

## Marketing Research into Youth Tourist Preferences

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### Abstract

*The article contains the results of the marketing study of youth tourist preferences. The relevance of the study is determined by the growing need for youth tourism development as a promising direction for promoting regional tourist services.*

*The issue under consideration is as follows: what are the tourist preferences of youth in modern sociocultural conditions? The purpose of the study: describe the results of research into youth consumer preferences in the modern tourism service market. Results: the essence of youth tourism is revealed; the prerequisites are identified for popularizing youth tourism in the modern tourism service market; the results of the marketing study of youth tourist preferences in the tourism service market are presented. The results of the study may become a foundation for forming a strategy to create and promote a competitive tourist product for youth by developing a marketing complex of the territory.*

**Key-words:** Tourism, Youth, Youth Tourism, Consumer Preferences, Marketing Research, Tourist Product.

### 1. Introduction.

Relevance. An important place in the trend of socio-cultural processes of modern youth as a social-age group belongs to the integrative forms of its activity, including youth tourism. Youth

tourism is considered a promising area for promoting tourism services. The need for youth tourism development is determined by the special characteristics of young people – dynamism, cognitive activity, the ability to communicate in different environments, the need for affordable tourist services, open-mindedness, romanticism, lack of fastidiousness as well as the availability of free time and the desire to spend the free time with maximum benefit for oneself. This segment of the tourist market is characterized by an orientation towards pronounced needs determined by the age characteristics of young people. Some researchers have proven the connection between tourist mobility and the age of consumers as well as social status and marital status. Namely, there is an increased interest in active tourism among people aged 18–30.

As of 1 Jan. 2020, there are 21,436,258 people aged 18–30 living in Russia which is 14.6% of the total population of Russia (Federal State Statistics Service) [1].

Table 1 – Russian population aged 18–30 (compiled by the authors) [1]

Age, years	18–20	21–24	25–30
Population, people	4,035,944	5,580,731	11,819,583
Total, people	21,436,258		

Youth tourism today is assigned the roles of social and economic planes. From the perspective of the social component, this type of tourism is considered as a component of a healthy lifestyle, a type of rationally organized spare time, a factor of recreation and the acquisition of new life experiences. The economic format of the "youth tourism" phenomenon allows one to consider the latter as a factor in the investment attractiveness of regions, one of the conditions for the development of their socio-economic attractiveness. All this is an important prerequisite for studying the problem of youth tourism development as an important socio-economic content of the functioning of the entire tourism industry and regions [2]. It seems relevant to consider youth tourism as a socio-economic phenomenon that fully characterizes the patterns of young people's exploration of the surrounding sociocultural space within a certain framework, taking into account the achievements of civilization as well as the national-regional component.

The purpose of the study: conduct a marketing study of youth consumer preferences in the modern tourism service market.

The goals of the study: reveal the essence of youth tourism; justify the need to conduct a marketing study of youth consumer preferences in the modern tourism service market; provide the results of the study of consumer preferences in youth tourism.

Previous studies. Despite the variety of studies on the subject of youth tourism (A.V. Kamenets, O.A. Ribnik, A.I. Pogrebnoi, V.G. Minchenko, E.L. Zadneprovskaya, T.N. Poddubnaya, F.R. Khatit, S.V. Bulganina, K.V. Ananeva, N.S. Tyumina, Yu.G. Shutova, T.A. Dzhum, M.V. Ksenz, A.Yu. Stezel and others), however, the issues of development of this particular tourism market segment are not fully explored. The problem under study investigation in the plane of several sciences. In recent years, there has been a broad research reflection of the problem under consideration in the academic community. As fundamental materials, one can note: the works on the theoretical substantiation of the definition of "youth tourism"/ E.L. Zadneprovskaya, F.R. Khatit [2]; the works examining youth tourism as a segment of youth subculture, – O.A. Rybnyk, V.G. Minchenko, T.N. Poddubnaya, / E.L. Zadneprovskaya [3; 4]; research into youth tourism as a type of social tourism – A.V. Kamenets, L.I. Donskova, A.G. Redkin, O.V. Otto, A.A. Makarov, E.V. Myagkova [5; 6]; research into the regional aspects of youth tourism development – T.A. Dzhum, M.V. Ksenz, F.R. Khatit, A.Yu. Stezel (including based on public-private partnership) [7], A.I. Pogrebnoi et al. (including research into designing domestic tours for youth) [8]; D.V. Sidorova, A.A. Filobok, N.V. Ponomareva, T.A. Volkova (including the issues of youth tourism development in Russia and the Krasnodar Region) [9]. Individual elements of marketing studies in relation to the content of youth tourism have been expounded by S.V. Bulganina, K.V. Ananeva, N.S. Tyumina, Yu.G. Shutova, N.S. Komleva, V.A. Fomenko [10; 11].

