

АКТУАЛЬНЫЕ ВОПРОСЫ РАЗВИТИЯ ТУРИСТСКИХ ТЕРРИТОРИЙ

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CURRENT ISSUES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURIST AREAS

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Abstract. The article discusses the main issues of development of tourism services in Kazakhstan. An analysis of the state of the tourist cluster in the city of Almaty was carried out, and promising directions for its development were developed. Particular attention is paid to the importance of developing eco-tourism in the republic as the most promising segment. The role of marketing for tourism development is highlighted, the characteristics of the marketing complex and its features for tourism activities are given. The study developed recommendations on the use of wide marketing opportunities for the development of tourism in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Keywords: tourist cluster, Kazakhstan, ecotourism, mountain tourism, marketing in tourism, marketing mix.

АКТУАЛЬНЫЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ РАЗВИТИЯ ТУРИСТСКИХ РЕГИОНОВ

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Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются основные вопросы развития туристских услуг в Казахстане. Проведен анализ состояния туристского кластера города Алматы и разработаны перспективные направления его развития. Особое внимание уделено важности развития экотуризма в Республике как наиболее перспективного сегмента. Выделена роль маркетинга для развития туризма, дана характеристика маркетингового комплекса и его особенности для туристской деятельности. В результате исследования разработаны рекомендации по использованию маркетинговых возможностей для развития туризма в Республике Казахстан.

Ключевые слова: туристический кластер, Казахстан, экотуризм, горный туризм, маркетинг в туризме, комплекс маркетинга.

I*ntroduction.* The development of tourism is an important priority for the Republic of Kazakhstan, aimed at improving the economic situation of the country and creating conditions for the growth of related industries. Kazakhstan has unique natural resources and a rich culture of nomadic people, which creates favorable conditions for the development of tourism. Tourism is not only an economic sector, but also an important sphere of people's lives. It occupies one of the leading positions in the global economy, providing more than 75 million jobs worldwide, and every twelfth inhabitant of the Earth is associated with this industry. International tourism has become an integral part of the life of modern society and helps strengthen international relations.

Materials and methods of research. The theoretical and methodological basis of the study was the scientific techniques, principles and methodological developments of scientists in the field of tourism development in Kazakhstan, presented in the works of such authors as Daribaeva A. K., Shulenbaeva F. A. [1], Zholdasbekov A. A., Konysova Sh. M. [4], Kaygorodtsev A. A., Granetsky V. N. [5], Sarieva Zh. I., Shalgimbayeva S. Kh. [8], Takhtaeva R. Sh. [9] and other authors.

The information and empirical base of the study consisted of statistical, information and analytical data from the Statistics Committee of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan [6], the Department of Statistics of the city of Almaty [2], the Department of Tourism of the Ministry of Investment and Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the city of Almaty [3], the Department of Tourism of the city of Almaty [10]. The methodological basis of the study is made up of modern analytical, historical, systemic methods.

Research results and discussion. The tourism sector is concentrated in several regions of the world, and the main movement of tourists occurs within the regions. In recent years, tourism has become one of the most profitable industries, and it uses about 7% of the world's total capital. Total international tourism revenue reached US\$ 1,07 trillion in 2022 [6]. This area also has an impact on the social, cultural and environmental environment in various countries.

The evolution of tourism began at the end of the 19th century and became most active in the second half of the 20th century, with the development of technology and changes in social relations. Ecotourism, which involves observing and interacting with nature, has become an important area of tourism [9]. This type of tourism strives to minimize negative impacts on the environment, finance protected natural areas and create sources of income for local communities.

Kazakhstan is an attractive tourism destination, and recent years have shown growing interest in the country. Kazakhstan has a unique tourism potential, including natural beauty, historical and cultural monuments and the Great Silk Road. Organizing tours along the Great Silk Road can attract the attention of countries such as Japan, Malaysia, China, Korea, as well as European countries [8]. Kazakhstan offers a variety of types of tourism, including cultural, environmental, adventure and much more.

Kazakhstan has recognized tourism as a priority sector of the economy and has developed a Tourism Development Concept, which includes six national tourism clusters. This Concept seeks to develop ecotourism and environmental education, including protected natural areas.

In this regard, the development of the Naurzum Nature Reserve, which is located in the Kostanay region, as an object of ecological tourism meets the main economic and social interests of the tourism industry in question and contributes to its implementation in the long term. Let's consider the current state of one of the tourist clusters — Almaty. Almaty is the largest city in Kazakhstan, the financial, innovative, tourist and cultural center of the country, occupying a leading position among other regions of the country in terms of gross regional product and other indicators of socio-economic development. According to the Department of Tourism Industry of the Ministry of Investment and Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as of 2023, 1807 tourism firms operate in Almaty [2]. Almaty is the leader in the number of foreign tourists arriving 417 thousand in of 2022 [3]. Every second foreign tourist visits Almaty, where a quarter of the income from tourism services in the country is generated.

