

PLANNING OF THE INTERREGIONAL TOURIST ROUTE IN THE URALS

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ABSTRACT: The article aims to attract the attention of geographers to the development of technology for the design of tourist routes. The world and Russian experience of designing long interregional tourist routes is considered. The authors' approaches to route design are illustrated by the example of the Urals. Interregional tourist routes in Russia are actively developed with the support of the government. They are initiated by interacting regions and especially federal districts. Interregional routes are tours covering several adjacent regions or regions that are close not territorially, but thematically in tourist aspects. Such routes are quite different, but they have mainly cultural and informative goals as well as an excursion, transport and sometimes cruise style. Among all the interregional routes, the 'Golden Ring' and the 'Volga-Kama' river cruises are exemplary, among which the 'Moskovskaya krugosvetka' stands out due to the uniqueness of the ring shape of the route. The geographic features of the Urals are at the heart of the logical decisions for the preparation of the interregional tourist project 'The Great Ural Route'. The Urals have attractive, image, logistic and other opportunities for organising a large tourist route. A route should be developed for residents of the country and foreign guests, which will introduce the most striking and characteristic objects of the macro region as a whole. Moreover, the annular shape of the route is most preferred. It is advisable to lay the route in most of the Ural regions. It should include the main cities, landscapes of different natural zones, the most significant excursion sites and distinctive territories. Geographic route design technologies make it possible to make them relevant for a long time.

KEYWORDS: tourism, tourist itinerary, interregional routes, travel planning, route design, tourist cruises, Russia, Ural

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Introduction

Tourism is a practical sphere and one of its main categories is a 'route (itinerary)'. This is a geographic category; therefore, geographic approaches should be widely used in the development of routes. The concept of a tourist route should be based on geographical approaches, which should be logical from a geographical point of view.

The development of domestic tourism in Russia is accompanied by the growth of the network of itineraries, among which interregional ones stand out. When organising new routes, it is advisable to turn to geographic analysis and geographic technologies. This article examines the geographical aspect currently used and projected interregional tourist routes in Russia and in some other countries. Using the example of the development of a new interregional tourist route

in the Urals, the authors try to show the use of geographical approaches in the formation of the concept of the route. According to the authors, a tourist route should be based on a geographical concept.

The organisation of interregional tourist routes was recognised as useful and began to be supported by the federal government of Russia. An interregional route is defined as a tour passing through the territory of two or more regions of the Russian Federation, promoting cultural, historical and sports facilities, which are characterised by recognition, regularity, completeness and compliance with service standards. According to the recommendations of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation (*Guidelines for the formation of competitive tourist routes*, 2017), the task of each region should be to create a basic route as the basis for the formation of tours of various topics. The main tourist routes of two or more neighbouring regions can be part of an inter-regional tour. It is expected that combining the capabilities of each region in a common tour will increase tourist arrivals in each region.

This proposal is interesting, but questions arise in pursuance. How to connect regional routes if their lines do not join or if their programmes differ in themes and consumer segments? How to make a tourist route important and attractive to the general public for a long time? How to create a geographically logical inter-regional tourist route? This topic is very relevant for practical tourist route planning and also interesting for the development of the theory of recreational geography.

The idea of inter-regional routes is not new; such routes have existed before. Moreover, it is the interregional routes that are very common and reflect most the essence of tourism. As a rule, 'route tourism' is of an interregional nature. These types of travel include river and sea cruises, bus cruises, caravanning and active travel.

Unlike 'stationary tourism' (balneological, beach, mountain skiing, business, event and rural tourism), in which the guest is within only one region and one place, 'route tourism' is often interregional and even interstate.

Travel on ships along the river system of the European part of Russia is interregional. Rafting on the rivers of the Urals (Chusovaya, Sylva and Yuryuzan) is associated with crossing the

borders of the regions of the Russian Federation. Many rivers of Siberia, popular for rafting, in their course, cross the borders of administrative territories (these rivers are Charysh, Peschanaya, Biya, Belaya, Irkut and Chaya). Many popular hiking and trekking trails run from one region to another. 'Tridtsatka' – in the past the famous all-Union tourist route – is a popular path for trekking in the Western Caucasus from the Republic of Adygea to the Black Sea coast in the Krasnodar kray. During the Soviet era, mountain travels connected the regions of the North Caucasus with the territories of the Transcaucasus. In Central Asia, such routes were typical, e.g. routes from Kazakhstan to Kyrgyzstan connecting Almaty and Lake Issyk-Kul and travel from Kyrgyzstan to Tajikistan along the Pamir Highway. Many tourist routes in the Urals stretch from one region to another. This is especially true for routes in the north of the Urals.

