

ENSURING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM THROUGH THE FORMATION OF TOURISM CLUSTERS

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ABSTRACT-- *The article highlights the objective need to develop tourism, one of the strategic sectors of the economy. The importance, specific features and advantages of using a cluster mechanism to increase the competitiveness of the economy are highlighted. The use of a cluster mechanism is also based on ensuring the competitiveness of tourism products and services. The organization of tourism clusters in the region, their stages and factors influencing them are analyzed, the tasks performed by clusters of tourism activities are presented. There are proposals for the organization and development of tourism clusters.*

Keywords-- *tourism, cluster, tourism cluster, competition, competitiveness, tourism industry, innovation, innovative economy, tourism products, services.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In the current context of globalization, the growing importance of the use of digital technologies in the economy requires innovative development of sectors and industries of the national economy. Today, the tourism industry has become a lucrative and fast-growing, strategic sector of the economy. Therefore, many countries around the world are trying to further develop this industry, to raise the relevant infrastructure to world standards.

According to statistics from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO): "... tourism is the third most profitable, the fourth largest export of goods and services, its share in world GDP is 10%" [4] .

Uzbekistan has all the necessary resources for the development of a modern tourism industry. The location of our country on the Great Silk Road, favorable natural and climatic conditions and rich historical and cultural heritage, state support for the development of tourism offer ample opportunities for the development of both domestic and international tourism.

The Address of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev to the Oliy Majlis also states that the transformation of tourism into a strategic sector of the economy remains a priority, the rapid development of pilgrimage and medical tourism with great potential, the development of pilgrimage and traditional tourism. It is necessary to identify measures to increase the number of sites on existing routes to 800,

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to accelerate the inclusion of new sites in Uzbekistan in the UNESCO World Heritage List and Intangible Cultural Heritage, and other important tasks [1].

The Action Strategy for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017-2021 also includes "Accelerated development of the tourism industry, increasing its role and share in the economy, diversification and improvement of quality of tourist services, expansion of tourism infrastructure" [2] Priorities have been identified.

As a result of the rapid implementation of measures aimed at developing the tourism sector in our country, the importance of tourism in the economy is growing, and the volume of tourism enterprises and the services they provide is growing.

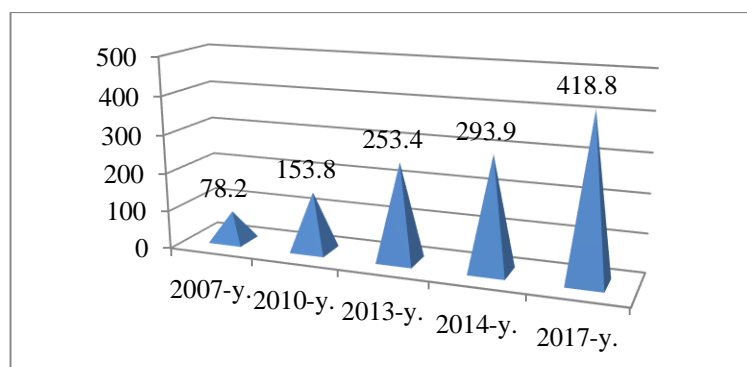


Figure 1: The volume of tourist services in Uzbekistan in 2007-2017 (billion soums, at current prices)

According to statistics, the total volume of tourist services provided by tourism enterprises and organizations in 2007 amounted to 78.2 billion soums, and this figure has been growing over the years. It can be seen that in 2017, 5 times more tourist services were provided than in 2010. In 2016, the number of tourism enterprises was 433, and in 2018 it was 502.

Our country has the opportunity to form almost all types of tourism. There is a huge potential for the development of pilgrimage tourism in ancient and ancient cities, ecotourism in many areas, agritourism in rural areas, medical and sports tourism.

Today, the formation of clusters, which is one of the tried and tested ways to increase the competitiveness of the national economy, remains one of the urgent tasks.

In the context of the growing importance of digital technologies and innovations in ensuring economic development, there is an objective need for the effective formation of "clusters", which are a "qualitative factor of modern innovation and economic growth" in ensuring the development of tourism.

There are different approaches to the cluster mechanism in the scientific literature, and different definitions and interpretations have been given by economists. The study of deceptive definitions and interpretations will help to determine the essence, advantages and effectiveness of cluster organization in tourism.

