

European dimension in qualifications for the tourist sector as an institution for Russian destinations development

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ABSTRACT

Adaptation of the best practices of the extensive and nationally specific European experience in the field of measurement of qualifications becomes particularly appropriate as there is some delay in the development of Russian scientific, practical and methodological approaches to the national qualifications framework. At the same time, the shortage of highly qualified personnel in the fast-growing tourist sector is becoming chronic, and the results of creating tourist clusters are ambiguous, with a large share of failures in the implementation of master plans for territorial tourism development. In this regard, the acceleration of the development of a structured measurement of qualifications in the form of a national qualifications framework becomes demanded not only to achieve greater maturity and effectiveness of the Russian educational and professional systems in the tourism sector, but also as a common institution for the strategic development of Russian destinations in training areas, technologies, competencies and the innovation potential of the tourism and hospitality industry. The projects of the European Commission ERASMUS+ are one of the effective network channels for the development of national and international expertise in structural measures to optimize educational systems, and in particular, to compare and develop systems, matrices frameworks for qualifications. The article represents an attempt to highlight how the implementation of a structured project in the field of qualifications can correspond both to general progressive trends in the evolution of educational systems and to the overall objectives of territorial tourist development.

As a conceptual result, the authors identify six mid-term and six long-term effects of the developments of a national qualifications framework that directly and indirectly provide beneficial outcomes within the development of Russian destinations through improving the focus of retraining and advanced training programs, enhancing lifelong learning, promoting labor mobility in the tourism sector, successful validation of informal education, wider circulation of partial and intermediate qualifications in the tourism and hospitality industry. Adjacent to this issue is the problem of the relationship between the development of educational clusters in the tourism sector and the national qualifications framework, on the one hand, and tourism clusters, on the other, the consideration of which is also presented in this article.

KEYWORDS:

tourism, clusters, destinations, qualifications, competences, national qualifications framework, professional standards, educational standards.

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1. INTRODUCTION

At the present stage of development of the tourist industry in Russia a certain experience of expertise in the formation and development of tourist destinations, including within the cluster approach has accumulated. However, specific methodological problems have not yet been fully resolved. In recent years, many key difficulties in the formation and development of tourist clusters in the Russian Federation are considered in detail: erroneous or inaccurate targeting of clusters, non - optimal parameters of public - private partnership arrangements, often leading to sudden rupture of contracts and projects, weak organizational capacity of many clusters, lack of expertise in this area among representatives of state and municipal authorities, as well as business and financial institutions themselves, insufficient or irrelevant training for the industry, especially for highly skilled jobs.

Results of the Federal Target Program (FTP) “Development of domestic and inbound tourism in the Russian Federation (2011 — 2018)” (Resolution, 2011), which have yet to be summarized in detail, have so far generated mixed feelings among experts. For a number of indicators it is already clear that the tasks have been exceeded. For example, this applies to investments and hotel rooms. In September 2018, the reporting of the Federal Agency for Tourism on the creation and functioning of many clusters, the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation officially recognized as unreliable, and for many stakeholders related to the clusters it wasn't a surprise. A number of clusters, which were supposed to become “business cards” of the entire FTP, exist only on paper or close to that, for example, “Golden Gate” of Altai. After Rosturizm was transferred from the Ministry of Culture to the Ministry of Economic Development, we can, of course, expect new strategic initiatives and approaches from the point of view of the development of tourist clusters in Russia. It remains to be assumed that the Ministry of Economic Development will be able to coordinate more professionally the development of the principles for the formation of clusters within the Federal Target Program for the period 2019 — 2025. So far, only the concept of the Federal Target Program for the next five years has been presented to the public.

The article proposes to consider one of the problematic aspects of the development of destinations — assessment of qualifications in the tourism sector. While in Russia there are no relevant methodological and conceptual developments, and therefore the creation of a national qualification framework is chronically delayed. It is the lack of comprehensive approaches, including taking into account European and other international practice, that hinders the formation of a scientific, educational and scientific-practical space in Russia, where it would be possible to standardize, update, professionalize, continue learning and disseminate knowledge and skills, not to mention innovation, especially in terms of strategic development of tourism systems. The article presents some advanced structural and methodological approaches of the international project “Erasmus +” in this area, systematizes existing problems and offers recommendations, to complete the formation of the national system of qualifications in the tourism sector in Russia.