The modern Belarusian experience of marking and preserving 'green corridors' at the borders of regions is an example of the correct organisation of nature-oriented interregional routes (Sergachev 2012).

Interregionalism is a characteristic feature of tourist travel; this is not a new trend. Why are interregional tourist routes now especially stimulated by the federal government of Russia? There are many objective reasons for this. We name just a few.

1. It is more efficient to carry out marketing promotion of small regions not separately, but by groups of regions, indicating a common theme;
2. Logical interregional tourist routes can be relevant for a long time and be a prerequisite for the development of interregional transport links.
3. An interregional route for adjacent regions can contribute to the socio-economic development of peripheral territories.

Study of tourist routes as a scientific and geographical problem

The design and organisation of a tourist route is usually understood as a practical task. Scientific works on tourist routes do not appear often and are mainly of an applied form. Thematically, they

are connected with the development of tourism infrastructure and the monitoring of tourist flows. The topics of logistics and programming of the choice of the path are studied. Geographical logic and the development of concepts for tourist routes are started much less frequently. By a strange coincidence, tourist routes, being a geographical product, are infrequently considered from scientific geographical positions. We will show a number of modern directions of route research through specific publications.

The planning and organisation of long tourist routes are carried out in many countries, both between them and between the provinces. Jenny Briedenhann and Eugenia Wickens of Chilterns University College (Buckinghamshire, UK) write about South Africa's itinerary: "Whilst the project has encountered its hurdles, the African Dream (Project), is now starting to count its successes. To date there are 32 routes, involving 80 towns and their rural areas in four countries, stretched over a distance of 11,623 km" (Briedenhann, Wickens 2004: 77).

Antonson and Jacobsen (Antonson et al. 2014) point out a lack of modern research on the process of planning tourist routes. The authors compare route planning technology in Sweden and Norway. They note: "... public road administration route planning procedures in the two countries are quite different. In Norway, a top-down principle is basically employed, concerning initiatives and designation of routes. In Sweden, the principle is one of muddling through, giving street-level planners more opportunities for individual influence on route planning" (2014: 342). The authors conclude: "...that the Norwegian route planning has been the more successful of the two approaches studied here, at least if accomplishment is to be measured by international media coverage and maybe also by visitor numbers" (2014: 349).

Meyer (2004) drew attention to the large role of tourist routes for the development of remote territories and to the need to develop route concepts.

The dissertation and article of Marlien Lourens (2007) examines the critical success factors of route tourism development. Lessons are drawn from case studies of the Camino de Santiago in Spain, the heritage trails in Queensland, Australia, Hadrian's Wall in the United Kingdom

and of the Midlands Meander in South Africa. It is argued that the successful development of tourism routes is not an exact science and emerging destinations often have many hurdles to overcome. The author identifies the elements of thematic routes that make up the success of the destination.

The article of Christian M. Rogerson is devoted to routes a little further north (Rogerson 2007). The author examines the local development impacts of the Magaliesberg Meander, a tourist route that traverses across two South African provinces. It is argued that while this tourism route has extended the tourism growth potential of the locality, its wider impacts on surrounding communities have been limited because of the weakness of local government in addressing issues concerning tourism planning.

Technological and mathematical approaches to trip planning are offered in a number of publications. Hasuike, Katagiri, Tsubaki and Tsuda (Hasuike et al. 2013) propose a versatile and interactive route planning task for sightseeing in a variety of conditions. The multipurpose route planning problem is formulated as a network optimisation problem. Using the model proposed by the authors of the article, the tourist simultaneously receives not only the optimal tour route in normal conditions but also a suitable tour route in other conditions, depending on time and weather.

