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# THE ROLE OF COOPERATIVE RELATIONS IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGIONAL TOURISM MARKET

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**Abstract:** The article examines foreign countries' experience in developing the regional tourism market based on cooperation mechanisms. Based on the research findings, proposals are developed to further enhance cooperation relations aimed at ensuring the sustainable development of the regional tourism market in the country. The study substantiates the use of public-private partnership mechanisms in the development of the tourism sector, the formation of an effective state support mechanism for tourism entities, including tourism clusters, and the organization of interregional tourism clusters based on regional specialization in tourism services.

**Key words:** tourism, tourism market, tourist product, tourist services, service, quality, tourism resources, hotel, cluster.

**Annotatsiya:** Maqolada mintaqaviy turizm bozorini hamkorlik mexanizmlari asosida rivojlantirishning xorijiy mamlakatlar tajribasi o'rganilgan. Tadqiqot natijalari asosida turizm sohasini rivojlantirishda davlat-xususiy sheriklik mexanizmidan samarali foydalanish, turistik subyektlar, jumladan, turistik klasterlar faoliyatini davlat tomonidan qo'llab-quvvatlashning samarali mexanizmini shakllantirish hamda hududlarning turistik xizmatlar sohasi bo'yicha ixtisoslashuvidan kelib chiqib hududlararo turistik klasterlar faoliyatini tashkil etish orqali mamlakatda mintaqaviy turizm bozorining barqaror rivojlanishini ta'minlashga qaratilgan ilmiy-amaliy takliflar ishlab chiqilgan.

**Kalit so'zlar:** turizm, turizm bozori, turistik mahsulot, turistik xizmatlar, servis, sifat, turistik resurslar, mehmonxona, klaster.

**Аннотация:** В статье на основе изучения опыта зарубежных стран в развитии регионального туристического рынка с использованием механизмов сотрудничества разработаны предложения по дальнейшему развитию кооперационных отношений в целях обеспечения устойчивого развития регионального туристического рынка страны. Обосновано использование механизма государственно-частного партнерства в развитии туристической отрасли, формирование эффективного механизма государственной поддержки деятельности туристических субъектов, включая туристические кластеры, а также организация межрегиональных туристических кластеров с учетом специализации регионов в сфере туристических услуг.

**Ключевые слова:** туризм, туристический рынок, туристический продукт, туристические услуги, сервис, качество, туристические ресурсы, гостиница, кластер.

## INTRODUCTION

In the context of ongoing globalization and intensifying competition, the tourism sector has become one of the key drivers of the socio-economic development of regions. In particular, the effective formation of the regional tourism market and ensuring its sustainable development are regarded as priority areas of contemporary economic policy. Alongside tourism infrastructure, service quality, and marketing strategies, the establishment of well-structured cooperative relations among participating stakeholders plays a decisive role in this process.

The regional tourism market develops through interaction among multiple stakeholders, including public authorities, private business entities, local communities, non-governmental organizations, as well as educational and research institutions. In the absence of coordinated actions among these actors, the effective utilization of tourism potential, rational allocation of resources, and the creation of competitive tourism products become considerably more challenging. Therefore, the design and practical implementation of cooperation mechanisms in the development of the regional tourism market emerge as an urgent scientific and practical issue.

The Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan places special emphasis on advancing the national tourism sector, particularly by enhancing the efficiency of utilizing regional tourism potential. This includes organizing new types of tourism routes within a single region or among neighboring regions with similar tourism

development potential, thereby promoting modern forms of economic cooperation in the tourism sector. In this regard, the priorities set by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Sh. M. Mirziyoyev, for 2025–2026—such as facilitating travel for 15.8 million foreign tourists, increasing tourism service exports to USD 4 billion, constructing 108 new hotels, 375 family guesthouses, and 123 hostels, as well as developing capsule hotels, yurts, apart-hotels, modular hotels, and establishing 12 tourism villages and tourism neighborhoods [1]—underscore the need to prioritize effective methods for tourism development. These objectives, in particular, highlight the importance of reforms aimed at clustering the tourism sector.