It is worth noting that within the framework of marketing research into the tourism market, sufficient attention was paid to such aspects as the study of youth tourism products, means of its promotion and consumer preferences. Meanwhile, there has been no comprehensive research of the tourism services market focused specifically on the youth segment. We believe that a reason for this is the focus of most tourist enterprises on wealthier clients (youth tourism is considered economically unprofitable) as well as other directions of a tourist destination, including outbound tourism.

## **2. Methods.**

The theoretical framework of the study consists of academic publications by Russian and foreign scholars, the information framework is open statistical data on the Internet. For the study, we

used information obtained based on primary and secondary data. We used the method of collecting primary information – a questionnaire. The main working tool was a specially developed questionnaire. We processed and analyzed data using standard processing software Statistika, Excel, Yandex.Forms service. The statistical method of one-way analysis of variance was used. The report on the results is presented in the form of graphs, figures, tables and comments thereto.

### **3. Results and Discussion.**

In the study by S.V. Bulganina et al., the following definition is given: "youth tourism should be understood as a special type of travel for a group of people united by a common goal of organizing recreation" [10]. A.V. Kamenets examines this type of tourism through the prism of its functional capabilities, namely the ability to satisfy a wide range of leisure needs, actualize historical memory through the popularization of the historical and cultural heritage of the region, expanding horizons, humanistic thinking and social contacts, patriotic education and rational organization of spare time [5]. In general, scholars define youth tourism as a type of tourist activity aimed at meeting the needs of the population under 30. A similar approach is used in regulatory documents (The Tourism Development Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period until 2035, the Fundamentals of the state youth policy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025, etc.) that contain requirements for the involvement of young people in events related to the popularization of the country's historical heritage, development of infrastructure ensuring the affordability of the youth tourism segment and increasing the investment attractiveness of regions for the development of domestic youth tourism. The relevance of the development of this type of tourism S.V. Bulganina et al. see in the possibility of traveling across the territory of Russia, the cost-effectiveness of recreation, making new acquaintances and making friends, improving health, broadening one's horizons, preparing for emergencies and receiving discounts on group trips [10]. Scholars highlight the benefits associated with the development of youth tourism, namely: 1) the impact of the seasonality effect; 2) the spread of tourism to new territories; 3) the stability of the tourism market; 4) development of innovative processes and technologies; 5) the effect of impressions from the services received [6; 9; 12].

It is well-known that tourism is a resource for the socio-economic development of regions. Therefore, conducting a proper marketing study allows one to determine the exact areas of tourism activities within which the achievement of the set goals becomes possible with minimal risk. Marketing research in tourism is an informative basis for making further strategic decisions for the

development of the tourism policy of the territories and reducing the risk [13]. At the same time, these studies are the most important tool for research and social policy aimed at strengthening the regional self-identification of residents and increasing their involvement in the implementation of social programs. The objects of marketing research can be both certain territories (region) and certain types of services (tourist). The tourist resources of the territory constitute the tourist potential and the tourism infrastructure which determines the importance of developing a marketing complex of the territory and the consumers of the tourist territory are tourists, potential investors, enterprises of the tourism industry and government bodies.

The segment is competitive if more complete information about the segment is provided for customers and offers are based on the possession of the most complete and reliable information about the real and potential market of consumers, their capabilities, purchasing power, wishes and preferences. Marketing research in the tourism industry allows one to identify services for which there is an increased demand; understand and establish the factors influencing the decision to purchase a tourist service; understand the logic of a consumer purchasing a particular tourist service; find sources of information allowing one to learn about the tourist offer; simulate customer feedback and forecast the development of this segment [14].

Based on this, we have put forward the following working hypotheses:

the youth tourism market in the regions is not fully developed;

the features of the category of consumers under study are poorly investigated;

young people are characterized by increased tourist activity which remains not implemented properly;

the youth tourism market needs a specific tourist product developed based on consumer preferences;

the cost of a tourist product aimed at young people should correlate with the level of consumer purchasing power.