The article of Worapot Sirirak and Rapeepan Pitakaso (2018) examines the possibility of programming an excursion route depending on a number of parameters, such as length, cost and others. This is a multifactorial task. The authors talk about limitations that were not taken into account in this work, such as topography, seasonality and ecological differences.

Interesting work on route planning using Points of Interest (POIs) is carried out by Lim (2016). He writes that trip planning is both challenging and tedious for tourists due to their unique interest preferences and various trip constraints. Despite the availability of online resources for tour planning, there are various challenges such as selecting POIs that are personalised to the unique interests of individual travellers, and constructing these POIs as an itinerary with considerations for time availability, starting/ending place preferences and others. The authors are

developing algorithms for recommending personalised tours to both individual travellers and groups of tourists based on their interest preferences, which we automatically determine based on geotagged photos posted by these tourists.

Planning a tourist route and tourist programme is also a geographic task. It should be geographically reasoned and logical. In this case, it will be of higher quality, safer, and the route will be in demand for a long time. There are some methodological developments on the geographical reasoning (logic) of the route (Zyryanov, Korolev 2009a). The geometric shape of the route (linear, circular, radial or combined) affects all components of the journey. Various types of logical decisions on route planning are distinguished (the logic of stringing, the logic of ascent (visiting), the logic of crossing (overcoming), the logic of the Great Path, the logic of the historical path, the logic of the direction, the logic of the expedition, the logic of learning, etc.). Each of these logical approaches to travel planning is expressed in the peculiarities of the route thread.

The rapidly developing independent tourism is especially creative in route solutions. (Zyryanov, Zyryanova 2013) The authors are certain that the geographical grounds for choosing the entire track line and not just the nodal reference points will allow developing the network of tourist routes rationally, making tourist travel the most useful.

Route planning is a basic technological challenge in tourism. It is an intellectual and creative endeavour where science, practice, experience and art play a role. It is a geographic challenge, where geography, combined with tourism technology and tactics, determines the content of the activity.

The structure and geographical logic of interregional tourist routes in Russia

Which of the existing and planned interregional tourist routes are best known in Russia today? Among them are routes designed according to historical paths. Establishing such routes is not easy as modern transport lines often deviate greatly from historical roads.

The Great Silk Road attracts the attention of historians, geographers and tour operators in

terms of the possibilities of planning short and long routes. All regions of the North Caucasian Federal District are interconnected by a highway in the form of a section of the Great Silk Road. The difficulty is that many different lines of movement were used on this historical path. Travel planning along the Great Silk Road is actively pursued in many different areas of this belt (Kuznetsova 2017). The 'Great Silk Road' route has a general direction 'east-west', but on local tourist routes it can run sublatitudinally and even meridionally.

Regions located along the Trans-Siberian Railway are mastering the passage along the Great Tea Route. Many cities (such as Chelyabinsk and Kungur) claim to be included in this tourist route. The Great Tea Route is the most advanced tourist route in terms of interstate relations between China, Mongolia and Russia. A number of publications inform about the organisation of such trips on the Siberian sections of the route (Balyuk et al. 2019; Sergachev 2012). Many cities on this route are developing the theme of the history of the tea trade (Ulan-Ude, Kungur).

This type of movement is usually linear across neighbouring regions. Among them is the route 'On the way of Ermak' from the Prikam'ye to Siberia, which some Ural tour operators organise, connecting the Perm kray, the Sverdlovsk oblast and the Tyumen oblast.

A number of routes have a thematic concept. The project 'Russian estates' covers Tula, Tver, Tambov, Smolensk, Ryazan, Oryol, Kaluga, Moscow, Voronezh, Vologda, Bryansk, Leningrad and Pskov regions. The tour known as 'Russia - the birthplace of space' now unites Moscow, the Moscow region, Kaluga and St. Petersburg. There are at least 30 cities in Russia that are closely related to the topic of cosmonautics; so, the number of project participants is constantly increasing. Such inter-regional routes can link non-contiguous regions.