M. Porter, the founder of cluster theory, showed that enterprises belonging to a competitive network are scattered in different countries, and they tend to be concentrated in one country, as well as in a particular region. The study of clusters in industry and other sectors revealed a competitive advantage over industries outside the cluster system and a high standard of living in the regions where they are located.

According to AAMigranyan, a cluster is “a set of relatively efficient and interconnected types of economic activity, that is, a set of interconnected groups that successfully compete and compete in the network, national and global markets. 'gives thousands ”[7].

Shilchenko T.N. describes the cluster as “geographically bordered” and the tourism cluster as “the joint activities of interconnected enterprises that organize and serve tourism” [8].

Uzbek scientists M. Rakhmatov and B. Zaripov described the cluster as follows: “In general, clustering is a group of enterprises concentrated in a single geographical area and linked to a single management chain, aimed at solving a specific task. they are an interconnected, science-based process that integrates the workforce to strengthen collective competition, ensure innovation, and, of course, economic growth ”[9]

T. Juraev and M. Hamidov described the cluster as a structure that includes all manufacturing (service) enterprises connected to a "single technological chain" of regional or intersectoral division involved in the creation of final products and services. they gave. They note that the transition to innovative development in the current era, when traditional methods of economic development do not provide sufficient efficiency and competitiveness, requires the introduction of a new economic structure "clusters" [10].

In his research, Safarov proposed a model of tourism and recreation cluster, which pays special attention to economic, natural, socio-cultural and legal factors [11].

The fact that industry experts focus on clustering the economy as a tool to increase the competitiveness of the economy is explained by the "flexibility" of clusters.

Today, it is clear that the cluster is one of the most effective forms of innovation. The consolidation of enterprises into a cluster does not result in a “spontaneous” concentration of various innovations, but is a strictly balanced system for the dissemination and transfer of innovations, technologies and new knowledge. The following figure shows the specifics of using a cluster mechanism in tourism.

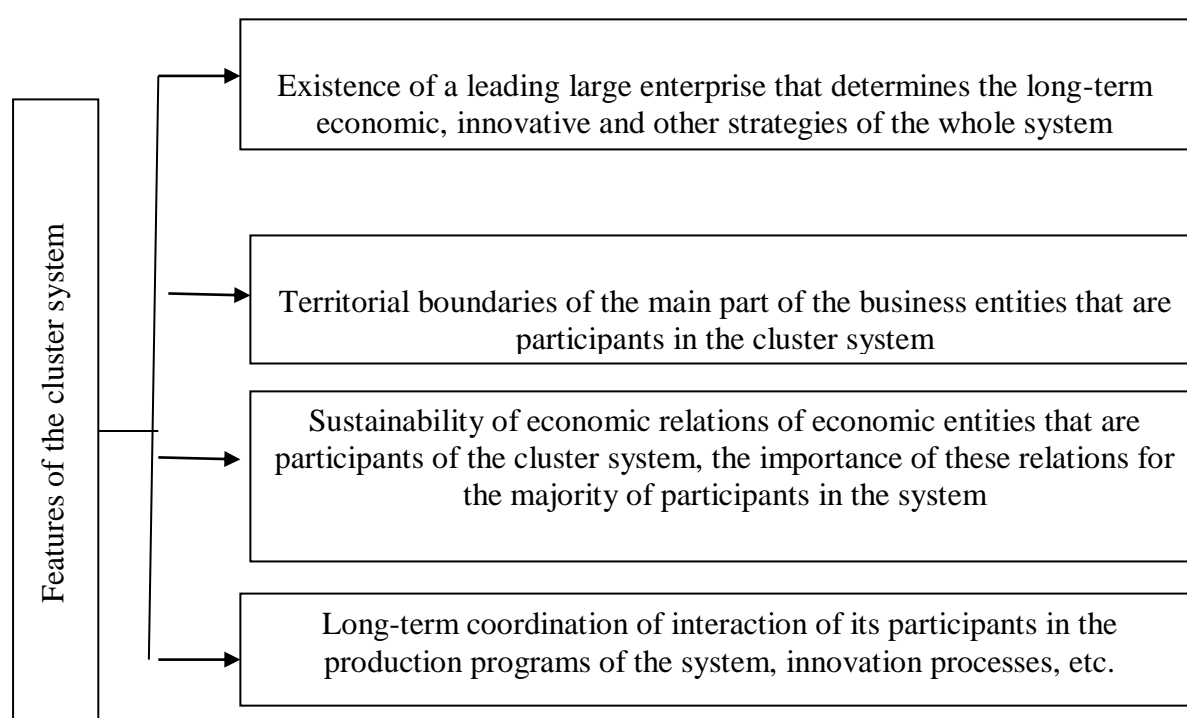


Figure 2. Features of cluster organization

It is expedient to implement a policy of tourism clustering aimed at further increasing the efficiency of the tourism potential of Uzbekistan, which is of great importance, and adapting the country's attractive tourism products to the requirements of a market economy in this area.

