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## PRIORITY AREAS OF BUSINESS TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

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*Abstract.* The article analyzes the development of business tourism in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The authors analyzed the current state of this type of tourism. The study conducted by the authors on the state of business tourism allows us to state its sustainable development. In the structure of business tourism development in Kazakhstan, the leading positions are occupied by individual tours, visits to exhibitions, conferences, and congress events. The purpose of the study is focused in the area of generalization and systematization of approaches to the content of the conceptual apparatus of business tourism, identifying the specifics of the organization and development of business tourism, substantiating its role and development prospects in Kazakhstan.

*Keywords:* business tourism, MICE, Republic of Kazakhstan, tourist flow.

## ПРИОРИТЕТНЫЕ НАПРАВЛЕНИЯ РАЗВИТИЯ ДЕЛОВОГО ТУРИЗМА В РЕСПУБЛИКЕ КАЗАХСТАН

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*Аннотация.* В статье осуществлен анализ развития делового туризма в Республике Казахстан. Авторами проанализировано современное состояние данного вида туризма. Проведенное авторами исследование состояние делового туризма позволяет констатировать его устойчивое развитие. В структуре развития делового туризма в Казахстане лидирующие позиции занимают индивидуальные туры, посещение выставки, конференции и конгресс-мероприятия. Цель исследования сосредоточена в области обобщения и систематизации подходов к содержанию понятийного аппарата делового туризма, выявления специфики организации и развития делового туризма, в обосновании его роли и перспектив развития в Казахстане

*Ключевые слова:* деловой туризм, MICE, Республика Казахстан, турпоток.

**I***ntroduction.* In the Republic of Kazakhstan, as in many other countries, tourism has a great influence on economic development and in attracting foreign capital to the country. In addition, tourism creates new jobs and actively participates in the formation of gross domestic product, having a significant impact on the development of related sectors of national economies: public catering, trade, transport, hospitality, etc. Due to the specifics of the modern business world, leisure is very often combined with work and the needs of the organization at each specific stage. That is why the development of such a tourism product as MICE tourism is gaining momentum. International practice of running a tourism business shows that in modern conditions, business and congress tourism are considered one of the most highly profitable and actively developing areas of organized travel. Business tourism, both in Kazakhstan and abroad, is a fairly «young» type of tourism.

*Research methods.* During the research process, statistical, comparative methods, and descriptive methods were used.

The methodological and theoretical basis of the study was the work of scientists and specialists in the field of MICE tourism. Issues related to the promotion of MICE tourism are considered in their works by such authors as A. A. Shirokova, M. B. Chugunova, E. O. Belova, A. N. Tsatsouline, D. S. Ormanji and others.

*Research results and discussion.* The Republic of Kazakhstan has enormous climatic potential for tourism development. Kazakhstan is rich in natural landscapes and unique traditions, as well as business industry facilities. The development of tourism in the country is gaining momentum, the situation in this segment of the economy is improving, and the interest of both foreign and domestic tourists in various types of activities in the country is growing [6].

The development of the national economy of Kazakhstan and its integration into the world market influence the development processes of the business tourism sector. Business tourism plays an important role in the development of business, cultural and scientific ties between regions of the country and at the international level.

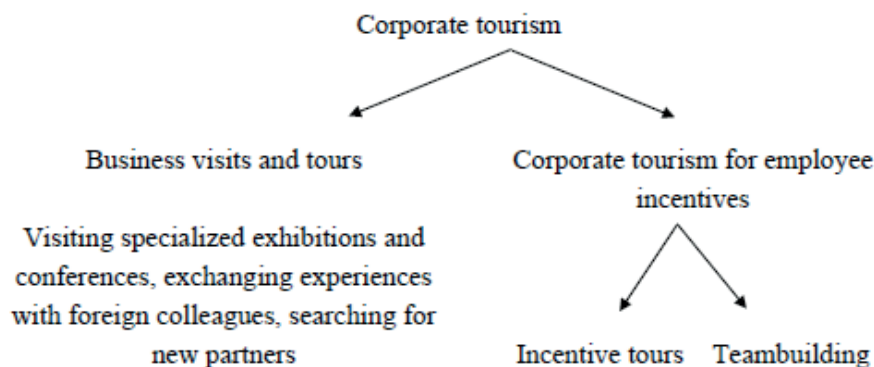
A. Aguilera considers business tourism as a set of relationships and phenomena that arise and occur during working hours for the purpose of attending business events in places other than the place of work [8].

Currently, business tourism is considered as a type of tourism that combines the business travel industry and the meetings industry (MICE).

MICE tourism is a new direction in tourism activities. It consists of organizing and conducting various events related to business trips and corporate vacations abroad. The meaning of the project is to provide business tourism services and organize a full cycle of such events.

Today this is a whole complex of actions, which usually includes four areas of tourism activity, conventionally called MICE tourism. This abbreviation usually means:

- business meetings;
- incentive or otherwise intensive tours organized not only for its employees, but also for the company's partners and clients;
- participation in exhibitions and conferences;
- holding organized corporate events [1].



Types of corporate tourism [1]

Since any business tour requires attention to many details and a lot of time, with the help of MICE tourism you can solve all these difficulties. Organization of business tourism includes searching and booking suitable hotels, flights, transfers, visa support. Offers for organizing business tourism include four types of services:

- holding meetings, negotiations, conferences;
- loyalty programs, incentive trips;
- holding forums, conferences;
- holding any events within the team — birthdays, New Year's Eve, etc [4].

