

ANALYSIS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract: *This article reveals aspects of the development of tourism in Uzbekistan. As we know, the republic has opportunities for the development of international and domestic tourism, as evidenced by the many objects of material and cultural heritage, natural and climatic conditions, unique national cuisine and unsurpassed hospitality of the Uzbek people attract travelers. The purpose of this study is to analyze the development of international tourism in Uzbekistan.*

Key words: *international tourism, service, opportunities of tourism, recreation, infrastructure*

Introduction

In recent years in Uzbekistan, along with traditional forms of travel, ecotourism, geotourism, agritourism, medical tourism and gastronomic tourism have also developed. Uzbekistan places particular emphasis on the modernization of the tourism industry, the development and improvement of the regulatory framework for the sustainable development of the industry, and the organization of tourist services in accordance with international standards. Government policy is aimed at developing tourism, so that this area in the future should become one of the drivers for accelerating the integrated development of regions and their infrastructure, helping to solve such important socio-economic tasks as creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs, ensuring diversification and accelerated development of regions increasing incomes, the level and quality of life of the population, increasing the volume of foreign exchange earnings, improving the image and investment attractiveness of the country. The average annual growth rate of foreign visitors to 2016 over the past five years was 8%. In 2017, this figure is 32.7% more than in 2016. For eleven months of 2018, the number of foreign tourists exceeded the figures for the same period in 2017 by almost 2 times.

The preferences and expectations of tourists were studied by questioning. The results of the survey show that tourists come to Uzbekistan, having sufficient information, a certain motivation and with purposeful aspiration. Visitors showed high interest in historical tourist tours and visits to museums, galleries, excursions, cultural events, visits to the countryside, walking / hiking, shopping and ecotourism. The majority of tourists are satisfied with the general quality of the standards of accommodation facilities, tourist products, transport services, food and overall quality of service, and also feel safe during the trip. Most tourists intend to visit Uzbekistan again within 5 years.

Currently, tourism is one of the leading sectors of the global economy. Therefore, Uzbekistan places particular emphasis on the modernization of the tourism industry, the development and improvement of the regulatory framework for the sustainable development of the industry, and the organization of tourist services in accordance with international standards. During the years of independence, significant actions were implemented in Uzbekistan in terms of the development of this sphere with the preservation and enhancement of the historical and cultural heritage of the people, the

revival of national traditions and customs, restoration and arrangement of the country's attractions.

From the first years of independence, Uzbekistan has been actively increasing cooperation with international organizations, and regularly comes up with initiatives to deepen cooperation in the field of tourism.

The current trend of the tourism industry confirms the need to study the prerequisites, system analysis of the dynamics of tourism development, identifying preferences and expectations of tourists, timely correction and modernization of the system of measures, taking into account the existing realities and prospects, which served as the basis for this study

Materials and methods

For the analysis of the prerequisites and dynamics of the development of inbound tourism in Uzbekistan, information from official sources, statistical reporting data of the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan for the development of tourism for 2015-2017 were used.

To identify preferences and expectations of foreign tourists from abroad, a survey was conducted. For questioning tourists, some fragments (elements) of the questionnaire developed by the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the State Tourism Development Committee of Uzbekistan were used based on the consultations of an expert from the UNWTO. This questionnaire was previously tested and used in Uzbekistan to carry out such studies. The survey was conducted among foreign tourists from foreign countries who arrived in the Kashkadarya region by railway transport (the route of the train “Afrosiyab” Tashkent-Karshi) for the period 15-25 August 2018.

