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THE PECULIARITIES OF USING FOREIGN EXPERIENCE IN IMPROVING THE EFFICIENCY OF TOURIST AND RECREATIONAL AREAS

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Abstract. This article examines the specific features of applying foreign experience to improve the efficiency of tourist and recreational areas. The study analyzes successful practices in Spain and the United Arab Emirates in tourism development, with particular focus on infrastructure development, destination branding, investment attraction, digitalization, and diversification of tourism products. Comparative and analytical methods were used to identify the key factors contributing to the effective development of tourism destinations. The findings indicate that strategic planning, regional tourism branding, modern infrastructure, and digital technologies play an important role in increasing tourism competitiveness. Based on international experience, several recommendations are proposed for improving the efficiency of tourist and recreational areas in Uzbekistan. The implementation of these approaches can contribute to sustainable tourism development, increased tourist flows, and enhanced regional economic growth.

Keywords: tourist and recreational areas, tourism development, foreign experience, Spain, United Arab Emirates, tourism infrastructure, destination branding, sustainable tourism, tourism competitiveness, Uzbekistan.

Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются особенности использования зарубежного опыта для повышения эффективности туристско-рекреационных территорий. В исследовании проанализированы успешные практики развития туризма в Испании и Объединённых Арабских Эмиратах с акцентом на развитие инфраструктуры, брендинг туристских дестинаций, привлечение инвестиций, цифровизацию и диверсификацию туристских продуктов. Для выявления ключевых факторов, обеспечивающих эффективность туристских направлений, использованы сравнительный и аналитический методы исследования. Результаты показывают, что стратегическое планирование, региональный туристский брендинг, современная инфраструктура и цифровые технологии играют важную роль в повышении конкурентоспособности туристской отрасли. На основе международного опыта предложены рекомендации по повышению эффективности туристско-рекреационных территорий Узбекистана. Реализация данных подходов будет способствовать устойчивому развитию туризма, увеличению туристических потоков и ускорению социально-экономического развития регионов.

Ключевые слова: туристско-рекреационные территории, развитие туризма, зарубежный опыт, Испания, Объединённые Арабские Эмираты, туристская инфраструктура, брендинг дестинаций, устойчивый туризм, конкурентоспособность туризма, Узбекистан.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the most dynamically developing sectors of the global economy. It continuously adapts to new conditions, creates modern infrastructure, introduces innovative technologies, and provides new opportunities for comfortable travel and recreation. Today, the development of international tourism is considered one of the key factors influencing economic growth and the sustainable development of regions. Tourist and recreational areas play an important role in attracting visitors, creating employment opportunities, and stimulating regional development.

In modern conditions, it is difficult to imagine the development of tourism without studying and applying advanced international experience. Many countries have already achieved significant results in this field, and their practices may be useful for Uzbekistan. However, it is important not merely to copy ready-made foreign models or projects, but to adapt them to national conditions, available opportunities, cultural values, and local mentality. This approach is especially relevant for Uzbekistan, which has great tourism potential, rich cultural heritage, and unique natural resources that can help the country strengthen its position in the global tourism market.

At present, different countries apply various approaches to the development of tourist and recreational areas. Some states prioritize environmental protection, ecological safety, and the sustainable use of natural resources, while others focus on attracting investment, developing infrastructure, and strengthening partnerships that can accelerate the growth of the tourism industry. This experience is particularly important for countries with significant tourism potential, including Uzbekistan.

The main purpose of this article is to analyze foreign experience in the development of tourist and recreational areas and identify ways to use it effectively in Uzbekistan. Based on the analysis, the article aims to develop recommendations for improving tourist and recreational areas and further developing tourism clusters in Uzbekistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Issues related to tourism development, particularly the effective utilization of tourism and recreational potential in regions and the enhancement of destination attractiveness, occupy an important place in contemporary scientific literature. The studies of numerous foreign and domestic scholars provide valuable insights into various approaches to tourism development. Their research addresses the formation of tourism clusters, investment mechanisms, sustainable tourism development, and the effective management of tourism resources. Such experience is particularly valuable for countries seeking to strengthen their position in the international tourism market.