To study the tourist preferences of modern youth, we conducted an online survey from Oct. to Dec. 2020. The Yandex. Forms service was used. The survey was carried out by distributing a link to the questionnaire via the Internet as well as by telephone. The questionnaire included 12 questions, the analysis of the answers to which allowed one to accumulate information on the personal characteristics of the respondents, the frequency of using tourist services, the dominant factors of consumer choice, preferences for types of recreation and territories and the main channels for

purchasing tourist services. There were 5,600 participants in the survey – mainly students and young people of the Krasnodar Region aged 18–30. The sample was random, without repetitions. The representativeness of the sample was ensured by a random selection procedure. The results were processed using the Yandex. Forms service, Microsoft Excel, and the statistical method of one-way analysis of variance. The survey made it possible to reveal the consumer preferences of young people in tourism services. Below are the results of the survey.

Most respondents (94.8%) were people aged 18–25, the remaining 5.2% were aged 26–30 (Figure 1). An insignificant gender difference in the number of respondents was identified – 53.0% were women, 47.0% were men, which generally confirms the gender distribution of the population (Figure 2).

Figure 1 – Respondent age (compiled by the authors)

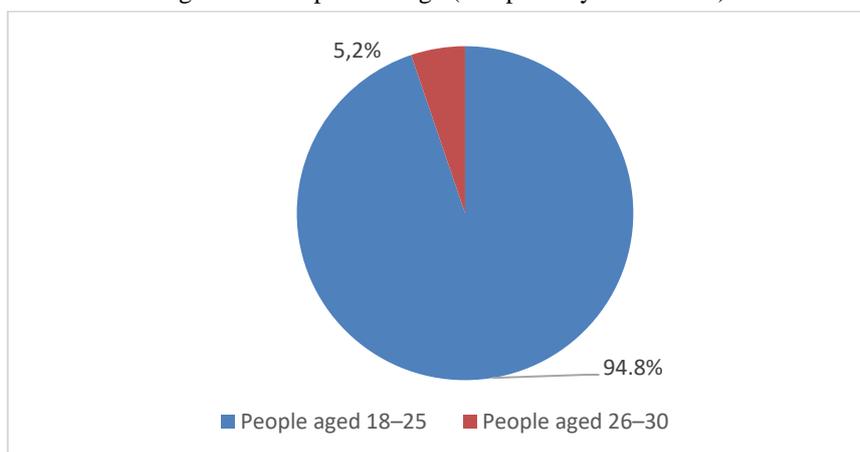


Figure 2 – Respondent gender (compiled by the authors)

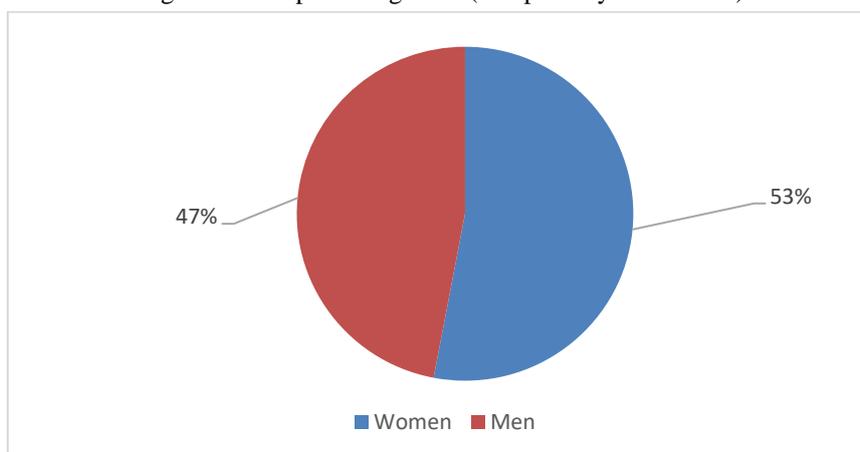
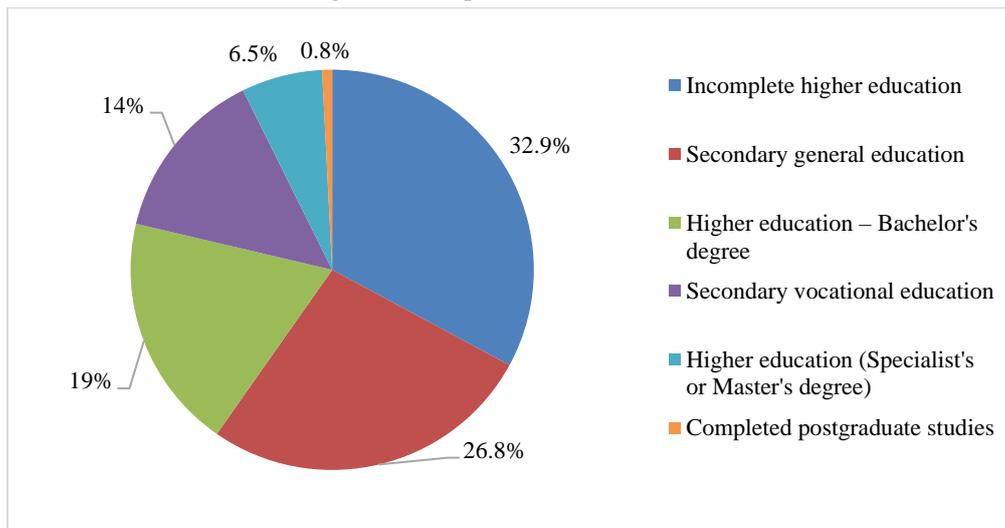