Literature review

Studies on tourism issues appeared in the second half of the 20th century. Questions of the conceptual apparatus, theoretical and methodological nature on the problems of tourism and tourist activities are covered in the works of V.I. Azara, M.B. Birzhakova [1], I.V. Zorin, A.C. Kuskova, E.V. Listvy, V.L. Odintsova, Yu.S. Putrika, B.C. Senina. The works of Panov I.N. [2], Fowler, B. [3], Balaeva A., Predvoditeleva M. [4], Veprentsev V. [5], Dumazedier J. [6], Kozielski J. [7] are devoted to the problems of the development of international tourism. A significant contribution to the study of regional development and promotion of international tourism at the regional level made their work: , Mac Cannell, D. [8], Rojek Ch. [9] and Toffler A. [10]. In addition, I would like to mention the research of Kanevsky I., Kuznetsova O. and Chirkina V., addressed to the role issue state in the development of tourism. Insufficient knowledge of modern tourism, additional economic studies are needed that will reveal the place of tourism in the domestic service sector, identify the signs, current problems and the most significant factors of its development, as well as determine the most comprehensive structure of national tourism

Data collecting, materials and methods

For the survey, students (a total of 5 students) of the Tashkent State University of Economics were recruited as interviewers, as well as responsible employees of the Tourism Development Department of the Kashkadarya region (3 people in total) as supervisors. To ensure the quality of research, clarification of the goals and objectives of the survey for interviewers and supervisors training was organized.

The survey was conducted among foreign visitors who traveled to Uzbekistan, who stayed in the Samarkand region for more than one night and less than one month and did not have a goal to work in Uzbekistan. A total of 255 respondents were involved in the survey process. The survey was conducted at the railway stations of the cities of Samarkand.

Analysis of results

An important milestone in the history of tourism in Uzbekistan was the entry of the republic in 1993 into the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). The presence of more than seven thousand objects of the material and cultural heritage of different eras and civilizations, including the historical centers of Bukhara, Khiva, Samarkand and Shahrisabz, included in the UNESCO World Heritage List of UNESCO testify to the highest potential of Uzbekistan. The world-famous historical monuments, modern cities, the unique nature of Uzbekistan, the unique national cuisine, as well as the unsurpassed hospitality of the Uzbek people attract travelers.

In the framework of cooperation with the UNWTO in 1994, the Samarkand Declaration on Tourism along the Silk Road was adopted by 19 countries of the world.

In 20.08.1999, the Law No. 831-I “On Tourism” was enacted by the Decree of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The purpose of this Law is the legal regulation of relations in the field of tourism, the development of the market of tourist services, as well as the protection of the rights and legitimate interests of tourists and subjects of tourist activities.

In 1999, the Khiva Declaration on Tourism and the Preservation of Cultural Heritage was adopted, supported by UNWTO, UNESCO and the Council of Europe. In 2002, the Bukhara Declaration on Tourism along the Silk Road, which emphasizes the benefits of sustainable tourism and identifies concrete steps to promote cultural and ecological tourism in this direction. In recognition of the special place of the republic in the global tourism industry in 2004 in Samarkand, a regional UNWTO office was opened to coordinate tourism development on the Silk Road. Today, such an office exists only in two countries - in Japan and Uzbekistan. The main function of the office is to designate directions in the development of not only regional, but also international tourism.

In Uzbekistan, a new stage of significant progress in the field of international tourism began from the beginning of 2017. In 2018, a visa-free regime was established for citizens of Israel, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Turkey, Japan, Tajikistan and France. In addition, the procedure for issuing visas to citizens of 39 countries has been simplified.

The efforts of the leadership of the Republic of tourism infrastructure in recent years raised to a fairly high level. The measures taken to support and protect the private sector contributed to the increase in the number of tourist organizations and hotel facilities. There are 1,667 tourist organizations successfully operating in the country, including 989 tour operators and 869 hotel facilities. An extensive network of hotels with more than 25,000 beds meets modern international standards. Thanks to the truly extensive work on the construction and reconstruction of infrastructure facilities in Uzbekistan, 11 airports received the status of international harbors. Modern comfortable airplanes consisting of Boeing and Airbus airliners operate regular flights to more than 40 cities in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and America. Tourists visiting Uzbekistan have the opportunity to get to

the sights of the republic and through railway transport. So, besides the usual and high-speed trains, high-speed trains "Afrosiab" produced by the Spanish company "Talgo" run daily between Tashkent, Samarkand, Shakhrisabz and Bukhara, which significantly improved the quality of guest service and reduced the trip time.