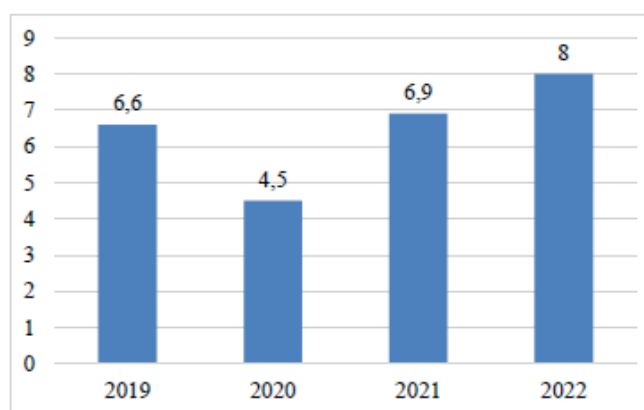


Figure 1. Number of domestic tourists, millions of people

According to the Department of Statistics of the city of Almaty for 2022 annual growth in the volume of services by 84,1%. Kazakhstan hotels and hostels received 3.5 million guests in the six months of 2023 [2].

According to Kazakh Tourism, in the first half of 2022, the number of tourists throughout the country almost reached 3 million people (+ 16% compared to pre-pandemic 2019), and the amount of money left by tourists in hotels was 67.8 billion tenge (+33% by 2019) [6].

The launch of new flights, simplification of the visa regime and the development of bleisure-a trend aimed at combining business with leisure — contribute to the recovery of the industry.

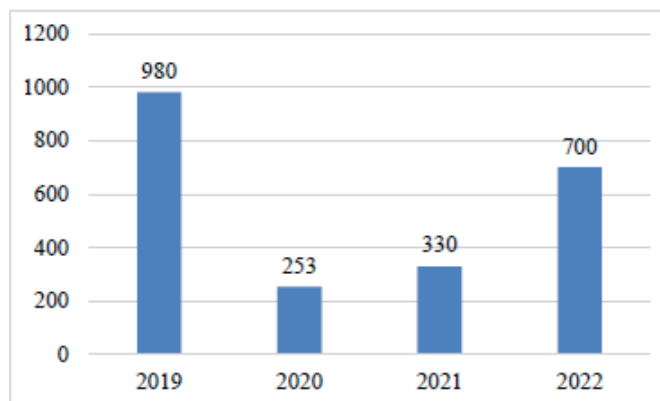


Figure 2. Number of foreign tourists, thousands of people

The Almaty cluster in 2022 was the most popular tourist destination in Kazakhstan — it was visited by 50% of foreign tourists and 30% of domestic tourists. In quantitative terms, this is 774.3 thousand guests [10].

The decrease in the number of domestic tourists was due to the adjustment of the tenge exchange rate. But this, in turn, had a positive impact on incoming tourism, as the Kazakh tourism product became competitive. Despite the positive indicators for inbound tourism, further targeted work is being carried out with focus markets (Iran, China, Russia, India) to promote the city of Almaty [3].

The main guests of hotels are business travelers who not only host work meetings and business events (MICE) but also vacation, which is a relatively new trend. There is also an increase in tourist travel now. Most of the tourists are from Russia, Uzbekistan, as well as Arab countries and China, with which air traffic and visa regimes are established.

According to the Tourism Department, the delegation of the city of Almaty, to expand tourist relations, took part in the international tourism exhibitions «SATTE» in Nw Delhi, «TITE» in Tehran, «ITV» in Berlin», «Intourmarket» in the city of Moscow. During the exhibition, partners were identified in these countries, agreements were signed with the XUAR Tourism Administration (PRC), the administration of Hubei Province (PRC), with leading Indian tourism operators Travel — fsu.org, Columbus Travels, and with the Russian company Profi Travel», with the company «Mahan Air» (Iran) [1]. In Almaty a bilateral tourism forum Profi. Travel Connect Kazakhstan — Russia was held representatives of the tourism market of Kazakhstan and Russia.

The main goal of the forum was to establish contacts between representatives of the tourism business of Russia and Kazakhstan in order to increase the mutual tourist flow. Heads of tourism companies from both countries gathered at the forum to create new business ties and discuss opportunities to increase the flow of tourists.

The event was attended by representatives of 51 tourism business companies from Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan. Currently, there is an increased interest of the Russian market in Kazakhstan and Almaty, in particular. To promote tourism, information tours were conducted for leading Indian tour operators specializing in eco- and mountain tourism, as well as for representatives of the ministries of tourism of the Turkic Council member countries, the media, the Turkish channel TRT and leading tour operators. In order to promote tourism, advertising and image products were produced about the tourism potential of the city of Almaty and distributed among tourists. Thus, the study shows that systematic measures are being taken to develop tourism in Almaty.

However, to improve the situation in the sector, it is necessary to focus efforts on promising segments, such as the construction of budget accommodation using public-private partnerships and stimulating the construction of hotels by large oil and financial companies. To develop attractive types of tourism, such as caravanning, hitchhiking, safaris, it is proposed to develop tours using bicycles, mopeds and horse-drawn vehicles (camels and horses). Marketing has enormous potential in the development of tourism, and its further use should become an active direction in the development of the tourism cluster.

