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## THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL TOURISM

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**Abstract.** This article focuses on the challenges of developing regional tourism infrastructure. The article also defines the essence of the concept of "regional tourism infrastructure" and its importance in the development of the region, its content and development problems. Based on the studied materials, conclusions and practical recommendations are given for improving tourism infrastructure in the region.

**Keywords:** Regional tourism infrastructure, service sector, investment attractiveness, long-term targeted programs.

### **Introduction**

Today tourism industry is in a turning point around the world . The speed of information flow and the rapid increase of using transport services are causing that people to change their perceptions of travel. Tourism development plays an important role in solving social problems in society. In many countries of the world, with the help of tourism many employment opportunities are created, a high standard of living will be maintained, and conditions will be created for the development of infrastructure in all sectors of economy. In turn, the state will support this sector with creating favourable visa, customs, tax, environment opportunities for safe tourism.

According to the concept of the development strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2035, in 2017, Uzbekistan ranked 117th out of 185 countries in the ranking of countries in terms of the share of tourism in GDP and aims to join the Top-50 countries by 2035 [1].

Conditions and comfortable environment during the trip are provided by the tourist infrastructure. Tourism infrastructure means the availability of good conditions, ease

of consumption of tourist resources, as well as a set of enterprises that provide this opportunity to the tourist.

### **Literature review.**

The terms "tourism infrastructure", "tourist infrastructure", "regional tourism infrastructure" are often used in regulatory, strategic and program management documents, scientific and specialized literature in the field of tourism. Depending on the tasks to be solved in the economic literature, researchers suggest that the infrastructure is a set of enterprises that create "conditions to meet the needs of tourism" [2], a set of existing structures and industries "for tourism sector activities" [3], as a system of facilities and organizations "creating all the necessary conditions for the provision of a full range of services (transfer, accommodation, catering, transport services, etc.)" [4].

Tourism infrastructure is the basis of tourism development and utilization of existing destination resources. Tourism infrastructure includes a large number of services, necessary to meet the needs of tourists and increase satisfaction during their stay at the destination [5].

D.F. Vaselixa describes the regional tourism infrastructure as a number of material objects that are carriers of various material and intangible properties, called "collectors", ensuring the maximum quantitative and qualitative realization of the goals of tourists [6]. Tourism infrastructures as noted by Adebayo and Iweka are the physical elements that are designed and erected for visitors [7].

The traditional functions of tourism infrastructure are to provide tourists with transportation, accommodation and meals for tourists, to meet their information, cultural, communication and other needs, depending on the type of tourism and the proposed tourist product. A number of enterprises, organizations, various facilities that are part of the tourism infrastructure are required to perform various infrastructure functions [8].

Panasuik identified four major facilities of tourism infrastructure which are hospitality facilities, gastronomy facilities (food and beverage facilities), accompanying facilities (transportation and security) and communication facilities [9].

It is clear that the tourist destination develops in a particular area at a particular time, and that it directly and indirectly affects the shaping of that area, both physiologically, through various tourism infrastructure facilities, infrastructure, and the presence of a large number of tourists, and by function, where the destination, next to the existing functions, gains the tourism function, which can be the dominant or the only function [10].

According to the Tourism and Transport Forum (Tourism & Transport Forum, 2012), tourism infrastructure is the supply chain of transport, social and environmental infrastructure collaborating at a regional level to create an attractive tourism destination [11].

In the scientific literature there are methods used by experts in the assessment of direct tourist infrastructure (for example, V.S. Bogolyubova, I.G. Limonina, O.B. Evreinova, A.V. Kuchumova, etc.) and these methods can be divided into two approaches [12].

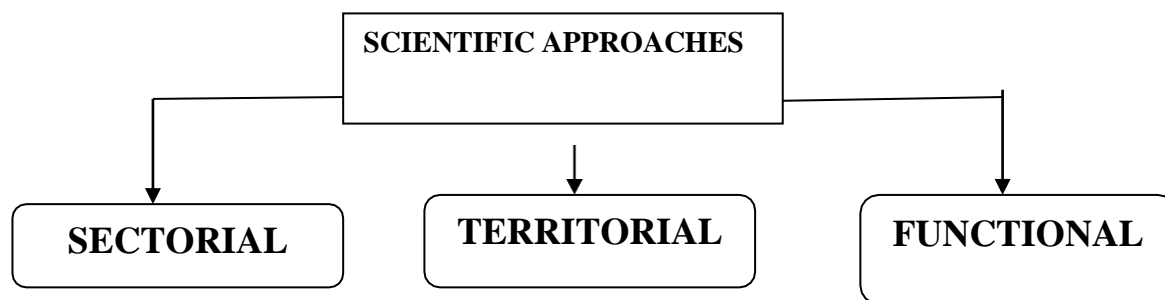
According to the first approach (I.G. Limonina, A.V. Kuchumov), the development of regional tourism infrastructure is assessed through the sum of its elements. These methods allow to highlight the most "weaknesses" of the development of tourist infrastructure in the regional context, as well as to conduct comprehensive economic and geographical research without compromising the importance of its individual elements and the development of the entire tourist infrastructure.

