

## INFRASTRUCTURE OF VOLGOGRAD REGION AS THE PERSPECTIVE TOURISTIC DESTINATION OF RUSSIA AND ITS PROBLEMS

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**Abstract.** *Resourcing the Volgograd Region and the city of Volgograd promising as a possible tourist destination in Russia. The objects of tourist interest. The involvement of the region in the federal targeted programs carried out and planned activities within the programs. Plans for development of the region and increase the flow of tourists. Description of the existing tourism infrastructure, display objects. Actions for the creation of tourist infrastructure. Characteristics of some problems in the field.*

**Keywords:** *Volgograd, Russia, infrastructure, destination, development.*

Volgograd Region and the city of Volgograd in particular is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Russia due to its rich history and contribution to the victory in the Second World War. It is a monument-city and a hero-city, visited by hundreds of thousands of Russian and foreign tourists. They are attracted by Volgograd's nature, mineral springs, spas and rest-houses, along with the rich and glorious history. There are many museums and monuments, with a vibrant culture and architecture.

According to the regional agency of tourism, on the territory of Volgograd region, there are 58 museums, 1,164 historic objects, 923 architecture sites, 9 artistic sites, more than 20,000 archeological sites, 162 nature sites, one third of which are military-patriotic themed, 6 natural parks (natural park "Volga-Akhtuba floodplain", "Don", "Nizhnehopersky", "Ust-Medveditsk", "Tsimlyansk Sands", "Scherbakovsky" and perhaps the most visited "Eltonsky" natural park) [1].

The nature parks located in the region cover the territory of more than 600,000 ha. There are numerous amounts of instinct animals and plants interesting for biologists and nature-lover. Also, these areas are open for ecological tourism. Visitors can go fishing, mushroom collecting, etc. Untouched nature, a peculiar fauna, distance from civilization is attractive for tourists from all over Russia.

The region is also famous for its churches and monasteries, the oldest of the latter being

the Ust-Medvedsky Spaso-Preobrazhensky Convent (the Convent of Transfiguration of the Savior) and the Kremensko-Voznesensky Monastery (Ascension Monastery). Such a large number of monasteries, churches and temples are not only a cultural value Volgograd region. It also contributes to the maintenance of pilgrimage tourism, which is interesting in itself as the region's residents and foreigners. These old Orthodox churches, mosques, synagogues attaches tourists to different religions of nations, which live on Volgograd friendly land, their history and spirituality.

Volgograd citizens and visitors enjoy boat cruises along numerous Russian rivers including the Volga, the Oka, the Don, the Kama, the Svir. Active tourism is in high demand, too, like cycling, horse-riding and walking along the special routes, kayaking and canoeing on the Don, the Khopyor River, the Medveditsa River and the Akhtuba. The salt lake Elton is famous for its holistic properties.

Among the historic sites bearing no connection to the Great Patriotic War of 1942-1945, there are:

- Tsaritsyn Fire Observation Tower;
- The premise of the Museum of Local History, previously occupied by the Noble Council of Tsaritsyn;
- The Colony of gernguter brothers in the Old Sarepta (an old German settlement, whose presence helped Volgograd to receive the industry of mustard due to which Volgograd is popular) [2].

Monuments dedicated to the Battle of Stalingrad:

- The statue “Motherland Calls!” on the Mamayev Hill;

- Museum-Panorama “The Battle of Stalingrad”;

- Ruins of the Old Mill (one of the few buildings left unrestored after the Battle).

Memorials and architectural ensembles of post-war Volgograd:

- The Obelisk to the defenders of Red Tsaritsyn on the Alley of Heroes ;

- The Square of Felix Dzerzhinsky;

- The “Volgograd 1” train station;

- Volga-Don Channel in the name of Vladimir Lenin;

- Volgograd Planetarium

Sites built during the period from 1991 to 2012:

- “Volgograd City” – a recently completed business complex famous for its modern architecture;

- “Volga Sails” – a housing complex on the bank of the river, nicknamed “Sails” due to the unusual coloring and shape of the premises;

- The Bridge over the Volga [3].

Volgograd region was included in the federal program “Development of domestic tourism in the Russian Federation (2011 – 2018 years)” as a perspective tourist destination area “the great Volga” (except for the subjects of the Russian Federation, entering the Volga Federal District and attracting annually more than 5.2 million people or 16.2 percent of the total tourist traffic of the country). This also includes the Astrakhan region. Historical, cultural and national characteristics of the major cities along the rivers Volga and Kama (Nizhny Novgorod, Kazan, Izhevsk, Samara, Ulyanovsk, Saratov, Volgograd, Astrakhan and others), combined with a large number of recreational areas and objects of tourist attraction made this area popular to Russian and foreign tourists [4].

Within this program creation of a complex infrastructure of tourist clusters, including electricity, communications, heat supplies, gas, budgets of gas supply, water supply, water disposal, transport infrastructure, accom-

modation facilities, and objects of trade, leisure, entertainment and food is planned.

According to expert estimates the flow of tourists within a tourist destination “the Great Volga” can be increased to 10 million tourists per year, if all the problems of infrastructure and overcoming of the related restrictions are resolved.

Moreover, it is expected to increase the number of tourists in 2018, as in the Volgograd region will host the World Cup FIFA.

