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**CENTRAL ASIAN JOURNAL OF
ARTS AND DESIGN**

Journal homepage: <http://cajad.centralasianstudies.org/index.php/CAJAD>



Extreme and Adventure Tourism in Uzbekistan

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Annotation

In the context of globalization, the issues of effective use of tourism potential have become the most relevant in ensuring sustainable economic development of the country. In recent years, the state has been paying close attention to pursuing an active policy in the field of tourism development, including extreme tourism, adopting regulatory legal acts and targeted regional programs to form the legal foundations of the modern civilized tourism market, and modernizing the tourism infrastructure.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 01 Sep 2021

Received in revised form 27 Oct

Accepted 28 Oct 2021

Available online 30 Nov 2021

Keywords: Tourism development, extreme tourism, coronavirus pandemic, quality of tourism services, economic development, competitiveness.

Introduction

Today, many people are showing an increasing interest in outdoor activities other than the traditional organized and carefully planned group travel, preferring adventure travel. The relevance of the topic is precisely due to the growing popularity of such tourism. Mountain tourism, river rafting, cycling and car travel off-road, uninhabited and wild areas are gaining an increasing number of fans, and Uzbekistan has a huge potential for the development of extreme and adventure recreation.

Accelerated development of the tourism sector and increasing its role in the economy is considered one of the important tasks in the Action Strategy for the further development of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In recent years, tourism has become one of the “points of growth” of the national economy, which, being a driver of the development of other related industries, stimulates income growth, having a high multiplier effect: \$ 1 of direct income from tourism gives at least \$ 5-7 in related sectors of the economy [1].

It should be noted that tourism services and related catering services (accommodation and catering in

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(ISSN: 2660-6844). Hosting by Central Asian Studies. All rights reserved..

the interpretation of the OKED) have a noticeable effect on the growth of market services and GDP as a whole. Thus, calculations show that the development of the service sector has a greater impact on GDP growth and an increase in the population's income (growth in GDP and population income by 67.2% and 60.3%, respectively, which are provided by expanding the volume of market services) [2].

Materials and methods

In recent years, a wide range of regulatory documents on tourism development has been adopted, an institutional system for managing tourism development has been formed, structural divisions of tourism management have been created in all regions of the country to effectively use the huge tourism potential of the regions. New organizations contribute to the development of the tourism industry: the Tourism Services Certification Center, the Tourism Development Institute, the National PR Center and others.

It should be noted that the adoption of Resolution No. PP-4095 of January 5, 2019 "On measures to accelerate the development of the tourism industry" served to intensively develop tourism, create and promote a national product on world markets based on the creation of favorable economic incentives and organizational and legal conditions. So, as of March 15, 2021. A 30-day and 60-day visa-free regime has been established for 90 countries (in addition to the bilateral visa-free regime for the CIS [3]). Subsequently, UP No. 5611 of 01/05/2019, from February 1, 2019, introduced a visa-free regime for 45 countries for a period of 30 days, according to UP No. 5691 of March 18, 2019 for UAE citizens for a period of 30 days, according to UP No. 5781 of August 13 .2019 for 20 countries for a period of 30 days.

The issuance of an electronic tourist visa in a simplified manner through the "e-visa.gov.uz" portal has been launched through the system for issuing electronic entry visas for 57 countries since July 15, 2018 [4]. Foreign citizens of these countries can obtain an electronic visa for a period of 30 days without applying to consular offices in two working days [5].

As a result, the number of tourists and the number of hotels has significantly increased, the tourism business has been actively developed, and new types of tourism have appeared.

Over 3 years, the number of tourists has grown 5 times: from 1.3 million foreign tourists in 2016, to 6.7 million in 2019. Due to the pandemic, in 2020, 1.5 million foreign tourists managed to visit the country. at the same time, the export of tourism services amounted to \$ 261 million, and tourism became one of the most affected industries (Fig. 1).

