

Accessible Tourism in Russia: Recommendations for a Universal
Design, Barrier-free Environment

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Accessible Tourism in Russia: Recommendations for a Universal Design, Barrier-free Environment

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List of abbreviations

CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
H&T	Hotel and Transportation
IRTS	International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics
LMG	Low mobility groups
PwD	People with disabilities
SNiP	Building Codes of Russia
UN	United Nations
WCu	Wheelchair users
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Tourism Organization

Abstract

Recently, barrier-free tourism has become increasingly important. The number of people with disabilities around the world is growing. Most of these people want and can travel. But not all countries and cities have a sufficiently adapted environment for comfortable movement. The purposes of this master's thesis are to research accessible tourism in the cities of the Russian Federation, determine the problems that people with disabilities face in Russia during travel, understand how the lack of an available environment affects the desire to travel. The principles of universal design are also discussed in this work, and special attention is paid to how these principles should be followed in the tourism industry. In addition, define what changes will be the most effective in developing an accessible environment and will be able to lead to an increase in the number of disabled people as participants in tourism.

This study is based on semi-structured interviews. The questions for the research have been prepared after an extensive analysis of the current state of the theory. The research was performed among people with disabilities who use wheelchairs or their caregivers. The experiences of twelve participants were evaluated.

The analyses of the interviews identified several challenges that the participants were dealing with. These findings provided a clearer understanding of the problems currently being experienced by the study group. They also helped address a number of outstanding research questions.

To sum up the findings of this research, the availability of an accessible environment is a crucial factor when choosing a holiday destination for people with disabilities and their caregivers. The developed accessible environment gives people with disabilities a sense of freedom, independence, and makes them equal members of society and motivates them to choose new places to travel. Thus, creating a barrier-free environment might play an important role in attracting new visitors and become a serious competitive advantage among tourism companies.

Keywords: inclusive tourism, people with disabilities, accessible environment, universal design, wheelchair users, travel motivation

Chapter 1: Introduction

Tourism has recently become a social phenomenon that mobilizes millions of people around the world. Tourism occupies one of the first places in the world economy. In some countries, it is the main source of national income. Tourism contributes not only to economic development but also to improving mutual understanding, communication, and tolerance between people. Disability is also a social phenomenon. No State can avoid it. That is why accessible tourism is so important for any member of modern society, regardless of his physical, economic, and social capabilities (Lepa, 2012).

According to the data provided by the World Health Organization (2021), there are about 15% of people with disabilities in the world today. Among them, 190 million (3.8%) are people over the age of 15 who need medical services, as they have significant limitations in functioning. "More than 2 billion people, such as spouses, children and caregivers of persons with disabilities, representing almost a third of the world's population, are directly affected by disability" (United Nations, 2017, para. 1). The growing disability rates are associated with an aging population, increasing lifespan, decreases in communicable diseases, improved medical technology, and improved child mortality. Also increase in the number of chronic health disorders lead to increased attention to ensuring equal rights to work, recreation, and access to infrastructure for all citizens and has a direct impact on increasing demand for inclusive tourism. Analysis of recent works shows that barrier-free environment and inclusive tourism are growing areas of tourism research and practice (Yau et al., 2004).

Thanks to medicine, many diseases have gone from fatal to chronic (for example, spinal muscular atrophy). Now many patients do not plan to die but want to lead an active lifestyle and be equal members of society. Thanks to private funds and state support, people with disabilities are provided with suitable wheelchairs, now handicapped are able to travel long distances. These and other changes have affected the number of people willing to travel outside their area, but they face a lot of problems in the environment. This inaccessible environment hurts not only people with disabilities but also their relatives, families, friends. Awareness of this injustice influenced the choice of the research. This work is aimed at analyzing the accessible environment in Russia, identifying its shortcomings, giving recommendations for their elimination and possibly bringing people with disabilities closer to a barrier-free environment. All people have the right to travel, regardless of their physical abilities. It is worth noting that people with limited mobility when going on a trip get the same range of feelings as a person without restrictions. To

integrate a person with a disability into society, it is necessary to create an accessible environment.

This study examines restrictions of disabled people to participate in tourism. The types of disabilities are different. It is important to focus on one type of disability in order to study their problems and limitations in depth. People who use a wheelchair and their assistants were attracted to work. Thanks to their experience, recommendations will be given to bring the possibility of disabled people as close as possible to the living conditions of healthy people.

This thesis consists of several main parts: the introduction will be followed by the theoretical review, the empirical part and the conclusion. The theoretical part conducted in this paper provides historical background. It provides how attitudes to disability have changed in different cultures at different times. Further, the concept of accessible tourism and universal design is analysed. The Russian legislation that shapes the accessible tourism environment is considered. Tourist motivation is also considered in the context of restrictions. This is important to understand how the lack of an accessible environment affects the behavior of tourists with disabilities and their choice of destination. Finally, the paper presents a foreign example of accessibility and general statistics in Russia complete the theoretical part of the thesis.

The literature review is followed by the methodology. The importance and relevance of conducting research on this topic was outlined there, and defines the following research questions:

- What changes will be the most effective in developing an accessible environment and will be able to lead to an increase in the number of disabled people as participants in tourism?
- How does the lack of an available environment affect the motivation of people with disabilities to participate in travel?
- What are the main barriers and constraints that people with disabilities face in terms of participation in tourism?
- What is the crucial factor when choosing a holiday destination for people with disabilities and their caregivers?

Answers to these research questions will help understand the difficulties of people with disabilities while traveling and what factors influence their choice of vacation destination. Also to identify the relationship between restrictions and the desire to travel.

Based on the recommendations of other researchers, a semi-structured interview was chosen as the most acceptable method in qualitative research. At the end of Chapter 5, the data collection process and an overview of the interview participants were presented.

Chapter 6 is devoted to data analysis. In the course of a systematic comparison of text fragments, qualitative data was coded. Based on these codes, different themes were presented, supported by quotes from participants. During the analysis, answers to research questions were found.

Conclusions and recommendations complete this work. These suggestions aim to help create the necessary conditions for achieving the same standard of living for people with disabilities (PwD) as other citizens in various spheres, removing barriers to their participation in the life of society.

Chapter 2: Accessible and tourism: a conceptual overview

Chapter two will start with a short historical overview of how attitudes towards disabled people have changed over time analysis of what has been done the worldwide level. The reviews of Russian and Foreign literature on the topic of accessible tourism and universal design will be discussed. The concept of tourists' motivation and the decision-making process will conclude Chapter 2.

2.1 The historical aspect of the attitude of society and the state to the people with disabilities

This chapter is a brief overview to assess the changes in the attitude of society towards people with disabilities in different cultures towards people with physical and mental disabilities. Also to analyze what has been done worldwide.

Although attitudes towards people with disabilities (PwD) vary across the cultures, over the years, in many cases disability viewed as a symbol of damnation, disgrace, and perceived as a religious punishment. Disability did not fit into the concept of man as the image of God (Vedeneeva, 2010). PwD was perceived as inferior and not worthy of attention. Moreover, people with disabilities could not count on the neutral attitude of others towards themselves, since it was believed that deafness, blindness, and other ailments was a punishment sins or the sins of their parents. Only in the 20th century the first serious steps were taken to change this concept. Since then, there have been many changes in attitudes towards handicapped people, but there are still remnants of traditions, past stereotypes and beliefs that influence modern practice (Wright, 1973).

In Ancient Times, in a number of cultures (for example, Sparta), professing the cult of strength and endurance, any deviations in the physical development of children were considered undesirable. The first mention of people with gross physical and mental disabilities is contained in the legislative documents of the ancient world. From the point of view of the law, authorities, and society, persons with pronounced defects were not considered full-fledged citizens. Children born with gross defects were condemned to death (Kiselev, 2012). In ancient Rome, as in ancient Greece, infanticide of infants with disorders was considered the norm. The Roman philosopher Seneca wrote that it is necessary to kill freaks and drown those children who are born frail and disfigured. This should not be done out of anger, but in accordance with the rules of reason (Seneca, 2001). Seneca's position is typical of a citizen of a military state, which was the Roman Empire. From the point of view of the Roman state, a disabled child, even belonging to the

upper class, was inferior and unnecessary. And the philosopher Aristotle wrote that no crippled child should be fed (Dyachkov, 1956).

At a later time, the path of physical elimination gives way to another method – expulsion from the community, leaving a person fend for himself, depriving him/her of food and shelter. In these conditions, regardless of class, disabled people become outcasts of society. Among the northern peoples (for example, Scandinavia), it was customary to deprive such people of their lives. However, this was not a case of cruelty. Believing in the afterlife, they believed that in this way they help a person to move to a better life (Vedeneeva, 2010).

In the Middle Ages, due to the spread of Christianity in Europe, the attitude towards disabled people and views on their position in society changed significantly. In the Christian Era, people with disabilities went to the monasteries, therefore providing themselves with food and housing. There were no such cases among the Slavic tribes (Vedeneeva, 2010). Since the 14th century, scientists have been developing ideas for individual education of children with disabilities. However, this applied only to the upper classes. The practice of individual training proves the possibility of training and educating people with developmental disabilities. Illness and disability become objects of knowledge and cease to cause fear (Mironova, 2011).

In the Russian language, the word "disabled" took root in the XVIII century. This was the name of former military men, who could no longer serve in the army and self-care for health reasons. Peter I, by his decree of January 31, 1712, ordered the construction of special hospitals for the disabled, as well as by the decree of April 20, 1762 - special medical homes for the insane. The boundaries of the use of this term expanded in the XIX century. Disabled people began to include all persons who lost the ability to self-care due to a violation of their health. Thus, historically, the semantic emphasis of this term was placed on the inability of a person to carry out labor activity in full and to self-care (Kiselev, 2012).

In the Modern Era new scientific theories and trends are actively developing: psychoanalysis, existentialism, postmodernism, etc. This, of course, leaves an imprint on the attitude towards people with disabilities. In the beginning of the 20th century, a network of institutions for the education of disabled children was already formed in most European countries. However, Fascism destroyed those structures. Sick people, from the point of view of fascist ideology, could not contribute to the evolution of the Aryan Race. Thus, the idea of destroying the disabled has regained its place in society. And only the Second World War changed the ideas of Western Civilization about the value of human

life, human rights and freedoms. Disabled people were recognized as a part of society. And after the war, in many states, a special system of education and upbringing was created for the disabled. It was only in the second half of the 20th century that disabled people began to be considered as full-fledged members of society. The world community has gradually abandoned the idea that a person must meet certain standards and norms. There was a need to differentiate the education system for the disabled. The first legislative acts protecting the rights of persons with disabilities were adopted. Along with the state system of support for people with developmental disabilities, the first social movements that protect the rights of disabled people are emerging (Mironova, 2011).

Since the second half of the 20th century, legal principles for the protection of persons with disabilities have been formed. The UN General Assembly of November 20, 1959, proclaimed the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959), which defines a number of principles for the protection of children, including:

Principle 1 - The child shall enjoy all the rights set forth in this Declaration.

Every child, without any exception whatsoever, shall be entitled to these rights, without distinction or discrimination on account of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, whether of himself or of his family. (para. 8)

Principle 5 – The child who is physically, mentally or socially handicapped shall be given the special treatment, education and care required by his particular condition. (para.12)

In 1971, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the "Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons". According to the document, it was determined that a mentally retarded person has the same rights as other people. In particular, they have the right to receive high-quality medical care and treatment, the right to education, training, rehabilitation, and the services of a guardian to protect their own interests and well-being (United Nations, 1971).

In addition, in the "Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons", adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations (1975), describes the rights of persons with disabilities that still guide the world. It was noted that PwD have all the rights that other persons have, regardless of their race, skin color, gender, national and social origin, level

of well-being and any other factor. They have civil and political rights, the right to work, legal, medical care, as well as a satisfactory standard of living. Below are some of the points:

- Disabled persons shall enjoy all the rights set forth in this Declaration. These rights shall be granted to all disabled persons without any exception whatsoever and without distinction or discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, state of wealth, birth or any other situation applying either to the disabled person himself or herself or to his or her family. (para.11)

- Disabled persons have the inherent right to respect for their human dignity. Disabled persons, whatever the origin, nature and seriousness of their handicaps and disabilities, have the same fundamental rights as their fellow-citizens of the same age, which implies first and foremost the right to enjoy a decent life, as normal and full as possible. (para.12)

- Disabled persons have the same civil and political rights as other human beings. (para. 13)

- Disabled persons are entitled to the measures designed to enable them to become as self-reliant as possible. (para. 14)

- Disabled persons have the right to economic and social security and to a decent level of living. They have the right, according to their capabilities, to secure and retain employment or to engage in a useful, productive and remunerative occupation and to join trade unions. (para.16)

- Disabled persons have the right to live with their families or with foster parents and to participate in all social, creative or recreational activities. (para. 18)

- Disabled persons shall be protected against all exploitation, all regulations and all treatment of a discriminatory, abusive or degrading nature. (para.19)

Article 7 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted by General Assembly resolution 61/106 of 13 December 2006 (United Nations, 2007), specifically dedicated to children with disabilities, states:

1. States Parties shall take all necessary measures to ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.

2. In all actions concerning children with disabilities, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

3. States Parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them, their views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children, and to be provided with disability and age-appropriate assistance to realize that right. (p. 7)

Currently, several models of disability have been formed. The most widespread in the world practice are two models: medical and social. The medical model appeared in the healthcare system in the XIX century. This model considers the physical and mental differences between people in terms of pathological defects. In other words, disability is a disease. A person with a disability in the medical model is a patient. The ideas of accessibility of education, travel, leisure, recreation, and sports for such people are not considered at all (Korostelyeva, 2012).

The UN declares 1981 the International Year of Persons with Disabilities under the motto "Full participation and equality" (United Nations, n.d.). Since this year, the movement in favor of the social model of disability has been spreading. This model is based on the belief that a disabled person is a full-fledged member of society, regardless of his or her illness. The label of disability can be attached to a specific social system in which this condition is considered a deviation from the norm. People can remove this label by changing their social environment. In the social model, it is assumed that the problem is not with the disabled person. The problem is in society and it must change (Tarasenko, 2005).

Work at the international level on the integration of persons with disabilities into society continues to this day. European Commission presents an ambitious Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030. Strategy 2021-30 is based on the previous strategy. It emphasizes that in recent years there has been progress in access to medicine, education, and recreation. But still many challenges remain and this is the time to scale up. Participants of the European Commission are concerned that people with disabilities still face discrimination and constraints, for instance, “when looking for a job or using public transport” (European Commission, 2021, para. 4). There are a few issues were discussed, here are the key themes: EU rights, independent living and autonomy, non-discrimination and equal opportunities. Since the rights of persons with disabilities do not end at the borders of Europe, the Commission will promote the rights of persons with disabilities worldwide. The strategy outlines a plan to create a resource center "AccessibleEU", as well as a platform that unites national authorities. The Commission will act as an advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities at the global level (European Commission, 2021).

Vedeneeva (2010), a consultant of social and humanitarian disciplines, identifies the following historical forms of attitudes towards disabled people: negative, indifferent, tolerant, compassionate, active-creative (providing assistance now and here). She suggests that in the modern attitude to the disabled in Russia, but also in the world, the residual phenomena of each of these forms of relations have been preserved.

