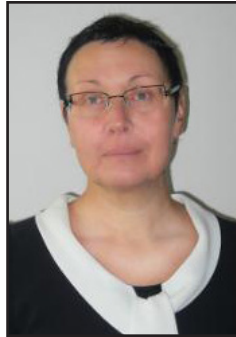




Volunteering to Help People with Disabilities and Less Mobile People in Transport Higher Education Institutions



Nadezhda V. GRUVER



Olga M. ZEMLINA



Regina K. NAZAROVA

Gruver, Nadezhda V., Institute of Legislation and Comparative Law under the Government of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russia.

Zemlina, Olga M., Russian University of Transport, Moscow, Russia.

Nazarova, Regina K., Russian University of Transport, Moscow, Russia.*

ABSTRACT

Topical issues of involving students at transport universities (based on the example of Russian University of Transport) in volunteer activities, in assistance for people with disabilities and less mobile people at transport facilities are examined using the methods of the system-legal approach and tools of empirical interviews.

The objective of the study was to examine the impact of organisation of volunteer movement on solving of the University tasks and on motivation of the students, particularly considering the sustainable development goals.

The attention has been focused on the analysis of the mechanism and methods of implementing the capacity of volunteer movement, from the point of view of possibilities of forming socially significant qualities and value orientations in students that correspond to the needs of society and development of the transport complex, as well as the skills of legal culture and behaviour of future transport employees.

A conclusion is drawn about the need to use the opportunities of volunteering as a means of self-development of the student's personality.

The study was particularly dedicated to examining the experience of the Resource Training and Methodological Centre for Training Disabled Persons and Persons with Disabilities created and operating in Russian University of Transport, main directions of increasing the efficiency of activities to create necessary conditions for accessibility of higher education for persons with disabilities in transport universities.

Social survey allowed to reveal and assess the correlation of motivation and interest of participants in volunteer movement in training on the programs offered at Russian University of Transport and in participating in volunteering since most important incentives spread among the students comprise desire to help people to feel needed, as well as the desire to master new skills and acquire competences.

Keywords: transport-related education, volunteering, personal self-development, resource centre, assistance to disabled people and less mobile people, transport, mobility, youth movement, sustainable development.

*Information about the authors:

Gruver, Nadezhda V. – Head of the Division of Master's studies of the Institute of Legislation and Comparative Law under the Government of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russia, gruver511@mail.ru.

Zemlina, Olga M. – Ph.D. (Law), Associate Professor at the Department of Transport Law of Russian University of Transport, Moscow, Russia, Zemlin.Aldr@yandex.ru.

Nazarova, Regina K. – Specialist of the Resource Educational and Methodological Centre for Training of Disabled People and Persons with Disabilities of Russian University of Transport, Moscow, Russia, regina-nazarova@rambler.ru.

Article received 10.12.2020, updated 05.02.2021, accepted 26.02.2021.

For the original Russian text of the article please see p. 246.

INTRODUCTION

UN Sustainable Development Goals and the activity of universities

The contribution of higher educational institutions to achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) is particularly important in the perspective of the modern global developments of education. This task is complex. The UN SDG comprise both the goal 4 directly related to development of education and providing for ensuring «inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all»¹, and a set of other goals. University as large organisation as well as social institution can make a specific contribution to their achievement. Recently adopted Impact ranking of universities within the system of Times Higher Education rankings is quite eloquent in that context. Its indicators reflect different aspects of university activity corresponding to the tasks within the framework of the UN SDG. They include, e.g., indicator 10 (reduced inequalities), Its metrics comprise evaluation of proportion of students with disabilities, accessible facilities for people with disabilities, support services for people with disabilities². Other leading global ranking agency QS Quacquarelli Symonds edits special reports dedicated to that topic.

A rather wide range of scientific literature reflects different aspects of understanding of contribution of universities to achievement of the SDG as well as of integral elements and processes of sustainable development of the universities themselves. Without assigning ourselves with a task of developing any more or less detailed review of relevant publications in the present article, it is possible to note exclusively as an example the diversity of topics studied in those publications. They include general approaches to the concept of sustainable university [1–2], system relationship of sustainable development with increasing quality of education [3], system of indicators [4], and rather a great number of more specific approaches regarding, e.g., sustainable mobility in university campus [5]. Most approaches based on generalised features of universities and particular successful situational decisions merit the attention and adapted implementation.