Representatives of the second approach (V.S. Bogolyubov, O.B. Evreinov) assess the regional tourist infrastructure by analyzing its facilities. The proposed model is very useful for both annual and operational planning in tourism infrastructure enterprises, as well as for strategic business planning.

In his research, A. L Kosmanyov noted the use of a graphical model that reflects the system of approaches to the geographical study of tourism infrastructure in the region.

The use of this model to assess the tourism infrastructure of the region is aimed at identifying the most attractive types of tourism in the region (historical, cultural, environmental, rural, medical and health), studying the tourism infrastructure at

different regional levels (local, regional, interregional) and tourism infrastructure. according to (capacity, convenience, ease of transport, security, availability of mobile communication) involves the active use of the assessment method.



*The essence of scientific approaches*

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <i>Study of the infrastructure of certain types of tourism, including the most attractive.</i> | <i>Study of tourism infrastructure at different regional levels</i> | <i>Functional assessment of tourism infrastructure</i> |
|--|---|--|

**Figure 1. Scientific approaches to the study of regional tourism infrastructure [13].**

In our opinion, tourism infrastructure is a complex topic. It includes many processes and objects that can differ significantly from each other.

The role and importance of tourism infrastructure is to provide conditions for the effective operation of the tourism industry. We propose to consider the tourism infrastructure as a set of interconnected structures, including material and intangible components that provide tourism activities.

**Analysis and results.**

As part of the infrastructure complex of the region, tourism infrastructure performs a number of important functions. These include supply, integration, and regulatory functions. The supporting function of the tourist infrastructure is to create the necessary conditions for the organization of tourist services; integration - the organization and support of contacts between enterprises of the network, the formation of regional tourist and recreational complexes.

The increase in the influx of foreign and domestic tourists indicates the high potential of international tourism in the region.

According to statistics, the number of tourists visited in Khorezm region during the first 3 months of 2021 was consisted of an average of 222,395 tourists, including 3,732 foreign and 218,663 local tourists [14].

At the same time, it should be noted that the stability of the international situation can also have a direct impact on the attraction of foreign tourists. For example, in 2020, the number of tourists visiting the region due to the pandemic decreased slightly. Therefore, it should be noted that ensuring the safety of foreign tourists, the correct interpretation of the political situation is directly important in the growth and development of international tourism. Consequently, determining the prospects of tourism in the region, the growth of tourism in the future and the increase in the flow of tourists depends on different conditions, internal and external situation.

It is necessary to further develop tourism in the region, strengthen its material and technical base, form a regional tourism infrastructure. The development of regional tourism is closely linked to the tourism infrastructure, or serves as a limiting factor in the development of the industry or determines its positive dynamics. At the same time, infrastructure problems for most regions of the region are becoming the main reason for the decline of the region's competitive advantages in the tourism services market.