Many river cruise routes in Russia are inter-regional. These include trips along the Volga-Kama river basin (Perm - Astrakhan; Perm - St. Petersburg). One of these routes is in the form of a ring. This is 'Moskovskaya krugosvetka', the way from Moscow along the Moscow Canal, the Volga, Oka and Moscow rivers with a return to the capital. On the way, towns and tourist sites of eight regions are visited. This is probably one

of the most logical inter-regional routes, as it follows a natural route in one mode of transport and is unique in its circular shape. It is full of attractions related to visiting not only the central cities of the regions but also many peripheral settlements. This route is optimal from the point of view of tour operators, since it has a maximum duration of 10 days, covers an area that is very bright in natural, historical and socio-economic terms and is geographically mosaic.

The most popular interregional cultural and historical route in Russia is the Golden Ring. This circular route connects cities located north-east of Moscow, where one can see architectural landmarks of the 12th century; it thus becomes possible to feel the atmosphere of the principalities of Ancient Russia. This tourist route connects the following towns and cities – Sergiev Posad, Pereslavl-Zalessky, Rostov Veliky, Yaroslavl, Suzdal and Vladimir. Quite often, the route includes Kostroma and Ivanovo, and somewhat less often, Uglich. Many cities in this area declare their participation in this route and are included in the tours. These are Alexandrov, Gorokhovets, Gus Khrustalny, Kalyazin, Kineshma, Murom, Myshkin, Palekh, Ples, Rybinsk, Tutaev, Shuya, Yuryev-Polsky and others. This route is circular, although many tourists prefer to visit individual cities, and then the travel thread may differ from the shape of the ring. Different forms of transport are used – bus, car or train. The trail is especially attractive to foreign tourists, but it is also popular among Russian residents. The main segments of arrivals are middle-aged and older travellers, family tourists and school groups. The route and brand are very popular. The popularity of the brand has resulted in a situation wherein other tourist routes in Central Russia are often sold under the guise of tours on the Golden Ring.

Each of the federal districts of Russia is taking the initiative on tourism. In this regard, new interregional tourist routes appear. The idea of an automobile interregional route in the Central Federal District *Dorogi dushi derzhavnoy* (Roads of the Great Soul) was proposed, covering many towns – municipal centres of the district in one round (Fedulin et al. 2015).

Another original idea is being implemented by the forces of four regions in the tourist interregional route 'The Golden Ring of the Bosphorus Kingdom'. The Republic of Crimea, the city of

Sevastopol, the Krasnodar Territory and the Rostov region open up archaeological and other tourist resources associated with the existence of the ancient Greek colonies and the Bosphorus state. The Mediterranean, with its historical heritage, is the most attractive tourist region in the world. The antique theme has a new natural continuation in the territories to the northeast. The route expands the structure of tourism and the range of recreational activities on the Azov–Black Sea coast and overcomes a narrow beach specialisation. The project includes the following ancient cities: Gelendzhik (Torik), Kerch (Panticapaeum), Anapa (Gorgippia), Sevastopol (Tauric Chersonesos), Novorossiysk (Bata), Feodosia (Feodosia), Azov (Tanais), Evpatoria (Kerkinitida), Taman (Hermonassa) and Simferopol (Scythian Naples). The trip is designed for two weeks using different types of transport – bus, car, train and cruise ship. The route was organised thanks to the activity of all regions of the Southern Federal District; the idea is being developed by the Krasnodar branch of the Russian Geographical Society.

The Golden Ring of Siberia route was conceived as an opportunity to get acquainted with the huge Siberian macro-region in one trip (Kalyuzhnaya et al. 2018). The tourist route passes through 12 regions of the Siberian Federal District, where the following cities and natural tourist sites are visited: Omsk oblast – Omsk; the Novosibirsk region – Novosibirsk oblast; Altai kray – the resort of Belokurikha; the Altai Republic – Lake Manzherok, Mount Malaya Sinyukha, the Chuisky tract, Gorno-Altaysk, Artybash village, Lake Teletskoye; Kemerovo oblast – Ust-Kabyrza village, Sheregesh resort, Novokuznetsk; the Republic of Khakassia – Abakan; the Republic of Tuva – Kyzyl; Irkutsk oblast – Irkutsk, Listvyanka, Lake Baikal; the Republic of Buryatia – Ulan-Ude, Transbaikalian kray – Chita; Krasnoyarsk kray – Krasnoyarsk, Yenisei, Stolby Reserve; Tomsk oblast – Tomsk. On different parts of the route, it is necessary to use different transport: go by train, by car, by plane and cross Lake Teletskoye on a motor boat. The route includes many large regions with long distances between the places of visit and is organised in an area where it is difficult to draw a circular line. Nevertheless, if it is popular, then this speaks of the demand for such geographic tours that cover large territories of Russia.