The issues of using the integration potential of volunteer activity in the educational environment in the process of professional training of students in educational organisations since they are of great importance predetermined the interest of several authors to this problem [6–7; 8, pp. 49–57].

Regarding the field of transport law, scientists are particularly interested in such aspects as ensuring transport security [9–11], education of legal culture and raising professional competence of future transport employees [12, pp. 4961–4965; 13, pp. 403–411], as well as assistance to people with disabilities and less mobile people at transport facilities and in vehicles [7; 14], including with involvement of student volunteers. In this perspective, particular interest may be paid to the monograph prepared with participation of representatives of the scientific school «Transport Law», the authors of which developed, scientifically substantiated and carried out an experimental test of a designed model of the process of implementing the integration potential of volunteer activity, followed by definition of the organisational and pedagogical conditions for its successful functioning in educational environment of the university [7, pp. 8–9].

Problem statement and the objective of the research

Based on the above it seems useful to analyse the expertise of the Russian University of Transport which is sufficiently unique. It concerns, first, creation of conditions for equal access to education of people with disabilities and of less mobile people, and second, study of the features of the university as a reason for student volunteering outside the university. It is important to show that such an activity is inherent in training process, allowing obtaining better education.

The system nature of such an approach is predetermined by the specific profiling of the University. Within the higher education system in Russia there are universities with sectoral or industry's specifics that successfully train future employees, e.g., for national health system, agriculture, judicial system, prosecutor's offices, etc. Russian University of Transport is the leading university training specialist for transport and transportation sector. This predetermines focusing its activity on solution of tasks of the transport and transportation sector, e.g., the industry of future employment of graduates. The task to ensure access of less mobile people and people with disabilities to transportation services is from social point of view among key goals of transport industry. It is useful to analyse in the article the degree of motivation of future transport employees, appealed to participate in its achievement as part of the staff of the industry, to participate in its achievement just now, while been trained, particularly through volunteering. So the generalised objective of the study is to examine the impact of the volunteering on the fulfilment of the tasks of the university and on the implementation of relevant motivation of the students, considering particularly the achievement of sustainable development goals.

¹ UN Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 4. [Electronic resource]: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4>. Last accessed 05.02.2021.

² Methodology of THE Impact ranking. [Electronic resource]: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/impact-rankings-2021-reduced-inequalities-sdg-10-methodology>. Last accessed 05.02.2021.

RESULTS

Volunteer movement and social support to disabled people

It is quite reasonably noted that «volunteer activity (volunteer movement) is an integral element of modern society, since in its most general form it is a gratuitous activity aimed at serving people, society, and the state. In conditions when state bodies are not able to independently cope with social problems under the conditions of an increase in the number of those in need of social assistance, the role of charitable activities increases» [14, p. 6].

In the process of volunteering, a person improves morally, gets knowledge in communication, interaction, cooperation, and humanity. Since volunteering is active and creative, young people get the opportunity to express themselves, help to form an attitude to what is happening around, including in political life, to develop an active civic position. The problem of young people with disabilities and families with people with disabilities remains a serious problem of the social security of young people.

It is obvious that social support for the disabled, low-income, unemployed is undoubtedly humane and socially significant. In this regard, charitable organisations hold various events aimed at providing material assistance, medical and social rehabilitation of the needy, unemployed, persons in need of care, both one-time (charity events, holidays, celebrations) and permanent (organisation of charitable canteens for large, single-parent families, places for temporary stay of persons without housing, organisation of children's summer camps, sanatoriums, etc.). Scientific research on environmental problems, implementation of special programs for prevention of natural disasters and various types of disasters, creation of laboratories for the study of natural phenomena are being organised. Fundraising is carried out in favour of persons affected by catastrophes and natural disasters, provision of medical, psychological assistance, clothing, food, jobs, etc. is organised [15].

Today in Russia there are 10 million people with disabilities (about 7 % of the population). There are a lot of young people and children among them. Along with the growth in the number of disabled people, there are tendencies of qualitative changes in their population. The society is concerned about the increase in the number of disabled people among people of working age, they make up 45 % of the number of citizens initially recognised as disabled. It is also alarming that, according to the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation, 50 thousand children are born in Russia every year who are disabled since childhood. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of disabled people due to military trauma. People with disabilities and families with disabled people (the presence of a disabled person in a family dramatically reduces its standard of living) are in our country one of the most deprived social groups [6].