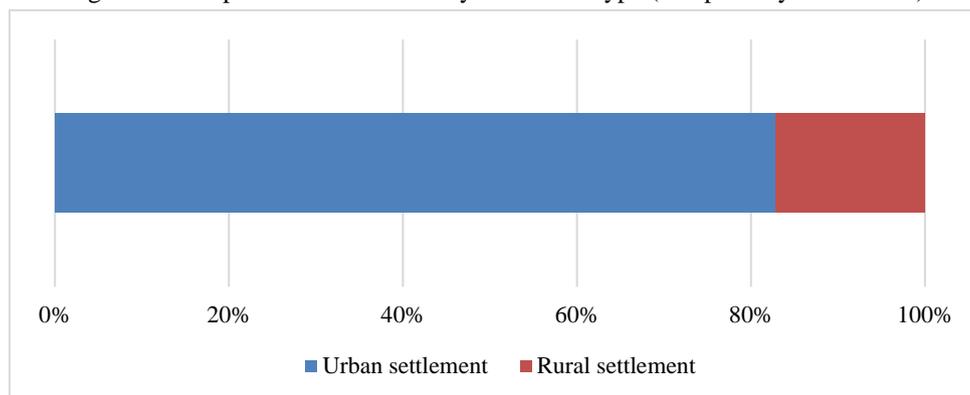
Figure 3 shows respondents by education level. The figure shows that there are more respondents with incomplete higher education (32.9%), followed by respondents with secondary general education (26.8%), higher education – bachelor's degree (19.0%), secondary vocational education (14.0%). The minority (6.5%) of respondents have higher education (specialist's or master's degree), 0.8% completed postgraduate studies. Consequently, considering the socio-demographic criterion, university students are the main consumers of tourism services among young people.

Figure 3 – Respondent education level



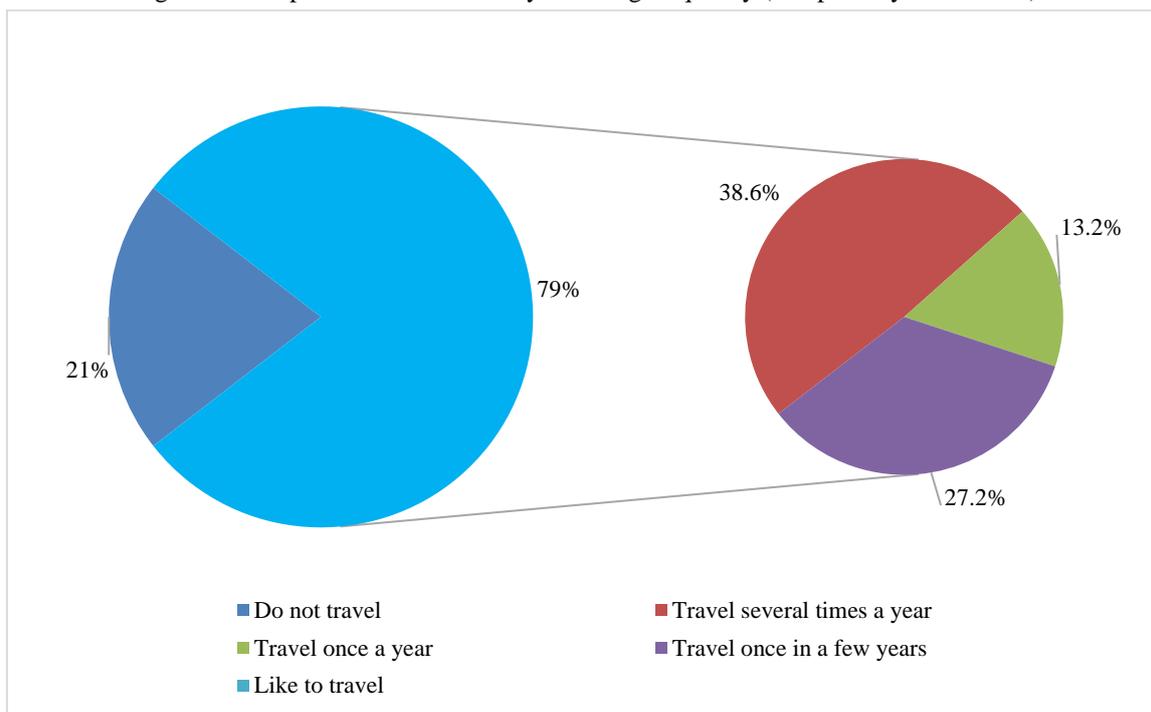
Most respondents were from urban settlements (82.8%), the others were from rural settlements (17.2%) (Figure 4).