In the regions of the Far East and Transbaikalia, the Great Eastern Ring route is being designed, covering the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Buryatia, Transbaikalia, Kamchatka, Primorsky kray and Khabarovsk kray, Amur oblast, Irkutsk oblast, Magadan oblast, Sakhalin oblast, the Jewish Autonomous oblast and the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug. This route represents a single brand, not a single route. The huge potential tourist market of the countries of the Asia-Pacific region stimulates tourist routes in this Russian space. Branding is developing, emphasising the uniqueness of the tourism resources of each of the regions participating in the project. So, in Yakutia, it is the 'Pole of Cold', the natural park 'Lena Pillars', 'Diamond Yakutia' and the sports games 'Children of Asia'; in the Khabarovsk kray it is the culture and arts and crafts of the first nations, the river cruises and fishing tourism; and in the Amur region it is the 'Golden Mile' in Blagoveshchensk and a 'Space Odyssey' with excursions to the Vostochny cosmodrome. Since the modern transport system of the Far East does not facilitate circular routes, there are proposals for the development of sea tourist transport (Gomilevskaya, Petrova 2017).

The Silver Necklace of Russia route connects all regions of the north-western Federal District. If the Golden Ring covers mainly the cities of Vladimir-Suzdal Rus, then the Silver Necklace of Russia includes mainly the cities of the ancient Novgorod land. Like in the Far East, this is actually not one specific route, but an interregional tourism project to create and maintain a complex of routes passing through territories where unique monuments of history and culture are located. As part of the project, tour operators have prepared the following routes: 'The Great Way in the Russian North', 'Petrovsky Cities', 'Journey to Ancient Rus', 'In the Footsteps of the Varangians', 'Zastava Rusi', 'In Holy Places', 'Living Water of the North-West of Russia', 'Northern Ports of Russia', 'Wooden Architecture', 'Tree of Life', 'Ghost Towns of the North', etc.

Thus, inter-regional tourist routes are a modern universal desire. This is a reaction to the complexity of the tourism branding of the regions of the Russian Federation separately. It is a desire to organise accessible and well-known routes, combining the tourist resources of a whole group of regions.

Geographical approaches to the design of an interregional tourist route in the Urals

Considering the large territories of Russia from the point of view of the possibility of organising an interregional tourist route, the Urals stand out with their resources and logistical reasons for creating a strong concept and high-quality programmes. In addition, the massively used interregional tourist route is necessary for the Ural regions from an economic, social and educational standpoint. In connection with the task of planning a travel line across the entire territory of the Urals, we will call this project the 'Great Ural Route'. Using the accumulated Russian experience, taking into account the peculiarities of the Urals, we will try to find approaches to planning an interregional route for residents of our country and foreign tourists.

The geographical name 'Ural' is ambiguous. This is a mountain system, an economic region, and a federal district. This name has strong natural, historical, cultural and economic significance. The Ural is one of the brightest and most identifiable regions in the world, although it is not geographically mapped. Neither natural nor artificial borders, nor administrative borders distinguish the Urals on a geographical map. Ural territoriality lives on in the hearts of its inhabitants. People simply consider themselves to hail from the Urals.

Despite the natural wealth and beauty of the landscape and its economic weight, the Ural, due to its internal location, is in scarce demand by Russian and foreign tourists. This is indirectly facilitated by the division of the Ural regions into different federal districts.

In this regard, it is important to create a large tourist route covering the entire Urals. A route is needed that would connect the regions of the Urals, introduce the residents of Russia and foreign guests to the largest cities, interesting natural and economic sites and historical and cultural heritage. The route can contribute not only to the advancement of territories and the development of the tourism industry but also to an increase in humanitarian and investment interest in the Urals as a unique and promising territory.