It is quite obvious that the issues of volunteering, the degree of effectiveness of its organisation and interaction of volunteer organisations with government bodies have acquired particular relevance in the face of emergence of the threat of the spread of a new coronavirus infection (COVID-19), which determined the need to take particularly stringent management measures using methods and means of public legal regulation. The experience of transportation sector in a difficult epidemiological situation shows the particular importance of a correct organisation of the system work of government bodies [16], of their interaction with charitable organisations, participation of volunteers in providing assistance to less mobile groups of people in the context of inevitable introduction of restrictions on movement of individuals [17].

It should be noted that the Russian Federation is a party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and is bound to ensure accessibility of students with disabilities to higher education. The organisation of a network of resource and methodological centres for training people with disabilities and persons with disabilities (RUMC) on the basis of Russian universities results from fulfilment of obligations assumed by the Russian Federation in connection with signing in 2006 and ratification in 2008 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In Russia, as a country party to the Convention, the necessary conditions must be created to eliminate any obstacles to people with disabilities to ensure their right to receive education and educational services at all levels [18].

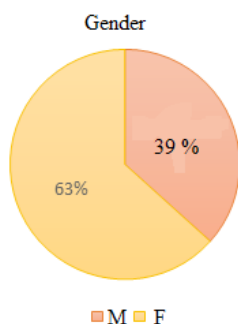
Resource Educational and Methodological Centre

There is a Resource Educational and Methodological Centre for the Training of Disabled People and Persons with Disabilities (RUMC) within the Russian University of Transport, which ensures creation of special conditions for accessibility of higher education for people with disabilities, including socio-cultural rehabilitation and assistance in employment of graduates.

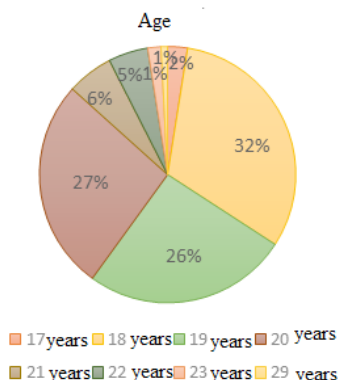
In the Russian Federation, as indicated above, program to create RUMC based on Russian universities was launched in 2016. The RUMC was created as a structural unit of the university with the aim of solving the problem of coordination, methodological, personnel and organisational support of the educational process for people with disabilities³. According to the regulation governing its activity, the RUMC is the basic structure that supports development of competencies in the field of teaching students with disabilities, including adapted educational programs and has model images of creating special educational conditions for the

³ Resource Educational and Methodological Centre for the Training of Disabled People and Persons with Disabilities (in Russian) [Electronic resource]: <https://www.mii.ru/depts/26244>. Last accessed 05.02.2021.





Pic. 1. Gender distribution of volunteers (respondents).



Pic. 2. Age distribution of respondents.

provision of educational services of higher education for students with disabilities of various nosological groups.

The main activities of the RUMC are:

- Monitoring the activities of professional educational organisations and educational institutions of higher education on admission of persons with disabilities, on teaching students with disabilities and training for students with disabilities, on creation of special conditions for education, employment.

- Conducting seminars (webinars) for teachers and parents on vocational guidance and receiving services of secondary vocational and higher education for students with disabilities.

- Development of requirements for conditions for obtaining higher education for persons with disabilities, considering various nosological groups.

- Development of requirements for the provision of educational services for obtaining secondary vocational education for persons with disabilities and disabilities, considering various nosological groups.

- Development of websites on the Internet that provide information support regarding possibilities of obtaining educational services of secondary vocational, higher education and vocational training in the Russian Federation for students with disabilities.

Volunteering: social survey

It is worth noting that volunteers from among the students of transport universities were trained in the skills of providing situational assistance to students with disabilities on the basis of the RUMC.

In the process of training, students mastered the ethics of communication and the basic methods of providing situational assistance to students with disabilities, considering various nosologies, learned to use special assistive equipment and technical devices. Much attention was paid to the rules for interacting with students with disabilities and ensuring safety when providing assistance.

To comprehend the input conditions premises and final results of training of volunteers, as well as to identify the motives of students' personal interest in learning, a survey was carried out to analyse how and from view the «image» of the volunteer is developing. As the object of the study, a sample was taken from the number of students at Russian University of Transport who were trained in 2020 on the basis of the RUMC on the programs (topics): «Introduction to providing situational assistance to people with disabilities», «Ethics of communication with various categories of persons with disabilities», «The needs of various categories of people with disabilities in situational assistance». In total, the opinion of 120 people from among the volunteers of Russian University of Transport at the age of 17 to 29 was analysed. All survey participants were divided into four status groups: bachelor, specialist, master, and Ph.D. students. It should be noted that mostly girls (63 % of the total number of respondents) are trained as volunteers (Pic. 1).

