

Strategies For Increasing Tourist Flow In Bukhara Region

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Abstract

this study comprehensively analyzed the priority directions for developing tourism in the city of Bukhara. It highlights strategies to increase tourist flow by strengthening marketing activities, improving tourism infrastructure, and enhancing transport connectivity. The importance of improving service quality, preserving cultural and historical sites, and presenting them using modern methods is also substantiated. The research emphasizes the necessity of diversifying tourism types and effectively utilizing digital technologies and online platforms. The proposed recommendations for expanding international cooperation aim to enhance the competitiveness of Bukhara city in the international tourism market.

Keywords: tourist flow, destinations, foreign tourists, local tourists, tourism development

Tourism is considered one of the most rapidly developing sectors of the modern world economy. The development of the tourism industry has been declared one of the priority directions of state policy in the Republic of Uzbekistan [2, 3]. As a region rich in historical and cultural heritage, Bukhara region has great potential for increasing tourist flows.

The main goal of the study is to analyze the current state of tourist flow to the Bukhara region and identify effective directions for its increase. For this purpose, statistical data for the period 2017-2024 were analyzed, and the dynamics and structure of the tourist flow were studied [4]. The data in Table 1 demonstrate a significant increase in the total volume of tourist flow in Bukhara region during 2017-2024. In 2017, the total number of tourists was 1,452,000, and by 2024, this figure is projected to reach 5,000,000, representing a 3.4-fold increase. This positive trend is directly linked to the development of tourism infrastructure in the region, the growth in the number of accommodation facilities, and the government's policy of supporting tourism.

Table 1

Dynamics of tourist flow (2017-2024)

Indicators	2017	2019	2022	2023	2024
Total tourists (thousand people)	1452	3641	3514	4878	5000
Foreign tourists (thousand people)	170	603	553	1388	1500
Local tourists (thousand people)	1282	3038	2961	3490	3500
Share of foreign tourists (%)	11.7	16.6	15.7	28.5	30.0

The dynamics of foreign tourist inflow deserve special attention. While in 2017 the number of foreign tourists was 170 thousand, by 2024 this figure reached 1.5 million, showing an 8.8-fold increase. Notably, the sharp increase in foreign tourist numbers in 2023-2024 can be attributed to the post-pandemic recovery process, the expansion of international flight routes, and the active promotion of Bukhara in the international tourism market.

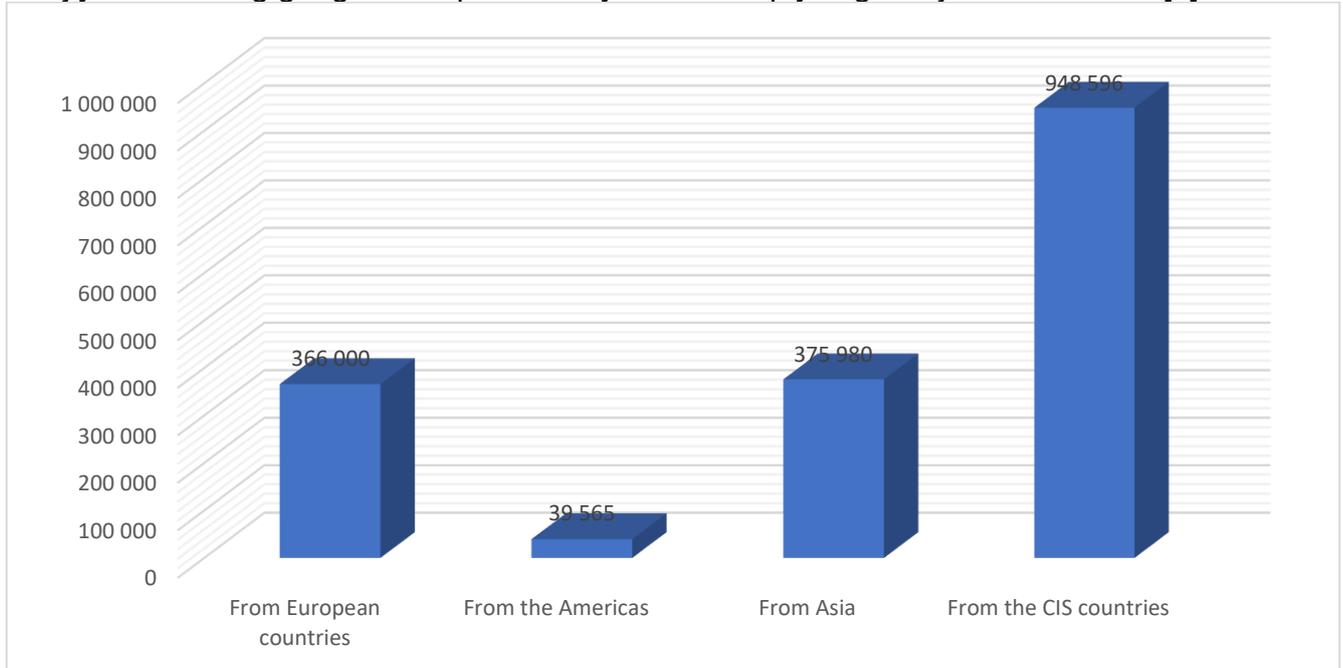
The flow of domestic tourists has also demonstrated a steady growth trend. The number of domestic tourists increased from 1,282,000 in 2017 to 3.5 million in 2024, marking a 2.7-fold rise. This trend is a result of programs aimed at developing domestic tourism, cultural and educational travel, and the popularization of short-term tourism options. However, a relative decrease in the number of domestic tourists was observed in 2022 due to the impact of the pandemic, but this situation has been fully resolved in subsequent years.

