

SOME GEOGRAPHICAL ASPECTS OF TOURISM FORMATION IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract: *The article examines some of the country's potential as a tourism destination. The issues of organizing international (pilgrimage, mountain, ecological, etc.) tourism in Uzbekistan are highlighted. Also, recommendations on the development of tourism are given.*

Key words: *tourism, pilgrimage tourism, mountain tourism, ecological tourism, historical tourism, sanatorium, resort, mineral water, mud.*

Enter. Countries of the world are paying great attention to international tourism in order to effectively use the available natural resources. Tourism has become an important source of income for the economy of many countries in the world. Effective use of tourist resources and, first of all, the organization of a developed tourist industry and recreation is one of the important directions in solving the problems of socio-economic development of the country. At the same time, the problem of employment of labor resources in the country can be solved positively. Development of tourism paves the way for the expansion of socio-economic relations between countries and nations and allows for the improvement of skills for various professions. Therefore, conducting research and developing recommendations aimed at the development of various types of tourism in different regions of Uzbekistan has an important scientific and practical significance.

The main part. The modern tourism industry is one of the large sectors of the economy that bring high income and are rapidly developing, and it serves as a practical dialogue in the field of culture of the peoples of the world. Tourism is one of the main areas of income in many countries of the world. Globally, tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors, and in recent years, more than 10 percent of the

world's labor resources are directly engaged in the tourism sector. However, one of the sectors that has suffered the most from the crisis caused by the coronavirus is the tourism sector, information about this is presented below (Table 1). Before the pandemic, the number of international tourists reached 1.5 billion people, but in 2020, this figure was equal to 381,000 people, a decrease of 74 percent.

Table 1

Number of people involved in international tourism activities

Years	1950	1980	2000	2015	2019	2020	2030
Number of tourists, million	25	278	674	1,2	1,5	381	1,8

Source: UNWTO, 2016:1, Worldometers, 2017. 2 UNWTO, 2016

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on aviation, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the number of people employed in the sector fell from 46 million to 41.7 million in 2020, leading to a loss of 52.5% of jobs, while tourism reduced to 58 percent.

In particular, in 2019, when the pandemic began in Uzbekistan, the number of foreign tourists who visited our country was 6.7 million. made up 1.9 million people in 2021. From 2022, the situation began to improve somewhat, but it is still at a level much lower than the indicators of the period before the pandemic (Table-2).

Table 2

Visit of foreign tourists to Uzbekistan in 2019-2021

Years	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of tourists, million	53	6,7	1,5	1,9	5,9	6,5

In 2020, 4.5 times less foreigners and stateless persons visited Uzbekistan than in 2019.

The tourism potential of countries is directly related to the level of socio-economic development of the region, natural complexes, that is, natural conditions, development of technical infrastructure, service system, development of culture, art, science, that is, in a word, with the natural and economic-geographical location

of the country. depends. In particular, Uzbekistan is fundamentally different from many countries of the world in terms of its opportunities in the field of international tourism.

In recent years, Uzbekistan has been active in taking high places in the field of tourism along with other leading countries of the world. In particular, according to many international publications, our country has become one of the most attractive tourist destinations in 2020. And again, in the list of cities that should be visited by The Telegraph newspaper of Great Britain, information is given about the city of Tashkent, the heart of our country. By the end of 2019, 6,748 million people visited Uzbekistan, which is 125% more than the statistics of 2018, i.e. 5,346 million people. At the same time, the export of tourism services amounted to 1.313 billion dollars, and in 2018 it was equal to 1.041 billion dollars. After the pandemic in Uzbekistan, the number of foreign citizens has increased since 2022. In the table below, we can see the analysis of the purpose of tourists coming to Uzbekistan (Table 3).

Table 3

Purpose of visiting foreign nationals

To see relatives	To relax	For treatment	Regarding the service	Тижорат учун	For study purposes
2,2 million people	169,8 thousand people	44,4 thousand people	38,8 thousand people	9,1 thousand people	2,4 thousand people

Compiled by the author based on the data

Source: Statistics Agency.

It is known from the table that most of the tourists visited Uzbekistan to see their relatives and to relax.

Diagram 1 below shows which countries' citizens visited Uzbekistan the most for tourist purposes in 2023.