The socio-cultural aspect, which is determined by historical factors and traditions of different cultures, plays a huge role in the attitude of people to disability. The history of the developed disability problem shows that it has passed a difficult path. Starting from physical destruction, non-recognition of disabled people, expulsion, to the need to integrate people with various physical disabilities into society, creating a barrier-free environment for them. Society has come to understand that people with disabilities are the same people as everyone else, differing only in the presence of special conditions to meet their needs. The task of a civilized society is to create conditions for the self-realization of every person, regardless of their state of health.

2.2 Accessible tourism

There are many definitions of tourism in the literature. In addition, the tourism terminology is constantly undergoing changes due to the rapid pace of development of tourism, its sectors, types and forms, as well as technologies and the emergence of new tourist realities. Currently the most common definition of tourism is that formulated by the

UN and the UNWTO: "Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon related to the movement of people to places outside their usual place of residence, pleasure being the usual motivation" (UN/UNWTO, 2010, p. 2). Hunt and Layne (1991) gave the next definition of tourism that has been accepted for decades: "the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs" (p.8) .

In many countries, tourism plays a significant role in generating GDP, creating additional jobs, and providing employment. Tourism has a huge impact on such key sectors of the economy as transport, communications, construction, agriculture, and acts as a catalyst for socio-economic development. But not every traveling person can be counted in the tourism statistics, but only those who are carriers of certain characteristics. According to International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics-2008 (IRTS-2008), there are three main features:

1. Travel outside the usual environment. This criterion involves the transport or walking movement of tourists to a place outside of their permanent habitat in another city or country.
2. Duration of stay. In tourism, the length of stay is limited to 12 months, after which the visitor passes into the category of permanent residents and is not taken into account in tourism statistics.
3. The purpose of the trip. The essence of this criterion is that the main goal is not the goal of employment at the company registered in the country or place of visit (UN/UNWTO, 2010).

This work is aimed at studying accessible tourism in Russia. This activity for people with disabilities is not just an opportunity to restore the body and spend leisure time, but also a tool of rehabilitation and unity with society. First, it is motor activity, travel supports physical conditions and health. Secondly, tourism creates an environment for full-fledged communication, eliminates the sense of loss of dignity, inferiority, and integrates the elderly and disabled into society. Third, tourism helps to restore the mental resources of a person, as a good climate and beautiful nature contribute to a positive psycho-emotional mood (Sigida & Lukyanova, 2015).

The definition of "Accessible tourism" has many synonyms such as 'barrier-free tourism', 'easy-access tourism', 'inclusive tourism' and 'tourism for all'. They can change depending on the context of use or country. In Russia for example, "accessible tourism" is often called low-budget tours (everyone can afford it in terms of budget). And "inclusive

tourism” is often called a type of tourism product when the consumer pays for all services at once, including transport, food, accommodation and other tourist services. It is difficult to say which term will take root in Russia.

For instance, Piramanayagam et. al. (2019) give the next definition of accessible tourism: “it is a form of tourism that enables every individual, irrespective of their physical, social or cultural conditions, to engage in leisure and tourism activities and has a process that allows them to function independently through universal tourism products, services, and environments” (p. 43). Darcy and Dickson (2009), in their work “A Whole-of-Life approach to tourism: The case for accessible tourism experiences”, define accessible tourism as

Accessible tourism enables people with access requirements, including mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions of access, to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally designed tourism products, services and environments. This definition is inclusive of all people including those travelling with children in prams, people with disabilities and seniors. (p. 34)

While some disabled people stay at home and never travel, many others enjoy a full and active life. Ordinary tourists to go on a trip, they need to choose a destination, buy tickets and a hotel in a convenient location, or just contact a travel agency. In theory, for people with disabilities, the process should be the same. However, people with disabilities face many constraints, that can inhibit their full participation in tourism. People with disabilities have more things to consider and more challenges to face before and during a trip than those without (Yau et al., 2004).

United Nations (2017) describes the following difficulties:

- Untrained professional staff capable of informing and advising about accessibility issues;
- Inaccessible booking services and related websites;
- Lack of accessible airports and transfer facilities and services;

- Unavailability of adapted and accessible hotel rooms, restaurants, shops, toilets and public places;
- Inaccessible streets and transport services;
- Unavailable information on accessible facilities, services, equipment rentals and tourist attractions. (para. 9)

Lee et al. (2012) considered the relation between sense of helplessness of people with disabilities during the travel and a negative effect on their intention to travel. They have established, that the increased perception of travel constraints has led to an increased sense of helplessness. Helplessness negatively affects the intention of disabled people to travel. Therefore, it is so important that the tourist does not face any barriers and constraints while traveling and has a positive experience from the tourist product. According to UNWTO, Tourism Product is "a combination of tangible and intangible elements, such as natural, cultural and man-made resources, attractions, facilities, services and activities around a specific center of interest which represents the core of the destination marketing mix and creates an overall visitor experience including emotional aspects for the potential customers". (2021, para. 1)

When forming a tourist product, it is necessary to take into account additional needs of certain categories of consumers. Wheelchair users (WCu) need to be safe and comfortable to move around, as well as to have access to accommodations and food facilities. At the same time, the caretakers need interesting entertainment and a diversity of programs. The main feature of the organization of barrier-free tourism is to take into account all the requirements and the combination of the needs of all categories of consumers participating in the trip.

It is worth noting that the development of inclusive tourism can become a serious competitive advantage due to:

- increase in sales volume due to the expansion of the contingent of consumers of tourism services;
- increase in sales of additional services;
- increase loyalty and frequency of re-placement of customers;

- filling the room fund in the low season, as guests with disabilities prefer to have vacation during this period;

- increase the length of staying at the hotel (Radygina, 2014).

To obtain all these advantages, accommodation facilities need to form a so-called barrier-free environment, which assumes the availability of accommodation facilities for guests, the availability of transport and information accessibility.

The barrier-free tourism industry requires serious government intervention around the world. This includes “a collaborative process among all stakeholders, Governments, international agencies, tour-operators and end-users, including persons with disabilities and their organizations” (United Nations, 2017, para. 3). It is necessary to create the appropriate infrastructure and train the necessary staff. Programs to promote affordable tourism should be created on the basis of public-private partnership: business should take into account the interests of disabled people when creating facilities. And the state should ensure that existing tourist facilities are adapted to people with disabilities.

2.3 Universal (inclusive) design

Darcy and Dickson claims “everyone at some stage in their lives will have access requirements — whether that is personally acquired permanently or temporarily as a result of an accident or injury, through knowing family or friends with access requirements, or with someone with whom they are travelling. A solution to meet people’s access requirements for the travel is through the application of universal design principles” (2009, p. 32).

Universal design has been defined as “a design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design” (The Center for Universal Design, 2021, para. 2). The goal of universal design is to simplify life for everyone by designing products, services, objects and devices that meet the capabilities and needs of the maximum number of people, with minimal or no additional costs, regardless of their physical condition, age or other factors (Darcy & Dickson, 2009).

The foundation of inclusive tourism is universal design. The term “universal design” was first coined by the leadership of wheelchair architect Ronald Mace in 1985. Mace et al. give the following definition “Universal design means simply designing all products,

buildings and exterior spaces to be usable by all people to the greatest extent possible“ (1991, p. 2).

The seven principles of universal design were formulated and implemented almost 30 years ago under Ronald Mace and colleagues at North Carolina State University College of Design:

- *Equitable Use* - The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.
- *Flexibility in Use* - The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
- *Simple and Intuitive Use* - Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.
- *Perceptible Information* - The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.
- *Tolerance for Error* - The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.
- *Low Physical Effort* - The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.
- *Size and Space for Approach and Use* - Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility. (Bettye et al., 1997, paras. 4-17)

Enterprises and services that adhere to the principles of universal design will entail many benefits. Among them it is worth noting: “improved reputation with communities, lowered barriers on inclusion, more people access services, efficient work spaces, friendlier & less stressful environments, discourages prejudicial attitudes” (Sparke, 2021, Specific Benefits section, para. 2).

The government regulates all aspects of the built environment in Russia through legislation, codes and standards. Among them:

- The State Program "Accessible Environment" for 2011-2020 (Resolution No. 1297, 2015);
- Federal Law No. 181 "On Social Protection of Disabled People in the Russian Federation " of November 24, 1995 (Federal Law No. 181-FZ of 24.11.1995 "On Social Protection of Disabled Persons in the Russian Federation", 1995/11.06.2021);
- Procedure of Realization the Requirements for Access by the Disabled Persons to Social Infrastructural Objects (Procedure of Realization the Requirements for Access by the Disabled Persons to Social Infrastructural Objects, 1999);
- Building code No. 35-01-2001 "Accessibility of buildings and structures for persons with reduced mobility" (2013);
- Building code "Design of buildings and structures accessible for physically handicapped persons" (2001);
- Building code "Residential environment with planning components, accessible for handicapped persons. Design rules" (2013);
- Building code "Public buildings and structures accessible for physically handicapped visitors" (2001).

After studying the information in the above-mentioned building codes and state documents, below it will be provided some data for compliance with universal design principles in creating tourism products and services. The tour operator should create a tourist product that would be valuable for as many people as possible, and attract mass consumers. The principle of forming such a tourist product practically does not differ from the formation of any other tourist product. It is based on: transportation and transfer services, accommodation and food services, excursion services.

2.3.1 Tour Guide Service

The practice of conducting tours for the disabled has shown that their organization has its own specifics. The effectiveness of this work directly depends on the availability and development of the appropriate infrastructure. Another problem is specialized personnel. In Russia, many years of "downtime" in the training of specialists working with disabled people, especially in the field of tourism, have had an impact. This has naturally led to a shortage of professional travel experience (Tourism Development Department, 2009).

It is recommended that for every ten tourists to appoint one person to accompany them during the excursions. This will ensure the safety of tourists and improve the quality of tourist services. Accompanying a group of tourists with disabilities is a person who

knows their problems and creates equal opportunities for disabled people during the passage of the route. The goal of the accompanying person is to help the guide during the tour. The personal assistant can be a volunteer, or any other person who knows the personal problems of a disabled person, for example, a relative. The main function of the personal assistant is to provide assistance to disabled people in household and sanitary self-service, assistance in getting into and out of transport, as well as in pedestrian movement. A sign language interpreter can also be considered a personal assistant if there are people with hearing disabilities in the group (Khrushch, 2013)

2.3.2 Features of transportation

When forming and organizing travel for people with disabilities, transportation companies are one of the main service providers. PwD can use any safe mode of transport: air, rail, buses, passenger vehicles, as well as river and sea modes of transport. According to the Federal Law "On Social Protection of Disabled People in the Russian Federation", organizations that provide transport services to the population provide equipment for railway stations, airports and other facilities with special devices that allow disabled people to freely use their services (Federal Law No. 181-FZ of 24.11.1995 "On Social Protection of Disabled Persons in the Russian Federation", 1995/11.06.2021).

2.3.2.1 *Air transport*

Increasing the availability of air transport and improving service at airports is an urgent issue for passengers with disabilities. Since now Russian tourists with disabilities often travel abroad, because of the more adapted infrastructure for the disabled (Antipyev & Malkova, 2016). Airport buildings must comply with the requirements of Building code No. 35-01-2001 "Accessibility of buildings and structures for people with limited mobility". Parking spaces for disabled vehicles must be provided not far (not more than 50 m) from the entrances to the terminals, which must be marked with an appropriate sign. Such places are allocated at least 10% of the total number of parking spaces. Disabled people use them for free. The width of the parking space is not less than 3.5 m (2013).

According to Building Codes of Russia No. 35-01-2001, the width of all doors must be at least 0.9 m. Doors with swinging hinges and revolving doors are not allowed on the path of movement of low-mobility visitors. ATMs, phones, information desks and ticket office window should be accessible to the disabled and located at a height of 0.8 m. Restrooms should be equipped according to the needs of people with disabilities. All information must be duplicated in the form of text and symbolic information. It is recommended to install signs of the established international standard, indicating the

entrance, exit, parking, elevators, toilets, escape routes, services for the disabled, etc (2013).

There is an escort service and the possibility of passing through passport control in the priority queue in Russian airports. Many airlines allow people with visual disabilities to bring a guide dog for free, provided that the dog has a training certificate. Most airlines allow free transportation of wheelchairs, medical equipment, crutches, and medical supplies (Moscow Domodedovo Airport, 2021).

2.3.2.2 **Railway transport**

Disabled people can also use railway transport. The requirements for the transportation of disabled people on railway transport are described in the interstate standard document No.33190-2019, which is called "Passenger cars on locomotive traction and railcars. Technical requirements for transportation of disabled persons and methods of control". According to it, the entrance to the train car must be equipped with a wheelchair lift, with which the passenger can get into the car from both high and low platforms. The train car must be equipped with a restroom specially adapted for the use of disabled passengers, devices for attaching wheelchairs, information signs made with the use of Braille. The doors inside the train car must be sliding and have the function of locking in the open position. The train must have at least one compartment for a disabled passenger in a wheelchair. The passenger compartment in the train must be equipped with two sleeping places arranged in two tiers above each other (the lower seat is for a disabled passenger, the upper one is for an accompanying person). Also emergency call buttons must be in the passenger compartment and in the bathroom. The door handles must be installed at a height of 800 to 1200 mm from the floor (2020).

Carriers provide frequent opportunities to train personnel. They organize training for passenger car conductors and train managers on issues related to the service of passengers with limited mobility (Russian Railways, 2021).

2.3.2.3 **Buses**

When organizing tours, specially equipped buses should be used. Buses intended for the transport of passengers with disabilities must comply with the State Standard No.50844-95 which is called "Buses for carrying disabled people. General technical requirements". According to it, one of the door should be intended for entrance/exit of PwD onto those buses. It should be marked with the appropriate inscription and pictogram. The width of the door must be at least 90 cm. In addition, it should be equipped with ramp or lift. The width of the ramp must be at least 80 cm, the angle of entry must not

exceed 8%. The platforms of the lifting device must be at least cm: length 110, width 80. The load capacity of the lift device must be at least 350 kg. Lifting a disabled person in a wheelchair should be carried out smoothly (without jerks). The surface of the ramp and lift platform must be covered with a material that protects the wheels of the wheelchair from slipping. In the case of transporting people with disabilities in a wheelchair, the bus must be provided with place length 130 cm, width 80 cm and fasteners that fix the wheelchair while driving. A call button must be installed next to the disabled person's seat. If a toilet is provided on the bus, it must have horizontal and vertical handrails (handles) that facilitate the use of the toilet for the disabled person. The width of the single seat must be at least 45 cm. The seats must have backrests with head restraints and a support for the feet (1995).

2.3.2.4 Cruises

During the warm season, cruises and boat trips are popular. Ensuring transport accessibility for disabled passengers begins with ensuring the accessibility of transport infrastructure, namely river and sea stations, river and sea vessels. Sea and river stations must comply with the general accessibility requirements, as airport buildings and railway stations (Code of Rules No. 35-103-2001, 2001).