Figure 4 – Respondent distribution by settlement type (compiled by the authors)



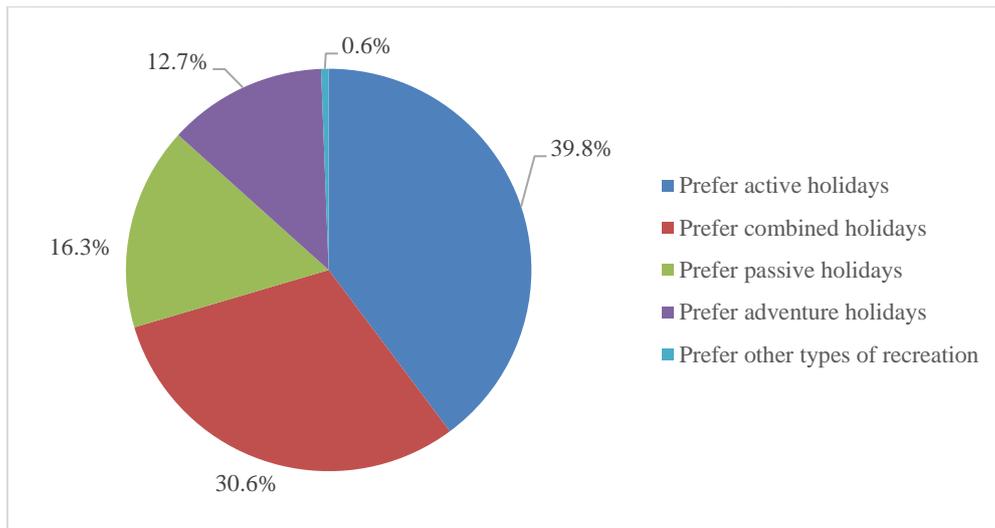
The survey revealed that most young people liked to travel (79.0%). By frequency of travel, the respondents were distributed as follows: 38.6% traveled several times a year, 27.2% traveled once a year, 13.2% traveled once in several years and 21.0% indicated that they did not travel (Figure 5)

Figure 5 – Respondent distribution by traveling frequency (compiled by the authors)



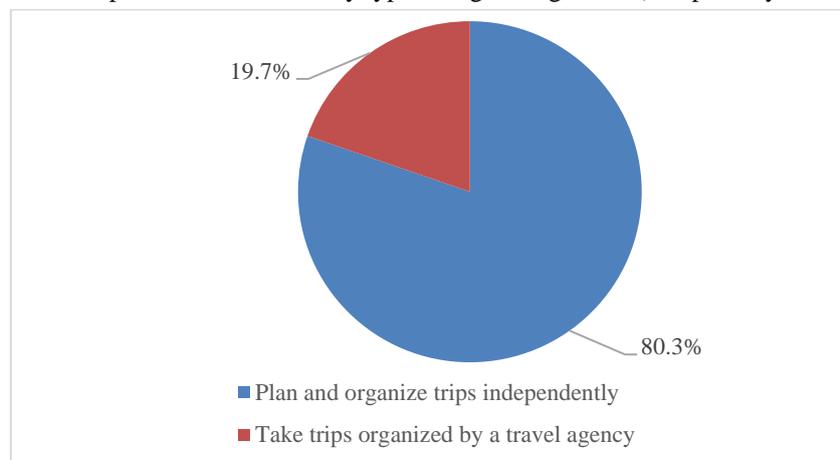
Differentiation in the preferences of the types of recreation was identified. Out of all the respondents, 39.8% prefer active holidays, 30.6% – combined holidays, 16.3% passive, 12.7% prefer adventure holidays, the rest (0.6%) indicated that they preferred other types of recreation (sleep, watching a movie, reading books, e-sports, airsoft, fishing, hunting, business trips, etc.) (Figure 6).