The formation of tourist clusters in the regions of Uzbekistan will help to open new tourism companies and intensify the work of existing ones on the basis of full use of tourist and recreational resources, as well as the production of new types of modern tourism products.

The organization of clusters in the national economy is a practical mechanism of the regional mode of production in the formation of productive forces. The experience of developed countries shows that clusters play an important role in the production of modern competitive goods, increase investment activity and attractiveness, encourage innovation and, ultimately, ensure socio-economic development.

Tourism clusters ensure the concentration of interconnected enterprises and organizations engaged in the production, promotion and sale of tourism products, as well as tourism and recreation services in a single limited area.

Tourism clusters include enterprises in various sectors related to tourism services in the region, such as touroperators, hotels, catering establishments, souvenir manufacturers, transport enterprises and others.

The following figure shows the process of clustering:

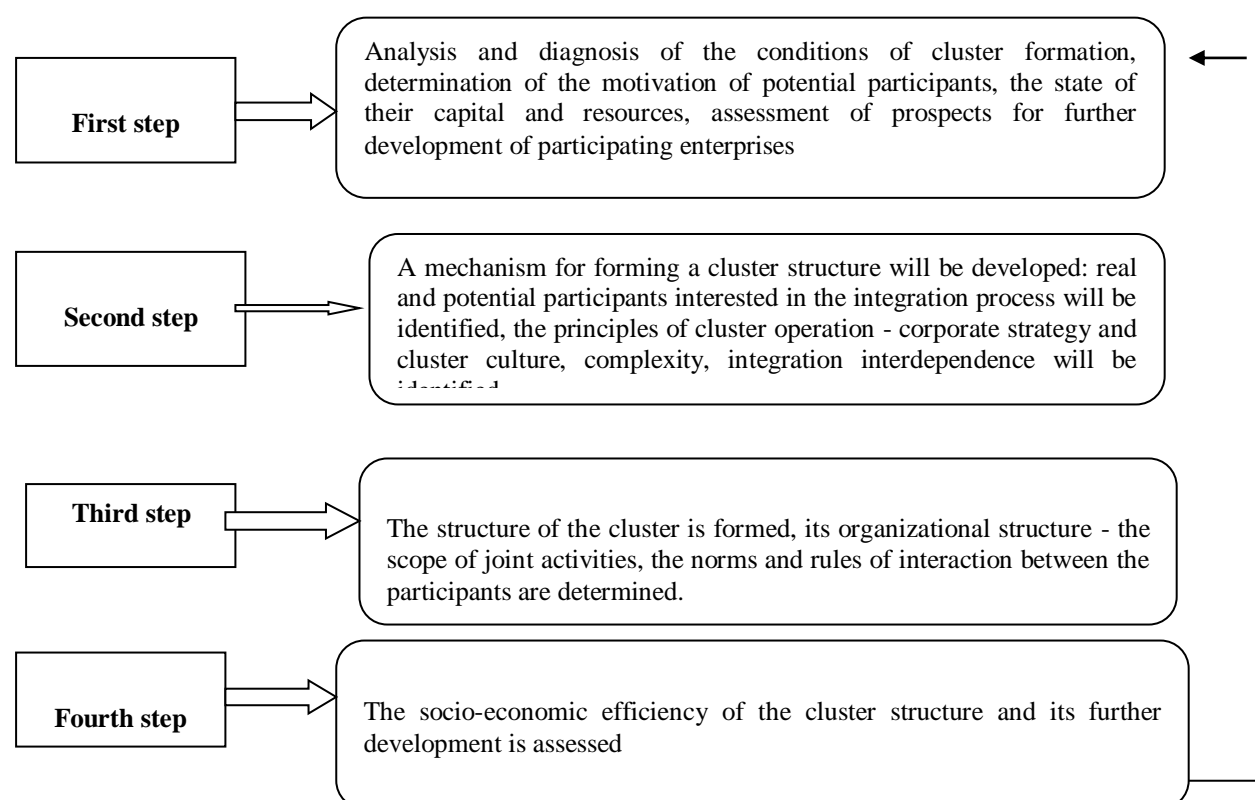


Figure 3. Formation of conditions for cluster development

Figure 3 shows the stages of tourism cluster formation and the sequence of work to be carried out in these stages. This analysis process allows to determine whether or not to establish a tourist cluster in the region, and if so, the opportunities and efficiency it offers.