For ships, similar requirements are imposed as for other types of transport. For people with disabilities, the problem on the ship can be steep stairs, narrow corridors, cramped toilets, unsuitable cabins. According to the rules for the classification of ship construction, all information on the ship should be duplicated with pictograms and signs in Braille. There must be a ramp (at least 1.5 m wide), an elevator, wheelchair fasteners, as well as special places in the restaurant. Cabins and bathrooms should be without thresholds and with a wider doorway and with enough space for a wheelchair to turn around. Rooms for persons with disabilities should not be located below the boarding deck in rescue vehicles. Additional seats should be provided for low-mobility groups on the rescue vehicles or ships (Russian River Register, 2015).

2.3.3 Features of accommodation

Special attention should be paid to the internal infrastructure of the hotel and the maintenance of the hotel room. Unfortunately, in Building Codes No.35-01-2001 “The Regulations on the Classification of Hotels and Other Accommodation Facilities” do not have any special requirements for the maintenance of rooms designed to accommodate

disabled people. In hotels, motels, campsites, etc., the layout and equipment of 5% of the rooms should be universal, taking into account the settlement of all categories of visitors, including the disabled (2013).

The arrangement of the internal infrastructure of the accommodation facility must begin already at the approach to the hotel. In order for the guests to use the equipment of the room, first they need to get to it. That is the reason the entire territory of the hotel should provide convenience of movement. The width of the paths on which WCu move should be at least 1.8 m to ensure the separation of wheelchairs (Code of Rules No.35-101-2001, 2001). Asphalt, tiles, natural stone, very well compacted for comfortable movement are suitable for covering paths. It is recommended to use the hardest possible coating. Knowing the length of the ramp will allow a WCu to calculate their strength if he/she is traveling alone. The main condition for the arrangement of the territory is the possibility of unhindered departure in a wheelchair. This requires the absence of thresholds, curbs on the route. It is important to provide an expanded parking space for WCu. The entrance area of the hotel should also be equipped with a ramp with a width of at least 1 m. It is also important to provide visitors with booklets that contain clear maps of the territory and a list of phone numbers (Code of Rules No.35-101-2001, 2001). Rooms for the disabled are most often located on the first floor. However, it's recommended to provide an elevator. In this case, the elevator doors should provide unhindered access to the wheelchair. Also, the elevator should easily accommodate a wheelchair, an accompanying person and a luggage. Special requirements apply to the equipment of the hotel room. It is very important to consult with potential guests, to get acquainted with the recommendations of the party of disabled people.

The size of the room for the convenience of guests should exceed the area of a standard room - 28 m². The entrance door in the room for the disabled must be equipped with additional handles located below the usual, two eyes (for standing and sitting people) (Code of Rules No.137.13330.2012, 2013). The width of the doors is not less than 0.80 m. The desk should provide access to the wheelchair, more often it is made curved, without sharp corners. It is ideal when the rooms are equipped with special equipment for moving from a wheelchair to a bed. The closet should have lowered bar, at a height convenient for a person in a wheelchair - 1,1–1,2 m (Code of Rules No.35-101-2001, 2001). Light switches and lamps can be problematic, so it is better to equip the room with touch switches. The location of sockets and switches in the room should not be higher than 1.2 m above the floor level. They should also provide an emergency call button in the room and bathroom. The bathroom should be spacious enough to turn around in a wheelchair, and also have access to the sink on the wheelchair. There should be handrails near the

toilet, a shower with a folding seat. The bathroom equipped with grab bars on the side with slip-proof mat. The bathroom, even with handrails, is problematic for a disabled person to use without assistance, so preference should be given to the shower.

It is worth considering that the equipment of a room for guests with disabilities is more expensive than the equipment of a standard room. The room size is larger. Hotels need a competent organization of the space, technical equipment of the room, additional interior items, and so on. Therefore, the room should be designed in such a way that it can be used by guests who do not have any constraints. It is very important to ensure that the rooms intended for the disabled are not idle in their absence. It should be comfortable and cozy for all guests, including accompanying persons.

2.3.4 Restaurant Services

It is recommended by Building Codes No.35-01-2001, to provide service by waiters in catering establishments. If there are no elevators in the building, the dining rooms should be placed on the ground floor. The dining area, based on the building standards, should be at least 3 m² per seat. There should be at least one table with a height of 0.65-0.7 m. To allocate up to 5% of seats, but not less than one seat for people who move in wheelchairs and with visual impairments. Also the arrangement of furniture and equipment should ensure the unhindered movement of the disabled. The width of the passage between the tables in the restaurant should be at least 1.2 m. The bar counter must have a lowered section designed for at least two visitors in wheelchairs and / or tourists who cannot use high bar stools. The lowered bar section must have a width of at least 1600 mm, and a height of 850 mm (2013).

2.3.5 Features of the excursion service

One of the services in the organization of the tour is the excursion service. It can be an independent service or part of a tour package. The organizer of the tour for people with disabilities or elderly people should pay attention to many features: the choice of the gathering place, the duration of the tour, the saturation of the route, the rest on the route. Also it is necessary to know in advance the following factors: the category of disability, the severity of the disease, the level of their physical condition, age, and ways of communication. The staff of tourist and excursion organizations that provide tourist services for the disabled and the elderly should have information about the physical and

psychological health of these categories of tourists, as well as be able to provide first aid (State Standard No. 57286-2016, 2017).

The majority of disabled people have a low-activity lifestyle (Heikkinen, 2006). Taking into account this feature, the guide should set the rhythm of the group's movement: the speed of pedestrian movement, the duration of transitions and stops, the amount of information provided. Considering the fact that tourists with disabilities are prone to rapid fatigue. The guide must provide places for short-term rest on the route in advance.

Tour guides are professionals who are authorized to give explanations regarding monuments, museums, palaces and other tourist attractions. The preparation of excursion information intended for the disabled also has its own peculiarities. The quality and method of their presentation is especially important for blind and deaf tourists. When preparing such information, the guide should first get advice from specialists working with this category of people, for example, by contacting the local society for the blind and deaf. (Khrushch, 2013).

2.4 Tourism motivation and the impact of constraints on travel decision-making

It's commonly believed that tourism is a pleasure, active or passive recreation, leisure, and entertainment. When offering a tourist product, it is advisable to take into account the factors that influence the motives for choosing a tourist product. These factors have certain opportunities to increase their influence on consumer behavior and the process of making a decision about travel and the choice of a tourist product. Tourist motivation is the most important component of the tourist activity system (Shchitova, 2005).

Motivation is defined as "a set of needs and motives that encourage a person to be active in a certain direction" (Lobanova, 2015, p. 31). In other words, this is the force that makes to move in the desired direction to achieve the goal. It's what makes us act (Lobanova, 2015). Tourism motivation can be defined as a person's motivation to meet recreational needs, depending on their individual physiological and psychological characteristics, system of views, values, inclinations, education, etc. (Shchitova, 2005).

There are various factors that reduce motivation and the desire to act. In the context of this work, the issue of the impact of the lack of an accessible environment on the desire to travel will be considered.

The philosopher Helvetius (as cited in Ilyin, 2002) considered the passions to be the source of human activity. Passions arise from the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of needs. On the basis of satisfaction from the process of activity, a person has a long-term motivational attitude to its implementation. Thus, satisfaction is one of the factors influencing the decision to continue the activity. Dissatisfaction with the need for travel or other activities can lead to a fading of the motive (Ilyin, 2002). The hospitality and tourism industry should be aimed at creating a development program to attract tourists in order to provide them a high level of quality services, to provide a warm welcome with personal attention to tourists, taking into account their wishes and needs. As it was mentioned before, people with disabilities have special needs. They need a barrier-free environment. Faced with an inaccessible environment, discrimination, and various constraints on travel, a disabled person will experience not only dissatisfaction with the desire to travel, but also dissatisfaction with the need for security, self-respect, and belonging to society, love, respect, and recognition (Kosheleva, 2012).

In the psychology of behavior, travel decision-making can be considered from the point of view of classical and operant conditionality. These are two theories in psychology that describe the acquired behavioral patterns of an organism.

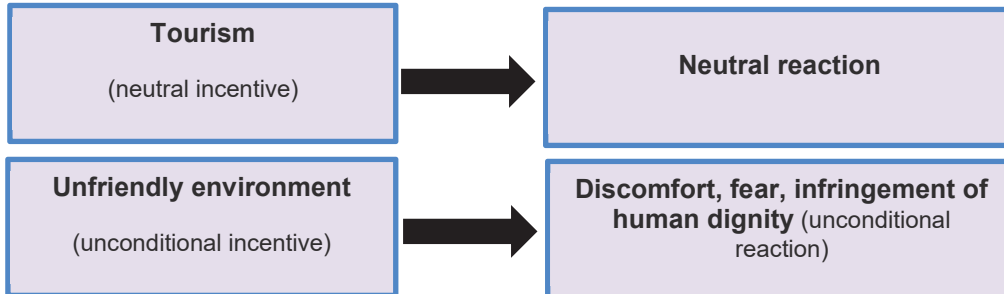
2.4.1 Classical conditioning

“Classical conditioning is also called “conditioned reflex”. It implies the development of a conditioned reflex. Over time, the previously neutral (conditional) stimulus begins to cause the same reaction (conditional reaction) that the first stimulus (unconditional stimulus) previously caused” (Lefrançois, 1999, p. 93). Classical conditioning (theory of the scientist Ivan Pavlov¹) can be described as a process that occurs through various associations between a stimulus from the environment and a stimulus that develops by nature. Classical conditioning states that actions in our behavior occur through various connections with the environment and previous experience. The environment shapes human behavior (Lefrançois, 1999).

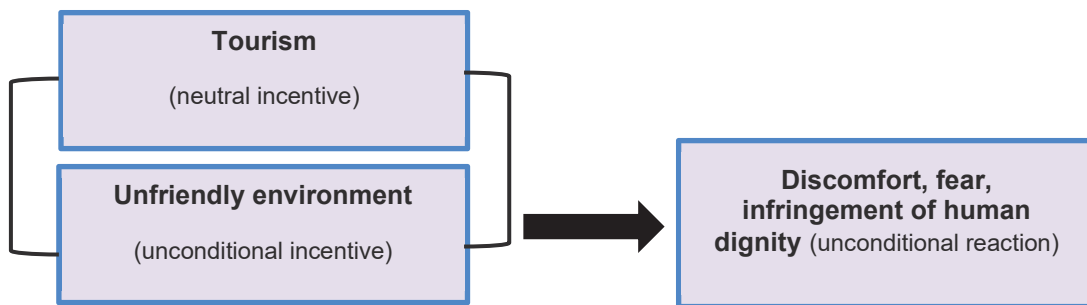
Lefrançois (1999), depicted the process of classical conditioning in figure 1. His figure was taken as a basis and adapted for tourism. The process of classical conditioning on the example of tourism is as follows:

¹ Ivan Petrovich Pavlov (1849-1936) was an outstanding scientist, physiologist, the first Russian to be awarded the Nobel Prize. His main achievements are the discovery of the conditioned reflex and the creation of the science of higher nervous activity.

1. Initially, tourism does not cause any strong emotional responses. The unconditional stimulus in the form of an unfriendly environment causes negative reactions (discomfort, fear, feeling of insecurity).



2. Further, tourism is repeatedly combined with an unconditional incentive (an unfriendly environment).



3. As a result, tourism becomes a conditional incentive associated with negative reactions.

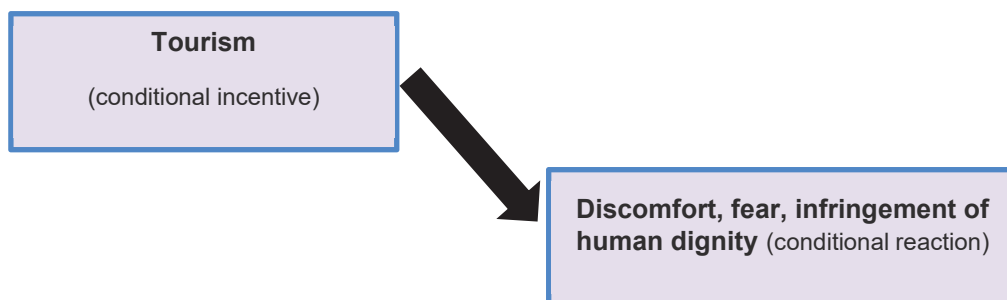


Figure 1: The process of classical conditioning on the example of tourism

This example shows that tourism as a process will cause negative emotions. The person will unconsciously avoid the activities that cause discomfort.

2.4.2 Operant conditioning

The theory of operant conditioning (the idea of the scientist Skinner²) also states that behavior that causes positive consequences is likely to be repeated. While behaviors that cause negative consequences probably won't be repeated. In operant conditioning, the behavior becomes weak or strong due to the use of either reinforcement or "punishment" (Lefrançois, 1999).

It can be concluded that a tourist with disabilities, faced with restrictions and difficulties, will regard this as a punishment. In the future, they will avoid traveling. Conversely, a place with an accessible environment will satisfy the needs of a disabled person from traveling. The probability that a handicapped will return here again is increasing. Therefore, if a person with disabilities has the option of choosing a place, it is highly likely that a destination with an accessible environment will be chosen.

These two theories have similar principles. But the main difference is that classical conditioning is instinctive reactions to certain situations. Operant conditioning occurs as human-controlled actions.

Based on the above, we can conclude that there are many motives that guide the tourists. However, any motive in a particular situation under the influence of certain circumstances can influence the consumer's behavior in the process of making a decision about travel and choosing a travel product. Understanding tourists' motives allows to ensure that demand and supply match. As a result, increase of the efficiency of enterprises in the hospitality and tourism industry.

² B. Skinner (1904-1990) - American psychologist, representative of behaviorism, professor of psychology at Harvard University, made a significant contribution to the theory and methods of teaching.

Chapter 3: International best practices regarding accessible tourism

Social protection of persons with disabilities is a system of economic, social and legal measures guaranteed by the state, which provide disabled people with conditions for overcoming, replacing (compensating) life constraints and aimed at creating equal opportunities for them to participate in the life of society with other citizens. One of the most important elements of a person's life is spending free time, including tourism. All people have the right to rest, regardless of their physical abilities, and tourism performs a large number of functions:

- cognitive function - acquisition and replenishment of knowledge, acquaintance with the nature, history, culture of their own region and country, as well as other countries and peoples;

- educational function - the formation of moral and aesthetic qualities, instilling love for the world around us;

- cultural function - raising the cultural level of citizens;

- health and relaxation function-the use of the beneficial effects of natural factors to maintain and restore the physical, mental, emotional condition of the body, the restoration of working capacity (Lepa, 2012).

Thus, it is advisable that people with disabilities going on a trip will receive the same range of feelings and emotions as an ordinary person. Because it will give them the opportunity to get acquainted with the culture of other regions and countries, satisfy their curiosity, contribute to the development of their personality, and enrich themselves spiritually and morally.

The idea of travel opportunities for people with disabilities was expressed in the World Programme of Action for Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 3, 1982. This program was a significant result of the International Year of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2015). This became a starting point for the development of not only barrier-free tourism, but also understanding the need to integrate people with disabilities into society. The problem of development of tourism for people with disabilities is strongly felt in many countries till now. According to the social model of disability, which treats disability as a social problem and not as a human characteristic, disability requires government intervention. Since the problem arises due to the unsuitability of the environment and the infrastructure of cities in general. This model

calls for the integration of persons with disabilities into the surrounding society, the adaptation of living conditions in society and for the disabled as well. All this includes creating an accessible environment: ramps and special lifts for the physically disabled, duplication of visual and textual information for the blind, and duplication of audio information for the deaf. Putting all these aspects into practice in every corner of the world will help to improve the disability tourism aspect in the best possible way (Lepa, 2012).