2. RESEARCH DIRECTIONS IN THE FIELD OF QUALIFICATIONS IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

The problem of studies of tourist qualifications, undoubtedly, is in the direction of general discussions on the problems of formation of a common national system of qualifications, including taking into account acute problems of interfacing education with professional qualifications (Karavaeva, 2017), general conceptual and methodological foundations of its formation (Oleinikova, Muravyova, Aksenova, 2018). A separate perspective direction of studying the problems of qualifications is the comparison of the processes of formation and implementation of national systems of qualifications, both in the context of those countries where it has already occurred or is almost completed by 2010. (Allais, 2011), and Europe as a whole (Bohlinger S., 2012), and those countries where the situation is roughly the same as in Russia.

Among the general principal problems of establishing a national system of qualifications in Russia is of



Figure 1. Ratio of subject areas

particular interest and is the problem of institutional effect depending on what path has passed the national education system. According to researchers, the latter manifests itself in different priorities, participation of different groups of stakeholders and other specific difficulties of full implementation of the national qualification system (Helgo, Homme, 2015), including methodological aspects of measuring the comparative effectiveness of what has already been implemented (Pilcher, Fernie, Smith, 2017) and incorporating the non-formal learning component (Colardyn, Bjornavold, 2014).

As for the Russian conceptual research, on the one hand, experts in the field of pedagogy and management of industry education try to offer some improvements in the industry training, based on universal ideas about building a system of qualification on the basis of scientific and methodological approaches. On the other hand, specialists in the field of tourism research deepen in the issues of study and correlation of educational and professional standards,

preparation, development of approaches to optimization programs and curricula (Kharitonova, Shtremberg, Ilkevich S.V. and others, 2014) and only then turn to aspects of the general qualification structuring of the national system of qualifications.

Separately we can note the formation of specialized clusters of education and training in tourism, which are justified in some studies (Fedulin, Sakharchuk, Ilkevich, 2014). We are talking about the concepts of building multi-level regional (Brel, 2015), interregional (Brel, 2016) and even cross-border educational clusters in the tourism and hospitality industry with components of intersectoral, interprofessional and networking. While such concepts can be criticized for some abstractness, these studies are also useful in the context of building a national qualification system, since in the end there will be some correlation between the educational cluster and the framework of qualifications in organizational and managerial, coordination and attestation aspects. Cluster