Figure 6 – Respondent distribution by preferred types of recreation (compiled by the authors)



Most young people (80.3%) plan and organize trips on their own. Only a small part of the respondents (19.7%) takes trips organized by a travel agency (Figure 7).

Figure 7 – Respondent distribution by type of organizing travel (compiled by the authors)



Moreover, we identified the optimal travel times (Figure 8): 53.3% of respondents prefer trips that last three to seven days, 27.1% prefer longer trips, the remaining 19.6% are willing to spend one to three days on a trip.

Figure 8 – Optimal trip length (compiled by the authors)

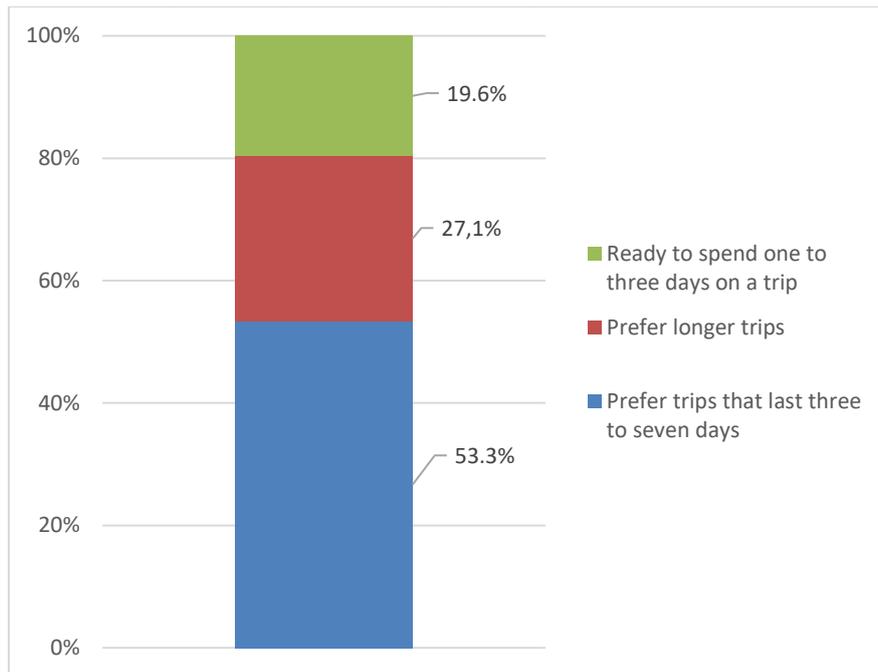
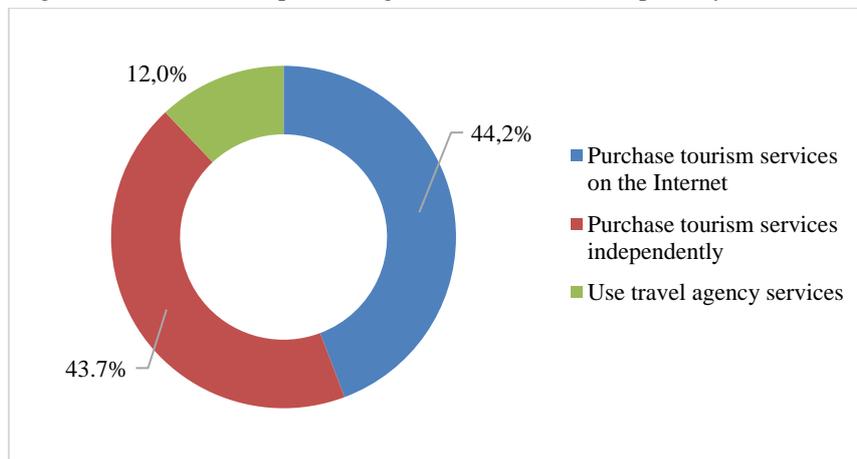


Figure 9 shows the possible channels for acquiring tourism services. Young people mainly use two channels for acquiring travel services – on the Internet and independently, which amounted to 44.2% and 43.7%, respectively. Travel agency services are used by only 12.0% of young people.