The scientific foundations of tourism development have been extensively explored by prominent geographers V.I. Kruzhalin and N.S. Mironenko. In their textbook *Geography of Tourism*, the authors describe tourism as a complex socio-economic phenomenon that significantly influences regional development. Particular attention is devoted to tourism and recreational resources, their spatial distribution, and the role of tourism in improving living standards and stimulating economic growth. According to the authors, the rational use of natural resources and cultural heritage forms the basis for the sustainable development of the tourism sector.

The organization of tourism activities and the functioning of the tourism market are comprehensively discussed in the textbook *Fundamentals of Tourism* by L.V. Stakhova, Candidate of Economic Sciences and Associate Professor. The author examines the fundamental principles of tourism management, the formation of tourism products, and emerging trends in global tourism. The study highlights the importance of improving service quality, developing tourism infrastructure, and applying modern management approaches in tourist and recreational areas.

A significant contribution to the study of recreational potential was made by N.S. Mironenko and A.I. Trofimov. In their textbook *Recreational Geography*, the authors analyze the formation of recreational systems, methods for assessing tourism and recreational resources, and mechanisms for their effective utilization. They emphasize that tourism development should take into account the socio-economic and environmental characteristics of each territory.

Among international studies, the work *Essentials of Tourism* by K. Cooper, a renowned tourism scholar from the United Kingdom and Australia, deserves special attention. The author analyzes contemporary trends in the global tourism industry, examines factors influencing destination competitiveness, and highlights the importance of strategic planning for tourism development. According to Cooper, sustainable tourism development requires close cooperation among government institutions, the private sector, and local communities.

The collective monograph *Sustainable Tourism: Frameworks, Practices, and Innovative Solutions*, edited by Thomas Walker, Ender Demir, Gabrielle Machnik Kekesi, and Victoria Kelly, focuses on the challenges and opportunities of sustainable tourism development. The authors explore innovative approaches to the management of tourist destinations and strategies for ensuring the long-term sustainability of tourism activities. The study emphasizes that sustainable tourism has become one of the most important global trends, contributing to the preservation of natural and cultural heritage.

Another valuable source is the article *Foreign Experience in the Effective Use of the Tourist and Recreational Potential of the Region*, published in the journal *Yashil Iqtisodiyot Taraqqiyoti* in 2024. The article examines contemporary international practices and their potential application in Uzbekistan. Special attention is given to foreign experience in tourism development, the cluster approach, and methods for increasing the efficiency of tourism resource utilization. The author concludes that the successful development of the tourism sector largely depends on effective cooperation among government institutions, the private sector, and local communities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on comparative analysis and case study methods. The tourism development models of Spain and the United Arab Emirates were selected as case studies due to their successful experience in tourism management and destination development. Secondary data obtained from international reports, scientific publications, tourism statistics, and official government sources were analyzed.

Comparative analysis was applied to identify the main factors influencing the efficiency of tourist and recreational areas, including infrastructure development, investment attraction, destination branding, digitalization, and tourism diversification. In addition, synthesis and generalization methods were used to formulate recommendations for adapting international experience to the conditions of Uzbekistan.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Today, Spain is considered one of the leading countries in the global tourism industry, attracting millions of tourists annually. Tourism accounts for approximately 12–14 percent of Spain's GDP, making it one of the key sectors of the national economy. Spain's success in this field is largely associated with the effective use of its natural, cultural, and historical resources. Through a well-planned approach, Spain has transformed tourism into one of the most important drivers of economic development.

The diversity of tourism resources plays an important role in the development of tourism in the country. Spain offers tourists a wide range of tourism products, including ecotourism, beach tourism, cultural and educational tourism, gastronomic tourism, and event tourism. For example, the regions of Catalonia, Andalusia, and Valencia attract tourists not only with their seaside resorts but also with national cuisine, historical monuments, festivals, and cultural events. This diversity attracts visitors from different parts of the world, reduces dependence on a single type of recreation, increases tourist flows, and raises tourist spending during travel.

Another important advantage of Spain is its well-developed infrastructure. The country has the largest high-speed railway network in Europe, numerous international airports, and modern highways. These factors allow tourists to travel easily from one city or region to another.