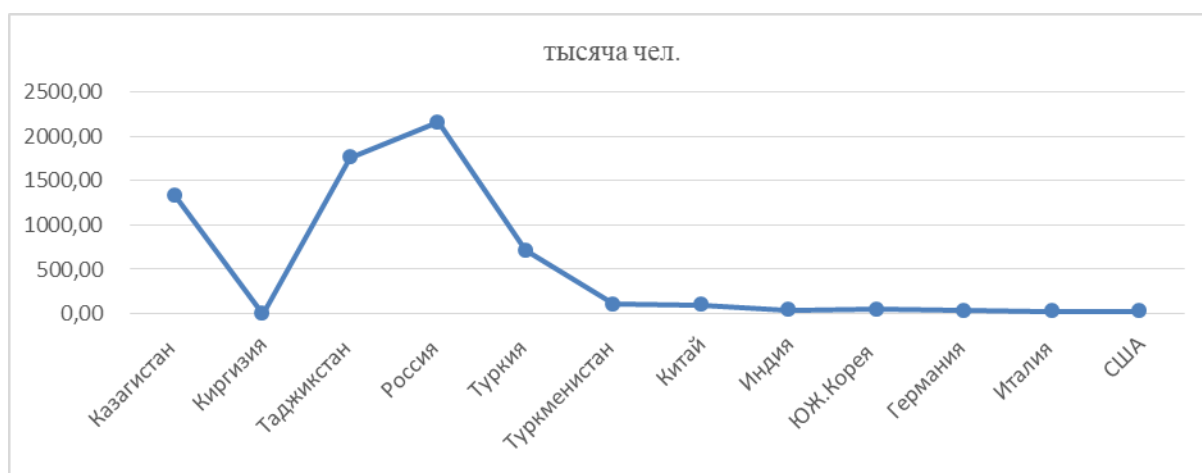


Diagram 1. The number of foreign citizens visiting Uzbekistan by country (per thousand people). Source: *Statistics Agency. Tourism Committee under the Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change*

In Uzbekistan, especially in the post-pandemic period, the number of tourists visiting such directions as mountain tourism, health tourism and ecological tourism has increased. It is no secret that our country is one of the mountainous regions, that mountains occupy 31.3 percent of the territory of Uzbekistan and that more than 10 percent of the country's population lives here. The mountain climate, clean and clear water, the wide distribution of fir groves, wonderful natural landscapes, different forms of relief, rock formations created during weathering attract the attention of tourists [1; 321. 6; 81-83]. A lot of snow in winter and it does not melt for a long time. The number of tourists increases mainly in the spring and autumn months in the direction of mountain tourism. In order to attract tourists in the mountain regions in winter and summer, increasing the number of holiday homes in the heart of nature and improving the conditions will increase the tourist capacity. The existence of water basins of rivers, foothills, desert and hilly regions with natural-territorial regions is an impetus for the development of hunting tourism in our republic [4; 243-245. 5; 97-100].

A trip to spas and health centers is not only a treatment, but also a planned activity for recovery and treatment of chronic diseases in thermal medical facilities. The mountainous regions of Uzbekistan have precious and so far little-studied healing mineral water sources, climatic features and sports-health facilities.

Mountain and sub-mountain regions are very rich in mineral waters, and there is a large reserve of sulfur, iodine, radon and weakly mineralized, alkaline, thermomineral waters used in medicine [3; 69-71]. On the basis of these sources, physiotherapeutic hospitals, sanatoriums and other health care facilities were established in the country [2;133-135]. More than 200 healing underground mineral water and mud sources have been identified in different regions of Uzbekistan. These underground waters are different according to their chemical composition, medical-biological and other properties. Today, the number of sanatoriums and resorts in Uzbekistan and their capacity are not enough for the use of the local population. It should be noted that the territory of Uzbekistan is a country with contrasting nature with plains and deserts located between mountains (Chirchik-Ohangaron, Fergana valley, Kitab-Shakhrisabz bog, etc.). Uzbekistan has many rivers (Chirchik, Zarafshan, Sokh, Isfara, Kashkadarya, Surkhandarya, etc.), lakes (Arashon Lake, etc.) and healing mineral springs (Turon, Chortoq, Abu Ali ibn Sina, Amonkhona, etc.). Today, there are more than 57,318 special sanatorium, prophylactic and rest houses in our country, which are important for the expansion of the domestic and foreign tourism network. This direction of tourism leads to the development of internal and external tourism in the regions, and increases the level of employment of the local population. For this, it is necessary to establish sanatoriums and spas with a large capacity.

To increase the attractiveness of the region, its historical and cultural potential plays a major role in the development of tourism. It includes historical monuments, architectural shrines and other spiritual and cultural monuments, folk crafts, museums. There are more than 7,400 cultural heritage sites in Uzbekistan, 209 of which are included in the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. In addition, the republic has 11 national parks and state reserves, 12 nature reserves, 106 museums and many other tourist attractions. For example, in order to develop tourism of historical monuments, it is appropriate to organize a trip to historical monuments in the cities of Bukhara, Khiva, Samarkand, Shahrissabz, Tashkent and

various regions and districts of our republic. The development of tourism, the construction of additional roads, the creation of tourist routes, creates environmental challenges: although these resources can add additional value to the development of the region and the country, it is necessary to protect them from damaging the natural and cultural heritage.

Summary. Today, in order to develop tourism in Uzbekistan, to expand the service system for tourists and to create all conditions for them, a lot of money is allocated for the construction of new tourist complexes, hotels, campsites and restaurants, bars. For the development of tourism, there are great tasks related to the creation of new jobs, new types of tourism, and the organization of tourist services. In particular, in the following years, the increase in the number of countries using the simplified visa regime, and the introduction of the system of issuing and issuing electronic entry visas greatly contributed to the development of the sector. This, without a doubt, will increase the level of well-being of the population in our country. At the moment, we must focus all our efforts on the development of domestic (local tourism and pilgrimage) and foreign tourism. It is also of practical importance to attract foreign investments to tourism organizations, to establish new tourist destinations, to improve the training of qualified personnel at a high level in the regions, and to make the service equal to world standards. If the tourism sector is developed in the republic, it will have a significant impact on the country's economic development and can increase foreign exchange earnings.

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