



## TOURISM STRATEGY IN UZBEKISTAN (1990–2000)

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### ABSTRACT

This scientific article analyzes the role of the tourism sector in the national economy, its contribution to the formation of foreign currency revenues, and development trends based on international experience. In particular, the dynamics of rapid growth in tourism revenues are illustrated through the examples of Austria and Hungary. Furthermore, the tourism potential of the Republic of Uzbekistan, including its geographical location, historical and cultural heritage, natural and climatic conditions, and infrastructure opportunities, is scientifically substantiated. The article examines the strategic directions, priority tasks, and phased reforms for tourism development in the 1990s, highlighting the sector's contribution to economic growth, employment, and international integration.

**KEYWORDS:** Tourism, economic development, foreign exchange revenues, tourism strategy, infrastructure, international tourism, investment, service sector, cultural heritage, tourism market, Uzbekistan tourism.

### INTRODUCTION

In the modern global economy, tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors. It is recognized not only as an important part of the service industry but also as a strategic direction that ensures stable foreign currency revenues for states. International experience shows that the development of tourism can lead to significant economic efficiency in a relatively short period. For example, in Austria, tourism revenues increased from 2.1 billion to 110.1 billion shillings over 80 years, representing a 55-fold growth. Similarly, in Hungary, income from foreign tourism increased by 80% and reached 1 billion US dollars [1.p.52]. These figures clearly demonstrate that tourism is a highly profitable sector of the economy. The Republic of Uzbekistan has enormous potential for tourism development. First of all, its geographical location is of particular importance. Historically, this territory has been one of the key crossroads of the ancient trade routes—the Great Silk Road—serving as a center of economic and cultural interaction between East and West.

This factor has contributed to the interaction and enrichment of various cultures in the region. Even today, this historical heritage serves as an important resource for tourism development. The country is home to more than 4,000 historical and architectural monuments, most of which are of global significance.

At the same time, the natural and climatic conditions of the country are highly favorable for tourism development. The presence of all four distinct seasons makes it possible to develop different types of tourism throughout the year. This reduces seasonality and ensures stable income year-round.

The tourism development program in Uzbekistan identified the following strategic priorities:

- forming and strengthening the country's image in the international tourism market;
- promoting national cultural and historical heritage globally;
- strengthening interethnic relations;
- transforming tourism into a significant source of foreign currency revenues for the state budget;
- increasing employment and stimulating regional development.

These tasks are aimed at the comprehensive development of tourism, covering economic, social, and cultural aspects.

International and national experience indicates that increasing foreign currency revenues from tourism depends on the following factors:

- increasing the number of foreign tourists;
- extending the duration of tourists' stay;
- improving the quality of services and service standards;
- expanding the range of additional services;
- developing tourism infrastructure;
- attracting foreign investments.

For example, in developed tourism countries, the average length of stay of tourists is relatively high: in France it is 7.1 days, in Turkey 8.3 days, in Spain 11.4 days, and in Israel up to 20 days. In contrast, in Uzbekistan in the early 1990s, this figure was only 2–3 days [2.p.53], which indicates the need for diversification and modernization of tourism services.

In the 1990s, one of the main obstacles to tourism development in Uzbekistan was the insufficient level of infrastructure development. In particular:

- the quality of hotel and transport services was low;
- the share of additional services was very small (about 1%);
- services did not meet international standards;
- foreign investment was insufficient.

In contrast, in developed countries, up to 50% of tourism revenues are generated through additional services.

#### **Tourism development was carried out in stages:**

Stage 1 (1993–1994): Ensuring economic stability and creating conditions for the transition to market relations.

Stage 2 (1995–1997): Formation of a tourism management system and integration into the international tourism market.

Stage 3 (1998–2000): Creation of a modern tourism industry and modernization of infrastructure.

Global experience demonstrates rapid growth in tourism development. For example:

- Turkey received 1.5 million tourists in 1985, increasing to 7 million by 1992;
- Singapore increased from 129,000 tourists in 1966 to 3.2 million in 1986;
- in Hungary, tourist numbers exceeded 19 million [3.p.54].

These figures confirm that tourism can achieve high results when developed under a well-planned strategy.

In the 1990s, tourism development in Uzbekistan became not only an economic necessity but also a key direction of state policy. During this period, priority was given to establishing institutional frameworks, forming a legal basis, and adapting the sector to market conditions.

Institutional reforms were reflected in improving the management system, developing state programs, and expanding the authority of responsible organizations. This made it possible to develop tourism in a unified strategic direction and enhance integration into the global tourism market.

Particular attention was also paid to infrastructure development. Measures were taken to modernize hotels, improve transport and logistics systems, and reconstruct roads leading to tourist sites. Special emphasis was placed on developing tourism services in historical cities to increase tourist flows. At the same time, improving service quality in line with international standards was recognized as essential.

Attracting foreign investment was another important factor. Joint ventures were established with foreign partners, and investments were directed into the hospitality and service sectors. This contributed not only to strengthening the material and technical base but also to introducing modern management practices.

In addition, training and retraining qualified personnel became a priority. Preparing specialists in accordance with international standards and improving service culture were considered crucial, as the human factor plays a decisive role in tourism.

Another important direction was the diversification of tourism products. Alongside traditional cultural tourism, new forms such as ecological tourism, pilgrimage tourism, health tourism, and recreational tourism began to develop. This helped extend the duration of tourist stays and increase tourism revenues.

Overall, the institutional and structural reforms implemented during 1990–2000 played a crucial role in shaping and developing the tourism sector in Uzbekistan. These reforms laid a solid foundation for sustainable development and enhanced the country's competitiveness in the international tourism market.

The analysis shows that tourism is one of the most promising and profitable sectors of Uzbekistan's economy. The country's rich cultural heritage, favorable geographical location, and natural conditions provide a strong basis for tourism development. At the same time, further progress requires improving infrastructure, enhancing service quality, attracting foreign investment, and actively participating in the global tourism market.

Through comprehensive development, tourism can contribute not only to economic growth but also to the global promotion of Uzbekistan's rich cultural heritage.

## References

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