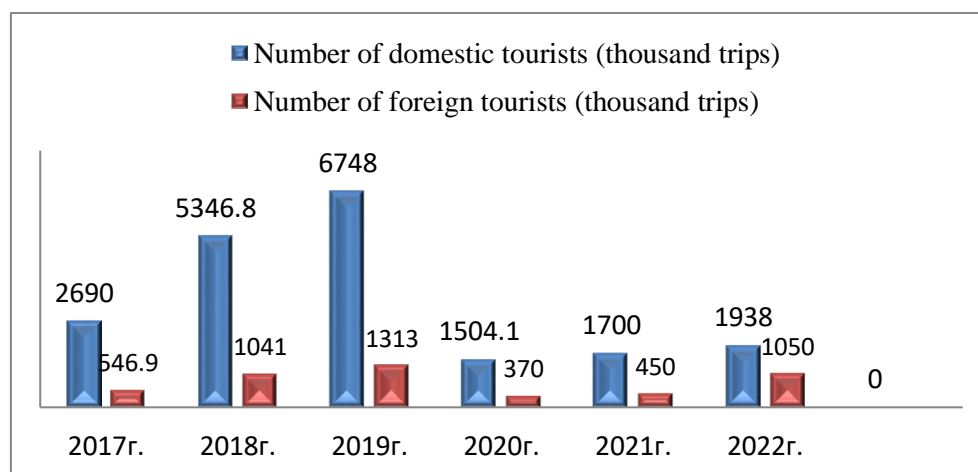


Fig. 1. The number of foreign tourists (thousand people).

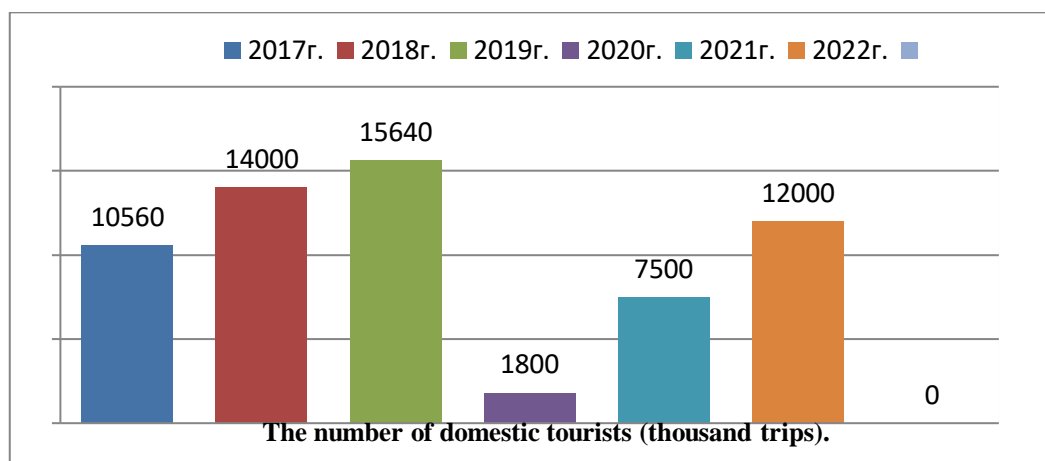


Fig. 2. Number of domestic tourists (thousand trips).

It should be noted that the pandemic has seriously affected the tourism industry and related industries, the incomes of more than a hundred thousand people have sharply decreased, including guides, artisans, workers of architectural monuments and resort institutions, public catering facilities, transport and others.

In 2020, trips were organized within the country for 1.8 million people, in 2021 this number is expected to sharply increase to 7.5 million people [6-16].

Professionals try to organize tours with an attractive educational purpose. Such routes can be developed on the basis of historical and local history materials, use "not promoted" hard-to-reach natural and cultural monuments that are of interest to tourists. The creators of such a tourist product, at the request of customers, can ensure that there are no everyday problems even in the conditions of an autonomous hike, high-quality varied food, an excursion and entertainment program, and increased attention to safety. The general organization of the tours is such that they are accessible to people without special training, although there are special routes for experienced travelers.

Results

Recently, extreme and adventure tourism has been actively developing. Usually, this definition is understood as a type of recreation that unites all travels associated with active modes of movement and recreation in nature, with the aim of obtaining new sensations, impressions, improving the tourist's physical shape and achieving sports results. Special types include a variety of adventure tourism, namely, extreme tourism, which is gaining momentum all over the world, including Uzbekistan.

Extreme adventure tours can be considered kayaking or rafting (inflatable rafts), snowmobile safaris, quad bikes, jeep tours, yachting, multi-day trekking, etc. Combined routes are especially popular, when different sections of the path are overcome by different types of transport. And, of course, for extreme adventure tours, vast opportunities are provided by the vastness of our Republic.

Despite the vague wording, the growth rates of extreme and adventure tourism are several times higher than those of standard group programs. According to the WTO (World Tourism Organization), if tourism, in general, grows annually by 2-4%, then adventure tourism by 10-15% [7,8].

Conclusion

Thus, the intensive development of extreme and adventure tourism in Uzbekistan, including through

the creation of infrastructure that meets international standards, the creation of regional structures, strengthening ties with foreign partners, respect for the historical and cultural heritage, will ensure the attraction of tourism and the growth of its share in the national product.

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