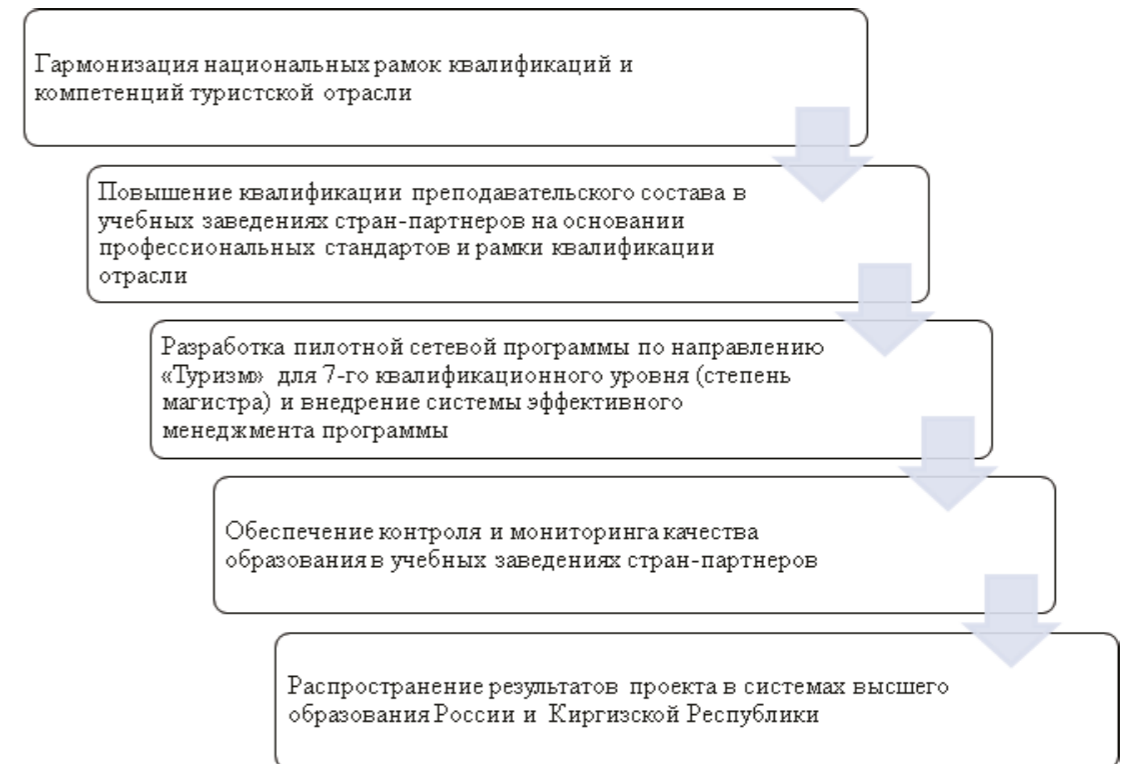


Figure 2. The objectives of the project "European Dimension in Qualifications for the Tourist Sector" of the Erasmus + program of the European Commission

approach is fundamentally preferable, because the acquired knowledge quickly becomes obsolete, and only the cluster approach allows to provide the greatest adaptability and rapid actualization of educational programs (Anichkin, Bryukhanova, 2016, p. 62). In addition, large companies (tour operators, hotel and restaurant chains, airlines) often conduct their own training in their training centers and training schools and consider it sufficient, as well as the students themselves.

Fig. 1 summarizes the ratio of the national system of qualifications, non-formal education, educational cluster in the tourism sector and tourism cluster. While it is relatively simple to imagine the content of each component, the aspects of their interaction and mutual conditionality are far from trivial. At the intersection of four subject areas there is a complicated, complex, interdisciplinary scientific-practical and methodological problem of integration, which is appropriate to solve, taking into account experience of European countries in Europe. There each component has been developing for decades, the problems of their relationship and mutual influence academic, educational, business and administrative bodies have understood and have begun to study from the beginning of 2000s.

3. CONCEPTUAL ACCENTS OF THE PROJECT "EUROPEAN DIMENSION IN QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE TOURIST SECTOR"

Project European Dimension in Qualifications for the Tourist Sector, EurDiQ, per. № 561832-EPP-1-2015-1-LV-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP of European Commission Program Erasmus+ has been implementing since 2015 within a consortium of Russian, Kyrgyz and European universities: The University of London, the University of Nicosia, the Institute of Applied Sciences (Schwerin, Germany), the Baltic International Academy (Latvia. Riga), Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation (Moscow), St. Petersburg State University of Economics, Don Technical University, Sochi State University, Russian State University of Tourism and Service, Issyk-Kul State University named after K. Tynystanov, Bishkek Financial and Economic Academy.

Modern trends of modernization of the economy and rapid change of technologies lead to the fact that requirements of employers to qualification of specialists

significantly changes. There is a clear need for the tourism sector to respond more flexibly and adjust the education system because of the multifunctional nature of the activity, interdisciplinary nature, activities in the industry, constant complication of types of tourism, increasing competition between destinations. That is why the main goal of the EurDiQ project research was to develop approaches to the harmonization of the national system of qualifications and competencies of the tourism industry.

The aim of the project is to ensure sustainable development of higher education in Russia by creating a system for assessing the quality of educational programs in accordance with the principles of the Bologna process and the plan strategic development of the European Union until 2020. The project involves strengthening European approaches and methods to identify the tourism industry in order to expand employment opportunities for graduates in Russia and the Kyrgyz Republic (Fig. 2).

During the implementation of the project two priority directions of development of tourism industry - development of tourist destinations and congress and exhibition activities, formulated the task and initial set of proposals for the formation of professional standards "Development of tourist destinations" and "Congress and exhibition activities" to improve the integration of business and personnel training, and thus the competitiveness of graduates of higher educational institutions in the labor market.

It is necessary to analyze professional and educational standards and to identify gaps between European, Russian, Kyrgyz educational standards and approaches to learning. The project consortium decided to develop new training modules for a network master's program in leadership and tourism development strategy based on European best practices. Russian and Kyrgyz teachers together with European colleagues have developed 10 training modules aimed at developing the competencies of future leaders of the tourism industry. In addition to the mandatory disciplines of national standards, the curriculum of the master's program includes modules "Sustainable tourism", "Management of events", "Legislation and safety in tourism", "Innovation and Service", "Strategic Management and Marketing in Tourism".

Within the framework of the project, the gaps in competences at the level of master's training in tourism management are methodically identified and a complex of subject, thematic and didactic innovations is offered.