Thus, at present, for qualified work in the tourism industry, appropriate psychological preparation and knowledge of interpersonal communication issues are also required [4]. In this regard, to promote tourism services, it is necessary to competently use the so-called «marketing mix» of services. The concept of «marketing mix» was first scientifically established by Harvard Business School professor Neil Borden. The concept of the 4Ps, first published in the article «The Concept of the Marketing Mix» by Neil Borden, is that the marketing mix consists of four components: Product, Price, Promotion goods on the market (Promotion) and delivery of the product to consumers (Place). In the service sector, the usual 4P marketing model begins to work only when three more «Ps» are added and is transformed into a 7P marketing model, where company personnel (People), material and physical evidence (Physical evidence) and Process (Process) are added [7]. This refers to the level of development of standardization of service and quality of services, modification of services and the availability of «after-sales» service.

Thus, to satisfy tourism demand, several elements must be present. If any of them is missing, the strategic goal of tourism cannot be achieved.

The analysis allows us to develop the following recommendations for using the wide marketing opportunities for tourism activities of the Republic.

- development of a program to improve the quality of customer service that meets international standards;
- changing the foreign policy of travel companies by using the «West — Asia» combination when developing tours based on customer preferences;
- use internal marketing opportunities
- management of labor resources of a tourism enterprise with motivational programs;
- introduction and development of new types of services using advanced technologies;
- carry out active promotional activities and widely use elements of the marketing mix.

It should be noted that all activities must be carried out taking into account the climate, geographical location and characteristics of the national culture and taking into account market requirements.

With the development of infrastructure and increased transport accessibility, many territories have become able to reveal their tourism potential. The share of domestic tourism in the Republic of Kazakhstan is already 3,9% of the gross domestic product. The increase in this indicator is associated with the attractiveness of the territories for visitors, namely their tourism potential. This potential is manifested through the creation of tourism infrastructure, interaction with potential and actual clients and the implementation of tourism policies. Currently, sustainable tourism development is one of the key research issues. With the increase in population and the growth of the economy of many countries, more and more people are traveling, both abroad and within their own countries, in search of relaxation and new experiences. This creates increased potential and competition among regions seeking to attract tourists to their territory. For example, in the Republic of Mongolia tourism is actively developing around Lake Khubsugul, a significant natural site. In this article we will focus on the results of policies already implemented to develop tourism potential in such regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan as the Altai Republic, the Republic of Karelia, the Khabarovsk Territory, the Vologda and Irkutsk regions. When forming a sample of regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan, we take into account the following parameters: the significance of natural objects characterized by harsh subarctic climatic conditions. In the Irkutsk region, tourists are primarily attracted by the unique natural attraction — Lake Baikal, which was a key factor in choosing the region for analysis.

Growing interest in the Baikal region as a tourist area is manifested in the creation of a «single tourist and economic space of the Baikal region and the entire Baikal-Mongolian Asia» which is expected to increase the flow of foreign tourists by 15% – 20%. However, tourism around Lake Baikal is mainly represented in the territory of the Irkutsk region, and not in the Republic of Buryatia, which is confirmed by the volume of tourism services provided in the territory of these entities, where the Irkutsk region prevails in this indicator. However, the Republic of Buryatia is actively increasing the volume of paid tourist services, and according

to data for 2018, it occupies a higher position in this indicator than before. In addition to Lake Baikal, in the regions with a subarctic climate discussed in this article, other natural objects can be distinguished, such as lakes Onega and Ladoga in the Republic of Karelia, Lake Teletskoye in the Altai Republic and White Lake in the Vologda region. Despite the fact that the lakes are not the only ones, and there are other attractions in the regions, such as nature reserves, geysers, forests and mountains, they represent strong competitors for the Irkutsk region. For example, in the Khabarovsk Territory there are interesting routes such as «Ichthyofauna of the Khabarovsk Territory» and «In the Footsteps of the Tiger». This study does not include regions that have more non-natural attractions than natural ones, as well as regions with a higher level of economic development.

Conclusions.

The share of tourism in Kazakhstan's GDP reached 3.9% in 2022, indicating a return to pre-pandemic levels. Kazakhstan strives to increase the share of tourism in GDP to at least 8% by 2025 in accordance with the adopted Concept for the Development of the Tourism Industry for 2023–2029. In 2022, domestic tourism increased, 8.6 million Kazakhstanis spent their holidays within the country, which significantly exceeds the pre-pandemic figures in 2019: 6.6 million people in 2019 and 5.9 million people in 2018. The number of foreign tourists visiting Kazakhstan in 2022 reached 4.8 million.

Kazakhstan has huge tourism potential, but there are a number of challenges, from the need to modernize infrastructure, including roads, airports and hotels, to the need for a more active marketing campaign to attract foreign tourists and raise awareness of Kazakhstan's tourism opportunities. The lack of highly qualified specialists and the low level of service at high prices can reduce the level of tourist satisfaction; visa restrictions may discourage potential visitors; visa facilitation may help attract more tourists; investment in tourism is still insufficient.

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