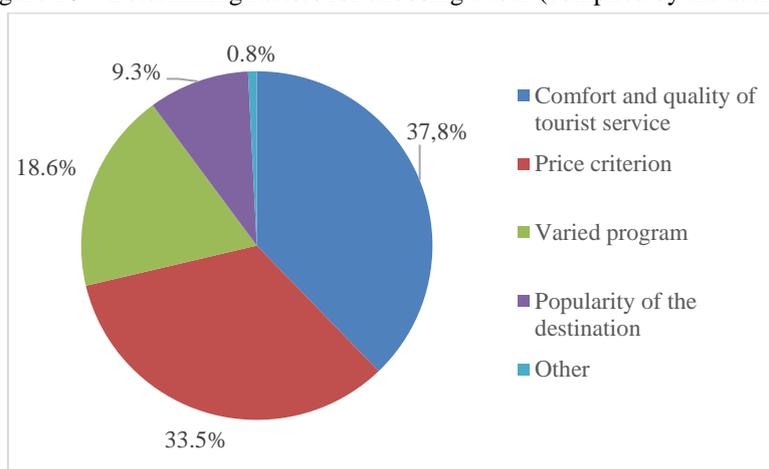
Figure 9 – Channels for purchasing tourism services (compiled by the authors)



Young people's choice of a tour is influenced by the following factors (Figure 10): 37.8% indicated the criterion of comfort and quality of tourist service, 33.5% – the price criterion, 18.6% – a varied program, 9.3% – the popularity of the destination. Only 0.8% named among the determining

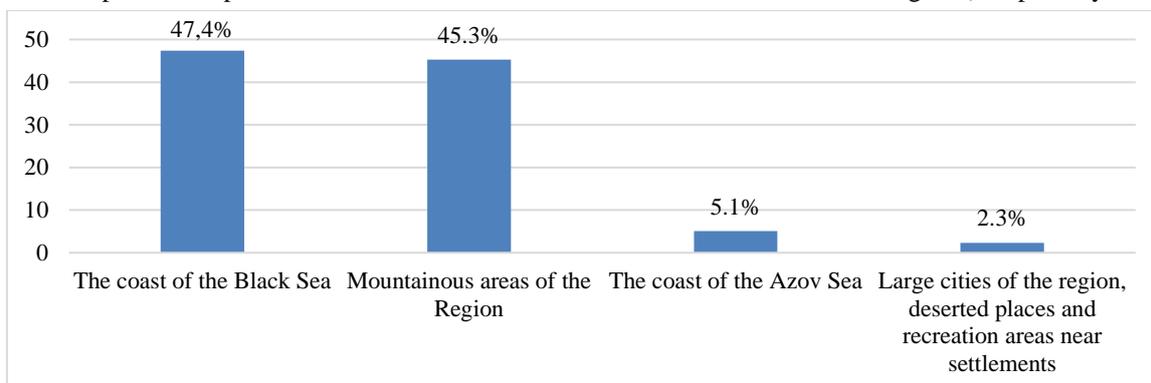
factors a picturesque landscape, an interesting program, a good company of tourists, transport accessibility, the presence of a competitive spirit, and the compliance of the tour with one's own interests. As one can see, young people give preference to two criteria to a greater extent – comfort and quality of tourist services and the price of a tourism product.

Figure 10 – Determining factors for choosing a tour (compiled by the authors)



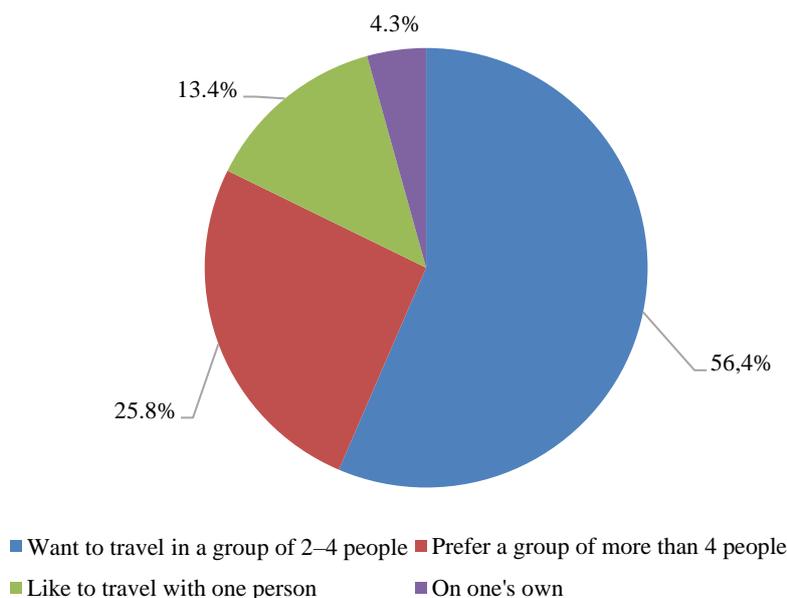
Among the most attractive tourist areas, the respondents noted the Black Sea coast (47.4%) and mountainous areas of the Region (45.3%). The coast of the Azov Sea was chosen by 5.1% of young people. A small share of young people (2.3%) preferred large cities of the region, deserted places and recreation areas near settlements (Figure 11). This information must be considered at the regional level to develop popular directions of domestic youth tourism.

