

# Business Tourism is a Means of Developing the Tourism Industry

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**Abstract:** The article examines the role and growing share of the tourism sector in the global economy, as well as the development trends of the industry. Practical measures for the development of business tourism in our country and their role in the development of the tourism sector are also highlighted.

**Keywords:** business tourism, investment, profitability, visa, cluster, tax benefits.

The modern tourism industry is one of the largest, most profitable, and rapidly developing sectors of the world economy. Tourism, as a service sector, serves as an important means of redistributing national income within the country, having a multiplier effect on the development of many sectors of the economy.

Global socio-economic development trends show that currently more than half of the world's gross domestic product is produced in the service sector. More than 40% of direct investments in the world economy are accounted for by trade, banking and financial services, insurance, and tourism. World practice shows that the tourism sector ranks second after oil and gas extraction and processing in terms of profitability and dynamics. According to the World Tourism Organization, the tourism business accounts for 10% of the turnover of the production and service market, which is 7% of total investments and 5% of all tax revenues.

The potential of Uzbekistan in the areas of cultural, historical, gastronomic, MICE (business tourism associated with the organization and holding of various corporate events), ethno, eco, agro, sports, and medical tourism deserves special recognition from industry experts. Since ancient times, our country has been located at the crossroads of the historical Great Silk Road and has attracted the attention of the whole world for centuries through the valuable memories of famous tourists.

Today, there are more than 8,200 cultural heritage sites in our country. Four museum-cities, including 209 of them - Ichanqal'ha in Khiva, the historical centers of Bukhara and Shakhrisabz, as well as the crossroads of cultures - Samarkand - are included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. These magnificent cities, as well as Termez, continue to captivate tourists worldwide as cities that must be seen.

Taking the above into account, the General Assembly of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) was held in Samarkand on October 16-20, 2023.

On October 16, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev took part in the opening ceremony of the 25th session of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in Samarkand.

At the main event of the Global Tourism Organization, which lasted until October 20 with the participation of representatives from more than 140 countries, the head of our state put forward a number of important initiatives for the further development of the industry.

The leader of Uzbekistan noted that the tourism sector is one of the fastest-growing and most promising sectors of the world economy. In Uzbekistan, within the framework of large-scale and systemic reforms to modernize the country, priority attention is also paid to the development of the tourism industry.

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In recent years, in order to develop the industry, a visa-free regime has been introduced for citizens of almost one hundred countries, and a simplified electronic visa regime has been introduced for citizens of another 55 countries.

Favorable conditions have been created for conducting all types of tourism business, tax and customs benefits have been provided, and credit and financial assistance has been strengthened. Despite the pandemic restrictions, 800 infrastructure projects have been implemented over two years.

The number of hotel places has reached 140 thousand, 70 new tourist routes have been opened, and 6 private airlines have started operating.

As a result, the number of foreign tourists visiting Uzbekistan has doubled. Revenues from tourism exports have quadrupled. According to estimates, a total of 7 million tourists will visit our country this year. By 2030, it is planned to increase this figure to 15 million, and domestic tourism to 25 million.

The large-scale work being carried out is gaining recognition from the world community. In particular, Uzbekistan occupies high positions in international rankings as the fastest-growing tourist destination and the safest country.

The head of Uzbekistan emphasized that the developed Strategy for the Comprehensive Development of Tourism until 2030 prioritizes the creation of modern tourism and transport infrastructure. New high-speed roads and railways will be built, the air transport fleet will be doubled, and the number of flights will be quadrupled. 30 large tourism clusters will be created in large cities and tourist destinations.

Within the framework of the national program "Pearls of Ancient History," the number of cultural heritage sites attracting tourists will be increased from 800 to 2.5 thousand, 745 cultural heritage sites will be restored, and "open-air museums" will be created at 20 architectural monuments.

Within the framework of the pilgrimage tourism program, the number of visitors will be tripled.

The focus will be on the creation of joint tourist routes with the countries of Central Asia.

In general, it is planned to create at least 1 million new jobs in the future through the development of tourism destinations.

At the same time, the leader of Uzbekistan noted that the most pressing problem of global tourism is ensuring a guaranteed tourist safety system. In order to strengthen the legal framework in the field of international tourism, the head of our state proposed to develop a Global Code of Safe Tourism within the framework of the UN.

The relevance of adopting an international Action Program for the development of "green" tourism in the context of increasing climate change was emphasized. As practical steps in this direction, it was proposed to establish the nomination "Best City for Implementing Green Tourism" within the framework of the UNWTO, as well as to create a Global Green Tourism Startups Laboratory in cooperation with the Central Asian University for the Study of Environment and Climate Change and the International University "Silk Road" in Samarkand.

In order to further strengthen favorable conditions for tourists with disabilities and develop the infrastructure of inclusive tourism, the President of Uzbekistan put forward an initiative to declare 2025 the "World Year of Inclusive Tourism" and adopt a special declaration.

It was noted that within the framework of the UNWTO, it is advisable to create a platform for the exchange of best practices in the preservation of historical monuments - the Council of Historical Cities for Tourism. It was noted that Uzbekistan is ready to organize the first meeting of the Council in the city of Bukhara.

The leader of our country announced the allocation of special grants for training specialists at the recently opened UNWTO International Academy of Tourism in Samarkand, which has no analogues in the world in the field of training and advanced training of personnel for the tourism industry.