The Ural is large in size; its contours, no matter how drawn, will be clearly visible even on

the globe. Despite the fact that the Urals have common features and a clearly distinguished economic profile, the macro-region is spatially diverse and mosaic. Travelling through one part will not provide a holistic experience. A route that unites several regions of the Urals at once will be more expedient and relevant in this regard than a trip to one or two regions.

Modern transport of various types allows showing several regions of the Urals at once during one trip. Developed transport links make it possible for tourists to plan and choose the optimal main line of the route from a variety of options. Regions, cities, settlements and facilities that fall within the Great Ural Route zone will benefit from the promotion of a general informational emphasis, tourist coordination and the development of transport and services.

When designing a tourist route, it is necessary to take into account the peculiarities of the Urals. Each territory has its own characteristics in relation to the construction of the route (Zyryanov, Zyryanova 2013). The route is inter-regional and difficult. Its goal is to acquaint the guest with the Urals as a whole, to provide comprehensive information about people, cities, the economy, historical places, nature, unique and typical properties. The territory of the Urals as a whole has a meridional extent, since the Ural Mountains are meridional.

The territory of the Urals is clearly diversified, by meridional natural zones (Predural'ye, the Ural Mountain belt and Zaural'ye), geographical areas (the Polar Urals, Subpolar Urals, Northern Urals, Middle Urals and South Urals), as well as by subjects of the Federation (the Perm kray, Sverdlovsk oblast, Chelyabinsk oblast, Republic of Bashkortostan and Orenburg oblast).

A number of socio-economic regions of the country in one way or another are included in the concept of the Urals. The Udmurt Republic, located in Predural'ye, the Kurgan region, is located in Zaural'ye. These are part of the Ural economic region. The Tyumen region, the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug and the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug are part of the Ural Federal District. The Komi Republic covers the Predural'ye and the mountains of the Northern Urals. The eastern part of the Nenets okrug covers the foothills of the Polar Urals. We can discuss the eastern regions of the Kirov region

as Predural'ye. Thus, many regions of Russia can, to one degree or another, consider themselves to be the Urals.

The Ural has not narrow but broad specialisation in the field of tourism. The macro-region is famous for cities and industrial enterprises, natural landscapes and historical monuments and it has a well-developed road and rail network. Tourist ships sail along large rivers. There are large airports in central cities.

Thus, it is advisable to lay a route through the largest number of regions, to focus on a variety of types of tourist resources when it is possible to connect different types of transport during travel. The vast territory of the Urals and many tourist facilities and good transport links allow organising an interregional tourist route in an excursion form using comfortable means of transport and accommodation in the 'Ural without difficulties' style.

The choice of visited regions and excursion sites on the planned route can be based on the following considerations. It is advisable to show the Urals in a large set of regions, but within two weeks it should be limited only to those that directly have mountain parts on their territory, i.e., located in the Ural Mountains. It is advisable to include regions that are well transport-related to each other and transport-developed within. In this regard, it is rational to include the Perm kray, Sverdlovsk oblast, Chelyabinsk oblast and the Republic of Bashkortostan, and possibly the Orenburg oblast in the route. If there is any other possibility, then there is reason to add sites in the Udmurt Republic and in the Komi Republic. There is reason to include in the route the territory of the Komi-Permyan okrug. The areas and places included in the route in the selected regions will depend on the territorial structure of tourism in the Urals (Zyryanov 2018; Zyryanov, Korolev 2009; Zyryanov 2014).

Based on the purpose of the route and the features of the territory, the following principles for selecting excursion and recreational sites can be distinguished.

Among natural objects and territories, it is desirable to show mid-mountain and low-mountain landscapes, karst forms, sites of the Permian geological period, large rivers, reservoirs, big ponds, mountain rivers and lakes. It is important to show different natural areas: taiga, mixed

forests, forest-steppes and steppes in the mountainous and lowland parts of the territory. If possible, the upper tundra, meadow and stone zones of the Ural Mountains should be shown. It is vital to familiarise visitors to the macro-region with the main protected areas: reserves and national or natural parks.

Among the cultural and historical sights, it is necessary to choose objects showing different eras of economic development and important events in history. It ought to show the special aspects of the ethnic palette of the Urals and the history of peoples.