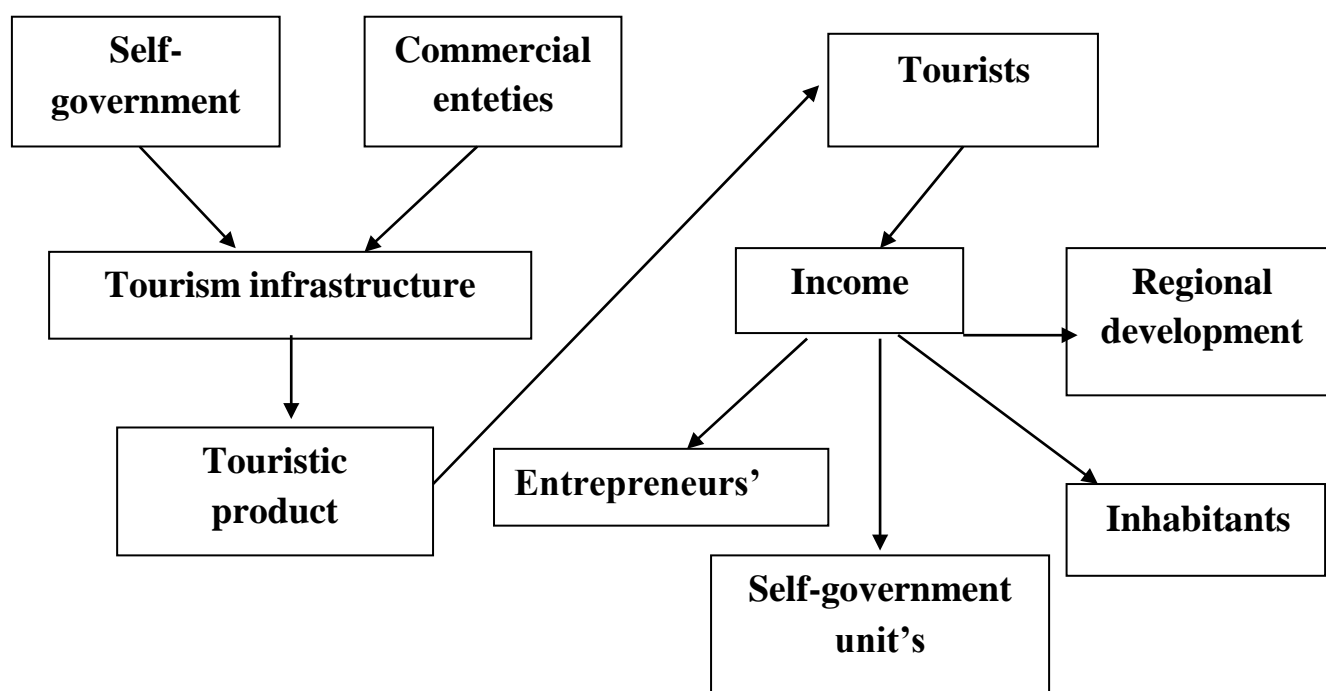


Figure 2. Tourism infrastructure as a determining factor in regional development [15].

Figure 2 shows the sequence of elements of tourism infrastructure for the development of regions: the device of actions of tourism infrastructure that affect revenues; entrepreneurs providing tourist services; regional and local self-government units and the population.

In order to address the infrastructure problems that hinder the development of the tourism sector and reduce its efficiency in a high quality and expedient manner, it is necessary to identify the factors that lead to their emergence in the regions. Based on a systematic analysis of the tourism sector, four key factors for the inefficient development of regional tourism infrastructure were identified:

- general economic;
- industry;
- socio-cultural;
- ecological.

Thus, there are four problem groups in the development of regional tourism infrastructure:

**A group. Problems caused by general economic factors** and of a general nature (financing of tourist infrastructure; property problems; obsolescence of tourism infrastructure, low level of renewal; lack of tourism infrastructure potential; balance in regional development, etc.).

**Group B. Problems with industry-specific characteristics.** It is important to study the problems arising from the industry-specific characteristics of the tourism infrastructure:

- seasonality of use of infrastructure facilities;
- increased technological, environmental, personal safety requirements.

**Group D. Problems caused by socio-cultural factors.** Important variables influencing the attractiveness of a tourist destination for different groups and categories of tourists are its cultural and social characteristics. The greatest interest among tourists is related to elements of folk culture, art, science, religion, history and so on. In the planning and development of regional tourism infrastructure, it is necessary to protect and restore the history of cultural monuments and man-made,

natural and traditional landscapes, which are considered to be permanent historical values and national treasures.

**Group E. Problems caused by environmental factors.** The implementation of infrastructure projects in the field of tourism is associated with interference with the natural environment of the region, which can lead to a violation of the ecological balance, and even the loss of tourist attractiveness by the region.

### **Conclusion.**

Based on the analysis of international and local experience, it is expedient to continue work on the quantitative and qualitative development of tourism infrastructure in the following promising areas:

**1. *Financing of tourism infrastructure.*** We believe that one of the reasons for this problem is the lack of a strategic management mechanism for the development of tourism infrastructure in these regions. However, it should be clearly understood that infrastructure is an area that is relatively less cumbersome and requires more investment. In this regard, the regions face the problem of attracting investment in the field of tourism infrastructure. Attracting private capital to this is a difficult task that requires a lot of work. Analysis of the current situation in the field of tourism in Khorezm region has shown that the full provision and solution of the infrastructure problem of the tourism industry can not be done only at the expense of private investment. A systematic, multi-step approach is needed to address this problem, which can only be achieved through the active interaction of all levels of government and private business.

**2. *Effective use of routes based on excellent and scientific recommendations, taking advantage of the region's tourism potential.*** Among the infrastructure problems discussed above, it shows the need for a comprehensive scientific approach to the study of the tourist infrastructure of the region, the development of methods for its assessment. In particular, we consider it expedient to develop a route of short-term trips on weekends for the local population in the region, especially for the permanently employed part of the population.



**3. Development of marketing of new tourist resources.** Marketing new tourism resources will help bring more tourists to the region. Public resources can help improve travel costs for the region, but it is not possible to invest large amounts in a region that does not have the resources available to attract visitors. All regions of the country have their own tourist opportunities, and it is advisable to study them and create a wonderful electronic guide about them. It is also possible to create a “discussion” platform on Facebook so that tourists visiting the area can find answers to many of the questions that they need before they arrive.

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