Practical experience demonstrates that mechanisms such as the cluster approach, public–private partnerships, intersectoral cooperation, information exchange, and the implementation of joint projects contribute significantly to the sustainable growth of the regional tourism market. However, the effectiveness of these mechanisms largely depends on their alignment with regional economic potential, the institutional environment, and the interests of participating stakeholders.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The scientific and methodological foundations for developing economic integration and cooperation among tourism service providers through the application of the cluster approach have been examined by foreign scholars such as M. Y. Ida Farina, Hoan-Thanh, N. Shpak, K. Y. Kulakov, and U. Tokbergenova [2]. Their studies focus on the role of clustering in enhancing competitiveness and fostering sustainable development within the tourism sector.

Among Uzbek economists, M. R. Boltaboyev, I. S. Tuxliyev, B. Sh. Safarov, S. A. Abduxamidov, M. T. Alimova, J. N. Abiyev, and Z. B. Navruz-Zoda [3] have explored the scientific and methodological foundations of tourism development in Uzbekistan, analyzing various approaches to improving the efficiency and performance of the sector.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a systematic and integrated approach to examine the economic essence and practical significance of cooperation mechanisms in the development of the regional tourism market. Scientific abstraction, along with inductive and deductive methods, is used to generalize theoretical perspectives relevant to the research topic. In addition, comparative analysis is applied to examine and contrast international and national experiences in the organization and implementation of cooperative relations within the tourism sector.

## ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

An analysis of the processes involved in the development of the regional tourism market indicates that its effective functioning depends not only on the availability of natural, cultural, or historical resources, but also directly on the system of interactions among the stakeholders involved in utilizing these resources. Practical analyses reveal that in regions where cooperation mechanisms are sufficiently developed, tourism activities acquire a systemic character, service quality improves, and stable growth of the tourism market is observed. Conversely, in areas where cooperative relations are weak, tourism opportunities are not fully exploited and the level of utilization of existing potential remains low.

The role of cooperation mechanisms in the development of the regional tourism market is clearly demonstrated by the experience of foreign countries (Table 1).

**Table 1. Comparative analysis of foreign experience in the development of the regional tourism market<sup>1</sup>**

Country	Sources	Key features	Possibilities for application in Uzbekistan
Italy	UNWTO, European Commission reports	Tourism development is based on territorial clusters that integrate public authorities, the private sector, and community organizations. Services are interlinked and offered under a unified regional brand.	Formation of tourism clusters and joint marketing initiatives in regions with rich historical and cultural heritage (Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva).
Spain	OECD, Tourism Management	Coordinated governance between the state and business is implemented through regional tourism agencies. Decisions are made at the local level with consideration of private sector interests.	Strengthening tourism coordination institutions at the regional and district levels and expanding opportunities for local initiatives.

<sup>1</sup> Tadqiqotlar natijasida muallif ishlanmasi.

Norway	UNWTO, Annals of Tourism Research	Local communities are fully involved in tourism processes, maintaining a balance between ecological sustainability, social benefits, and economic returns.	Active involvement of local populations in eco- and agrotourism, with models aimed at increasing household incomes.
Japan	Japan Tourism Agency reports	The state plays a leading role while maintaining close cooperation with the private sector and local communities. Centralized strategies are aligned with local initiatives.	Supporting regional innovative projects while preserving centralized governance in national tourism strategies.

The comparative evidence presented in Table 1 suggests that the effective development of the regional tourism market in foreign countries is determined not primarily by the quantity of resources, but by the quality of cooperative relations formed around these resources. Coordinated interaction among public authorities, private businesses, and local communities ensures the integrity of services and enables tourism products to secure a stable position in the market. This approach allows tourism activities to be shaped not as fragmented efforts, but as a systematic and goal-oriented process.

Based on the synthesis of international experience, it can be argued that under Uzbekistan's conditions it is not advisable to replicate foreign models in their entirety. Rather, their core principles should be adapted to national and regional specificities. Cooperation-based governance, support for local initiatives, and a clear distribution of responsibilities among stakeholders are of practical importance for the development of the regional tourism market. In this respect, the comparative analysis confirms the decisive role of human and institutional factors in tourism policy.

The regional tourism market develops not merely on the basis of natural or cultural potential, but through the nature of relationships established among the actors involved in realizing this potential. Practical evidence shows that in regions where the state, business entities, and local communities act in a coordinated manner, tourism activities become systemic and their outcomes sustainable. Conversely, insufficiently developed cooperation limits the full utilization of existing potential. Therefore, the purposeful and consistent development of cooperative relations is of critical importance in ensuring the sustainable development of the regional tourism market.