It is necessary to acquaint guests with the largest cities of the Urals, the centres of the regions, as well as with small and medium-sized cities of different economic specialisation in accordance with the specialisation of a region. It should be possible to get acquainted with industrial enterprises and service facilities, as well as with life of people in rural areas.

It is important to include the picturesque roads and, if possible, combine different types of transport. For walking and other active excursions, as well as 'outings', it is advisable to choose the most aesthetic directions in the landscape respect.

In what form will the journey take place along the Great Ural route, and what type of tourism does this trip fit into? The choice of places to visit, transport support, tourist market segments and service profiling will depend on this issue.

It is necessary to contemplate the type of tourism that gives the most general and comprehensive picture of a large territory, with dimensions of approximately one million km². Apparently, these are primarily route tourism types, in contrast to stationary ones, such as mountain skiing, balneological, event, business, etc. where the stay of visitors is usually relatively local. Tourist travel by means of transport as a rule allows tourists to organise the longest routes, covering large areas and many regions. Therefore, the trip most likely should include transport. Many regions and places to visit and a variety of objects of excursions will require a fairly high degree of travel comfort. Thus, the determining type of tourism should be one that is route- and transport-friendly, and comfortable.

When choosing a travel style, one should study the demand for the Ural regions in Russia and abroad from different types of tourism.

Among the many types of tourism, there are several enlarged groups (or blocks, according to Dolzhenko), which in the Urals are in demand in the inbound tourism market. These are: sports- and nature-oriented; excursion wide profile, tourism-significant events, business, balneological, skiing; river cruises.

An excursion type of travel is most acceptable for the following reasons. In the Urals, many natural attractions are quite well accessible in terms of transport. This type of tourism is all-season; during the year there is almost no noticeable decline in demand. Such trips are designed for any age, attractive for both organised and independent tourism and suitable for group and individual programmes, thus covering the widest segment of consumers.

The choice of transport on the Great Ural route is quite wide. By the beginning of the journey, which is advisable to start from any of the five main cities, tourists can travel by air. To arrive to the Urals, they can use railway transport, as well as river transport, if Perm is the starting point of the trip. Tourists can arrive in the Urals to the beginning of the ring route by car.

On the Great Ural route, bus tours or car trips are preferred. On many sections of the route, visitors can use air flight and railway movements. Active types of travel, namely motorcycle and bicycle, along this route can also develop.

Tourist advantages and key excursion topics of the Ural regions will determine the choice of specific sites on the route. All Ural regions have their own nature, history, populations and economies. It is necessary to highlight those features of the regions that can be expressed by sightseeing objects on the Great Ural route. The features of the regions of the Urals are most expressed by the following excursion topics.

Permskaya oblast: Perm – a city on the Kama; Komi-Permyatsky okrug – the most inaccessible and authentic corner of the Ural economic region, Patrimony of the Stroganovs, salt-making in the Urals, Gornozavodskoye Prikamye, Yermak and the Chusovaya River, historical town and fairy-tale cave.

Sverdlovskaya oblast: Demidov and Factories, Opornyy kray, Capital of the Urals, the Romanov Family, Bazhov Places; Chelyabinskaya oblast: Chelyabinsk – beautiful and industrial, Lake District, Mineralogy of the geochemical site;