Pic. 12 shows the main parameters of the studied sample based on the age indicators, showing that 85 % of the total number of respondents were young people aged 18–20 years.

Pic. 3 shows the results of processing the sample data according to professional groups. Since all the volunteers were students of Russian University of Transport, it was practicable to use a verified and clear criterion of appurtenance of respondents to one of 6 most large institutes of the University, as each of them has its own specialisation. The initial results showed that most present are the volunteers from among the students in technical sciences (Institute of transport vehicles and control systems (ITTSU) – 33 %, Institute of management, control and digital technology (IMDT) – 31 %, Institute of track, construction and structures (ITCS) – 8 %), less present were students of Law institute (LI) – 15 %, Institute of Economics and Finance (IEF) – 9 %, Institute of international transport communications (IITC) – 4 %. Nevertheless, based in the ratio of the number of volunteers to the total number of students at each institute the results should be adjusted. Without presenting detailed analysis, it should be noted that all the institutes are represented in an even way, that proves similar level of motivation of the students at the University regarding volunteering.

It should be also noted that all training courses in the above institutes are focused on acquiring skills and competences, qualifications intended for employment in transport and transportation sector.

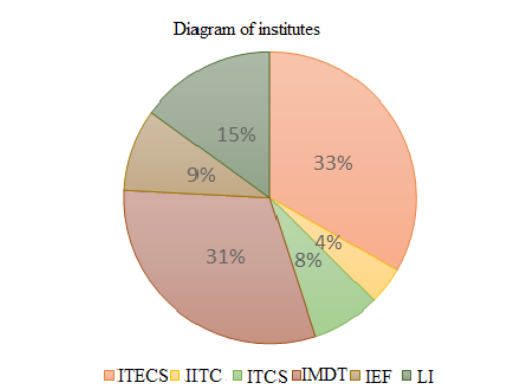
The students studying on budget [state sponsored, free study] and contract [fees are paid by the students] basis were almost equally represented (49 % of volunteers don't pay for studies). Based on the share of contractual students within the total number of students, we might conclude that volunteering is more attractive for those studying on budget basis (the reasons should be additionally examined, as a hypothesis that might be wrong, it can be supposed that contractual students have busier timetable since they might combine studies with job or other forms of employment). But the cleavage is not in any case considerable.

As part of the study, all respondents were interviewed on their motivation and interest in learning on this topic. Based on the answers received, we can conclude that, first, students are driven by the desire to help people feel needed. The second most mentioned driver was development of new skills and acquisition of competences that may be useful in the future. Third frequent answer was associated with the need for the desire to self-actualise, as well as to share one's own experience with others. The respondents noted the importance of conducting such training lectures and suggested that they be implemented in the future, supplementing the materials, using modern technologies, interactive training programs, as well as planning practical exercises with the subsequent issuance of certificates of course completion to persons who have mastered the program.

Volunteering regarding help to the people with disabilities at the transport facilities

Regarding practices of volunteering of the students of transport educational organisations to provide assistance at transport infrastructure facilities, it should be noted that, e.g., at Russian University of Transport there is a volunteer movement, which is a voluntary, consolidated, socially useful activity of self-governing, open associations of students that contribute to social personality development, stimulate its creative initiative and creativity. The purpose of the university's volunteer movement is to form an active social and civic position among university youth, develop such personal qualities as mercy, compassion, willingness to serve society, people in difficult life situations, sick, lonely and disabled people free of charge. At the same time, joint work with Volunteer Movement Centres, departments and services of public authorities is envisaged to provide, inter alia, practical assistance to persons with disabilities.

In our opinion, the most promising and interesting is the experience of the Centre for Volunteer Movement «On the Way of Good», created



Pic. 3. Distribution of volunteers (respondents) by institutes.

at the Institute of Transport Vehicles and Control Systems of Russian University of Transport. The profile of volunteer activities of the centre presumes work with wheelchair users and persons with disabilities. Representatives of the centre conduct joint activity in cooperation with the Association of Youth Disabled Organizations – AMIO. The Volunteering Centre «Always Nearby» of Law Institute also carries out social volunteering aimed at helping people with disabilities and less mobile people.

