



Development of Tourism in Uzbekistan

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Abstract: Uzbekistan pays great attention to the development of tourism, which has a rich cultural and historical potential. The article discusses the features of tourism development in Uzbekistan, as well as general characteristics of statistical data.

Keywords: tourism, infrastructure, foreign investments, tourist services, international tourism, hotels, tourists, architectural monuments.

Currently, Uzbekistan has demonstrated its welcoming embrace to the whole world, becoming not only a recognized industrial, financial, but also a developed tourist center of the region.

The main aspect for the development of the tourism sector is that the Government of Uzbekistan pays priority attention to the disclosure of all available tourism potential and the creation of the necessary framework and infrastructure conditions for this purpose.

The comprehensive promotion of tourism development, elevated to the rank of state policy, contributes to the fact that tourism has become an integral part of our life, an important source of income, both for the state and for individuals and organizations involved in this sphere.

Tourism is carried out on the basis of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Tourism" adopted by the legislative Chamber on April 16, 2019, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "on Additional measures to accelerate the development of the tourism potential of the republic, as well as further increase the number of local and foreign tourists" dated 04/26/2023 No. PP-135 where the conditions, features, rights and obligations are prescribed travel agents.

In January-March 2023, the total number of foreign citizens who visited Uzbekistan for tourist purposes amounted to 1487.7 thousand people, of which 783.3 thousand (52.6% of the total number) were men and 704.4 thousand women (47.4% of the total number).

Most tourists in the first half of the year were from Tajikistan — 958.5 thousand, Kyrgyzstan — 786.4 thousand, Kazakhstan — 764.4 thousand, Russia — 345 thousand. The tourist flow was less from Turkey — 48.3 thousand, Turkmenistan — 29.5 thousand, India — 16.7 thousand, Korea — 15.9 thousand, China — 13.3 thousand and Germany — 11.7 thousand.

Earlier, the authorities made a number of decisions to support tourism in Uzbekistan. From the beginning of 2024, tour operators of Uzbekistan will receive subsidies from \$ 20 to \$100 for each foreign tourist. The state will cover part of the expenses of investors for the construction and equipment of hotels not lower than five floors.

At different times, the tourism sector in Uzbekistan was under the jurisdiction of different ministries. In 2021, according to the decree of the President, a new Ministry of Tourism and Sports was created on the basis of the Ministry of Physical Culture and Sports and the State Committee for Tourism Development.



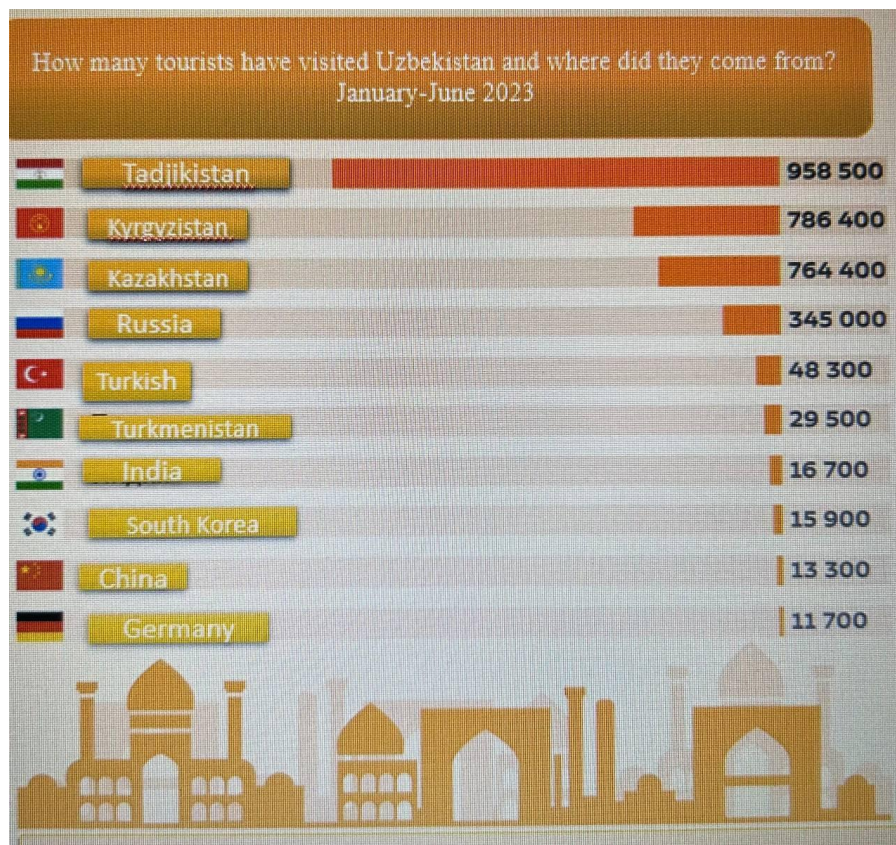
But a year later, according to the presidential decree of February 18, 2022, this ministry was divided into two: the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Heritage and the Ministry of Sports Development.

Currently, the tourism industry in Uzbekistan is managed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and consists of many entities and partner organizations. The leading tourism industries include hotel and restaurant business, cultural attractions, Silk Road travel, ecotourism, healthcare and medical tourism.