The proportion of foreign tourists in the overall tourist flow has been steadily increasing. While foreign tourists accounted for only 11.7% in 2017, this figure reached 30.0% by 2024. This

trend indicates that Bukhara region’s status as an international tourism center is strengthening and the region’s competitiveness in the global tourism market is growing.

Overall, during 2017-2024, along with quantitative growth, structural changes also occurred in the composition of the tourist flow. The increasing share of foreign tourists makes the quality of accommodation facilities, service standards, and adaptation of infrastructure to international standards an even more urgent matter. Therefore, this positive trend in tourist flow justifies the need for further development of accommodation infrastructure, increasing the proportion of high-category hotels, and expanding the diversification of services.

Xorijiy turistlarning geografik taqsimoti bo'yicha tahlil quyidagi natijalarni ko'rsatdi [4]:



Based on the results of the analysis and international experiences, the following directions have been determined:

1. Despite Bukhara being a globally recognized historical and cultural center, the proportion of tourists from the Americas and Asia remains relatively low. Therefore, it is crucial to develop and implement targeted marketing strategies for these regions. While the increase in participation at international tourism fairs to 20 events by 2024 is a positive development, this figure is insufficient to fully showcase Bukhara’s tourism potential. It is particularly important to actively promote the unique historical heritage, national traditions, and modern tourism opportunities of Bukhara through digital marketing tools, social media platforms, video content, and online advertising channels.
2. Although there has been a quantitative increase in accommodation capacity in the city of Bukhara, the proportion of high-category hotels meeting international standards remains low. As of 2024, there is only one 5-star hotel and three 4-star hotels, which constitute a very small fraction of the total number of hotels. This situation is limiting the influx of high-income and discerning tourists. Therefore, encouraging the construction of modern hotels with high levels of comfort in Bukhara, creating favorable conditions for investors, and expanding partnerships with international hotel brands is considered an urgent task [7].
3. Although the number of vehicles serving tourists in the city of Bukhara is increasing, there remains a need for further improvement of the transport infrastructure. Specifically, expanding international air traffic, opening new routes, and increasing the number of flights will play a crucial role in boosting the influx of foreign tourists. Additionally, modernizing the city’s internal transport system and ensuring convenient and rapid movement between tourist sites will further enhance the tourist appeal of Bukhara.
4. Despite the growing number of professional guides in Bukhara, there remains a shortage of highly qualified specialists who are fluent in foreign languages and possess advanced skills.

Enhancing the knowledge and expertise of guides, hotel staff, and service industry professionals who work directly with tourists has a direct impact on the quality of services provided. Therefore, it is essential to elevate the service culture to meet international standards by expanding specialized training courses, workshops, and certification systems [7].

5. Despite the fact that there are 660 cultural heritage sites, 175 of them require restoration [8]. The number of tourists visiting museums in 2023 amounted to 625,413 people, and this figure can be increased through the introduction of interactive technologies and modern exhibition methods. By introducing interactive technologies, audio guides, digital expositions, and innovative exhibition forms in museums and historical complexes, it is possible to increase tourist interest.

6. The development of various tourism sectors, such as ecological tourism (30 sites), pilgrimage tourism (51 sites), and handicraft tourism (9,000 artisans), is crucial for increasing tourist inflow. Therefore, the city of Bukhara has great potential to develop ecological, pilgrimage, handicraft, and gastronomic tourism alongside its traditional cultural and historical tourism. Ecological and pilgrimage tourism sites, as well as the activities of thousands of artisans, serve to enrich the tourism offerings. Diversification of tourism types creates opportunities to reduce seasonality, extend tourists' length of stay, and increase tourism revenues [4].

7. Although the e-hotel system has been fully implemented in the city of Bukhara, the presence of hotels on international online booking platforms remains insufficient. It is crucial to enhance the visibility of Bukhara hotels on platforms such as Booking.com, Expedia, and Agoda through professional content, high-quality photographs, and positive reviews. The effective utilization of digital technologies serves as a key factor in attracting tourists and expanding sales channels.

8. The growing number of partner cities of the city of Bukhara and the expansion of international cooperation have a positive impact on the development of tourism. Through established contacts with foreign delegations, international agreements and joint projects, it is possible to strengthen the position of the city of Bukhara in the global tourism market. These partnerships will serve as an important platform for exchanging experience, attracting investments, and forming new tourist flows.

Conclusion

The tourist flow to Bukhara region has experienced significant growth in recent years, increasing 3.4 times during 2017-2024. The number of foreign tourists has risen 8.8 times, with their share in the total tourist flow reaching 30%. However, the region's share in American and Asian markets remains low, there is a lack of high-class hotels, and a shortage of professional personnel.

To further increase the tourist flow, it is necessary to expand marketing activities, improve infrastructure quality, train personnel, modernize cultural heritage sites, and implement digital technologies. If these measures are carried out, the Bukhara region can become one of the leading tourism centers of Uzbekistan.

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