Development of the hotel network is an important constituent of tourism infrastructure of Volgograd and its region. Currently, the hotels and tourist reservations of Volgograd region have the overall capacity of 7,500 rooms, i.e 18,500 visitors. The establishments are divided into:

- 123 hotels;

- 184 tourist bases;

- 28 health resorts.

All these facilities have passed the classification of accommodation facilities on 01.01.2015.

Volgograd itself has in its hotels about 2,500 rooms, which means it can welcome 5,000 visitors. Obviously, it is not enough for a millionaire city. Due to the rapid development of the tourist sector and the approaching World Cup 2018, Volgograd’s current objective is hosting nearly 2.5 times as many tourists in the nearest future.

Furthermore, there are 1280 food items for tourists and citizens in Volgograd. The most popular are united under the “Stolia” company. They are – restaurant “Volgograd”, “Sakura”, “Grill Bar”, “Grand Café”, “Sushi House” and others. Moreover, there are a lot of unlabeled restaurants, cafés, bars and pubs with the sufficient quality of food and for affordable prices.

Also, a modern transport infrastructure is creating in Volgograd. Furthermore, the roads around the city's main attractions, biggest streets, the city center, as well as the road to the railway station, airport are repairing special for “the World Cup FIFA 2018”.

Along two the most extended routes of the city the new buses of the European standards working on methane were started up in August, 2015.

After the terrorist attacks in 2013 the railway station "Volgograd 1" was completely reconstructed according to European standards. On the 7 of May 2014, the opening ceremony of the restored station building Volgograd-1 was taken place. Undergone central entrance hall, waiting room and superior comfort room were rebuilt. Above the entrance was installed new bulletin board, updated furniture in the waiting room.

A large amount of construction and installation work was held: installed window units, recreated plaster cornices, caissons, sockets, replaced Marble columns and wall cladding, in waiting rooms stacked floor of granite with the preservation of historical ornament. Cleaned of soot and painted walls of the Inkerman stone facade, replaced the glass dial and mechanism of the central clock. The chief engineer of the Volga Regional directorate of railway stations Belonogov Alex told that experts restored the historical appearance of the station in 1954 according the old photos.

Also, FIFA Championship is coming to Volgograd and the railway station will be reconstructed again. The elevators and new electronic systems will be placed [5].

Within the Federal Program "Development of Transport System of Russia (2010-2015)" the airport "Volgograd-Gumrak" will be reconstructed. The expected results of it are: increasing the airport's capacity from 400 to 900 passengers in hour, upgrading of the landing airfield of the accepted weight of aircrafts, reducing the noise impact zones of the city from 23 square kilometers to 3 square kilometers, replacing the take-on/take-off zones from residential areas to non-residential [6].

The regional agency of tourism development created "The city guest card" which gives discounts at hotels, restaurants, cafes and even travel agencies [7].

In June, 2015 the first English-language guide to interesting places in Volgograd

"Volgograd - Stalingrad - Tsaritsyn: Travel Guide" for foreign tourists and guests was presented. The guide describes the main attractions, cultural, historical and natural heritage of the city and its touristic potential. This convenient booklet contains practical hints and tips for tourists and visitors: recommendations on routes, urban infrastructure, transport accessibility, as well as information about the excursions, the prices for tickets to museums and theaters, addresses of major malls and souvenir shops. For the convenience of tourists, in the guide there are also the detailed maps of Volgograd and a small dictionary - translator of essential phrases for foreigners who came to Russia [8].

Unfortunately, the city of Volgograd recently losing its unique sights: buildings, that have the status of a cultural heritage site. They don't receive enough money from federal and regional government to be reconstructed.

Also, the data suggest some slippage from the Volgograd region modernized Russian regions, aspiration of youth to leave the depressing region, that Volgograd is consider being. The formation of a negative image of "diminishing returns" provincial region makes all the high-quality specialists to leave the region. According to the territorial body of the Federal Service of state statistics, Volgograd region refers to the "decaying" regions, even the big amount of work immigrants are coming. This fact doesn't make the increase and decrease in people equal [9].

Finally, Volgograd region has even more huge problems, but anyhow, it is obvious that the Volgograd region has enough resources to become one of the leading tourist destinations in Russia for foreign and Russian tourists, in case of continuing developing the tourism industry in the region, with sufficient funding and wise policy at the federal and regional level, creating a positive brand of the region.

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## **ИНФРАСТРУКТУРА ВОЛГОГРАДСКОЙ ОБЛАСТИ КАК ПЕРСПЕКТИВНОЙ ТУРИСТСКОЙ ДЕСТИНАЦИИ РОССИИ И ЕЁ ПРОБЛЕМЫ**

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***Аннотация.** Ресурсное обеспечение Волгоградской области и города Волгоград как возможной перспективной туристской дестинации России. Объекты туристского интереса. Вовлеченность области в Федеральные целевые программы, выполненные и запланированные действия в рамках программ. Планы развития области и увеличение потока туристов. Описание существующей туристской инфраструктуры, объектов показа. Действия по созданию туристской инфраструктуры. Характеристика некоторых проблем в области.*

***Ключевые слова:** Волгоград, Россия, инфраструктура, дестинация, развитие.*