Due to the structured approach to competences and qualifications, medium-term effects are identified, which should ensure significant results in the tourism sector within 3 — 5 years, and long-term effects that are dictated by the inertia of the development of vocational and educational space.

4. MEDIUM-TERM EFFECTS OF FORMATION OF QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

Medium-term effects are intuitive, in some aspects they are already affected in Russian studies.

Achieving a balance between supply and demand for labour. Structured qualification approach ensures the formation of a common coordinate system for employees and employers in order to ensure correct information, targeting, correlation competencies and qualifications. With the help of the national qualification system, all stakeholders interested in the development of the industry will be able to express more precisely what workers are missing or, on the contrary, what too many.

Improving the focus of retraining and professional development. We are talking about optimizing and universalizing formats that are relevant for related qualification levels. The emergence of a national qualifications system will allow a clearer understanding in which sub-sector components of the tourism sector more programs can be used for several skill levels. At present, researchers emphasize that programs of additional vocational education in the tourism sector are unsystematic at the subjective and theoretical and methodological level, have no continuity of stages, modules, levels of training, not to mention the relevant approaches to monitoring the results of training and especially the international recognition of diplomas and certificates (Kolodia, Rodionova, Agranovich, 2013). One of the key aspects for the tourism sector is the project activity and, consequently, the need to accurately reflect the required competencies both in professional standards and in the qualifications. It can be argued that the development of a national system of qualifications is delayed due to insufficient comprehensive understanding of the essence and facets of project training, including in the framework of additional education. On the example of the business tourism industry it is shown what competencies and subcompetences need to be paid more attention in the formation of the so-called project economy (Gorbashko, Vasilieva, Grei, 2016).

Possibilities of correlation of qualifications of education and professional qualifications. Now much is unclear even at the conceptual level: how to correlate the qualifications obtained in Russia with foreign professional diplomas and qualifications in tourism and hospitality, not to mention the still vague prospects of internationalization Russian education.

Emphasis on the need for lifelong learning. National qualification system should assume the function of a navigator for workers, allowing them to model their individual development trajectory in terms of education and vocational training activities. Increasing the retirement age in the Russian Federation should further "boost" this process.

Optimization of content, volume and timing of educational programs (including theoretical and practical components). It is also important to ensure optimal continuity of qualification levels by type of professional activity.

Activation of labor mobility of the population in Russia and abroad. A clear and transparent system of matching qualifications will allow those wishing to enter the world's educational and professional space, to find a suitable educational institution or place of work for themselves, will improve the labor mobility of the population and within the country. Mobility is now associated with the problem of uneven economic development of regions, escape from poverty, rather than with the natural movement of skilled workers as a limited resource to where they can find themselves the best field for activity. For the personnel of enterprises in hospitality and tourism, this aspect is by definition particularly relevant, but it is not yet addressed in the literature.

5. LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF FORMATION OF THE QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

As the formation of the national qualification system in the Russian Federation, including in the tourism sector, one can gradually expect some regularization and structuring of the sphere professional education, since in time it is possible to develop in substance "road maps", specific scientific and practical approaches and organizational and methodological mechanisms for maximizing the following positive effects.

Opportunities to recognize (validate) informal education in tourism and hospitality. This effect at both conceptual and sectoral levels has not yet been considered in the domestic literature, except for individual works (Smith, Ilkevich, 2018), although it is one of the most important levers stimulation of effective practice-oriented educational activities. In Europe, the guidelines for validation of informal and informal learning have become the basic documents for a uniform understanding of the recognition (validation) of informal and informal learning, originally presented in 2009 and updated in 2015 (European Guidelines, 2015) and very similar in spirit to the Council of Europe recommendations (2012), as well as of the Yerevan Conference of Ministers of Education (Yerevan communiqué, 2015).

Structuring retraining and advanced training as modules of new qualification levels. Training and retraining programs will be perceived by producers, consumers as structural elements, modules, "bricks" within the national system of qualifications, which may lead to new qualification levels, as is gradually being done in European countries. There is no understanding of how to modular design an individual educational trajectory, so far neither the business community nor the educational and academic community in the tourism sector. For comparison abroad experience of

organization and promotion of additional education under such system is already accumulated (Rodionova, Kolodiy, Konyukhova, 2013).

Application of partial and intermediate qualifications. At the same time, in countries where national qualification systems are either in place or are in the final stages of development, the notion of "partial and/or intermediate qualification" is widely used. It is no exaggeration to say that for the tourism and hospitality industry it is simply an excellent educational tool, which, judging by the experience of a number of European countries, is appropriate for proliferation in Russia.