In recent years, major investment projects have been implemented for the development of tourist infrastructure, including the opening of the Lotte City Hotel Tashkent Palace and Hyatt Regency Tashkent brand hotels in Tashkent, the creation of cultural and entertainment parks in Andijan, Urgench, Tashkent, the opening of railway line "Angren-Pap."

In recent years, new types of travel, including ecological tourism, have been actively introduced in Uzbekistan. The presence in the republic of reserves, national parks, nurseries, wildlife reserves, natural monuments, biosphere reserve makes ecotourism in a very promising direction. In Uzbekistan, geotourism, medical tourism, mountaineering and rafting have also developed. Recreation areas and comfortable infrastructure facilities are being built in the regions. In the sports and recreation centers "Chimgan", "Beldersay" and "Charvak" the necessary conditions are created for practicing alpine skiing and other winter sports, where mountain trails of different types are built with a length of 300 to 3 thousand meters. There is a cable car here. In Uzbekistan, the gastronomic direction of tourism is also gaining popularity, the development of which allowed to make pilaf and other national dishes a recognizable brand of the country.

Significant role in ensuring the accelerated development of the tourism sector of Uzbekistan, the formation and maintenance of the country's image on the world market are played by major events regularly held in the country. One of the most important annual events is the Tashkent International Tourism Fair "Tourism on the Silk Road." Today it is the largest forum in Central Asia where industry professionals meet, negotiate in various formats, including business-to-business, the Hosted Buyers program is being implemented for buyers of the national tourist product, and conferences are being held on topical issues of the development of the tourism industry in Uzbekistan and the world generally. Representatives of our country also regularly participate in international fairs and exhibitions held abroad in order to present the tourist potential of the republic. Participation in them allows you to stay abreast of the latest trends in the global tourism market, enter into business contracts, and develop cooperation with foreign partners.

The state policy in this direction is aimed at the development of tourism, so that this area in the future should become one of the drivers for the accelerated integrated development of the regions and their infrastructure, to contribute to the solution of such important socio-economic tasks as the creation of hundreds of thousands of new jobs, ensuring diversification and accelerated regional development, increasing incomes, the level and quality of life of the population, increasing the volume of foreign exchange earnings, improving the image and investment attractiveness STI country.

The State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan for the Development of Tourism has been tasked to ensure, together with the relevant ministries and departments, an increase in the number of tourists in all promising areas of tourism and the volume of real export of tourist services at least twice in the next 5 years.

For the period 2015-2017, the export of tourist services grew by 33% and amounted to USD 546.9 million in 2017, and for 9 months of 2018 - USD 773.4 million, exceeding the figures of 2017 in total by 41%.

The result of the measures taken by the state, in the direction of tourism, is an increase in tourists arriving in the republic. Thus, according to the State Committee for the Development of Tourism of the Republic of Uzbekistan, over 2 million people from different parts of the world visit the country annually. The number of arriving foreign visitors to Uzbekistan is growing at a high rate every year. The average annual growth rate of foreign visitors to 2016 over the past five years was 8%. In 2017, 2,690 thousand tourists entered the Republic of Uzbekistan. This figure is 32.7% more compared to 2016, when the number of tourist arrivals was 2,027 thousand people (Source: Analysis by the State Committee of Tourism).

As the data presented in Table 1 for eleven months (January-November) of 2018 shows, the number of foreign tourists was 4,896,397 people and exceeded the figures for the same period in 2017 by almost 2 times - by 94.8% (Table 1).

Table 1.