Tourism aimed at people with disabilities is becoming more and more relevant today. The reason is a change in the approach to people with disabilities and the manifestation of attention to their problems and to their life situation. Unfortunately, the growth of people with disabilities is only increasing. Consequently, there is an increasing need for organizing tourist trips, both: group and individual.

Progress in the development of tourist recreation for people with special needs has increased in recent years, but it's not everywhere there are favorable conditions and amenities for the implementation of this type of tourism. State Governments should be interested and be "proactive in improving the day-to-day accessible tourism inclusions for people with disabilities. This is due to the fact that people with disabilities have a desire to be fully participating citizens and a legal framework in which to achieve this outcome. Each state has its own anti-discrimination legislation and environmental planning framework in which discrimination and access related issues can be addressed" (Darcy et al., 2012, p. 5).

Based on the available information, below short assessment will be presented and the experience of different countries in the development of accessible tourism.

While the Accessible Environment program has been implemented in the Russian Federation since 2011, similar programs have been implemented in European countries and the United States for a long time. The environment is maximally adapted to the needs of the designated population groups. For instance, in the UK, the current Disability Act was passed in 1944. In the United States, the promotion of such a law was associated with the struggle for the rights of veterans of the Vietnam War. As a result, they have achieved the opportunity to lead a full life in society for themselves and for their descendants. They considered physical barriers in the environment as a factor discriminating against their rights. After all, the presence of barriers makes it difficult or even impossible for a disabled person to get an education, work, play sports, travel. In the United States, the standard on accessibility of buildings for the disabled was adopted already in 1961. This document marked the beginning of the regulatory framework for

building a barrier-free environment, which was further improved and expanded (Skripkin et al., 2014).

To facilitate the movement of people with disabilities in some European countries, as well as Israel, the United States, New Zealand, Argentina and Brazil, special portals for people with disabilities have been created. It also gives them the opportunity to plan their own tour. A website www.accessibleeurope.com dedicated to accessible tourism has proven itself in Europe. Many other countries have created their own websites about the accessibility of their country's tourist sites. For example:

- Great Britain - disabledgo.com;
- Austria - <https://euregio-barrierefrei.eu>, <https://barrierefreierurlaub.at>;
- Italy - accessibleitaly.com;
- France - accessiblefrance.com;
- Germany - wheelmap.org;
- Israel - israel4all.com.

After analyzing the experience in the development of accessible tourism in many European countries, some of them will be provided below.

3.1 Germany

It is worth noting that Germany is a vivid example of attention to the disabled. Under the Glass Dome of the Reichstag, a spiral staircase was provided, which led to the highest point – the observation deck. However, the Reichstag deputy, being disabled himself, insisted that the stairs be replaced with a ramp, so that it would be accessible to disabled people. In Germany, cultural and leisure facilities such as cinemas, theaters and many other places are freely available for disabled people. Train stations, airports and generally all types of transport are equipped for disabled people to travel. There is the Association for Barrier-free Destinations in Germany. It's "a group of cities and tourism regions which are especially committed to accessible tourism in Germany and which work to continuously develop and communicate barrier-free tourism in cooperation with the partners of the association" (Erfurt Tourism and Marketing Board, 2020, para. 6). One of the members of this Association is Erfurt. It is one of the largest cities in Germany, having a medieval history and is of interest to tourists. Much attention is paid to barrier-free tourism for all. There is a wide variety of guided tours for visitors with disabilities, the blind and visually impaired, the deaf and hearing impaired, and guests with learning disabilities. One of the features is the training of WCu as a tour guide, thereby creating jobs for

disabled people and integrating them into the social life of the city. There are many leisure options with a barrier-free concept in Erfurt. The public transport network is also largely barrier-free. On one of the attractions – a 120-meter bridge, built up with residential buildings, there is a special transport for tourists – trailers with places for the disabled for 25 seats + 3 seats for wheelchairs. Bike rides and wheelchair combinations are also available in and around the city. On the example of Erfurt, the slogan "Tourism for all" is supported by all cities in Germany (Erfurt Tourism and Marketing Board, 2020).

3.2 Spain

North-Eastern province of Spain – Barcelona, which is turning into a true resort for people with disabilities. City transport and central streets have been adapted to their needs. The Catalan authorities are also making a lot of efforts to involve such people in a full-fledged active life. The tourist infrastructure is specially adapted for the disabled, specialized catalogs are published, and events, including sports, are held. All central streets of the city are equipped with ramps, all buses are adapted, and hotels have special rooms that are convenient for the disabled. Each new metro station has special equipment for people with disabilities. There are many tourist-friendly parks, beaches, some with bathing assistance services such as amphibious chairs. A large number of Catalan ski resorts are making every effort to adapt their infrastructure so that everyone can engage in winter sports. People with disabilities can also enjoy other sports: on calm waters, hot air ballooning, horse riding, cycling on country trails stretching more than 150 km (Catalan Tourism Agency, n.d.). All these amenities contribute greatly to the fact that Barcelona is a desirable and accessible year-round tourist destination. The capital of Catalonia, Barcelona, has become an example of an absolutely accessible city for the disabled in cultural terms. Adapting tourist and cultural facilities to people with disabilities has increased not only the tourist flow, but also the life of the Catalans themselves has become more comfortable (ENAT, 2015).

3.3 The UK

The UK has achieved the greatest success in developing an accessible environment and promoting barrier-free tourism among its citizens. Every fifth resident of the country has a disability or other health constraints, so it is a natural and logical step for business to create an accessible environment, adapt services to the needs of visitors and train employees to work with people with disabilities. People with illnesses and disabilities, as well as their fellow travelers, spend about 15.3 billion pounds on trips to England each

year. These consumers are more likely to make longer trips and are very loyal to places that meet their requirements (VisitBritain, 2020). There are already successful examples of this approach in different regions of the country. The Roman Baths in Bath, the yacht school in Falmouth, the Sandcastle Waterpark in Blackpool and the guest house in Newbiggin-by-Sea, these UK tourist attractions won the National Tourism Office's Visit England Award 2018 for the development of an accessible environment. There is a barrier-free infrastructure for visitors with wheelchairs (ramps, elevators), toilets for tourists with disabilities, and visually impaired guests can take a guide dog with them (Anpilogova, 2018).

3.4 **Austria**

Austria holds a leading position among the countries that are friendly to people with disabilities. there are a large number of people in wheelchairs on the streets, as well as blind people with guide dogs in Austria,. This is not because there are more of them there than in Russia, but simply because these people have the opportunity to live a full life (New Vienna magazine, 2018). Austrian hospitality applies to all visitors, including those who travel in wheelchairs, those with reduced physical abilities, as well as those with hearing and vision impairments. Barrier-free Austria ensures that disabled people get the same travel experience as the average tourist, without having to worry about getting around. It is worth noting the Austrian city of Salzburg. In December 2011, the city received the EU Access City Award for 2012. According to the judges, this city has made the greatest contribution to ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities. "The prize honours efforts to improve accessibility in the urban environment, services, transport and information and communication technologies, in order to foster the equal participation of people with disabilities" (ENAT, 2012).

There are many more vivid examples of adapting the environment to the needs of people with disabilities. Based on these examples, it can be concluded that the countries of Western Europe demonstrate a high level of development of tourism for the disabled and continue to actively work in this direction.

Chapter 4: Disability Classification in Russia - Disable person as a consumer of barrier-free tourism services

Currently, the concept of "disabled person" does not have a clear definition due to the constantly changing conditions of the social environment. In modern literature, disabled person can be referred to by different definitions depending on the context. The most popular are 'people with disabilities', 'handicapped', 'invalid', 'people with limited mobility', 'people with special needs'.

The United Nations Human Rights (1975), defines the concept of a disabled person in the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons of 9 December 1975: "disabled person means any person unable to ensure by himself or herself, wholly or partly, the necessities of a normal individual and/or social life, as a result of deficiency, either congenital or not, in his or her physical or mental capabilities" (para.10).

According to the Russian legislation: "Disabled person is a person whose abilities are restricted due to complications of illnesses, injuries, birth defects or other health issues. Disability is complete or partial loss of a person's ability/abilities to perform self-care, move on the own, navigate through their daily life, communicate with others, control their behavior, learn and engage in work activities" (Federal Law No. 181-FZ of 24.11.1995 "On Social Protection of Disabled Persons in the Russian Federation", 1995/11.06.2021, "General Provisions" Section, para.1).

Walters (1974) provides such a definition by stating that "A consumer is an individual who purchases, has the capacity to purchase, goods and services offered for sale by marketing institutions in order to satisfy personal or household needs, wants, or desires" (p. 4).

According to the Federal State Statistics Service (2021), there are almost 12 million people with disabilities in 2021 in Russia. But not all categories of PwD can be considered consumers of barrier-free tourism services. For example, a person who is completely restricted in movement (for example, a person with cerebral palsy) or who is on continuous medical equipment in a medical hospital will not be a consumer of tourist services due to the inability to transportation, accommodation and provide other tourist services outside the medical institution. But consumers of barrier-free tourism services can be not only directly people with disabilities.

It includes not just people in wheelchairs, but also people with other mobility problems related to diseases such as polio or rheumatism, people with low levels of

vision, people with speech or hearing impairments, people with cognitive disabilities such as Alzheimer’s Disease and Down Syndrome, and severely disabled people who may be confined to bed. It also includes people whose arthritic hands cannot grasp a doorknob, those who cannot walk up a flight of stairs due to heart disease, those with extremes of physical size who cannot enjoy a movie theater or airplane trip, and those with temporary disabilities related to, for example, sprained ankles, automobile accidents, or difficult pregnancies. The broader disability community includes not only the people with disabilities themselves, but also the caregivers who often must lift, transport, bathe, feed, or provide therapy or other support to the disabled person. (Mace et al., 1991, p. 5)

Zaitseva (2016) gives the classification of consumers of barrier-free tourism in Figure 2, which is based on the marketing approach to the classification of consumers of services:

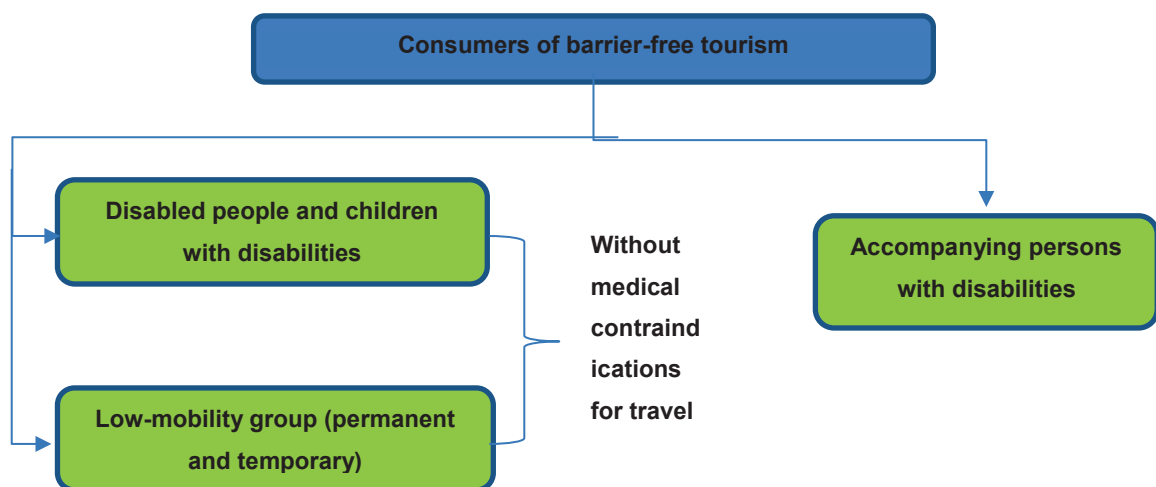


Figure 2: Consumers' classification of barrier-free tourism services.
Source: Zaitseva, 2016, p. 13.

Consider the categories of disability adopted in Russian legislation. The Ministry of Health and Social Development in the Order No.1013N (2009), approved the following categories and groups of disorders of the body's functions.

Categories:

- disorders of static-dynamic functions;

- cognitive disorders;
- speech disorders;
- circulatory disorders (blood circulation, respiration, digestion, excretion, hematopoiesis, metabolism, internal secretion, immunity);
- disorders of sensory functions (vision, hearing, smell, touch);
- disorders related physical deformity.

According to Russian Information Statistics company (2021), depending on the degree of severity of the disorders, the individual is assigned a degree of disability:

- Disabled people of **the first group** need the help of caretakers, can not self-care or move independently. These people are often disoriented in space and time, can not control their behavior and fully communicate with others.

- **The second group** is characterized by a partial loss of the ability to self-care. A person can move and perform various actions independently, but with the help of special devices. The I and II groups are non-working, because they can not fully work due to their diseases.

- **The third disability group** is awarded to those who are able to walk and perform self-care activities without assistance, but are slower than healthy people. Disabled people of the third grade can work, but they need a lighter schedule, more breaks and the creation of certain working conditions.

- **Disabled child** - this category includes children under 18 years of age who have disorders of body functions due to pathology, leading to restriction of vital activity. As a result, there are developmental disorders, inability to communicate, learn, control their behavior, independent movement and implementation of future work activities.

As noted above, not all categories of persons with disabilities can be considered key consumers of barrier-free tourism services. For example, a disabled person of the first group who is on continuous medical equipment in a medical hospital will not be a key consumer of tourist services due to the impossibility of his transportation, accommodation and provision of other tourist services outside the medical institution.

The Federal State Statistics Service (2021), provides the following information about the total number of disabled people in each category: the largest number of disabled people in Russia in Group II (5.209 million). And the smallest category is children with disabilities (688 thousand). The ratio of persons with disabilities of different categories is illustrated in the diagram (Fig. 3).

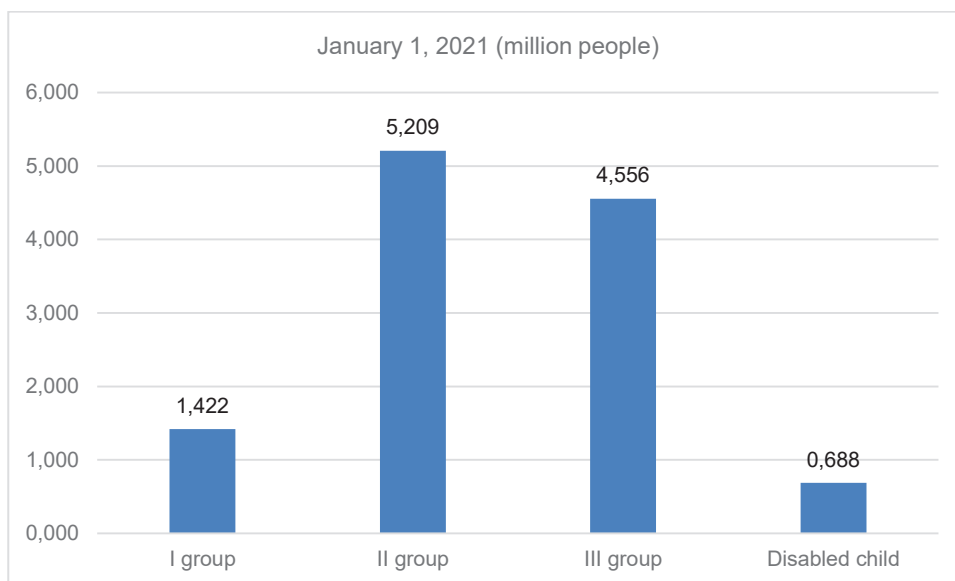


Figure 3: Total number of disabled people by disability group in Russia, January 1, 2020 (million people).