Currently, experts identify 4 main groups of companies, professional meeting organizers operating in the international MICE market:

1. Meeting planners and service providers. These include professional congress organizers (PCO);
2. Companies organizing meetings and events (destination management companies — DMC), convention visitors bureaus (CVB);

3. Meeting locations;
4. Specialist experts.

All business trips — «business travel» — can be divided into subtypes:

- «corporate travel»;
- trips related to participation in seminars, conferences and conventions;
- trips to trade and industrial exhibitions, fairs.

According to Business & Sport Travel LLP, more than 73% of all business moves are «corporate travel» — corporate trips, including «incentive» trips, which are intensive tours. Intensive tours are designed to raise the morale of employees; at such meetings, employees are motivated to work. The next 16% are trips that are directly related to participation in seminars, conferences, and conventions. Basically, such tours are carried out by various scientific, cultural, economic, religious organizations, etc. The remaining 11% are already attributed to trips to trade and industrial exhibitions, fairs for participation in them or for their own development.

In the structure of global business tourism today, the leading positions are occupied by individual tours (70.8%), followed by trips to attend seminars and conferences — 12.6% of the total number of business trips, and about 10.9% are allocated to visiting industry exhibitions. Congress and intensive tours take up only 3%. In the global tourist flow, the share of business tourists is about 25% of the total number of trips [4]

Every year business tourism attracts an increasing number of guests to the largest cities of Kazakhstan. These are, first of all, Astana, Almaty and Atyrau. Since it is in these cities that all kinds of regional and international conferences, summits, and symposiums are held, attracting an impressive number of foreign business tourists to the country.

The development of MICE tourism in the city of Astana is included in the TOP 10 of the Republican Tourism Map. Over the past 10 years, 36 international events have been held in Astana that meet the requirements of the International Congress and Conference Association (ICCA). In total, more than 15 thousand international delegates were registered at the meetings. The International Association of Congresses and Conferences annually publishes a ranking of MICE destinations, where the city of Astana is in 286th place. In order to enter the TOP 100 of this rating, Astana must annually hold at least 30 events per year [2].

The geopolitical position and natural resources allow us to count on an increase in the number of business tourists coming to Kazakhstan on business issues and participation in international conferences and forums (Table).

**Number of visitors entering Kazakhstan by purpose of trip [5]**

№	Purpose of the visit	2021,%	2022,%
1	Business and professional goals	28,2	31,4
2	Personal goals	71,8	68,6

To develop this type of tourism, hotels are constantly being built in the country's cities, targeting a variety of groups of tourists: these are five-star hotels of the world's most famous hotel chains, and cozy small hotels, as well as hostels.

It should be noted that in 2021, the total expenses of incoming visitors, depending on the purpose of the trip, were distributed as follows: for personal purposes — 68.6%, for business and professional purposes — 31.4%. In 2022, the purposes of incoming visitors by purpose of travel were distributed as follows: for personal purposes — 71.8%, for business and professional purposes — 28.2%. (Table 1.)

The increase in the number of trips has a positive impact on the growth of sales in the tourism industry of Kazakhstan.

Let's consider the factors influencing the development of business tourism in Kazakhstan. The development of this type of tourism is negatively affected by the low level of hotel infrastructure in Kazakhstan. Regionally, the main part of the accommodation facilities is located in the cities of Almaty and Astana, as well as in the East Kazakhstan, Almaty and Karaganda regions. And in this connection, Almaty and Astana are centers for major events of both republican and international significance. The smallest number of tourists were served in the South Kazakhstan and Kyzylorda regions — due to the lack of well-established

service, as well as a lack of hotel beds. Today in Kazakhstan there is also the problem of setting high prices for hotel services, but their level does not meet international standards.

At the same time, in general, the prospects for the business travel market in Kazakhstan are very good. Thanks to the stable socio-economic and political situation, the country is becoming increasingly recognizable and attractive from the point of view of developing business relations, which naturally causes an increase in the number of trips for business purposes to Kazakhstan and beyond.

In Kazakhstan, MICE services are provided by many companies, most of which are tourism companies. As we noted above, the geography of MICE in Kazakhstan is distributed as follows: approximately 40% of all events take place in Almaty, 30% in Astana, 30% of meetings are held in other Kazakh cities.

Let us highlight the main problems of the development of business tourism in Kazakhstan.

1. Lack of close cooperation at various levels between government authorities and industry professionals.
2. Insufficient promotion and PR to create a positive image of Kazakhstan for the development of inbound tourism.
3. Insufficient level of personnel training.
4. Insufficient attention to participation in international exhibitions of the MICE industry.
5. Poor infrastructure (hotels, roads, transport, etc.).

For the effective development of business tourism for businessmen, all conditions must be created for a comfortable stay on a business trip, which include:

- *specialized centers for organizing exhibitions, congresses, conferences;*
- *business hotels for business people;*
- *business aviation;*
- *mobile and satellite communications, other modern technologies.*

6. Complicated visa procedures.

*Conclusion.* To summarize, we note that the development of business tourism will not only make it possible to profit from the stay of foreign delegates, but also from the organization of the event itself, attract the world's leading experts and leaders of economic sectors, as well as investments in the region by demonstrating the readiness of the city and the Republic of Kazakhstan for further growth and development of market segments. At the same time, for a more dynamic development of business tourism, additional incentive measures and the use of the best international experience are necessary. It is necessary to provide measures to support business events, including systematization of the bidding process, and increase the number of events aimed at strengthening the country's image as a MICE destination.

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