

PROSPECTS FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN UZBEKISTAN AND ITS ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

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Abstract.

This article analyzes the contribution of Uzbekistan's tourism sector to economic development. It discusses how comprehensive tourism development can support economic growth, create new jobs, attract investment, and modernize infrastructure. Special attention is paid to integration with other sectors as well as to the principles of ecotourism and sustainable development. The paper also highlights Uzbekistan's opportunities and prospects for tourism development.

Keywords:

tourism; infrastructure; tourism market; tourism sector; sustainable development; investment.

It is well known that tourism is a high-potential and revenue-generating sector for a country. Tourism implies the movement of people from one place to another, both within a country and across borders. Today, tourism is becoming an integral part of the economy. Through tourism development, employment expands and living standards can improve, contributing significantly to overall economic growth. International experience in countries with advanced tourism industries also supports this view. Management plays a crucial role in tourism-industry development. Uzbekistan has substantial tourism potential; therefore, it is important to train young professionals and equip them with knowledge and skills in tourism management, including sector-specific characteristics and governance methods.

As noted by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, in his Address to the Oliy Majlis, “One of the most promising sectors that brings high income to the national economy today is tourism. Uzbekistan is a country with tremendous tourism potential. We have more than 7,300 cultural heritage sites, most of which are included in UNESCO lists. In addition, by using the opportunities offered by our unique nature and beautiful recreation zones, we can open new tourism routes. By actively attracting global brands to this field, we should pay special attention to developing pilgrimage tourism, ecological, educational, ethnographic, gastronomic tourism, and other segments. In this regard, we should take into account that public-private partnership relations open broad opportunities for sector development.” In recent years, the government has implemented a range of measures to accelerate tourism development. The expansion and quality improvement of services, as well as incentives and conveniences for domestic and foreign tourists, have changed significantly over the last 2-3 years.

To improve service quality, a number of legal acts have been revised and supplemented. The key objectives are to increase tourist inflows, raise household incomes, further develop the economy, enhance the country’s investment attractiveness, and implement new investment projects. To achieve these goals, it is essential to ensure effective management of tourism enterprises and to organize service delivery properly. Developing a workforce of young specialists whose knowledge meets modern requirements and international standards is therefore vital.

Several factors influence tourism development. Currently, worldwide and in Uzbekistan, more attention is being given to modern tourism as a non-manufacturing sector of the economy. People increasingly strive to spend their free time effectively, learn about national traditions, relax, restore their health, and explore cultural values - needs that tourism services meet. In addition, throughout history humanity has sought to expand its horizons and discover new places; in the 20th century this drive intensified and gave a major boost to the growth of the modern tourism industry. In some countries tourism has developed very steadily, with annual growth rates reaching

8-10 percent (e.g., Spain, Italy, France, the USA). Notably, tourism growth also stimulates related sectors such as transport, market infrastructure, trade, food services, construction, handicrafts, and other services. Uzbekistan has strong opportunities to expand international cooperation in tourism.

Tourism formation and development depend on the potential of tourism resources. The more diverse a country's tourism resources, the easier tourism development becomes. Uzbekistan has a very large resource base for tourism development - an advantage possessed by only a small number of countries worldwide. Beautiful nature, diverse climates, rich history, cultural monuments, and unique regional traditions are all present in Uzbekistan.

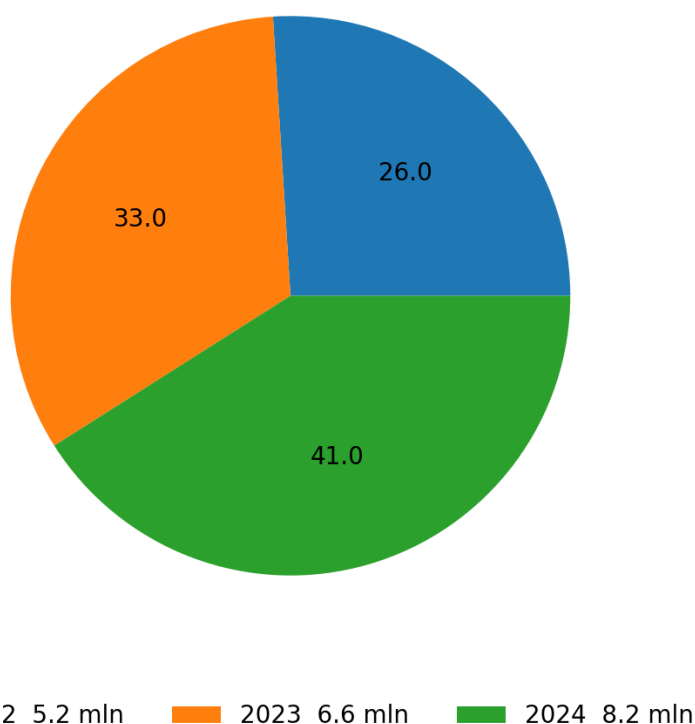


Figure 1. Tourists visiting Uzbekistan (million people): 2022-2024

Tourism is a rapidly developing service-industry sector of the national economy, and the services provided are consumed by tourists in the territories where relevant resources are located. As a labor-intensive sector, tourism creates many jobs not only within tourism itself, but also in industries that produce the diverse products and goods

consumed by travelers, as well as in transport and infrastructure sectors. Tourism also increases foreign currency inflows to the country and, on this basis, can significantly expand economic activity.

Uzbekistan has great economic and cultural potential for tourism development. The country's rich historical heritage, unique natural landscapes, national traditions, and hospitality are key factors for attracting domestic and foreign tourists. In recent years, government reforms, infrastructure improvements, and the expansion of visa-free regimes have supported rapid development. In the future, introducing digital technologies and improving service quality and marketing strategies can help transform Uzbekistan into a leading tourism center in the region.

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