Source: Federal State Statistics Service, 2021.

The disability insurance pension is established based on information about the disability. According to the Federal State Statistics Service (2021), the following pensions are established per month for different disability groups in Russia:

I group - 19940,3 rubles (~242,32 euros);

II group - 16223,5 rubles (~197,15 euros);

III group - 13801,5 ruble (~167,72 euros);

Disabled child - 14500,3 rubles (~176,21 euros).

The State's responsibility is to take care of persons with disabilities. Disability statistics are calculated annually to provide social support and medical care. Depending on the total number, the social policy of the state is determined. Persons with disabilities represent a special category of consumers. When providing tourist services, it is also necessary to take into account not only the needs of the tourist regarding the tour, but also their physical capabilities, medical indications and the possibility of providing proper medical care on the route if necessary.

4.1 Brief assessment of Russian experience in the development of accessible tourism

Western countries highly assess the prospects for the development of disabled tourism and are actively working in this direction, but Russia also needs disabled tourism as a social phenomenon in the form of rehabilitation of the integration of disabled people into society. Rehabilitation of disabled people with physical disabilities, especially people who move in wheelchairs, remains beyond the bounds of normal human life in Russia. In many regions, this problem is not solved at all. There is no infrastructure for organizing disabled tourism in Russia. Construction of new buildings and reconstruction of existing public places are actively carried out. However, all this is mostly aimed only at physically healthy people, and people with limited opportunities are actually "overboard". Ramps available in some public places do not eliminate the problem of uncomfortable, and often impossible, movement of people. As a result, the constitutional rights and interests of these people in their desire to travel in their homeland are violated (Gudkova, 2016).

Looking through the materials of the periodical press, television news, we see cases when disabled people in Russia constantly face discrimination and constraints during the traveling. For example, on February 18, 2009, at the Domodedovo airport, a blind passenger, Pavel Obiukh, was not allowed to board a plane of the Sibir Airline (Interfax, 2009). In 2015, the well-known economist and wheelchair user Irina Yasina was refused to be allowed on board without medical examination (NEWSru, 2015). In 2020, the largest amusement park in the country, the "Island of Dreams", opened in Moscow. The creators compare it to the famous Disneyland Park. But over the past year, there have been many high-profile scandals when WCu were denied access, since no attraction is adapted to the needs of disabled people. There is also no toilet for the disabled (Nekrasova, 2020). Not all cases are made public, but it is obvious that there is a problem.

Accessableurope.com is a well-known website with travel consultant among the disabled. They "have helped thousands of people travel to Europe and other continents with the greatest possible comfort" (AccessiblEurope, n. d.–a). There are a lot of usefull information about the accessibility of different European countries on the website. This site provides brief information about Russia and only about two cities. Here is what they published about Russia and its capital (AccessiblEurope, n. d.–b):

The country has limited accessibility even though new accommodations facilities have been built that have accessible rooms (but generally they are very expensive 4 and 5 star hotels). Transportation is one of the biggest

complications. The Moscow Metro is one of the largest in the world but few stations are equipped with elevators and moreover there are often differences in level and spaces between carriages and platforms that make access by wheelchair difficult. Many land vehicles are equipped with ramps but are often crowded. We are not aware of accessible taxis. General accessibility is quite good especially in the central areas. The city is built flat, the pavements are generally spacious but the crossing of the great avenues is usually through tunnels and many have no slides. (section "Russia")

In Russia, the conceptual framework in the field of barrier-free tourism is not fixed in any regulatory documents or acts. At the same time, a legal framework has been created at both the federal and regional levels to try to ensure the accessibility of urban infrastructure to the needs of disabled people. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the State Program "Accessible Environment", developed for the period 2011-2015, is being implemented (Zaitseva, 2016). And then extended until 2025 (Resolution No. 363, 2019/23.03.2021).

The State Program of the Russian Federation "Accessible Environment" (2019) consists of three parts:

1. Ensuring accessibility of facilities and services in priority areas of life for the disabled and other low-mobility groups of the population;
2. Improvement of the system of comprehensive rehabilitation and habilitation of disabled people;
3. Improvement of the state medical and social system.

The requirements and conditions for creating a barrier-free environment in all spheres of life are indicated in the first part.

Regarding the State Program "Accessible Environment" for 2011-2020, it aims to achieve a set of targets, as shown in Table 1 (Resolution No. 1297, 2015):

- increase the share of road and urban land electric transport equipped for transportation of low-mobility groups of the population (bus, tram, trolleybus) (up to 20.2% by 2020);
- increase the share of metro stations accessible to disabled people and other low-mobility groups (up to 14.6% by 2020);
- increase the share of subjects of the Russian Federation that have formed and updated maps of accessibility of facilities and services (up to 98% by 2020);
- increase in the share of priority facilities accessible to disabled people in the field of culture (up to 60.6 percent by 2020) and sports (up to 73.6% by 2020);
- increasing the share of educational organizations that have created a universal barrier-free environment for inclusive education for children with disabilities (up to 25% by 2020);
- increase the share of disabled people who positively assess the population's attitude to the problems of disabled people (up to 52.5% by 2020);
- increase the share of employed disabled people of working age in the Russian Federation (up to 40% by 2020).

Table 1: State Program "Accessible Environment" 2011-2020 – Expected results.
Source: Resolution No. 1297, 2015, pp. 10–11.

The pace of development of tourism in Russia for people with disabilities, although developing, but, nevertheless, significantly lags behind Western countries. A Russian researcher and lecturer at the University of Surgut claims that there are a number of problems in the country, such as lack of experience in the field of accessible tourism, lack of training of staff to serve customers with disabilities, inconveniences in using transport and lack of access to tourist attractions. At the same time, we can not say that the development of accessible tourism in Russia is not happening. Despite the difficulties that travel companies and people with disabilities are currently facing, slowly but surely, the country is finding a way out in solving this problem (Lepa, 2012).

Currently, much has been already done to ensure unhindered access of disabled people to social facilities in Russia. One of the great examples is the 2014 Winter Olympic Games which had a particular impact accessible tourism. After that, the country hosted

the 2014 paralympics - sports competitions for people with disabilities in five winter sports: alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, sledge ice hockey, and wheelchair curling. The Paralympic Games in Sochi contributed to the active integration of people with disabilities into a full life. The availability of transport infrastructure has created more opportunities for their involvement in public processes. During the preparation for the Olympics, special attention was paid to meeting the needs of people with disabilities. All sports facilities and infrastructure were equipped with characteristics, fully meeting the requirements of universal design. It will be comfortable for blind and deaf, as well as WCu and people with limited mobility. All these have led to an increase in the flow of tourists, including among people with disabilities (Gudkova, 2016).

There are few successful examples of museums adapted to people with disabilities in Russia. According to the information provided by the Izvestiya newspaper, St. Isaac's Cathedral receives the most positive reviews (2019). On the territory of the museum, parking lot designated for the disabled and a special separate entrance are available, equipped with the ramps. There is a specialized elevator with a load capacity of up to 1000 kg. There are lifting platforms with inclined movement, designed for the convenience of people with disabilities at the entrance and exit of St. Isaac's Cathedral. Museum administrators have received special training on working with lifts. Visitors with limited mobility have a unique opportunity to use a special elevator and a mobile platform to climb in a wheelchair to the observation deck, located at an altitude of 37 meters, take a circular view of the city panorama and listen to a 20-minute tour developed by the museum staff specifically for this route (State Museum monument St. Isaac's Cathedral, 2021). They not only made ramps for those who move in a wheelchair, but also thought out a separate program for blind visitors. Visitors are given an audio guide, where they can listen to all the information, and also at each stop they are given a layout that they can touch. The layout of the cathedral has a Braille transcript. All these give a person a sense of independence (Rubnikovich, 2019).

The most attractive tourist places in Russia are the resorts of the Krasnodar region as well as the city of Moscow and St. Petersburg. Thus, according to the Master Plan for the development of Moscow by 2025, the Russian capital plans to receive 20 million tourists a year. But every year the attractiveness of small cities in Russia is becoming more noticeable (Pisarevsky, 2014). At the moment, there are several well-known routes for people with disabilities and new ones emerge. A student of the Moscow State University from Dagestan, Saida Hajiyeva, who has been visually impaired since the age of 15, has developed a program of tourist routes for people with disabilities in Dagestan. The project route covers the tourist destinations of the Caucasus-Derbent, Gunib district,

Sulak Canyon, Sary-Kum barkhan, Balkhar and Kubachi villages. Music events and cultural events are also planned. For the convenience of travelers, it is planned to install special sensors and devices (DISLIFE, 2019).

After analyzing some of the travel companies in Russia that are ready to provide recreation to a group of people with disabilities, are as follows:

"Liberty"

In St. Petersburg, the travel company "Liberty" is the first travel company in Russia for people with disabilities. It was founded in 2004 by two friends — auditor, Natalia Gasparyan, and teacher, Maria Bondar. When they started their business, there was practically no infrastructure in the city. The girls bought the bus themselves, equipped it with a folding ramp, measured and tested the accessibility of city attractions, hotels, restaurants, cafes, and theaters. They began to conduct research on the accessibility of urban facilities. Having accumulated an information base, the first specialized sightseeing tours for people with disabilities were built. One of the goals of this travel company is to promote the idea of accessibility of the city. The company notes that some urban objects are gradually moving from the category of completely inaccessible to "conditionally accessible" due to various technical devices for overcoming obstacles, the company assures that a wheelchair is not a reason to deprive yourself of the pleasure of communicating with your favorite city. At first, the company offered tours to St. Petersburg, then to Moscow, Kaliningrad, and Kolomna. Now the number of destinations has significantly expanded. The first tours are designed for those who move with the help of a wheelchair, but not so long ago, Maria and Natalia began to think through programs for blind and deaf people (Travel agency "Liberty", 2021).

"Invatour"

It is a non-profit organization of the Charitable Foundation "Social Adaptation of Disabled People and Youth". Their motto: "We are like everyone else and a little stronger." The foundation's activities: creating opportunities for WCu to fully enjoy cultural and historical values.

According to the charter of the Invatur company organization (2013), the goals of the organization are:

- Social adaptation and rehabilitation of disabled people through excursion tourism;
- Promoting the integration of persons with disabilities into society;

- Spiritual support;
- Care and support for people with disabilities in realizing their right to live like the rest of the world;
- Professional orientation of people with disabilities, by conducting excursions to museums.

The company organizes various tours to historical cities of Russia, as well as tours to the United States, Greece, Egypt, Israel, Spain, Italy, and Slovenia. There are both group trips and individual trips (Invatour, 2013).

"Globe4all"

The company actively develops the direction of disabled tourism. It was created to assist in the social and cultural rehabilitation of PwD, to promote the creation of conditions for an accessible cultural environment for citizens, organizing excursions for disabled people in Moscow, in the Moscow region, trips for PwD in various cities of Russia and in other countries. Their mission is to cover all aspects of barrier-free travel, and to help travelers with special needs find interesting and convenient leisure time at their destination. In 2018, the site globe4all.net became a laureate of the All-Russian Festival of Internet projects "World of Equal Opportunities" (Globe4all, 2021).

The service includes: excursion and educational programs, transfer, equipment rental, sports and other events, group, individual and even online tours for the disabled, weekend tours, and cruises.

Globe4all takes into account all the features of the organization of recreation for the disabled:

- features of the organization of accommodation and meals;
- specialized transport for the disabled;
- interesting places and excursions;
- availability of sightseeing places;
- availability of special equipment;
- provision of accompanying persons;
- medical support;

- trained tour guides;
- sign language interpreters.

The long-term goal of the development of accessible tourism is to create a tourist environment in which all tourists can take an active part, regardless of their individual needs, age, physical limitations. After analyzing the information, the following conclusion can be made: Russia is at the initial stage of its development and lags behind many developed countries in its readiness to accept disabled people as full members of society. The process of creating an accessible environment in Russia, faces a number of problems related to the imperfection of the regulatory and legislative framework, the lack of budget-funded hospitality facilities, the unsuitability of urban facilities, the insufficient qualifications of service personnel, as well as the stereotypical attitude towards persons with disabilities. This kind of tourism has received special priority and distribution only in recent decades in Russia. But it is worth noting that there are already many positive examples of accessible tourism. But for the development of accessible environment, the entire chain of services should be available: accommodation facilities, transport, travel company websites. It is not enough to make an accessible environment in the museum, if the tourist does not have the opportunity to come there by transport.

Chapter 5: Methodology

This Chapter provides the study was to explore the travel experience of people with disabilities and their family members who accompany them on the journey. At the beginning of this Chapter, the importance of this research, the methodology used and the reasons for the selection are described. Furthermore, the research questions, the method of conducting interviews, the process of data collection and the questionnaire structure are introduced.

5.1 Importance of the research

When writing the theoretical part, the importance of developing accessible tourism was emphasized. Hence,

- the development of medicine has led to a decrease in mortality from many diseases, new trends in the aging of the world's population lead to a stable increase in the number of consumers of accessible tourism;

- an accessible environment is a need for the entire population as a whole and for each individual. Since every person in their life goes through cycles that are associated with low mobility (pregnant women, parents with strollers and small children, elderly and temporarily disabled people, cyclists);

- tourism forms a sphere for full-fledged communication, eliminates the sense of loss of dignity, inferiority, and integrates the elderly and disabled into society;

- accessible tourism mobilizes millions of people around the world, it promotes economic development, and improves understanding, communication and tolerance between people of different nationalities.

Given that Russia lags far behind Western countries in the development of accessible tourism and there is little research on this topic, it was decided to study and analyse the barrier-free environment in Russia to make recommendations for improving accessibility.

5.2 Research questions

As stated by Flick, "formulating a research question means defining the overall guiding questions for your entire project, rather than (for example) formulating the concrete questions you will ask in your interviews" (2018, pp. 83–84).

Thus, the aims are to answer the following research questions:

- How does the lack of an available environment affect the motivation of people with disabilities to participate in travel?
- What are the main barriers and constraints that people with disabilities face in terms of participation in tourism?
- What is the crucial factor when choosing a holiday destination for people with disabilities and their caregivers?
- What changes will be the most effective in developing an accessible environment and will be able to lead to an increase in the number of disabled people as participants in tourism?

The results concerning the research questions are presented in a later section of this thesis (6.4).

5.3 Selection of the right research approach

Currently, there is a lively discussion in the scientific literature about the “quantitative“ and “qualitative“ approaches to research. To explain the choice of a qualitative study as the main research method and the more appropriate one, the works of foreign and Russian authors were studied.

