

Mechanisms to Turn the Tourism Sector into the Driver of the National Economy

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Annotation: The article focuses on the areas that ensure the sustainable development of tourism as a driver in the territories of New Uzbekistan, and proposes mechanisms for implementing institutional changes that will make the tourism sector a strong driver of the economy of Uzbekistan.

Key words: strategic sector of the economy, economic driver of the tourism sector, international ratings, fundamental proposals, mechanisms of institutional changes.



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Currently, special attention is being paid to the rapid development of tourism as a strategic branch of the economy in New Uzbekistan. In particular, in the development strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2022-2026, the important directions of rapid development of the tourism industry, increasing its role and share in the economy, diversification and quality of tourism services, and expansion of tourism infrastructure were determined.

The number of domestic tourists to 12 million people and the number of foreign tourists coming to the republic to 9 million people were among the priorities.[1]

Due to this, it is no coincidence that the increase in the number of tourists by creating ample conditions for the development of foreign and domestic tourism in Uzbekistan is reflected in the goals of the "Uzbekistan-2030" strategy.[2] All this indicates the quality of the measures taken to increase the flow of tourists and increase the volume of tourism services in our republic.

The strategic sector of the national tourism economy, a qualitative driver for the whole world, strives to develop both a convenient economy and the organizational and legal conditions of the territories of tourism are competent to create fruitful tourism, the economy of the National cluster of emerging markets, the National tourism of the brand and the world market in the market of Uzbekistan there is a noticeable opportunity to promote the job image.

The new Uzbekistan has all the necessary resources to turn the tourism industry into a driver of the national economy. Our homeland, located on the Great Silk Road, has favorable natural and climatic conditions, a rich historical and cultural heritage, and at the same time, high potential for the development of both domestic and international tourism is recognized by the world community.

Analysis of relevant literature. Theoretical and methodological aspects of the development of the tourism sector and the effective use of the tourist potential of regions are covered in the scientific research works of many foreign scientists, including: A.Yu. Aleksandrova, I.T. Balabanov, M.B. Birzhakov, V.A. Kvartalnov, A.D. Chudnovsky, and local scientists M.K. Pardaev, I.S. Tukhliiev, B.N. Navruz-zoda, A.A. Eshtaev, M.T. Alieva, A.N. Norchaev, D.Kh. Aslanova, B.Sh. Safarov, S.A. Abdukhamidov and others.

Research methodology. In the process of research, scientific studies on international and national experiences in the development of the tourism sector were studied. In the process of forming the article, such methods as scientific and theoretical observation, observation and sampling, comparative analysis, systematic and situational approaches were used.

Analysis and results. It is known from the analysis of tourism theory and practice that the tourism sector is the most important driver of the socio-economic development of countries, regions, and cities. In regions of the world, tourism, developing as a business sector, serves to increase employment and self-employment, improve the urban environment, improve the quality of life of local communities, and increase tax revenues.

As a result of the identification of tourism as one of the strategic sectors of the economy in Uzbekistan, over the past 7 years, the government has adopted more than 100 regulatory legal acts, decrees and resolutions aimed at the rapid development of the sector. The Concept for the Development of the Tourism Sector in the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2022-2026 has been adopted.

As a result of the reforms carried out in the tourism sector, the number of countries whose citizens do not require a visa to enter our country has been increased from 9 to 100, the "electronic visa" system has been introduced for 77 countries, and citizens of 109 countries have been granted the right to reside in the Republic of Uzbekistan. In this difficult year for tourism, entities in the sector are receiving comprehensive support and are being allocated subsidies and loans.

It was determined that the number of foreign tourists visiting our country in 2022 amounted to 5.2 million people (annual plan - 2.7 million people), and in 2023 the number of tourists visiting our country was 7.0 million, an increase of 133.7% compared to 2022. The fact that the duration of the trip of tourists visiting Uzbekistan increased to 4-5 days, and their spending increased to \$ 305 (this was an average of 3 days in 2019, when tourists spent \$ 195), indicates that tourism has begun to recover after the pandemic.