In addition, from 8 to 10 percent of all jobs in the world are now related to tourism. The development of the industry also means new jobs and opens up opportunities for small and medium-sized businesses both abroad and in our country.

In recent years, in order to develop tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan, several decisions have been made to simplify the visa policy. Among them: the presidential decree, according to which, from February 1, 2019, citizens of 45 countries have the opportunity to visit Uzbekistan without a visa for up to 30 days, or the signing of an agreement with Kyrgyzstan to simplify entry only with an ID card.

Tourism in Uzbekistan is financed by public funds and investments in the industry. This allows the government and tourism companies to actively invest in infrastructure, service and quality of services, especially in tourism-developing regions such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Tashkent.



In 2022, on behalf of the Administration of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, funds totaling 7.4 trillion soums were disbursed through investments in the field of cultural heritage of tourism, and by the end of the year it was planned to implement 502 projects and create 7,480 new jobs. In addition, by the end of the year, it was planned to form a list of 727 projects worth 21.6 trillion soums with the involvement of new business entities and create 22,901 new jobs within the framework of these projects.



Also in 2022, funds were allocated to technical institutes, colleges and the Silk Road International University for a total amount of 39,031,304 soums. During the three quarters of 2022, the Ministry of Tourism and National Heritage concluded contracts totaling 9,677,375,138 soums, financed from the state budget.

In all these agreements, the state budget and extra-budgetary funds are indicated as a source of financing. Also, for three quarters of 2022, a total of 3,733,686 million soums were allocated to the republican budget of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, the regional budgets of the regions and the city budget of the city of Tashkent at the expense of the extra-budgetary fund for tourism support under the Ministry.

Nevertheless, in the three quarters of 2022, subsidies for more than 386 billion soums were allocated at the expense of the extrabudgetary tourism support fund under the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Heritage in order to support the subjects of the tourism industry in the economic situation caused by the coronavirus pandemic and the development of tourist infrastructure. Among the organizations that received the subsidy, DOLORES TRAVEL SERVICES LLC, located in Tashkent, COSMOS APART-HOTEL LLC and BLINK PRIME LLC, located in Namangan region, received more funds.

Also, in the first three quarters of 2022, the extra-budgetary fund for tourism support under the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Uzbekistan spent a total of more than 79 billion soums.

Tourism is an important component of the economy of Uzbekistan. This is one of the few industries in the country that generates income in foreign currency. Therefore, the Government continues to do everything possible to further develop the tourism sector and attract more tourists from all over the world.

Of course, do not forget that gaining popularity among tourists is a laborious process. But it should be noted that, according to the ministry, in 2022 there is a sharp increase in the number of tourists visiting the country.

The fact is that in the period from January to December 2022, 5,232,780 tourists visited the country — almost three times more than in the period of 2021, when the number of tourists amounted to 1,881,334 people. However, most of the people who came to the country turned out to be from neighboring countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. At the same time, it is not entirely correct to consider most of the people who visited Uzbekistan as tourists — many of them, rather, were visitors to the country who visited their relatives.

In 2022, Uzbekistan was visited by more than 1 million tourists from each of these countries. Afghanistan, on the contrary, showed a sharp decline in the number of tourists. If 34 thousand Afghans visited Uzbekistan in 2021, then in 2022 this figure was about 3 thousand.

Lack of tourist infrastructure. Some cities and regions of Uzbekistan may have limited access to the tourism sector, such as hotels, restaurants, tourist attractions and transport services.

Low internet speed. Not all regions of Uzbekistan can boast of high-speed Internet, and in some areas there is no Internet at all.

Lack of information in English. Some locals, including representatives of the tourism industry, have limited knowledge of English. This can become a problem for the communication of foreign tourists.

Tourism improves the lives of ordinary people, outstrips many industries in the world in terms of income. Natural resources, such as gas and oil, may be depleted, but it is difficult to say the same



about tourism, of course, if we ourselves do not destroy tourist facilities before our younger generation.

In accordance with the growth rates of tourist routes and those wishing to participate in this process, it can be concluded that tourism will develop at a high rate exceeding the rates of development of the main sectors of national economies. In order to attract foreigners to the country, it is necessary to create a civilized tourist infrastructure in a short time that meets international standards, and this is extremely difficult to implement in practice. Nevertheless, in recent years, a wide range of various projects have been implemented to improve the tourism infrastructure of Uzbekistan: many old hotels have been reconstructed in the republic and modern five and four-star hotels, the entertainment industry is developing, architectural monuments and historical centers of cities are being restored and colorfully decorated, the traditions of oriental architecture are being increasingly used in urban planning, the geography of international lines of Uzbekistan Airways is growing and is being modernized with a focus on world standards while preserving local flavor and traditions of hospitality, catering, transport.

Many regions of Uzbekistan provide good opportunities for the development of various types of tourism, such as specialized and adventure, rural and religious, ethnic and aquatic, nostalgic and youth. It is necessary to develop and develop these types of tourism in the future, they do not require large investments. Most often they are based on some special and remote attractions and can bring direct benefits to tourist enterprises.

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