Qualitative method allows “researchers to focus on the interviewees’ perspective of what is important or relevant, thereby potentially highlighting issues that the interviewer might not have considered“ (Young et al., 2017, p. 11). Strauss and Corbin (2001) stated that some areas of research are more suitable for qualitative types of research. For example, a study that attempts to uncover the nature of subjective experiences associated with phenomena such as illness, religious conversion, or drug addiction. Zagrebin (2018) recommended qualitative methods for studying the daily life of specific people, a specific experience, the disclosure of human feelings, which has a certain object, situation or event for a person. He noted that in qualitative methods, the source data cannot be presented in simple ways to a convenient form for counting. Thus, “the goal of the qualitative tradition is a deep understanding of the particular” (Domholdt, 1993, p. 139).

However, the qualitative and quantitative approaches have their drawbacks. Research results obtained from qualitative methods have a high probability of subjectivity in the analysis. Another researcher, relying on the same methods, can get completely different results in a similar situation. With a quantitative approach, you can get statistically significant correlation coefficients, but it is quite difficult to understand and explain what people actually live in reality (Zagrebin, 2018).

It was decided to choose qualitative research as a more applicable method. Since this work focuses on meanings and reasons rather than on frequencies. In addition, the experiences and feelings of people were studied in this work, which also makes a qualitative research method more suitable.

5.3.1 Qualitative research

This type of research allows getting very detailed data on the behavior, opinions, views, attitudes of a small group of people. According to Corbin and Strauss (2015), qualitative research is “a form of research in which a researcher(s) or designated coresearcher(s) collects and interprets data, making the researcher as much a part of the research process as participants and the data they provide” (p.3). Qualitative research is designed as a dialogue with participants. It’s used to study the daily life of specific people, specific experiences, atypical or new phenomena of social life, to reveal the structure of a particular human experience and the meaning that a particular object, situation, event or some aspect of one's own life has for a person (Zagrebin, 2018).

There are different methods of collecting quantitative data. “In qualitative research, unformalized or immeasurable methods of collecting primary sociological information are used. Such as in-depth interviews, non-standardized observation, analysis of personal documents, including visual ones (photos, videos), and a free manner of presenting the results“ (Zagrebin, 2018, p. 5).

5.3.2 Method of conducting interviews

The interview is a qualitative method of obtaining primary information through a relaxed, long conversation between the researcher and the interviewee. Both playing or imitating the roles of equal interlocutors (Zagrebin, 2018). “Interviews can be employed to understand the factors which influence decision - maker behaviour“ (Young et al., 2017, p. 11).

There are three different types of interviews used in qualitative research (Young et al., 2017):

- *Unstructured interviews*: conducted without an in advance list of questions. The speaker prepares only a list of topics and the course of the conversation depends on the answers.
- *Semi-structured interviews*: “allow the interviewer to ask additional questions if an interesting or new line of enquiry develops in the interview”.

- *Structured interviews*: conducted on the basis of a pre-developed questionnaire and contains a fixed set of questions.

For this study, a semi-structured interview format was chosen as the most applicable method to provide a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences, while still providing a certain structure in the research. The main list of questions was prepared in advance. But the researcher could be flexible, swap questions, ask additional questions, and thus provide a natural conversation. It provides more communication skills and helps to establish a warmer and friendlier atmosphere.

5.3.3 Structure of the interview questionnaire

The main purpose of the interview with the research participants was to study their travel experience. The interview questions for this study was developed accordingly (Appendix 1: Interview Questions).

The first part of the interview questionnaire starts by asking the participants general questions in order to get information about the participants and their families. The second part of the interview questionnaire is aimed at obtaining information that will help to get answers to research questions: to understand what factors influence the choice of destination, what difficulties participants face while traveling in Russia and how this affects their desire to travel. Research questions will be answered based on these topics. In the last part of the interview, the participants were asked to give recommendations for the development of an accessible environment that will affect the increase in the number of people with limited mobility in tourism. This question was useful, because participants made their own recommendations based on their own experience.

5.4 Data collection process

Person with disabilities or primary caregivers of children with disabilities were invited to participate in the interview. The interviews took place from July 29 2021 till August 20 2021. Interviews were conducted online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On average, the interview lasted about 30-45 minutes.

5.4.1 Preliminary interview

The pretest was conducted, before starting work with the interview. Pretesting consists of conducting a role-playing game on a small sample of respondents (n=3) in order to check the interview questions and eliminate potential problems. The respondents

in the pretesting should be similar to those who will be interviewed in the actual study, in terms of experience, behavior and attitude to the problems of the accessible environment (Magnusson & Marecek, 2015).

People who were selected for pretesting have more than three years of experience working with PwD. They know the specifics of various diagnoses, types of wheelchairs, and also have experience traveling in the regions of Russia. After this rehearsal, small changes were made to the questionnaire:

- In the question about transport (2.3) were added the following clarifications: how do you get to the destination, how do you move around the city and is there an opportunity to use transport for visiting excursions.

- Two questions were combined into one (question 2.5).

- It was suggested to provide specific examples in question 2.8.

5.4.2 Approach

In a first contact, the interviewee was informed, that the interview was prepared as part of the research work associated with the master's thesis entitled "Accessible Tourism in Russia: Recommendations for a Universal Design, Barrier-free Environment" and that, for this reason, it was important to record it. The person was informed that everything is confidential. For participant's data security, the unimportance of participant's names for the research results and the desire to simplify and analysis of the interviews, it was decided to assign an alias to each participant: P1, P2, P3, P4 till P12. All participants collaborated voluntarily and were informed about the type of study in advance. Permission was obtained to record all the answers during the interview. None of them was against the dictaphone recording and did not refuse an interview after learning all of the above.

After all the interviews were conducted, their qualitative analysis took place. The dictaphone recordings were translated into text form, and the main ideas in the text were highlighted. The interviews were analyzed with the identification of the main topics and categories encountered during the interview. The result of the qualitative analysis is presented in Chapter 6 and is provided with examples from the interview.

5.5 Participants

The interview was directed at the Russian population with disabilities. In Russia, as previously mentioned, almost 12 million people with disabilities (8% of the total population) possess some level of disability (Federal State Statistics Service, 2021).

The main criteria for selecting participants in this study were their experience of traveling in the regions of Russia and their need for an accessible environment. After the criteria for the research participants were selected, the extensive search started. It was decided to select a limited number of interviewees and to focus on a more extensive analysis of the interview results.

“When conducting qualitative research with the help of interviews, the samples are not large, but it is quite difficult to answer the question how many people are needed. It always depends on the goals and objectives of a particular research. Some scientists engaged in conducting qualitative interviews formulate the answer to this question as follows: there should be a sufficient number of respondents to answer the questions posed in the work.” (Vysokov I. et al., 2020, p. 129)

Creswell (as cited in Mason M., 2010) defines the number of interview participants in a phenomenology study from 6 to 25 participants. For this research, interviews were conducted with 12 research participants.

The study participants are the persons with disabilities or the assistants of the persons with disabilities who move in wheelchairs. The disabled persons in this study have various disabilities of the body's functions caused by diseases. These diseases are the consequences of genetic diseases or injuries leading to constraints of life activity.

If the study participant is under 18 years of age, the interview was conducted with his or her legal representatives (eight respondents), who accompanies on the trip as an assistant. If a person with disabilities is more than 18 years old (under Russian law he or she is an adult), and they answered the questions independently (four respondents). Two of the families surveyed have two disabled children in the family. Ps8 are two twin girls, both were injured during childbirth. Ps10 are two brothers who have the same genetic disease.

The demographic characteristics of the participants are given in Table 2.

Alias	Gender of PwD	Age of PwD	Disability Category	Family members	Frequency of trips (times per year)	Relationship caregivers with the Disabled Individual	Employment
P1	male	9	Neuromuscular disorders	Both parents, 2 children	4-6	Parent (the mother)	Parent (the father)
P2	female	7	Neuromuscular disorders	Both parents, 3 children	1	Parent (the mother)	Parent (the father)
P3	male	15	Neuromuscular disorders	The mother, the stepfather and 3 children	1-2	Both parents	Parent (the stepfather)
P4	male	19	Neuromuscular disorders	Both parents, 2 children	1-2	Parent (the mother)	The father and brother
P5	male	22	Neuromuscular disorders	The mother, the stepfather and 1 child	1	Parent (mother)	Both parents
P6	male	27	Neuromuscular disorders	Both parents sibling and wife	< 1 (mostly abroad)	Parents or wife	Both parents, the sibling and the research participant
P7	male	16	Neuromuscular disorders	The mother and 3 children	1	Parent (the mother)	Parent (the mother)
Ps8	female female	13 13	Cerebral palsy as a result of birth trauma	The mother and 2 children	~12 (more often in summer)	Parent (the mother)	Nobody
P9	female	10	Neuromuscular disorders	Both parents and 2 children	2	Parent (the mother)	Both parents and sibling
Ps10	male male	17 20	Neuromuscular disorders	The mother, the stepfather and 3 children	1-2	Both parents	Parent (the stepfather)
P11	male	26	Neuromuscular disorders	The mother and stepfather and 2 children	1	Hired assistant	The mather and stepfather
P12	female	12	Neuromuscular disorders	Both parents and 2 children	2	Parent (the mother)	Parent (the father)

Table 2: Socio-demographic profile of the sample.

According to the information in Table 2, the majority of the participants have the experience of travelling as an assistant with children under 18 years old (n = 8), who needs accessible environment. Another part of the respondents (n = 4) are people with disabilities and shared their experience independently.

According to employment, in most families, only the father works (n = 6). This is due to the fact that the mother takes constant care of a disabled child and is unable to work. Both parents work in three families. In one single-parent family, only mother works, since she is the only guardian. No one works in another single-parent family. The mother takes care of two disabled children there. They live on a pension from the state. Only one person with a disability works (among 4 adult participants).

We also see that in 8 cases the disabled person is accompanied by their mothers on trips as an assistant. In two cases, both parents go on trips. Their mothers cannot provide care without the help of a second person due to the fact that the PwD in these families are quite heavy and adults. One married participant is traveling with his wife. One adult participant has a hired assistant who accompanies him on all trips.

According to the frequency of trips, most families (n = 9) go on vacation 1-2 times a year in the regions of Russia. In most cases, they go on a tour, which is provided by the state for the PwD and for her or his caregiver. The state issues such vouchers 1 time a year (accommodation and tickets). One of the surveyed families travel to the regions of Russia about 4-6 times a year. One family goes on vacation about once a month (about 12 times a year). Less often in winter, more in summer. In general, they like to spend weekends in small historical cities near Moscow. And a working participant who is 27 years old has extensive experience of traveling to the regions of Russia when he was a child and now due to covid restrictions.

The severity of participants' disabilities ranges from persons with disabilities relying on assistance when accomplishing certain tasks to severely impaired persons having no mobility apart from being able to speak and move their hands. For example, P5 and Ps8 move around in a wheelchair, with the help of others, but they are able to rely on their feet a bit and take several steps with support or on a walker/ In addition to the problem in movement, Ps8 has mental problems, sometimes there are attacks of autoaggression. P1, P2, P7, P9 and P11 can not rely on their legs. The upper and lower limbs are weak, but their hands can push the wheels of the wheelchair and thus move around. Active user wheelchairs are must have good trunk and upper body strength to be able to push themselves. P3, P4, P6 and Ps10 move around on an electric wheelchair. This kind of wheelchair is adequate for people who lack the motor function to operate a manual wheelchair (their limbs are very weak and they move the wheelchair using the controller). They also do not hold the head and need a head holder. P12 uses two wheelchair (electric and manual), sometimes take both on trips.

All respondents live in Moscow. Considering that Moscow is a popular tourist city, the experience of traveling around Moscow was also taken into account. According to the responses of the participants, the most popular cities and regions to visit were identified. The most visited region among the respondents is the Krasnodar Territory. 11 respondents visited this region as tourists. The most popular cities are Sochi (n = 11), where the Olympic and Paralympic Games were held in 2014, Anapa (n = 10) and Crimea (n = 7). Most of the participants visit these regions regularly, as they receive a voucher for rehabilitation there from the state. Three participants visited 2 cities in the Stavropol region: Pyatigorsk and Kislovodsk. Three participants visited St. Petersburg. Also, several cities were named once: Tyumen (Siberia), Voronezh, Rzhhev, Kaliningrad, the cities of the Golden Ring (Pereslavl-Zalessky, Suzdal), two participants like to travel to cities near Moscow (Borodino, Pavlovsky Posad).

Figure 4 shows the territorial location of the cities mentioned in this study relative to Moscow.

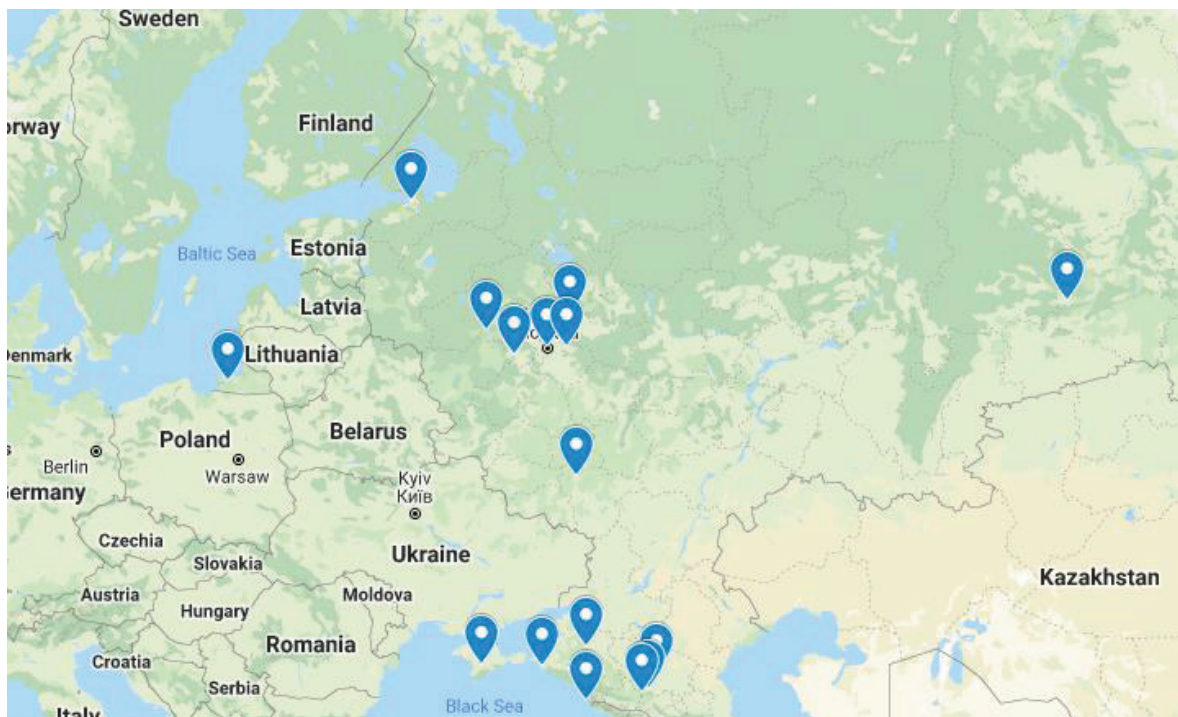


Figure 4: The most popular cities for tourism in Russia (according to this study).