The head of Uzbekistan proposed holding the next World Youth Tourism Summit in Tashkent, which will become an important and useful platform for young people to create tourism development projects and new ideas.

An initiative was put forward to establish a special UNWTO international award for contribution to the development of the "Silk Road" brand. The Thematic Office "Tourism on the Silk Road," opened in Samarkand, will be actively involved in the implementation of this plan.

Attention was drawn to the importance of establishing a Global Media Campus and holding its forums every two years within the framework of the sessions of the General Assembly. Readiness was expressed to host the first media campus in Uzbekistan.

The Head of our state called on the delegates to support the initiative to declare Samarkand the "International Capital of Cultural Tourism" and adopt a corresponding declaration.

Holding the 25th anniversary session of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in the ancient city of Samarkand, along with introducing our country's cultural, tourism, investment, and intellectual potential to the world, served to further strengthen international relations with the world community in the trade, economic, tourism, and cultural spheres.

The Investment Forum is attended by 122 major foreign investors from more than 100 countries and about 540 representatives of large local companies, who familiarized themselves with the existing tourist and investment potential of 14 regions of Uzbekistan, the activities of 3 tourist and recreational zones on an area of 4200 square meters, and discussed issues of future cooperation.

Historically, business tourism and global trade volumes have always been closely interconnected. Today, global trade is growing by 9% per year, and similar growth is expected for global business tourism spending in 2011. [5]

The business tourism industry accounts for 60% of global tourism, and 55-60% of hotel spaces are occupied by business trips. This tourism sector is actively developing in 150 countries, and large business events are being held not in capitals, but in the regions. [7].

According to forecasts, the annual growth of business tourism spending in Brazil, Russia, India, and China will be two to three times faster than in developed countries such as the USA, France, Germany, and Great Britain. The rapid growth of business tourism in developing countries is associated with debt obligations, difficulties in the real estate sector, and declining consumer demand in developed countries.

Therefore, relative changes have occurred in the formation of new directions, and innovations in the industrial sphere have begun to form a new global order in terms of the forms, volumes, and regional distribution of global business tourism. [5]

The problem of increasing the Russian tourism economy is currently one of the most important in modern Russia. And the solution is the development of business tourism. Business, cultural, and scientific ties between regions and countries are getting closer year by year. The development of the national economy and its integration into the world market is impossible to imagine without the development of business tourism. Business contacts, exchange of technologies and information, search for new markets, search for partners for investments and joint projects, promotion of companies through PR companies, training of employees and introduction of corporate culture - all this, however unexpected it may seem, is business tourism. Business tourism is one of the sources for the integration and development of companies through participation in exhibitions and congresses, business analysis.

Business tourism plays a decisive role in the development of the national economy and contributes to its integration into the global economic market. Modern business is impossible without active exchange of information, mastery of new technologies, participation in international conferences, seminars, exhibitions, and advanced training at all levels of business education. All of this is part of the business tourism industry. Thanks to this tourism sector, new innovative ideas are entering the economy, new markets are being conquered, and innovative products are being developed.



The daily expenses of an entrepreneur engaged in a business trip are on average three times higher than those of an ordinary tourist, therefore, due to optimal organization, it is possible to combine the business part of the trip with an increase in the number of participants' free time with various tourist programs and additional services. And at the same time, market research shows that, unlike other travel companies, the business tourism sector suffers the least damage and sometimes even increases its volume during any economic crisis and crisis period.

Business tourism today is a highly developed industry for serving business trips, which, in turn, are divided into several types. In turn, individual and group business trips to participate in events organized by industrial and commercial corporations account for about 68% of total business trips. Visits to industrial exhibitions and fairs and participation in their work account for 12%, attendance at conferences and seminars sponsored by political, economic, scientific, cultural, religious and other organizations - about 14%, congress trips - 3%, and stimulating tourism - 3%. This division is relative, since all types of business trips can coincide with each other. A characteristic feature of modern business tourism is the constant demand for joint programs that combine 3-4 days of work (business negotiations, establishing contacts, buying or selling products, searching for new technologies or equipment, etc.) and 1-3 days of leisure (excursions, active recreation, entertainment programs, cultural events, etc.).

While business tourism has existed in the West since 1841, in Uzbekistan it appeared only in the 1990s. In recent years, there has been certain progress in creating tourism infrastructure, primarily business tourism. Many business hotels and business centers have been built in Tashkent, and some regional centers, congress bureaus, and exhibition organizations are being created using innovative forms of management, and the schedule of forums and other business events is expanding. This trend is easily explained - in recent years, business tourism has become one of the most profitable sectors of the global tourism industry. While business tourism is among the twenty largest sectors of the country's economy in our country's market, business tourism in the regions is underdeveloped. However, the demand for conferences, exhibitions, and meetings is constantly growing, and there are very few participants who have purposefully promoted this product in the business tourism market. Companies engaged in elements of business tourism, as a rule, do not worry about this, and it is not often those who consider themselves participants in this market. There is practically no partnership between tourism companies operating in the field of business tourism, therefore, a chain has not been built between hotels, travel companies, and companies engaged in organizing events in the regions. To fully satisfy the consumers of the business tourism market, as well as to unite companies in one cycle to create a new competitive product in the field of business tourism - this is another task that can be solved with the help of strategic alliances of tourism structures, public-private partnerships. This has become a common global practice, allowing for faster response to market changes. The success of commercial activity in the market of tourist services, including business tourism, is determined, first of all, by an attractive tourist product.

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