As the qualification (for example, Master) on the basis of the whole set of postgraduate studies and practically mastered competencies, partial or intermediate qualifications can be awarded between Bachelor and Master levels. A separate aspect is the correct, sound, intuitive terminology of such intermediate steps. For example, for qualification between bachelors and masters it is necessary to choose certain "markers" and qualification titles: "qualification 6.5", or "pre-master", "sub-master", "advanced bachelor", "advanced bachelor".

It is important to note that the updated International Standard Classification of Education (ISCE-2011) clearly states that there are different options and individual ways to achieve qualification, not only by absorbing all elements of the entire program, but also by completing a separate phase of the program with partial and/or intermediate qualifications, skills and competencies, regardless of participation in any training program, up to complete non - participation. Unfortunately, until recently this topic was practically absent in the discourse about the institutionalization of Russian education, except for some studies (Gretchenko, Gretchenko, 2016).

Interesting international examples include the Turkish associate degree in tourism and hospitality management with 120 credits corresponding to the fifth level of the national framework qualifications, designed for two years of study. The analysis of its progressive aspects is presented in a recent article (Semenova, 2016).

The effect of the portfolio of professions. This effect has recently been discussed as an extremely interesting phenomenon with great potential for innovation. People of middle and late ages in the new economy of knowledge people of middle and senior age are unique specialists with original trajectories of the previous professional formation, they have the competence of formal and non - formal education, which is difficult to replicate. In the context of tourism and hospitality industry, this articulation of human capital development, particularly in terms of synergies among the different components of knowledge, is particularly relevant in the conditions of development of tourist clusters. Effect of the portfolio of professions is expedient to stimulate reasonable means, to ensure its recognition by all stakeholders. Progress in the national qualification system is also needed for this purpose. Moreover, it is possible and should be said that the

accounting of the portfolio of professions should be one of the main principles of its formation. Russian experts could act ahead and take advantage of the “catch-up development”: Irish, British and other advanced national qualification systems were developed before the massive manifestation of the effect of portfolio professions, however now “people who have only one profession, will be rare as dinosaurs” (Agarwal, 2018). And the country that more accurately and correctly reflects these interprofessional factors in the system of qualifications, will have an advantage in the formation of human capital.

Reduction of precarization (instability) of work of young people, older age, women. “Unsustainable employment is seen as a condition in which the labour market increases the level of uncertainty and risk of labour relations, and work ceases to be a source of medium- and long-term planning of life of the economically active population” (Veredyuk, 2013, p. 23). More accurate self-identification, strategy and tactics of professional self-development within the national system of qualifications will allow to increase labor activity due to better professional navigation especially since the tourism sector provides many specific niches for individual career paths.

Retraining and advanced training of foreign personnel. Through the development of a national qualification system, skills can not only be compared and contrasted at the international level, but can also be used as a basis for programming professional development and retraining of foreign workers in key foreign markets for Russia outbound tourism, for the development of organizational and coordination mechanisms for promotion and stimulation of retraining of personnel in various formats: at the level of associations and partner networks, corporate training, in foreign educational institutions, in Russian educational institutions. Especially so far, the plan for the export of educational services provided by the Government of the Russian Federation has not been adequately developed (Order 2002), which is one of the focal points for consideration of problems and underutilized opportunities for retraining and advanced training of foreign personnel.

6. CONCLUSION

European approaches to the formation of a national system of qualifications is a large set of conceptual and methodological tools for building effective educational systems. Advantages of studying European methods of structuring qualifications, including in certain industries, are expedient because they are well studied, systematically described in the literature and tested in practice, and in a number of areas for more than a decade. In the tourism sector formation of a national system of qualifications to external effects. Besides, despite all the obvious influence of the level of qualification of workers of the tourism industry on long-term competitiveness of destinations and, in particular, its innovative potential, this relationship is so long in time and

difficult to track that insufficient and even archaic educational systems and approaches continue to exist. The presented systematization of medium- and long-term effects of the introduction of the national system of qualifications is not limited to the attempt to demonstrate all the multidimensional nature of a well-structured vocational education and industry - wide activities in the context of the tourism sector. At this stage of development of Russian education in tourism and hospitality these effects are expressed weakly and blurred, nevertheless are a good diagnostic matrix for ascertaining and further monitoring the state of the Russian system of measuring qualifications in the tourism sector.

7. SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION

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