Chapter 6: Results, analysis and discussion

This chapter is dedicated to the analysis of the data collected during the interviews. In order to analyse of collected data, it had to be structured properly first. Therefore, the practice of coding was applied. According to Miles and Huberman (1994):

Codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meanings to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study. Codes usually are attached to "chunks" of varying size - words, phrases, sentences, or whole paragraphs, connected or unconnected to a specific setting. (p. 56)

Following this approach, the most relevant topics were identified, discussed by the interviewees. These topics have been grouped into three categories and analysed in detail in order to apply them to answer the research questions of this thesis. These three categories of topics discussed by the interviewees are described in the Table 3:

UNIVERSAL DESIGN	MOTIVATION	THE STATE AND SOCIETY SUPPORT
- transportation - accommodation - urban environment	- internal - external	- family - tourism sector employees - society - information support and awareness - the state

Table 3: Categories and subcategories of interview findings

6.1 Universal design

One of the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is to take appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to transport, information and communication, including information and communication technologies. All people with disabilities should have access to facilities and services open to the public, both in urban and rural areas, on an equal basis with other people (United Nations, 2007). One of the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities is to take appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to transport, information and communication, including information and communication technologies. All people with disabilities should have access to facilities and services open to the public, both in urban and rural areas, on an equal basis with other people (United Nations, 2007).

In order to develop accessible tourism, the entire chain of services should be accessible: accommodation facilities, transport and getting information. WCu note a positive shift in recent years. P3 remembers: "Before there was nothing at all – no devices, ramps, service. There are a lot of changes now. There are many advantages, but there are more disadvantages. Of course, we are not satisfied, but compared to what was before, we are very happy".

The respondents were asked to assess their satisfaction with the accessible environment in Russia as a whole, where 1 - Not satisfied at all; 2 – Slightly Satisfied; 3 – Moderate; 4 – Satisfied; 5 – Fully satisfied. To make the analysis of the interview more visual, the satisfaction rating from the accessible environment in Russia of each participant displayed in the Table 4:

Participants	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	Ps8	P9	Ps10	P11	P12
Assessment	3	3,5	3	3	4	2	3	2	2	4	2	2

Table 4: Assessment of participants' satisfaction with the accessible environment while traveling in Russia

Despite many changes, people with disabilities are still not satisfied with the level of development of an accessible environment. After analyzing their answers, the strengths and weaknesses of the available environment were highlighted.

6.1.1 Transportation

To ensure accessible and safe conditions for the independent movement of disabled people and other low-mobility groups of the population, it is necessary that the elements of the transport infrastructure meet a number of requirements.

During the interview, the experience of movement of people with disabilities was studied. Questions were asked about how the interview participants move between cities, what type of transport they prefer, how they move around the city, whether they have the opportunity to use excursion buses. Positive changes were identified, but limitations were also noted, which are still preserved.

After analyzing the respondents' answers, it became clear that there are positive changes, not only in Moscow, but also in the regions. It was noted that the escort services at the airports and train stations work very well. Employees are warned in advance that a person with a disability is planning to make a trip. Then caregiver and PwD meet support personnel staff member who helps them with their luggage and accompanies them without waiting in line.

6.1.1.1 *The airport*

People with disabilities have priority in boarding at the airport. If there are no opportunities to enter the aircraft through the sleeve for boarding, in this case, airport employees use a special machine with a lifting platform. Eight of the respondents prefer to travel by plane. Some respondents complain that an electric wheelchair is taken away from them in order to put it in their luggage. They are transferred to a regular wheelchair, which is provided by the airport. Such a chair is not suitable for people with such diagnoses. There is no head holder, no body supports, no foot support. As a result, the head falls, the body is not properly fixed falls and slides. In an airplane, a person with a disability must be transferred from a wheelchair to an airplane seat. There is no lift and it will be very difficult to transport an adult with a disability.

6.1.1.2 *Railway transport*

According to the respondents, railway transport has also become more convenient to use. Each train has compartment equipped for persons with disabilities. It is larger than the regular one, it has its own toilet and sometimes a shower. The entrance to the car is equipped with a lift and a ramp. It is important to note that there are several limitations in use that were identified in the conversation with the participants. Families with two handicapped children cannot use a car equipped for persons with disabilities because it is designed as a two-persons compartment. Two of the families surveyed have two children with disabilities (Ps8 and Ps10). Ps10 (the assistant of two handicapped children) said "I would love to go by train. The children can lie down and look out of the window there. But I can't use it with two children".

Another problem is that people with disabilities are forced to buy train tickets in advance or go on vacations not in high season. As we said above, there is usually only one compartment for person with disabilities on the train. Any person with disability can buy a ticket for this compartment, even one who has no physical needs. One of the families noted: "If 500 disabled people are going on vacation in the summer, then the probability that you will get this ticket is 1 out of 500. If you do not get this compartment, then it is impossible for WCu to travel by train. The passages and doorways are very narrow and not suitable for the wheelchair. There is no place to store the wheelchair. If it's left in the vestibule, then it may be stolen".

6.1.1.3 *Urban transport*

All respondents prefer to travel around the city by taxi or do not use transport at all. P2 said that sometimes it's easier to walk. They try not to use buses, as there was a

negative experience. Now they avoid this type of transport. All the survey participants noted that the urban transport is not intended for people to travel in a wheelchair (in those cities that they visited). Accessible transport is little or not developed at all. This does not allow people to move freely around the city. Moscow is an exception. The city of Sochi also received good reviews. In 2014, the Olympic and Paralympic Games were held there. It is not possible for electric wheelchair users to travel by taxi, since their wheelchair is too big for normal car. They can order van, but the cost of such a taxi is several times more expensive than usual. It is also worth noting that not all cities have the opportunity to order such a taxi. The participants of the interview noted that they had not met a single tour bus equipped for wheelchair users. Only four respondents had experience of traveling on tour buses. But they note that every year the probability that they will go on an excursion by bus becomes unlikely. As the WCu grow up, it's become more difficult for the assistants to carry them into the bus on the hands.

All survey participants noted that they do not feel their freedom of movement. The main problem for moving is the lack of special vehicles, which must be equipped with a ramp, a single-level floor, special platforms and handrails.

6.1.2 Accommodation

Planning a trip is closely related to finding suitable accommodation. All the respondents stay in hotels or apartments during their trips. The state issues vouchers to people with disabilities once a year for the purpose of rehabilitation. In this case, they will stay in a hotel-type rehabilitation center. Despite the fact that rehabilitation centers should be designed for people with disabilities, the study participants still face unsuitable accommodation. The lack of a ramp, small elevators or its absence, narrow doorways, an unequipped bathroom greatly limit people with disabilities. Ps10 said that the doorway to the bathroom was very narrow, the children could not enter the bathroom in a wheelchair. The assistant had to wash the children on the street under the garden hose.

If the interview participants are planning a vacation on their own, then in most cases they choose apartments with a kitchen. Apartments that meet the requirements of people in wheelchairs are limited. Two participants said that they had an experience when they were unable to find affordable accommodation in the cities of Gelendzhik and Kislovodsk. It was a period of high demand. As a result, they canceled trip to those cities and planned a trip to other places.

6.1.3 Urban environment

Urban social space is a place where social inequality on the basis of disability is clearly visible. A big problem is the violations associated with the unhindered entrance to the premises of WCu due to the lack of ramps. All participants of the interview note that they are limited in visiting a large number of cafes, restaurants, supermarkets and other service facilities. They are forced to look for an alternative or ask for help to overcome barriers. Sometimes it takes a lot of time and effort to find alternative. In the context of the vacation, two important problems were highlighted, which were mentioned by all the respondents.

The first problem is an unequipped *beach*. To sunbathe on the beach or swim in the sea are among the factors of choosing a destination. The manual and electric wheelchairs they use in daily life are not suitable for use on the sand. An assistant very often cannot carry a person with a disability to the sea on their own. P3 describes his feelings as follows: "Sometimes it is not possible to take the child to swim in the sea. He gets upset. But he pretends that he is not upset. He watches as his brother swims, and he sits on the shore. It breaks our hearts".

The second important problem is *toilets*. As a rule, tourists coming on vacation do not want to be tied to the hotel. But they cannot move away for long distances, since there are no toilets for the disabled. The participants of the interview note this problem not only in small cities of Russia, but also in Moscow. P3 said: "If I didn't have a child with disabilities, I would have no idea about this kind of discrimination". There are toilets with a sign "for people with disabilities" in rare places. But they are still not suitable. The presence of stairs, the size of the room, the lack of special equipment make the use of these toilets impossible. There are also many cases when such toilets are simply locked.

The answers of the participants in this study give an understanding of what prevents a person using a wheelchair from being a full-fledged participant in tourist activities.

6.2 Motivation

Human motivation is understood as a set of driving forces that motivate a person to perform certain actions to achieve a goal (Lobanova, 2015). These forces are located outside and inside a person and make them consciously or unconsciously perform certain actions. After analyzing the respondents' answers, internal motivation and external motivation were analyzed.

6.2.1 Internal motivation

The study participants were asked: Would you like to travel more often within Russia? The majority of respondents (10 out of 12) said that they want to travel more. Two of the surveyed families explained their unwillingness to travel more: Ps10 said that they like to travel, but they are not ready to travel more due to the deteriorating health of family members with disabilities. P9 replied that they really want to travel more, but not in Russia He is disappointed in tourism in Russia because of the discrepancy between the value and quality of service and accessibility of places of destinations.

Internal motivation is not related to external circumstances. People are involved in the activity and this process is the goal (Lobanova, 2015). People with disabilities experience the same emotions, desires, and needs during travel as others. It is obvious that all of these research participants have a strong desire to travel. The study participants prefer to spend a vacation in order to get positive emotions from exploring new places, enjoying good weather, swimming in the sea. Participants over the age of 18 prefer more noisy places where there is an opportunity to meet new people, where there is a nightlife and many different activities.

Respondents were asked to assess whether the accessible environment is the crucial criterion for choosing a destination, where 1 - the accessible environment is not important at all; 5 – the accessible environment is the most crucial factor when choosing a destination. The assessment of the participants are presented in the Table 5.

Participants	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	Ps8	P9	Ps10	P11	P12
Assessment	5	5	5	5	2	5	5	3	4	5	4	3

Table 5: Participants' assessment of the importance of an accessible travel environment.

According to the answers, conclusions can be drawn that the available environment is one of the most important factors. But sometimes the motivation to get to a new place is so strong that even the lack of an accessible environment does not stop them. P5 said: "It's not really important to me. If I want to go to somewhere, then I can drive across the lawn and climb a hillock, I can also ask other people for help". Ps8 answered: "There are sometimes very interesting places and it doesn't matter how we pass there, if I really want to go there". P12 (caregiver of the handicapped child) noted: "Of course, I want to have an accessible environment. But I don't want to restrict the child's travel just because there is no available environment".

Faced with the lack of an accessible environment, the study participants (people with disabilities and their assistants) experience negative emotions: anger, frustration, a

sense of discrimination. In addition to emotions, this has a negative impact on the health of assistants. Three out of eight assistants said that they experience back pain because they have to use physical force when moving a child in a wheelchair. Eight participants answered that they would definitely not go to their destination without an accessible environment. Four participants said that their decision will depend on other factors as well.

But it is important to note that the lack of an accessible environment does not have a significant impact on their motivation to travel. They will avoid negative emotions and consequences, but not by refusing to travel, but by choosing suitable places. Therefore, people with disabilities who use wheelchairs are very limited in choosing a place of rest in Russia. As a result, the lack of an accessible environment is a limiting factor in the development of tourism among WCu and low-mobility groups of the population.

6.2.2 External motivation

External motivation is something that is done for people to motivate them. The correct impact on the external motivation of a person will encourage them to act. Such motivation can be carried out through economic incentives (Lobanova, 2015).

The legislation supports the idea of the fullness of a person with disabilities. Once a year, the state provides a voucher to a rehabilitation center for a person with a disability and an assistant. This helps to support the physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social development of a person with disabilities.

The study participants were asked what prevents them from traveling more often. Five respondents said they had a limited budget. They highlighted that when there is an opportunity to go on a trip for free, it motivates them and they never refuse. It is worth noting that all 12 respondents use this opportunity from the state. Although even in those places where the state sends people with disabilities, the accessible environment remains at a low level.

It can be concluded that the state is a motivator that encourages people with disabilities to travel. As a result, the active participation of the state in the development of an accessible environment, as well as the provision of free trips, affects the increase in the number of tourists with disabilities.

6.3 The State and Society support

To ensure the social integration of a person with a disability into society, state support is necessary. The older respondents of our study still remember the period when they did not have a ramp. As a result, they could not leave the apartment, or go to the nearest store, or spend time in the nearest park. The number of people with disabilities on the streets has changed with the changes in architecture, with the advent of ramps. Below we will analyze the responses of respondents to understand whether society is ready to accept people with special needs? Who supports people with disabilities in integrating into society? Are small and medium-sized businesses ready to participate in the state program for the development of an accessible environment?

6.3.1 Family

Some respondents mentioned that there is a warning about people with disabilities that they are inferior people and a burden to society. But they do not feel this attitude towards themselves. Everyone is talking about the huge support from society, family and even employees of various organizations. Family support is very important. According to Table 1, it can be seen that 10 people with disabilities live in a full-fledged family and in most cases mothers are housewives (n=6), and fathers work. This allows mothers to spend most of their time with a disabled child and provide them with good care, education, and leisure. P3 and Ps10 said that they will not go anywhere without husbands. There may be health problems during trips and it is important to understand that they are not alone. Given the lack of an accessible environment, they need male power as well.

6.3.2 Tourism sector employees

Each participant has an experience of ignorant behavior on the part of employees of various tourist and entertainment organizations, these were isolated cases. For example, P2 shared that the child was refused to ride on a children's attraction. The staff asked to put the child vertically to measure the growth. Although they saw that the child uses a wheelchair. Ps8 was faced with the fact that her child was forbidden to enter the cafe in a wheelchair, they offered to leave the wheelchair at the entrance and carry the child in her arms. P11 was not allowed to enter the nightclub without an explanation. Despite these cases, all participants note the respectful attitude of the staff. They are organized a more convenient place in a cafe, at concerts, served out of turn.

The participants were asked to evaluate the attitude of the staff on a five-point scale. The average score is 4. This indicates a positive atmosphere between the participants of affordable tourism and the staff.

6.3.3 Society

The main thing before the trip is to be ready for it not only mentally, but also physically. In addition, the tourist should sensibly assess the complexity of the routes, the saturation and duration of the trip. But the environment for a person with a disability sometimes carries difficulties that need to be solved independently or with the help of strangers. The low-mobility part of the population needs more time to get into the transport or into the room, they are less agile, slower. Some participants note that they face irritation from society when they do not fit into the rules of the game invented by this society. P3 remembers that sometimes guests are angry, they don't like that a child can stop in the middle of the road in a stroller or is driving slowly.

But all these one-time cases are insignificant before what enormous help the society is ready to offer for the disabled. The answers given by the participants of the interview shows that the society is ready to help and not remain indifferent. People offer their help on the beach, in a cafe, on the street. P7 said that a man offered to put her son on his shoulders at a concert so that he could see the stage better. Then the staff took him to the VIP area without a ticket.

