

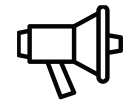
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ANALYSIS OF MACROECONOMIC INDICATORS OF RECREATIONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract: This article analyzes the main macroeconomic indicators of tourism development in Uzbekistan and evaluates their impact on economic growth. The study examines tourism's share in GDP, the flow of foreign tourists, tourism services exports, employment, and investment indicators based on statistical data. The empirical analysis shows that the development of tourism infrastructure and the increase in tourist flows contribute to the growth of the service sector in the national economy. Based on the results of the study, scientific and practical recommendations aimed at ensuring the sustainable development of the tourism sector are proposed.

Key words: tourism economics, macroeconomic indicators, tourism services export, foreign tourist flow, tourism infrastructure, economic growth, employment, investment.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of the steadily increasing share of the service sector in the global economy, tourism has emerged as one of the key drivers of economic growth. Over the past decades, tourism has formed a significant share of global gross domestic product (GDP), creating millions of jobs and increasing foreign exchange earnings, thereby becoming an integral component of the economies of many countries. Particularly for developing countries, tourism plays a crucial role as a tool for economic diversification, reducing regional disparities, and expanding international economic relations.

In the New Uzbekistan, consistent reforms are being implemented to structurally modernize the economy, increase export potential, and develop the service sector. In this process, tourism has been recognized as one of the priority sectors. The legal and institutional framework of the sector has been improved, infrastructure has been modernized, and mechanisms for attracting foreign investment have been expanded. As a result, in recent years there has been a significant increase in the number of foreign tourists visiting the country, the volume of tourism service exports, and investments directed toward the tourism sector.

At the same time, the need arises to conduct a comprehensive analysis based on macroeconomic indicators in order to ensure the sustainable development of tourism and more accurately assess its contribution to the national economy. Indicators such as tourism's share in GDP, its impact on employment, the balance of payments, and state budget revenues are of particular importance in determining the real economic efficiency of the sector. In addition, assessing the impact of tourism development on investment activity, regional economic growth, and the activities of small business entities is also a relevant scientific issue.

The ongoing process of economic liberalization and the transition to an open economic model in Uzbekistan create new opportunities for tourism development. In particular, the expansion of visa-free regimes, the improvement of transport and logistics infrastructure, and the modernization of the hotel industry and service sector contribute to the growth of tourist flows. However, considering that external shocks such as global economic instability and pandemics have significantly affected the macroeconomic indicators of the tourism sector, the development of risk management and diversification strategies remains an urgent task.

The relevance of this research lies in the fact that the macroeconomic indicators of tourism development in Uzbekistan are systematically analyzed, and their interrelationships and impact on economic growth are assessed on a scientific basis. The multiplicative impact of tourism on economic growth, including both direct and indirect effects, is examined, and the integration of the service sector with other sectors of the economy is analyzed. Based on this, scientific proposals and recommendations aimed at strengthening the strategic role of tourism in the national economy are developed.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON THE SUBJECT

The role of tourism in macroeconomic development has been studied by many foreign and domestic scholars. Researchers such as D. McKinnon, J. Fletcher, and R. Sharpley have analyzed the role of tourism in economic growth. Their studies emphasize that the tourism sector serves as an important factor in increasing service exports and employment within the national economy.

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism forms a significant share of global GDP and serves as an important driver of economic development in many countries.

Among Uzbek scholars, Sh.R. Kholmirezayev, B.T. Salimov, and others have studied the role of tourism in the national economy and emphasized that the development of tourism infrastructure positively influences economic growth.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the course of the study, economic-statistical and econometric methods were used to analyze the macroeconomic indicators of tourism development. Statistical data were obtained from the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Tourism Committee, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, as well as international databases.

The following methods were applied in the empirical analysis:

- statistical comparison method;
- time-series analysis;
- correlation analysis;
- regression modeling.

These methods made it possible to identify the relationship between tourism indicators and economic growth.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The main objective of this research is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the macroeconomic indicators of tourism development in Uzbekistan and determine their impact on economic growth and structural transformation. To achieve this objective, the following tasks were identified:

- studying the theoretical and methodological foundations of tourism development
- identifying and evaluating the system of macroeconomic indicators
- analyzing the factors determining the role of tourism in economic growth
- identifying internal and external factors affecting the sector
- developing scientific and practical recommendations for ensuring sustainable tourism development

A scientifically grounded analysis of tourism's macroeconomic development requires reliable statistical data. In the empirical research process, the impact of tourism on the national economy and its role in structural changes are evaluated using specific indicators.

As an empirical basis, data published by the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Tourism Committee, and the Central Bank were used. These sources cover key macroeconomic indicators of the tourism sector, including tourism's share in GDP, the volume of tourism service exports, tourist flows, employment levels, investment volumes, and budget revenues.

In addition, for international comparisons, indicators from the World Bank and other global databases were used.

The following system of indicators was formed in the macroeconomic analysis of tourism development:

1. Tourism's share in GDP — allows determining the real contribution of the tourism sector to the national economy and assessing its role in economic growth.
2. Number and dynamics of foreign tourists — reflects the country's competitiveness and openness in the international tourism market.
3. Tourism service exports — an important indicator for determining the impact on the balance of payments and reflecting foreign currency inflows.
4. Employment indicators — show the socio-economic significance of tourism through the number of jobs created in the sector.
5. Investment volumes — demonstrate the long-term development potential of tourism infrastructure.
6. State budget revenues — enable the evaluation of fiscal efficiency through tourism-related taxes and fees.