The purpose of creating a tourism cluster is to increase the competitiveness of the region in the tourism market, including: improving the efficiency of enterprises and organizations that are part of the cluster, encouraging innovation, and more. Establishing tourist clusters in a certain area also helps to shape the image of the area.

A favorable business environment must be created for the successful operation of tourism clusters in the region. The formation and operation of tourism clusters are influenced by a number of factors, including economic, natural, socio-cultural and legal factors.

Natural factors, of course, include the geographical location, climate, and so on of the region. The economic environment is determined by economic development and living conditions of the population. These indicators affect tourism products and services. The group of economic factors also includes the investment situation, as the attraction of investments ensures the development of cluster parts and affects the location of tourism enterprises. One of the main factors in the group of economic factors is labor resources. Because tourism is also a service sector, and the level of staffing of each facility and the impression tourists receive from the service sector will be indicators that will determine the development of the cluster.

The institutional environment also plays a special role in the development of tourism clusters. The rise of tourism to the level of state policy, the adoption of laws and decisions will ensure the successful operation of clusters. In addition, the regularization of tourism as an object of research will also contribute to the development of the industry.

Currently, the tested tourism clusters have the ability to perform the following important tasks:

- Registration of tourist resources and formation of a modern tourism market;
- Development of domestic and international tourism priorities in the region;
- Support for various types of business activities in the industry;
- Ensuring the integration of tourism activities in the region into the national and international tourism market and strengthening international cooperation in this area;

Training of personnel in the field of tourism, introduction of a modern system of advanced training and expansion of scientific research in the field of tourism, taking into account regional characteristics, etc.

Tourism clusters are also operating effectively in many countries around the world with tourism potential. Many sources and online publications indicate that Italy has a high level of experience in tourism clusters. The country is a world-renowned tourist destination. It is in this country that 60% of the world's cultural heritage is located. offers the opportunity to attract tourists. According to statistics, Italy ranks third in terms of tourist visits after France and the United States. In this regard, we consider it appropriate to study the Italian experience of clustering in tourism.

According to the Italian experience, there are the following main directions of the formation of tourist clusters:

- The importance of the tourist area (attractiveness, amenities);
- Opportunity to develop several types of tourism at the same time (for example, coastal, alpine skiing, business, sports tourism);
- Combining the capabilities of public and private businesses, the availability of tourist resources, the systematic production of tourism products.

The following are important aspects of the Italian experience in tourism clusters:

First, the existence of a systemic policy aimed at creating a favorable and sustainable environment that will increase the competitiveness and innovation potential of enterprises. Second, there is a consistent mechanism of cooperation and mediation, as well as the involvement and encouragement of experts to organize innovation clusters. In general, according to the Italian experience, tourism clusters unite tourism entities, including various enterprises, many industrial facilities close to the industry. A distinctive feature of the cluster approach in Italian practice is that private companies provide some of the functions associated with state support of clusters [15].

It should be noted that the tourist clusters will increase the efficiency of its business entities. For these entities, the opportunity to exchange information and introduce innovations will increase, the issue of coordination of joint efforts will be facilitated, and there will be opportunities for joint use of infrastructure facilities serving tourists. The existing human resources with the necessary skills and abilities available in the area where the tourism cluster operates are conducive to the emergence of new structures related to the investment activities of the cluster participants in the management of the farm and the specific tax regime. conditions occur.

The high tourist potential of our country creates ample opportunities for the establishment of tourist clusters in the following areas:

- - Establishment of pilgrimage tourism clusters, taking into account the abundance of sacred sites, shrines and historical monuments and high potential in ancient and ancient cities such as Bukhara, Samarkand, Khiva, Tashkent;
- - Formation of mountain, sanatorium and recreation clusters in Jizzakh, Surkhandarya and Fergana Valley regions;
- - Establishment and development of clusters on agrotourism, ecological, medical and desert tourism, etc. among the fastest growing types of tourism, etc.

In short, the effective operation of tourism clusters will increase foreign exchange earnings, create new jobs, increase the prestige of the tourism industry in the socio-economic life of the country, which will stimulate the development of infrastructure and ensure the efficient operation of a competitive tourist complex.

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