CONCLUSIONS

The brief analysis of some aspects of organisation of volunteer movement, critical reflection on the experience of volunteering at Russian University of Transport made it possible to draw certain conclusions regarding further improving the work of the Resource Centre, including to provide volunteer assistance to less mobile passengers and passengers with disabilities at transport facilities involving volunteer students.

The social survey allowed to reveal and assess the correlation of motivation and interest of volunteers in learning on topics offered by Russian University of Transport and in participating in volunteer movement since most important incentives for students are associated with the desire to help people feel needed, as well as with the desire to acquire new skills and competences. The students whose professional career will be linked to transport sector are most interested in learning on topics of assistance to disabled people. It confirms the hypothesis on profession-driven motivation to this kind of volunteering. In turn, participation in volunteering increases the motivation to be employed in transport sector since transport acts as a socially oriented industry that seems to be incentive for future employees.

The analysis presented in the article, including social survey held for the first time, as well as many issues concerned require, in our opinion, further research considering development of volunteer movement of transport universities' students.



The results of further research through better understanding of the reasons and causes of motivation of student volunteers, improved organisation and legal support of their socially significant activity will allow to develop even more efficient volunteering aimed at assisting people with disabilities and less mobile people.

REFERENCES

1. Lukman, R., Glavic, P. What are the key elements of a sustainable university? *Clean Techn Environ Policy*, 2007, Vol. 9, pp. 103–114. DOI: 10.1007/s10098-006-0070-7. Last accessed 05.02.2021.
2. Martins, N., Gouveia, J. B., Amaral, L. P. Quest for a sustainable university: a review. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 2015, Vol. 16, No. 2. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSHE-02-2013-0017>. Last accessed 05.02.2021.
3. Hussain, T., Eskildsen, J., Edgeman, R., Ismail, M., Shoukry, A. M., Gani, S. Imperatives of Sustainable University Excellence: A Conceptual Framework. *Sustainability*, 2019, Vol. 11, 5242. DOI:10.3390/su11195242. Last accessed 05.02.2021.
4. Findler, F., Schönherr, N., Lozano, R., Stacherl, B. Assessing the Impacts of Higher Education Institutions on Sustainable Development – An Analysis of Tools and Indicators. *Sustainability*, 2019, Vol. 11(1), 59. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11010059>. Last accessed 05.02.2021.
5. Dehghanmongabadi, A., Hoşkara, S. Challenges of Promoting Sustainable Mobility on University Campuses: The Case of Eastern Mediterranean University. *Sustainability*, 2018, Vol. 10(12), 4842. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su10124842>. Last accessed 05.02.2021.
6. Gruver, N. V. Modelling the activities of the volunteer centre in the institution of higher professional education [*Modelirovanie deyatelnosti volonterskogo tsentra v uchrezhdenii vysshego professionalnogo obrazovaniya*]. *Modern problems of science and education*, 2017, Iss. 2. [Electronic resource]: <https://science-education.ru/pdf/2017/2/26210.pdf>. Last accessed 05.02.2021.
7. Gruver, N. V., Zemlin, A. I., Kholikov, I. V. Legal problems and organizational and pedagogical conditions for implementation of the integration potential of volunteering in the process of training specialists in the field of jurisprudence: Monograph. [*Pravovie problemy i organizatsionno-pedagogicheskie usloviya realizatsii integratsionnogo potentsiala volonterskoi deyatelnosti v protsesse podgotovki spetsialistov v oblasti yurisprudentsii: Monografiya*]. Moscow, Rusayns publ., 2021, 264 p.
8. Sikorskaya, L. E. Volunteering as a social and pedagogical problem [*Volonterstvo kak sotsialno-pedagogicheskaya problema*]. *Vyshee obrazovanie dlya XXI veka. Pedagogika i obrazovanie*, 2009, Iss. 1, pp. 49–57. [Electronic resource]: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/volonterstvo-kak-forma-trudovogo-vospitaniya-studencheskoy-molodezhi/pdf>. Last accessed 05.02.2021.