**Regions of arrival of tourists entering the Republic of Uzbekistan
(for the 11 months of 2017-2018) [11]**

Regions	11 months 2017		11 months 2018	
	Total	In% to total	Total	In% to total
CIS countries	2 342317	93,2%	4 590740	93,8%
Foreign countries	171238	6,8%	305657	6,2%
Drove just	2 513555		4 896397	

The geography of foreign guests is wide. At the same time, the number of tourists from neighboring countries traditionally prevailed in the structure of arriving tourists. This phenomenon continues to persist as before - the share of tourists from the CIS countries for 11 months of 2017–2018. Amounted to 93.2% and 93.8%, respectively. The share of tourists from non-CIS countries during this period was only 6.8% and 6.2%, respectively.

The number of tourists from the CIS countries for 11 months of 2018 amounted to 4 590 740 people and exceeded on average the figures for the same period of 2017 by 1.9 times (Table 2). The increase in the number of tourists who have entered is noted from almost all CIS countries. The largest growth for 11 months of 2018 compared to the same period of 2017 was from Armenia (+143.4 times), the Republic of Moldova (+133.3 times), Ukraine (+15.5 times), Tajikistan (+5.0 times) and Turkmenistan (+3.4 times). The absolute number of visitors, who entered the Republic of Uzbekistan for 11 months of 2018. The leading positions are occupied by the countries of Central Asia - Kazakhstan (2,124,631), Tajikistan (984,804), Kyrgyzstan (959,976), Turkmenistan (146,348) and the Russian Federation (343,128).

The share of tourists from non-CIS countries during this period was only 6.8% and 6.2%, respectively.

In recent years, there has been a significant positive trend in the number of visitors entering the Republic of Uzbekistan from non-CIS countries. The number of tourists from non-CIS countries for 11 months of 2018 was 305,657 people and exceeded on average the

figures for the same period of 2017 (1,71238) by 1.8 times (Table 3). For the period under review, the growth in the number of tourists who entered has been observed from almost all foreign countries that have traditional tourist ties with Uzbekistan, with the exception of Iran (-15.1%). Of the far-abroad countries, Uzbekistan is especially popular with citizens of Turkey, Germany, France, Italy, the Republic of Korea, Japan, China, Malaysia, India and the United States. The most significant increase in tourist flow in the first 11 months of 2018 compared to the same period in 2017 was from the United States (+8.3 times), Italy (+3 times), United Kingdom (+2.6 times), Israel (+2.6 times), Germany (2.5 times) and France (+2.4 times). According to the number of visitors, who entered the Republic of Uzbekistan for 11 months of 2018. The first place was occupied by Turkey (37928). Also, a substantial number of visitors came from China (29,736), the Republic of Korea (25,634), India (19,161), Germany (17,699) and Japan (16,487).

Citizens from 8 countries participated in this study. As the data presented in Table 4 shows, the number of visitor respondents did not differ much by country, which is explained by the group character of the entries, i.e. the formation of an organized group of tourists entering Uzbekistan. (Table 2).

Table 2.

Citizenship of respondents - visitors who entered the Samarkand region of the Republic of Uzbekistan from foreign countries for 15-25 August 2018[11]

Countries	Numbers	%
Turkey	33	12,9
The Republic of Korea	23	9,1
China	32	12,5
India	30	11,8
Germany	33	12,9
Italy	35	13,7
France	38	14,9
Israel	31	12,2
Total	255	100

Thus, the intensive development of the tourism industry in Uzbekistan, including respect for the historical and cultural heritage, the creation of infrastructure that fully meets international standards, and the strengthening of international relations will turn our region into one of the most visited countries in the world. Further, in order to ascertain the preferences and expectations of foreign tourists from abroad, we conducted a survey. A total of 255 respondents took part in the survey process - visitors who entered the Kashkadarya region of the Republic of Uzbekistan from foreign countries, including 148 men (58.0%) and 107 women (42.0%). In the age structure of the respondents, the age group prevails. 35-45 years old - 111 people (43.5%). This is followed by the age group 25-34 years - 63 people (24.7%). Respondents in the age group 45-54 years - 55 people (21.6%) and over 55 years old - 26 people (10.2%).

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