The reasons for the fact that the tourism sector is a driver of the economy are that 77.6% of the main costs in the formation of the tourism product fall on the costs of more than 40 sectors and organizations providing services related to tourism. Calculations taking into account the joint development of tourism with related sectors indicate that there is a possibility of creating at least 112 thousand additional jobs per year in terms of employment. This, in turn, indicates that other sectors also have a significant direct and indirect role in the multiplier effect of tourism.

Since the transformation of tourism into a leading strategic sector of the economy has been identified as one of the priority tasks in the new Uzbekistan, the need to increase the efficiency of tourist and recreational services is becoming a task of state importance in the conditions of a digital economy. Therefore, it is currently necessary to carry out work on digitizing the database of tourist and recreational facilities and the services of tourist companies and hotels using the necessary digital technologies for regions of Uzbekistan with a rich historical and cultural heritage and unique natural potential.[3]

Digital platforms are playing a crucial role in the development of the country's tourism industry today and will continue to do so. Digital technologies will be of great importance this year and in the coming years as the tourism industry in Uzbekistan recovers from the pandemic.

In the current environment, the importance of the tourism sector and its impact on international, including intergovernmental and interpersonal, relations is constantly growing. Considering tourism primarily in terms of relations between countries and continents, the more regular international tourist relations become, the more predictable the world economy will be, and the more stable the world situation will be.[4]

Conclusions and proposals. In order to make the tourism sector a strong driver of the Uzbekistan economy, the following tasks have been set to improve its position in the following international rankings:

In the UNWTO tourism ranking of the fastest growing countries, from 4th place in 2019 to 3rd place in 2026; in the ranking of safe countries for tourists (among 180 countries), from 46th place in 2020 to 20th place in 2026;

In the Global Muslim Travel Index halal tourism ranking, from 7th place in 2020 to 3rd place in 2026; and in the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index, Uzbekistan has been set as a goal to enter the top 50 in 2026.

A series of international recognitions of the reforms in Uzbek tourism was the holding of the General Assembly of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in Samarkand in 2023, which took place in Madrid, Spain. At the 25th session of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization, the head of our state put forward a number of relevant and fundamental proposals during his speech[5].

The fundamental proposals for the tourism sector set out by the head of our state at the 25th session of the UNWTO General Assembly today serve not only for Uzbek tourism, but also for the rapid development of the global tourism industry in all regions of the world and its transformation into one of the drivers of the world economy. In implementing the fundamental proposals set out by the President of Uzbekistan, the following institutional change mechanisms are proposed to transform the tourism sector into a strong driver of the Uzbek economy:

- review existing tourism statistics, as the new Uzbekistan is setting real goals based on real numbers, and it is time to calculate real tourism revenues, investment forecasts, and infrastructure development. This will allow us to accurately record the number of foreign and domestic tourists visiting the country in the future, determine their spending in the country's territories, and calculate the real contribution of tourism to the country's GDP through the multiplier effect.[6]
- to form a single database of key tourism resources and services provided by related sectors, identify opportunities for using digital technologies in tourism, and conduct research on tourism marketing based on information systems in order to turn the tourism sector into a strong driver of the Uzbek economy;
- in order to innovatively develop the national tourism services market, the state should create an institutional base for a tourism and recreation cluster and form an institution of public-private partnership in the Republic of Uzbekistan, and develop strategic plans for the development of tourism after the pandemic. The application of the cluster concept in the tourism sector makes it possible to solve the problems of the modern tourism industry, including: insufficient assessment of the region's tourism potential, low demand for inbound tourism, insufficiently developed infrastructure, low interest of investors, and imperfect mechanisms and methods for implementing strategic tourism development programs.

In conclusion, today tourism is a universally recognized driver of the socio-economic and cultural development of all countries, as its successful activity leads to the development of many positive factors (creation of new jobs; development of infrastructure; replenishment of the budget system's

revenue; preservation of cultural heritage sites; restoration of the tourist's spiritual and physical strength, etc.).

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