Spain also pays considerable attention to the preservation and promotion of its cultural heritage. Historical cities, museums, architectural monuments, and UNESCO World Heritage sites are actively used as tourism resources. At the same time, the state invests substantial funds in restoration and conservation activities to preserve cultural sites.

In addition, the country actively develops regional tourism. Each autonomous region has its own tourism brand that promotes unique tourism products. For example, Catalonia and Madrid focus on urban and cultural tourism, Andalusia makes extensive use of its historical heritage and traditions, while the Canary and Balearic Islands specialize in recreational and beach tourism. This approach helps prevent the overloading of individual destinations and allows the tourism potential of different regions to be used more effectively (Figure 1).

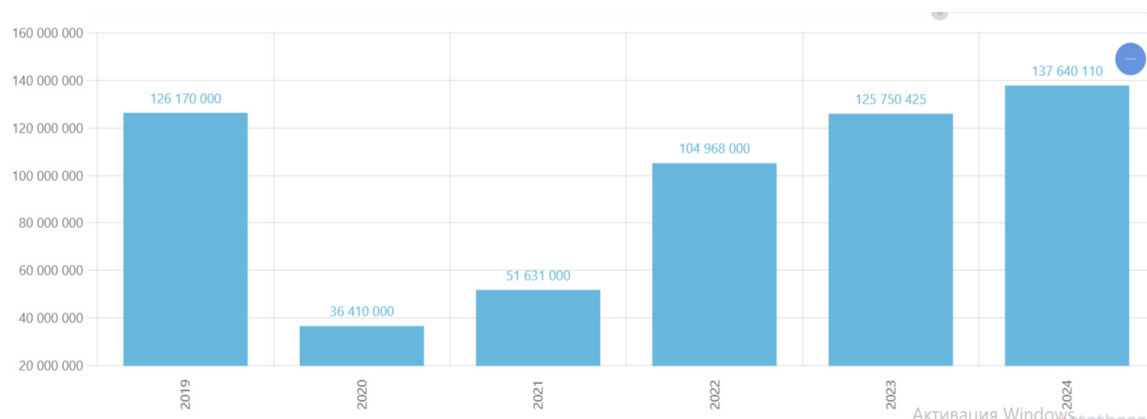


Figure 1. Annual visitor arrivals in Spain (2019-2024)¹

In Spain, each region develops natural, cultural, and historical types of tourism based on its specific potential, which may determine possible tourist flows and income sources. This approach can also be effectively applied in Uzbekistan, taking into account the capabilities and unique features of each region.

For example, Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva can offer tourists deep immersion in centuries-old history and culture through historical monuments, mausoleums, mosques, madrasas, and architectural complexes. The Fergana Valley attracts visitors with its craft centers, national cuisine, and traditional handicrafts. The region is rich in folk crafts such as pottery, wood and stone carving, musical instrument making, and decorative painting.

Jizzakh region, with Zaamin National Park, the Nurata Nature Reserve, and the Aydar-Arnasay lake system, has favorable conditions for the development of ecological and mountain tourism. Karakalpakstan can attract environmental and scientific tourism through destinations associated with the Aral Sea, the Ustyurt Plateau, and the historical and cultural complex of Mizzdakh.

In Surkhandarya region, pilgrimage and historical tourism can contribute to territorial development due to the archaeological sites of Termez, Fayaztepa, and Kampyrtepa. Namangan region is known for recreational and mountain tourism, particularly due to the Chortoq recreation area. Tashkent region has broad opportunities for the development of year-round recreational tourism, including skiing, sports, and ecological tourism in Chimgan, Beldersay, and Amirsoy.

Using Spain's experience in forming regional tourism brands would make it possible to use the tourist and recreational potential of all regions of Uzbekistan more effectively, reduce the concentration of tourist flows in individual cities, and ensure more balanced development of the tourism industry at the national level.

The United Arab Emirates is another important example of a country that has achieved significant results in the tourism industry within a relatively short period. The UAE government has implemented long-term strategies aimed at diversifying the economy and reducing dependence on oil revenues. As a result, tourism has become one of the most important sectors of the national economy.

