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Educational Tourism as a Modern Cultural Practice

Educational tourism started its development as an active form of tourist activities since nineties of the XX-th century in modern Ukraine. It should be noted that in Europe certain trends of educational tourism as various forms of students' educational tourism got an impulse for its development at the second half of the XX-th century [6]. At the end of the previous century noted scholars G. Smith and C. Cooper stated that the globalization impacted the sphere of tourism greatly but in the least degree influenced the educational tourism [9]. Japanese researchers emphasized in the educational tourism of Japanese students two tendencies – tourism for the purpose to learn the culture of the host country and academic tourism [4].

At the end of the XX-th century there have been identified three major trends in the educational tourism development:

- rapid growth of the students' segment in tourism;
- entering the educational tourism to the stage of maturity;
- hybridization of educational and leisure tourist services [8].

In new millennium those trends were added by the other forms of educational tourism such as child-youth (linguistic, historical, biological, geographical, ecological and others) and the development of different forms of additional education for adults (business tourism, family tourism and etc).

We shall follow the definition given by E. Lunin who identifies “educational tourism” as “a trip for the period from 24 hours till 6 months to get education (general, special, additional), to raise level of proficiency attending courses and practicing training, not gaining incomes in the country (place) of temporary staying” [2]. For the first time it was defined by I. Zorin and V. Kvartalnov in “Tourism Encyclopedia” and was quite ambiguous: “...tourist trips, excursions with the view of education, intellectual curiosity satisfaction, and other cognitive interests [1].

Foreign scholars identify “educational tourism” as “activities of staying for the night visitors and tourists for whom education and training is main or secondary aim of the trip” [11].

Although there are some other definitions such as “tourist programs for students and schoolchildren to learn cultural heritage of Greece” [3], “exchange programs for students” [12], “acquaintance with lifestyle, main occupations and produced products” [11].

It is worth mentioning that educational tourism embraces higher, vocational and school education, winter and summer schools, language courses, educational

programs for adults, short time courses, education development practice, internships, seminars, workshops and conferences. Modern concept of educational tourism includes educational institutions, accommodation, catering, transport facilities, entertainment sector which embraces museums, the sphere of arts and cultural heritage, leisure services and etc. [7].

Thus, it should be stated that modern educational tourism can be determined as an integral product including tourism itself and educational component in the context of educational infrastructure.

Minding foreign and national experience of educational tourism conceptually there can be outlined the following trends:

- children's (school) educational tourism is connected with learning additional materials in accordance with comprehensive secondary school program and additional educational programs (historical-and-cultural heritage learning, ecological-and-biological programs, natural landscapes learning when studying geography, foreign language learning, natural sciences learning in summer schools at the Universities or additional education centers, professionally oriented cognitive programs, participating in different socially designed reconstructions and performances – historic events reconstructions, ethno villages in the frameworks of tolerance development programs and etc.), both in Ukraine and abroad in the context of main or integrated programs combining recreational and educational tasks;
- youth educational tourism – mastering the programs of additional education (mainly linguistic ones) in the context of main or integrated programs combining recreational and educational tasks, participating in different socially designed reconstructions and performances – historic events reconstructions, ethno villages in the frameworks of tolerance development programs, innovative and creative activities development programs, within the frameworks of creative industries, learning the basics of entrepreneurship and etc.;
- specialized additional education programs for adults (main and integrated with recreational);
- specialized additional education programs for elderly people (main and integrated with recreational).

Summing up it should be noted that educational tourism shall be performed all-the-year-round and can be combined with recreational and medioprophyllactic types of tourisms. To develop educational tourism the resources of children's recreation camps, health and spa centers, schools of arts for children, vocational, higher educational institutions and centers for additional education can be used.

We shall state that the educational tourism development contributes to job vacancies, rising the effectiveness of recreational and educational resources usage, expanding the range of educational commercial services and optimizing the educational equipment application.

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