Figure 11 – Respondents' opinions on the attractiveness of tourist areas of the Krasnodar region (compiled by the authors)



Young people's tourist preferences include a desire to travel in a group. Most respondents (56.4%) indicated a desire to travel in a group of 2–4 people; 25.8% prefer a group of more than 4 people; 13.4% like to travel with one person, the rest (4.3%) prefer to travel on their own (Figure 12). Therefore, it can be argued that young people prefer group tours.

Figure 12 – The choice of trip companions (compiled by the authors)



The application of methods of mathematical statistics (statistical method of one-way analysis of variance) [15; 16] made it possible to identify dependencies between the examined variables. Three factors were considered based on the test results (how the respondent answered questions about quality, price and travel program). To carry out a one-way analysis of variance, the independent variable should take not one but several values which are called the gradations of the independent variable. A one-way analysis of variance is considered on the example of calculating the influence of the age of respondents on the selected characteristics of a tourist trip (Table 1). The goal was to determine how the age criterion (k) affected the selected quality, price and program (initial data  $X_{ij}$ ). To carry out the analysis, the results of the questionnaire survey were grouped for each age according to the number of observations (n).

Table 2 – The initial data for calculations of the one-way analysis of variance

Age (k)	Initial data $X_{ij}$	Number of observations n	Sum by variant	Sum of squares by variant	Mean by variant
18–25	18,6;33,5;39, 8	3	91.9	3,052.25	30.63
26–30	37,8;9,3;30, 6	3	77.7	2,451.69	25.9
Total:		6	169.6	5,503.94	56.53

Based on the initial data, the sum by variant for each group of respondents, the sum of squares by variant, as well as the mean by variant in each group were calculated. Further necessary calculations were carried out in the Statistical 12 software package. The output data on the factorial and residual variance made it possible to evaluate the influence of the age criterion on the quality, price and program of the selected tourist product by different ages of the respondents. The variance amounted to 73.3%. Thus, younger people (18–25 years old) tend to prefer low-quality services, cheap tours, and a varied program. Older young people (26–30 years old) prefer comfort, the corresponding price category and the ability to independently plan/adjust the tour program. At the same time, the contribution of the residual variance due to random influences is 26.7%.

#### 4. Findings.

The socio-economic study allowed one to formulate the following conclusions.

Youth tourism is a type of tourism activity aimed at meeting the needs of people under 30.

Young people belong to a relatively less demanding category of consumers who are less interested in the high quality of tourist services, more in the ergonomics, affordable prices, and a varied program that meets their age needs.

The main constraining factors for the development of youth tourism are lack of funding, the need to plan other more important, in the respondents' opinion, items of expenditure (tuition fees, combining work with studies, family support, etc.), as well as little spare time associated with time constraints due to the education process. This allows one to conclude the seasonality of youth tourism, a great demand for which is possible during the vacation period.

Youth tourism is predominantly a collective type of travel, so group tours are in demand.

Young people prefer combined types of tourism that include both passive and active tourism, educational and sports tourism, guided tours and game elements (airsoft).

Young people's consumer preferences also include the desire to travel more than twice a year was; planning and organizing trips independently and not through travel agencies; not very long trips (from three but not more than seven days); using the Internet as the main channel for purchasing travel services; young people consider the seaside and mountainous areas to be the most attractive.

## 5. Conclusion.

At the same time, the problem of popularizing tourist activities among the youth requires further development. In the context of socio-cultural transformation, the advantage of travel becomes obvious. The development of new tourist destinations focused on the needs of young people, the promotion of youth tours in the domestic market can be massively in demand in the realities of tourism practice, provided that the tourist preferences of the studied category of consumers are considered.

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