9. Zemlin, A. I., Klenov, M. V., Kholikov, I. V. Organizational and legal problems of preventing importation and spread of mass infectious diseases in transport (on the example of COVID-19 coronavirus infection pandemic): Monograph [*Organizatsionno-pravovie problemy predurezhdeniya zavoza i rasprostraneniya massovykh infektsionnykh zabolevani na transporte (na primere pandemii koronavirusnoi infektsii COVID-19): Monografiya*]. Moscow, Rusayns publ., 2020, 126 p.
10. Zemlin, A. I., Zemlina, O. M., Klenov, M. V., Openyshev, O. S., Kholikov, I. V. Organizational and legal basis for functioning of the transport system in a difficult epidemiological situation: Textbook [*Organizatsionno-pravovie osnovy funktsionirovaniya transportnoi sistemy v usloviyakh slozhnoi epidemiologicheskoi obstanovki: Uchebnik*]. Ch. eds.: A. I. Zemlin, I. V. Kholikov. Moscow, Rusayns publ., 2020, pp. 11–23.
11. Kholikov, I. V. Influence of epidemics, pandemics and mass diseases on the economic and medical components of transport security [*Vliyaniye epidemii, pandemii i massovykh zabolevani na ekonomicheskuyu i meditsinskuyu sostavlyayushchie transportnoi bezopasnosti*]. In: *Collection of scientific works of the International scientific and practical conference «Actual problems of transport law and transport security in the context of modern challenges and threats»*. Moscow, Russian University of Transport, 2020, pp. 38–47.
12. Bagreeva, E. G., Zemlin, A. I., Shamsunov, S. Kh. Does Environmental Safety Depend Upon the Legal Culture of Transport Specialists? *Ekoloji*, 2019, Iss. 107, pp. 4961–4965. [Electronic resource]: <https://www.elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=41714699>. Last accessed 05.02.2021.
13. Zemlin, A. I., Kholikov, I. V. Axiological approaches to formation of legal culture of a transport specialist in modern conditions [*Aksiologicheskie podkhody k formirovaniyu pravovoi kultury spetsialista-transportnika v sovremennykh usloviyakh*]. In: *Collection of scientific works of IZISP «Legal values in the light of new paradigms of development of modern civilization»*. Moscow, Infra-M publ., 2020, pp. 403–411.
14. Gruver, N. V., Zemlin, A. I., Zemlina, O. M., Klenov, M. V., Kholikov, I. V. Legal and organizational foundations of volunteer activities: Textbook [*Pravovie i organizatsionnye osnovy dobrovolcheskoi (volonterskoi) deyatelnosti: Uchebnik*] / group of authors; ed. by A. I. Zemlin. Moscow, Knorus, 2021, 158 p.
15. Kholikov, I. V. Legal support of international cooperation in the field of medicine and health care in emergency situations: Monograph [*Pravovoe obespechenie mezhdunarodnogo sotrudnichestva v oblasti meditsiny i zdavoookhraneniya v usloviyakh chrezvychaynykh situatsii. Monografiya*]. Moscow, Istoki publ., 2007, 260 p. [Electronic resource]: <https://www.elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=19761340>. Last accessed 05.02.2021.
16. Kholikov, I. V. The spread of epidemics, pandemics and mass diseases as a global challenge of our time [*Rasprostraneniye epidemii, pandemii i massovykh zabolevani kak globalniy vyzov sovremennosti*]. *Paths to peace and security*, 2020, Iss. 2 (59), pp. 27–40. DOI: 10.20542/2307-1494-2020-2-27-40.
17. Chernogor, N., Zemlin, A., Kholikov, I., Mamedova, I. Impact of the spread of epidemics, pandemics and mass diseases on economic security of transport. E3S Web of Conferences, 2020, Vol. 203, pp. 05019. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202020305019>. Last accessed 05.02.2021.
18. Kozhevnikov, O. A., Shashkova, O. V. Commentary to the Federal Law of August 11, 1995 No. 135-FZ «On charitable activities and charitable organizations» (itemized) [*Kommentariy k Federalnomu zakonu ot 11 avgusta 1995 g. № 135-FZ «O blagotvoritel'noi deyatel'nosti i blagotvoritel'nykh organizatsiyakh» (postateiniy)*]. [Electronic resource]: https://xn--36-6kcaa8dino3ai8f.xn--plai/sites/all/files/docs/1995.08.11_135.pdf. Last accessed 05.02.2021.
19. Trubaev, A. S., Muradian, K. O. Problems of Obtaining Higher Education by People with Disabilities and Ways to Solve Them. *World of Transport and Transportation*, 2019, Vol. 17, Iss. 2, pp. 242–252. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30932/1992-3252-2019-17-2-242-252>. Last accessed 05.02.2021. ●