Table 2 summarizes the main forms of cooperation, the participating stakeholders, and the expected outcomes that can be implemented in this area.

Table 2. Directions for developing cooperative relations in the sustainable development of the regional tourism market<sup>2</sup>

Direction of cooperation	Participating stakeholders	Key measures	Expected outcomes
Institutional cooperation	Public administration and local authorities	Strengthening regional tourism coordination bodies and clearly defining responsibilities	Improved coordination in governance and increased decision-making efficiency
Public-private partnership	Government and private business	Joint development of infrastructure, hotels, and service facilities	Increased investment and improved quality of tourism services
Cluster cooperation	Tour operators, hotels, service enterprises	Formation of regional tourism clusters and joint marketing	Creation of competitive tourism products
Enhancing local community participation	Local residents, farms, NGOs	Support for agrotourism, handicrafts, and family-based tourism	Increased household incomes and social stability
Information and digital cooperation	Public authorities, business, IT sector	Introduction of unified information platforms and digital services	Greater transparency and higher market efficiency
Education and human capital cooperation	Universities, training centers, business	Training and retraining of tourism personnel	Human capital development and improved service quality
Environmental and social cooperation	Government, local communities, NGOs	Implementation of sustainable tourism principles and rational resource use	Long-term sustainability of the tourism market

<sup>2</sup> Tadqiqotlar natijasida muallif ishlanmasi.

The analysis of the directions presented in Table 2 demonstrates that sustainable development of the regional tourism market cannot be achieved through isolated measures alone, but rather through the systematic formation of interrelated cooperative relations. When each direction is implemented with reliance on the activities of specific stakeholders, opportunities arise to improve decision-making clarity, enhance resource-use efficiency, and raise service quality. This transforms tourism activity from short-term initiatives into a long-term development model.

At the same time, the achievement of expected outcomes depends on the adaptation of these cooperation directions to national and regional characteristics. When the coordinating role of the state, the initiative of the private sector, and the active participation of local communities are harmonized, the regional tourism market evolves into a competitive, sustainable, and socially effective system. In this sense, the approaches outlined in Table 2 provide a practical foundation for improving cooperative relations in the tourism sector.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study indicate that cooperation mechanisms in the development of the regional tourism market should not be viewed as a set of isolated measures, but rather as an interconnected and systemic process. A cooperation model that takes into account the interests of all stakeholders, is based on clear rules, and is oriented toward long-term objectives is essential for ensuring the sustainable development of the tourism market. At the same time, the results of the analysis clearly demonstrate the need for institutional reforms, improvements in governance mechanisms, and increased investment in human capital in order to address existing challenges effectively.

The study also confirms that the development of the regional tourism market is determined not so much by the mere availability of natural or cultural resources, but by how the process of utilizing these resources is organized. The conducted analyses show that in regions where close and coordinated cooperation among public authorities, private businesses, and local communities has been established, tourism activities tend to develop in a consistent and sustainable manner. In contrast, in regions where cooperative relations remain weak, existing opportunities are not fully utilized, service quality lacks consistency, and market growth remains unstable.

Based on the conclusions drawn, the implementation of the following recommendations is considered appropriate for the development of the regional tourism market. First, it is necessary to regulate relations among stakeholders involved in tourism-related decision-making and implementation processes on the basis of clear and transparent rules. This requires strengthening the coordinating role of public authorities while simultaneously avoiding undue restrictions on private sector initiatives. In addition, expanding opportunities for joint projects in tourism infrastructure development would facilitate greater attraction of private investment.

Second, the promotion of a cluster-based approach that integrates tourism services at the regional level is of particular importance. This approach ensures strong interconnections among services and contributes to the formation of a comprehensive and coherent tourism product. Third, special attention should be given to increasing the involvement of local communities in tourism activities, as their participation is a key factor in achieving socially and economically effective outcomes. Fourth, enhancing information exchange, expanding the use of digital tools, and improving the system of education and training for tourism professionals will significantly contribute to strengthening the competitiveness of the regional tourism market.

Overall, the consistent implementation of the proposed measures will enable the regional tourism market to move beyond the framework of short-term activities and transition toward a sustainable and long-term development trajectory.

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