Empirical analysis determines annual growth rates, correlations between indicators, and their relationship with economic growth. Based on statistical data, time-series analysis is conducted to study the trend and cyclical components of tourism development.

Furthermore, to assess the impact of external shocks such as pandemics, comparative analysis methods are applied by comparing pre-crisis and post-crisis indicators.

Regional analysis also plays an important role in the empirical research since tourism development is unevenly distributed across the regions of the country. Regional macroeconomic indicators are used to assess tourism's impact on regional economies and identify development potential.

To deepen statistical analysis, econometric modeling methods are also applied. In particular, the relationship between tourism service exports and GDP growth is assessed through regression models, allowing the quantitative evaluation of tourism's contribution to economic growth.

Based on the results of the empirical analysis, conclusions are drawn regarding the macroeconomic efficiency of tourism development, and priority directions for sector development are identified. Thus, a scientific approach based on statistical data serves as an important methodological basis for improving tourism policy and making strategic decisions.

To deepen the statistical analysis, the use of econometric modeling methods is also planned. In particular, the relationship between tourism service exports and GDP growth is evaluated using a regression model. This approach makes it possible to quantitatively determine the contribution of tourism to economic growth.

Based on the results of the empirical analysis, conclusions are drawn regarding the macroeconomic efficiency of tourism development and the priority directions for further development of the sector are identified. Thus, a scientific approach based on statistical data serves as an important methodological foundation for improving tourism policy and making strategic decisions.

In assessing the macroeconomic development of the tourism sector, indicators such as its share in gross domestic product (GDP), tourist flows, service exports, employment, and investment are analyzed in an interconnected manner. These indicators make it possible to determine the real contribution of tourism to the national economy and to assess its role in the process of economic growth.

According to statistical data, the share of tourism revenues in GDP was 2.79 percent in 2019. However, during the pandemic period this indicator sharply decreased to 0.98 percent in 2021. This decline can be explained by global travel restrictions and the suspension of international transportation. Nevertheless, the recovery of tourist flows during 2022–2024 created the basis for a gradual increase in tourism's share in GDP.

Although tourism's share in GDP remains relatively low, its multiplicative effect is considered to be significant. Tourism generates additional demand in sectors such as transport, trade, catering, hotel services, and handicrafts. Therefore, in addition to the direct share in GDP, the indirect economic effects of tourism should also be taken into account.

According to national statistical data, the number of foreign tourists visiting Uzbekistan reached 1.4 million in 2020 but declined to 1.1 million in 2021. Starting from 2022, the recovery process began, and the number of tourists increased to 3.6 million in 2022 and reached 4.9 million in 2023. During the first nine months of 2024, 5.7 million foreign tourists were recorded.

By the end of the first ten months of 2025, the tourist flow had reached 9.7 million visitors. This indicator demonstrates the acceleration of the recovery process in the tourism sector and the increasing competitiveness of the country in the international tourism market.

The growth rate of tourist flows is closely related to infrastructure development, the expansion of visa-free regimes, and improvements in transport and logistics opportunities. Statistical dynamic analysis shows that the increase in the number of tourists directly affects the growth of service exports and employment indicators.

Tourism service exports occupy an important place in the country's balance of payments. In 2019, tourism service exports amounted to 1.313 billion US dollars. By 2023, this indicator increased to approximately 3.4–3.5 billion US dollars. By the end of 2025, tourism exports exceeded 4.4 billion US dollars.

These growth rates confirm the increasing importance of tourism as a source of foreign currency earnings. Tourism exports contribute to the formation of a positive balance in the services account of the balance of payments. In particular, the intensification of tourism exchanges with neighboring countries has strengthened regional economic integration.

The social importance of the tourism sector is reflected in employment indicators. In 2017, about 187 thousand people were employed in tourism and related service sectors, while by 2024 this figure had increased to 391 thousand. Thus, employment in the sector nearly doubled over seven years.

The increase in employment is largely explained by the expansion of tourism infrastructure and the opening of new hotels and service facilities. This process has a positive impact on regional economic development and contributes to the growth of household incomes.

Investments directed toward tourism infrastructure determine the long-term development potential of the sector. In 2021, investments amounting to 11.4 trillion Uzbek soums were utilized within tourism development projects. These investments were mainly directed toward the development of hotel infrastructure, transport systems, and the reconstruction of cultural heritage sites.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study examined the macroeconomic aspects of tourism development in Uzbekistan and assessed its impact on economic growth and structural transformation. The findings confirm that tourism plays an increasingly important role in the national economy by contributing to service exports, employment generation, investment activity, and regional development. The growth in tourist arrivals, expansion of tourism service exports, and increase in employment indicate the positive dynamics of the sector in recent years.

At the same time, the analysis revealed several structural challenges. The relatively low share of tourism in GDP, its sensitivity to external shocks such as global crises and pandemics, and the uneven distribution of tourism development across regions highlight the need for further improvement in sector management. In particular, strengthening risk management mechanisms and implementing diversification strategies remain essential for ensuring the long-term sustainability of tourism.

The results of the econometric and statistical analysis demonstrate that tourism has a significant multiplicative effect on related sectors, including transport, trade, and hospitality services. This confirms its role as a catalyst for broader economic development. Therefore, enhancing the integration of tourism with other sectors of the economy should be considered a key priority.

In conclusion, ensuring sustainable tourism development in Uzbekistan requires a comprehensive approach based on data-driven policy, regional planning, infrastructure modernization, and the active use of digital technologies. The implementation of these measures will contribute to strengthening the strategic role of tourism in the national economy and improving its resilience to external risks.

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