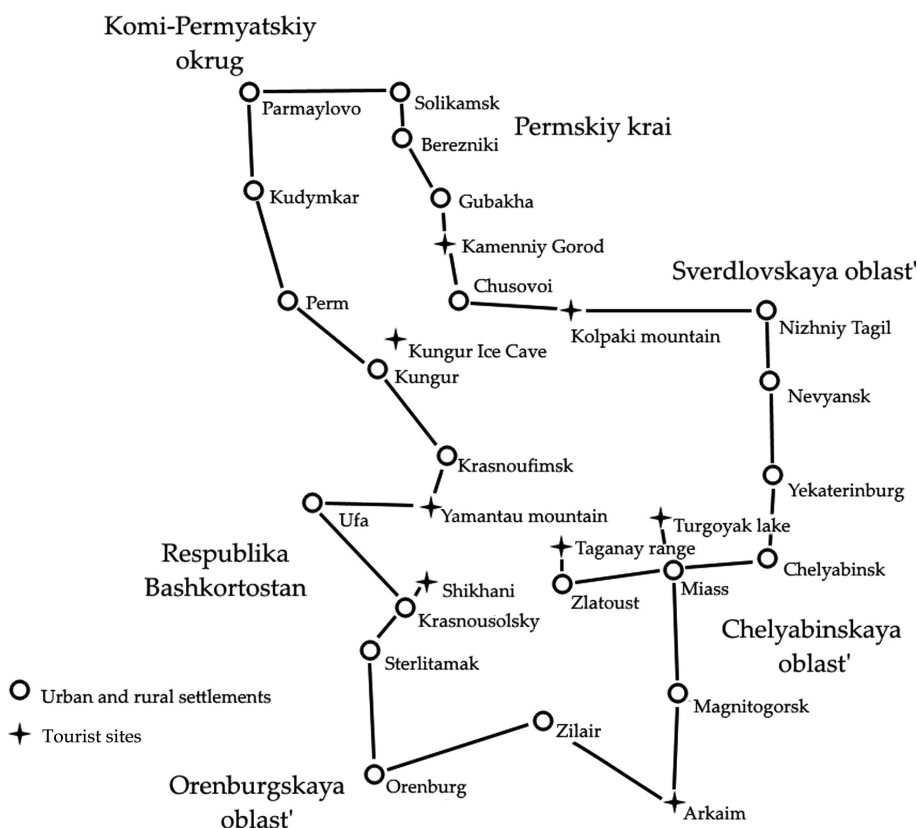


Fig. 1. Interregional tourist route in the Urals – 'Iron Ring'.

Taganay – a tourist country; Magnitka – the pride of the country, Mysterious Arkaim.

Orenburgskaya oblast: Orenburg city and the Orenburg region: history and achievements, the border of Europe and Asia and the Great Steppe.

Republic Bashkortostan: Forest and steppe mountains of the Southern Urals, Rural Bashkiria, Health resorts of Bashkiria, the capital of the Republic.

The proposed approaches and principles formed the basis of the logic and concept of the formation of a tourist route in the Urals. This route can be called the 'Iron Ring'. One of the variants of this route is shown in Fig. 1. The route in the form of the main places of visit includes 21 settlements and eight natural and other excursion sites.

Conclusions

The development of domestic tourism in Russia is accompanied by the active design of interregional routes, i.e., routes that pass through the territories of several regions. The planning of

such routes is supported by the state and is often initiated by federal districts. Among the country's micro-regions, the Ural does not stand out for large tourist arrivals and is not represented in the system of tourist routes as a single space that is interesting in terms of tourism. The Urals are distinguished by a variety of resources and opportunities for organising an interregional tourist route. The development of the Great Ural Route, which will introduce the bright and characteristic sites of the macro-region as a whole, is necessary for the residents of the country and foreign guests.

The topic of route planning is not popular in geographical science, being considered an exclusively applied problem in the field of marketing, economics and service. Nevertheless, the geographical problems of studying and planning tourist routes are being solved in many countries. To draw up a tourist route, it is important to take into account many factors, among which geographical ones occupy a special place. Geography provides the basis for creating the concept of a tourist route. The more definite the geographical logic of the tourist route and the more rational it is, the more high-quality programme it has.

When planning the line of an interregional tourist route in the Urals, many physical-geographical and socio-geographical conditions should be taken into account.

With regard to the proposed approaches, it is possible to formulate the principles for constructing an inter-regional Ural route, as a result of which the choice of the territory of travel, excursion sites, development of the route and programmes will be carried out. General ideas about the shape and structure of the route can be expressed in the following positions:

1. The ring shape of the route is most preferred.
2. The route passes through most of the Ural regions.
3. The route represents different landscapes of the Urals. Long distances are overcome, especially in the meridional direction.
4. The route includes the main cities of the Ural regions, and, if possible, the second most populated cities and industrial centres.
5. The route connects the most significant natural and historical-cultural sites with ethnically distinctive territories.
6. The route is planned so that it can begin in any of the main cities of the Ural regions.
7. The route should be provided with a variety of transport opportunities in both directions.
8. The route, initially linear, should gradually form radial branches, contributing to the tourist development not only of places on the main ring but also of adjacent territories.

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