The police also show their involvement. The participants, answering the interview questions, often mentioned the help of the police. Here are a few of the examples: P10 told, the police blocked the road so that they could cross it. Since there was an underground passage in that place without a ramp and an elevator. P12 remembers that the car blocked the exit. The passing police car stopped. They moved the child and a wheelchair by their arms.

Tolerance and empathy from society and government services increase the adequacy of the perception of the "other" and leads to the establishment of effective, positive relationships between people.

6.3.4 Information support and awareness

The study participants noted that they have a difficulty in being aware of the accessible environment. This significantly restricts their movement. Before they go to a new place, they must to collect information: how to get there, is there affordable accommodation, what places they can visit, where they can eat. Answering one of the

interview questions, P5 said that it is necessary to create a system of awareness about the accessible environment in different regions, so that people with disabilities could get all the information on the Internet and evaluate their capabilities.

There is also another problem-this is the lack of awareness of the staff. Today, employees of various tourism sectors are not familiar with the peculiarities of the organization of a barrier-free environment. They are not always aware of the specific features of various disability groups. P4 describes this problem as follows: "For us, the problem is that we cannot get reliable information about the available environment in different regions. Let's imagine that I want to go to a new city where I have no friends. I have a fear if there is no available environment. How will I get to the hotel? Will I be able to enter the hotel? For example, I found a suitable taxi for me and my electric wheelchair to the hotel. Before the trip, I called the hotel to clarify that they really have an affordable environment. They will tell me on the phone that they have an accessible environment, but in fact they will have two steps, for them this is already an accessible environment, and I will not be able to overcome it. I want people to be aware of what an accessible environment is, it's not just two rails".

Given that this problem was mentioned several times by the participants of this survey, this problem is quite acute. People with disabilities have a need to visit new places, get new impressions, learn about the world. But they have a fear that without receiving reliable information support, they may get into a situation where the environment has not accepted them as a full participant in life.

6.3.5 The State

The goal of the state program "Accessible Environment" is to create legal and economic conditions that promote the integration of disabled people into society and improve their standard of living. To achieve this, it is necessary to ensure equal access to priority facilities and services for people with disabilities and other low-mobility groups of the population. According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the State must ensure that persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with other citizens, have access to the physical environment, transport, information and communications, as well as to other facilities and services open to the public. The state allocates a significant part of the budget to ensure an affordable environment, and also obliged private businesses to organize barrier-free access to their infrastructure (pharmacies, beauty salons, supermarkets, restaurants, and others) (Resolution No. 363, 2019/23.03.2021).

After analyzing the responses of the survey participants, it turned out that in most cases the implementation of the "Accessible Environment" program is a formal approach. The initiatives of the state authorities are being implemented, but there is no control. As a result, ramps with an inappropriate slope appear or the ramp rests against the wall. The assistant call button does not work in most cases. The toilet has a sign that it is accessible to people with disabilities, but it does not meet the standards. The answer given by a WCu participant P4 is as follows: "I would like people who organize an accessible environment to get on a wheelchair and test the environment. Everyone should have an equal access to facilities. It is necessary that the suitable environment is provided in real life and not on paper. There should be people who testify to this".

Despite all the changes that are taking place, there is still a lot to work. Many respondents pointed to the lack of state control and the need for a testing system. People with disabilities should be involved in this testing system.

6.4 Answering the research question and Recommendations

Taking into account the data produced during the interviews and the subsequent analysis, this part is dedicated to the evaluation of the research results. Therefore, the research questions are answered.

- *How does the lack of an available environment affect the motivation of people with disabilities to participate in travel?*

During a semi-structured interview, it turned out that the lack of an accessible environment does not affect the motivation to travel. People do not lose desire to travel. But consumers of accessible tourism will choose their destination more carefully. People with disabilities will avoid trips where there is no accessible environment, as this affects their psychological and physical condition. Therefore, they will visit places where there is a more favorable and inclusive environment. The lack of an accessible environment has little effect on the frequency of trips, for the most part it affects the choice of destination. Due to the lack of diversity of places with an accessible environment, people with disabilities are forced to visit a limited number of cities in which the accessible environment is more or less developed.

- *What are the main barriers and constraints that people with disabilities face in terms of participation in tourism?*

After the analysis of the interviews, it is possible to answer this research question. As mentioned above, a lot has been done in Russia recently in the development of an accessible environment. People with disabilities can move between cities by plane or train. The main difficulties begin when the question concerns movement around the city. The size of electric wheelchairs does not allow using a city taxi. Difficulties were identified in the system of urban and excursion transport as well. There is no possibility to travel on tour buses at all. As a result, people who move around in wheelchairs constantly face restrictions. Therefore, one of the main barriers is the unsuitability of urban transport for WCu.

Another significant barrier is urban architecture. It is also not adapted for wheelchair users and low-mobility groups of the population. The most frequent restrictions are the lack of ramps, lifts, accessible toilets. There are no beaches adapted for visiting in a wheelchair. Each of the participants in this study faced restrictions in the choice of accommodation as well. Wheelchair users have to spend more time choosing a hotel or apartment, and then clarify by phone whether the information provided on the website is correct. People who are restricted in movement do not feel like full-fledged participants in society.

- *What is the crucial factor when choosing a holiday destination for people with disabilities and their caregivers?*

Taking into account that people with disabilities get the same impressions from traveling as others, they choose places where they can get emotions, lasting impressions, and change the monotony of the environment. Answering the question about the factors influencing the choice of a place, the participants noted the good weather, the opportunity to swim, sunbathe, eat delicious food, meet new people, and ideally see the sights. But as it was mentioned above (table 4), wheelchair users and their assistants identified the crucial factor for choosing a destination - an accessible environment. This factor was highlighted by all participants, and the majority of respondents said that they would not go to a place where there is no accessible environment. This gives them freedom, a sense of fullness, and preserves their moral and physical health.

- *What changes will be the most effective in developing an accessible environment and will be able to lead to an increase in the number of disabled people as participants in tourism?*

In order to increase the number of participants in tourism with disabilities, it is necessary that the environment should be adapt. People with disabilities should not feel

that the environment and society are unfriendly to them. The most valuable thing for a disabled person is gaining independence. The absence of barriers in the environment will help people with disabilities feel more confident in moving around, as well as reduce their fear of visiting new places or cities.

Based on the international best practices and the responses of the interviews conducted, the following Recommendations are suggested for Russia to improve accessibility of disabled people:

- Create an Association for Barrier-free Destinations, such as the best practice of Germany. Have leisure facilities such as cinemas, theaters and many other places that are freely available for disabled people. Regarding transportation, train stations, airports and generally all types of transport should be equipped for disabled people to travel. Provide guided tours for visitors with disabilities, the blind and visually impaired, the deaf and hearing impaired, and guests with learning disabilities.

Regarding transport, the Trains in Russia need broader passages and doorways, they are not suitable for the wheelchair, and it is recommended to have a place to store the wheelchair.

- Based on best practices in Spain, it is recommended that all central streets of the cities be equipped with ramps, all buses adapted, and hotels with special rooms that are convenient for the disabled. Provide sport facilities with infrastructures that are desirable and accessible year-round.

It is recommended for Russia to provide more accessible bus transport, it is undeveloped. This does not allow people to move freely around the cities. It is recommended to have special vehicles, equipped with a ramp, a single-level floor, special platforms and handrails.

- The UK has developed an accessible environment and promotes barrier-free tourism among its citizens. It is recommended to adapt services to the needs of visitors and train employees to work with people with disabilities. This helps to create loyalty amongst the citizens and tourists. Regarding accommodation, it is recommended that in Russia, hotels or apartments have ramps, have bigger elevators or to build elevators, improve the narrow doorways, and equip the bathrooms for people with disabilities.

- For the opportunity to live a full life, it is recommended to do as the Austrians. Their hospitality applies to all visitors, including those who travel in wheelchairs, those with reduced physical abilities, as well as those with hearing and vision impairments.

Barrier-free Austria ensures that disabled people get the same travel experience as the average tourist, without having to worry about getting around. For the urban environment, it is recommended that Russia create ramps in cafes, restaurants, supermarkets and other service facilities. Provide equipped bathrooms in swimming pool areas, beaches and other tourist activities.

To conclude, it is recommended that Russia have an equal access to priority facilities and services. A global development of accessible environment, should be established, including all services, public and private, accommodation facilities, urban and rural environment, transport and travel companies. It is recommended that Russia update its regulatory and legislative framework, increase the budget-funded hospitality facilities, create barrier-free urban facilities and invest in training and improving qualifications of service personnel.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

This thesis researched accessible tourism in Russia and its role in developing tourism among people with disabilities. The analysis of foreign experience and the domestic tourism industry in the field of barrier-free tourism revealed a significant lag in Russian tourism from the level of development in European countries. The review of the theoretical background provided in the previous chapters of this thesis emphasizes the importance of developing an accessible environment. Low-mobility groups of the population are more unprotected compared to other people. They experience difficulties in connection with their health condition and the unsuitable environment very often makes them dependent on the help or tolerance of others.

A person with disabilities is a special category of a consumer of tourist services. When providing tourist services to this category of consumers, it is necessary to take into account a number of special requirements for the product in terms of physical, psychological, and medical indicators, in addition to meeting the tourist's needs regarding the tourist product. The analysis of the interview gave answers to the research questions. A brief overview is provided below:

- *How does the lack of an available environment affect the motivation of people with disabilities to participate in travel?* - Although no ideal location for barrier-free movement has been identified, this does not affect the unwillingness to travel. People with disabilities are trying to adapt to the conditions that exist. Choose those places that are as close to normal life as possible. Currently, people with disabilities have few options. As a result, wheelchair users from this research visit the same places.

- *What are the main barriers and constraints that people with disabilities face in terms of participation in tourism?* - Interviews conducted with the study participants and subsequent analysis showed the main barriers. The problem lies in transport barriers, the lack of adaptation of entertainment services, hotel rooms, urban architecture. The lack of specially equipped buses, ramps, toilets for the disabled, elevators are obstacles that prevent people from fully enjoying the journey. All these restrictions affect the emotional state of tourists. Non-compliance with the principles of universal design restricts people with disabilities in movement, emphasizes their helplessness, deprives of independence, affects the quality of life. Despite the state program to ensure an accessible environment, people with limited mobility still face infringement of their rights.

• *What is the crucial factor when choosing a holiday destination for people with disabilities and their caregivers?* - It can be concluded that the available environment is a key factor when choosing a destination.

• *What changes will be the most effective in developing an accessible environment and will be able to lead to an increase in the number of disabled people as participants in tourism?* - The principles of universal design should be taken into account in everything. It is necessary to adapt transport, accommodation, entertainment service, and the urban environment.

One more important change that can significantly affect the number of disabled tourists is information support. For a disabled traveler, it is important to see in the description whether there are handrails or ramps on the territory of the hotel. It is necessary to adapt excursions, sights, and museums to various categories of disability.

The creation of a special organization that would monitor compliance with all the requirements and laws of the accessible environment. This could help to ensure that all places providing services to the public are equipped with facilities that allow access for people with reduced mobility.

In addition, and in order to achieve a high level of tourism development for the disabled, it is appropriate to look at countries that present good practices of policy and operational development in the field of accessibility and inclusion. This will help to reduce time, costs, and errors in implementing the measures, initiatives, and projects that best suit Russian reality. Thanks to these recommendations, people with disabilities will not feel deprived, vacation will no longer be associated with overcoming the obstacle course. In addition, people with disabilities will have a large number of places to visit.

7.1 Research limitations

“For all the value of social research, it should be recognized that it has its limits. One cannot study everything” (Flick, 2015, p. 211). It is better to consider any problem of research in a complex way, since any method of research does not exclude limitations. The following are the limitations of this study:

- Time limitation, due to Pandemic situation: taking into account that there was a time limit for this work, the study was limited to twelve interview participants.
- Participants' limitation: participants with similar movement constraints were selected for the study. On the one hand, this allowed studying the travel experience of wheelchair users more deeply. On the other hand, it did not allow to study the travel experience of other types of disabilities. Due to time limits, it

could lead to difficulties related to data analysis since the interviews generated a large amount of data.

- Place limitation: the geographical and climatic features of the country limit the choice of cities for tourists to visit. This affected the sample of cities for analysis.

7.2 Future Research Recommendations

In case of further research of this topic, it is recommended to interview more research participants and to diversify the sample: to select the participants from different cities and with other categories of disability. A larger number of participants from different cities would also allow more diverse travel experience and get more information about the accessible environment in other places. For example, to cover people with hearing, vision, speech, mental and intellectual development disorders. The quantitative study with a larger sample can also be useful.

All the study participants had travel experience. This allowed to analyze their experience and how restrictions affect their desire to travel. People with disabilities who do not travel anywhere were not involved in this survey. This might also be interesting to include them in future researches to study what restrains these people from participating in tourism.

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions

1. Please provide the following information:

- 1.1 City of residence.
- 1.2 Information about family members.
- 1.3 Who of the family members works?
- 1.4 What is the age of the person with a disability?
- 1.5 What characterizes the family's member disability?
- 1.6 How often do you go on vacation in Russian regions?
- 1.7 What regions of Russia have you traveled to?
- 1.8 Who goes on a trip as a caregiver?

2. All questions below will relate to your travel experience. Based on your previous travel experience in Russia answer the following questions, please provide details:

- 2.1 When you visit a place that is well thought out for the disabled during your trip, do you have a desire to return there next time?
- 2.2 Will you recommend visiting this place (well thought out for the disabled) to other acquaintances with disabilities?
- 2.3 Which means of transportation did you use during the travel (to the destination, around the city, for visiting excursions). Did they meet the requirements for use by disabled people?
- 2.4 Which type of accommodation do you usually choose? Was your accommodation suitable for people with disabilities (availability of elevators, ramps, wide doorways, bathroom adapted, etc)?
- 2.5 What did you feel when faced with the lack of an accessible environment? How did it impact your trip and memories of the trip? Describe your feelings. Please, provide details.
- 2.6 Are you satisfied with the staff behavior who provide the services (in hotels, entertainments, restaurants, etc.)? Was the staff nice and friendly to you? Please rate it from 1 to 5, where 1 - not satisfied at all; 5 - fully satisfied?
- 2.7 What challenges did you encounter when an accessible environment was not provided. How do you overcome them?
- 2.8 Have you ever made changes or cancel your traveling plan or route due to the lack of an accessible environment? Please, provide an example.
- 2.9 What factors influence your choice of destination?

2.10 An accessible environment is a key factor for choosing a tourist destination. Please rate it from 1 to 5, where 1 - not important at all, 2 5 - the available environment is the key factor.

2.11 Will you go to the intended destination when you know in advance that there is no accessible environment?

2.12 Would you like to travel more often within Russia?

2.12.1 If you answered "yes", then what prevents you from traveling more often in the Russian regions?

2.12.2 If you answer "no" explain why?

2.13 Are you satisfied in general with the accessibility provided to you during your traveling in Russia? Please rate it from 1 to 5, where 1 - Not satisfied at all; 2 – Slightly Satisfied; 3 – Moderate; 4 – Satisfied; 5 - Extremely satisfied.

3. In your opinion, what improvements should be done in order to improve conditions of tourism for people with disabilities? What recommendations can you provide, be specific and provide details?