The UAE is one of the most impressive examples of a country's transformation into a global tourism hub. Its economic diversification strategy has served as the main driving force behind this development. The country actively promotes tourism as part of its strategy to reduce dependence on oil revenues and implements long-term development programs focused on creating a post-oil economy. Key sectors include tourism, trade, logistics, and financial services. The government also plays an active role in planning and implementing tourism projects, often through large holdings and public-private partnerships.

The United Arab Emirates has created one of the world's most advanced tourism infrastructures. Its international airports, including Dubai International Airport and Abu Dhabi International Airport, are among the largest in the world and serve massive international passenger flows. The country is also represented by world-famous hotels such as Burj Al Arab, Atlantis The Palm, and Jumeirah Hotels. Modern transport infrastructure, including the Dubai Metro, high-quality roads, taxis, and transfer services, provides convenient mobility for tourists.

The UAE's tourism attractions include artificial islands, such as Palm Jumeirah, recreation areas, and theme parks, including Ferrari World and Warner Bros. World. Landmark projects have created a unique

¹ [number of tourist arrivals / Spain](#)

infrastructure that has become a global symbol of tourism. These include Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world; Palm Jumeirah, an artificial island shaped like a palm tree with hotels, villas, and beaches; Dubai Mall, one of the largest shopping and entertainment centers in the world; Louvre Abu Dhabi, a world-class museum created in cooperation with France; and Expo 2020 Dubai, an international exposition that attracted global investment and visitors.

The UAE has developed a wide range of tourism types, including business tourism, conferences, exhibitions, and forums; shopping tourism; medical tourism based on modern clinics and high-quality services; beach tourism; and cultural tourism through museums, festivals, and heritage-related events.

The UAE promotes the value of tourism through international advertising campaigns, cooperation with Emirates Airline, the development of transit tourism through Dubai as a global aviation hub, and increased professional awareness among employees in the tourism sector. The country is also actively implementing digital technologies, including simplified electronic visas, online services for tourists such as booking, transport, and service platforms, smart city initiatives such as Smart Dubai, and the use of artificial intelligence in tourism.

The Dynamics of Tourist Arrivals

The dynamics of tourist arrivals show the rapid development of the tourism sector and its sensitivity to global crises:

1995: 2.315 million tourists, the lowest figure during the observation period;

2019: 25.0 million tourists, a record level before the pandemic, representing a 10.9 percent increase compared to 2018;

2020: 8.084 million tourists, reflecting a sharp decline caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;

2021: 12.784 million tourists, indicating a 58.14 percent recovery compared to 2020;

2023: 25.3 million tourists, showing continued recovery of the tourism sector;

2024: 29.2 million tourists, representing a 15.5 percent increase compared to 2023, with a forecast of further growth to 45.5 million tourists by 2033.

Based on this experience, Uzbekistan can use the following opportunities:

attract investment in tourism infrastructure;

develop modern hotels and improve the transport network;

actively introduce digital technologies in the tourism sector;

organize international exhibitions, festivals, and forums;

improve the quality of tourism services and the overall level of service;

develop various types of tourism, including cultural, business, medical, and ecological tourism.

The implementation of these measures will allow Uzbekistan to reach a new level of tourism development, increase the competitiveness of national tourism, and attract more foreign tourists.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The experiences of Spain and the United Arab Emirates demonstrate that successful tourism development requires effective government policy, significant investment in infrastructure, strategic planning, and strong destination promotion. Spain has achieved notable success through regional tourism development, the preservation of cultural heritage, and the creation of strong tourism brands. The United Arab Emirates, in turn, has become a leading global tourism destination through innovative projects, large-scale investments, modern infrastructure, and high-quality services.

The study of these countries shows that sustainable tourism growth depends on infrastructure development, cultural heritage preservation, diversification of tourism products, and the use of modern technologies. The application of international best practices can enable Uzbekistan to strengthen its position in the global tourism market, increase inbound tourist flows, and ensure the sustainable development of tourist and recreational areas.

Based on the analysis, it is recommended to further develop regional tourism brands, improve transport and hotel infrastructure, attract private and foreign investment, expand digital tourism services, and diversify tourism products. Particular attention should also be given to ecological, cultural, gastronomic, medical, and business tourism. The implementation of these measures will contribute to increasing the competitiveness of Uzbekistan's tourism sector and supporting balanced regional development.

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