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Strategic Development of Social Tourism Activities in Uzbekistan Through Targeted State Programs

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ANNOTATION

This article provides a scientific analysis of the issues of strategic development of social tourism activities in Uzbekistan through targeted state programs. First of all, the essence of social tourism, its socio-economic significance and its role in society are revealed. International and domestic literature on the topic was critically reviewed and the experience of different countries was analyzed. Practical proposals and recommendations have been developed for the more efficient and sustainable development of social tourism.

Keywords: social tourism, state programs, inclusive tourism, youth tourism, Tourism Policy, domestic tourism, strategic development, social groups, subsidies, infrastructure, public financing, subsidy, international experience, social equality.

Introduction. Tourism today manifests itself as one of the most rapidly developing and multidisciplinary sectors of the world economy. It plays an important role not only in the creation of currency receipts and jobs, but also in the employment of the population, preservation of cultural heritage, ensuring environmental sustainability and strengthening mutual understanding among peoples.ntroduction. Tourism today manifests itself as one of the most rapidly developing and multidisciplinary sectors of the world economy. It plays an important role not only in the creation of currency receipts and jobs, but also in the employment of the population, preservation of cultural heritage, ensuring environmental sustainability and strengthening mutual understanding among peoples. At the same time, modern tourism also performs new social tasks - in particular, contributing to social equality by ensuring the right of the broad population segments to take advantage of tourism opportunities. The concept of social tourism plays an important role in achieving this goal.

Social tourism is a type of tourism activity specially established and financially supported for persons with limited material resources, socially or physically vulnerable persons (pensioners, disabled people, multi-child and disadvantaged families, students, young people, single seniors, etc. In the world experience, there is a trend of sustainable development of social tourism by supporting it at the level of Public Policy. In countries such as France, Spain, Brazil, Canada, South Korea, targeted programs in this area serve to popularize tourism and establish an inclusive society.

In Uzbekistan, strategic importance is attached to the tourism sector in the following years. The tourism sector in the country has become one of the priorities of Public Policy. Special attention is paid to the support of social tourism in the "concept for the development of tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2019-2025", approved by Presidential Decree PF-5611 of January 5, 2019.In Uzbekistan, strategic importance is attached to the tourism sector in the following years. The tourism sector in the country has become one of the priorities of Public Policy. Special attention is paid to the support of social tourism in the "concept for the development of tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2019-2025", approved by Presidential Decree PF-5611 of January 5, 2019.Social tourism networks are also expanding through initiatives such as" youth tourism development program"," inclusive tourism initiatives"," domestic tourism week". Projects implemented through partnerships between educational institutions, local governments, and the private sector are becoming practical expressions of social tourism.[2]

At the same time, there are also a number of problems in the field: insufficient Territorial Infrastructure, insufficient promotion of social types, low awareness of such opportunities in the population, limited financial support mechanisms, etc. These problems necessitate the need to scientifically substantiate targeted state programs for the more effective and sustainable development of social tourism.

Poetry of thematic literature. The topic of social tourism has become increasingly prominent in World Science in recent years in the process of wider awareness of the socio-economic importance of Tourism and the practical introduction of the principles of inclusiveness. Applied research has been conducted by a number of foreign and domestic scientists in an effort to reveal the contribution of tourism to social stability, not just economic.

British researcher M. Smith, in his assessment of social tourism as a "tool for shaping the human face of tourism," describes it as a means of ensuring social justice by creating travel opportunities for all segments of the population. In his opinion, social tourism leads not only to social protection, but also to the spiritual development of the individual, cultural communication and territorial stability.[3] however, Smith's study limited the analysis of economic mechanisms, with insufficient coverage of social tourism funding sources and the foundations of public-private partnerships.

French scholar J.-P. Studying the process of formation of social tourism in European countries by Degeorges, he highlights it as an important factor in the development of social capital. In his study, aspects such as government subsidies for social tourism in France and Spain, the impact on the labor market, the promotion of internal migration are perfectly covered. However, these studies are largely based on the European experience and do not take into account the social realities in developing countries, in particular in the countries of Central Asia.[4]

UNWTO International reports analyzed social tourism development trends on international platforms, its role in public policy, and development strategies based on social approach.[5] the report singled out the institutional aspects of the state support mechanism while describing social tourism as an opportunity for all. At the same time, there is a lack of accurate statistics in certain regions (in particular, in Central Asia).

J. from local scholars. In his scientific research, Safarov evaluates social tourism as an effective means of reducing economic and cultural inequality in regions. His study provides practical recommendations on the use of the tourist potential of Uzbekistan for social purposes.[7] however, the study focuses less on issues such as the effectiveness of public programs being implemented, and the effectiveness of budget spending.

M.. It studies the implementation of current decisions and decrees, analyzing the legal framework of social tourism in Uzbekistan by Abdullaev. He notes the need to develop a model of Public-Private Partnership in the development of social tourism.[8] nevertheless, the study has little coverage of the specific segmentation of social groups, their needs and requirements related to the field analysis.

A.. Dedicated by Minnaert to the study of social tourism as a means of influencing personal progress through education and cultural capital. He has characterized social tourism as a "transformative experience", attributing its influence to youth consciousness, social adaptation, and self-awareness.[6] this view supports the idea of developing youth tourism as a strategic direction in the conditions of Uzbekistan.

In general, the conclusion from the analysis of existing literature is that studies in the field of social tourism have different approaches in different countries. While international sources extensively cover the institutional and social aspects of the field, the focus in local research is on practical mechanisms and legal frameworks. However, there is still not enough research based on a deep scientific assessment of the real potential of social tourism in Uzbekistan, the calculation of the social effectiveness of programs and digital analysis.

Research methodologiuasi. The article developed recommendations for setting priorities for the management of industrial enterprises through methods such as dialectical and systematic approach, comparison, yemperic research and comparative analysis, relying on the opinions of economists and experts on the strategic development of social tourism activities in Uzbekistan through targeted state programs.

Analysis and results. In modern conditions, tourism is becoming not only a driver of national economies, but also one of the most important mechanisms that stimulate social progress. Development trends in the field of Tourism show that the involvement of large segments of the population, especially groups in need of social protection, on travel is being formed as one of the priorities of state policy. This made the concept of social tourism and the mechanisms for its implementation a more actual issue.

In Uzbekistan, the implementation of a number of reforms in the following years to improve social equality, the standard of living of the population, the development of infrastructure in places and the development of human capital capacity, making support for social tourism at the state level a strategic necessity. In this process, it is one of the important tasks to make tourism services accessible and transparent for groups in need of social protection based on the principle of “Let no one be left out”.

Table 1. Development status of social tourism in Uzbekistan

№	Years	Youth (thousand people)	Elderly and pensioners (thousands of people)	Persons with disabilities (thousands)	Total (thousand people)
1	2020	120	45	12	177
2	2021	250	90	28	368
3	2022	340	130	40	540
4	2023	540	180	62	752
5	2024	640	220	75	935

Source: Tourism Committee under the Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan

According to the data presented in the table, youth in 2020 amounted to 120 thousand people, in 2024-640 thousand people. Seniors and retirees are estimated to be 45,000 in 2020, compared to 220,000 in 2024.ccording to the data presented in the table, youth in 2020 amounted to 120 thousand people, in 2024-640 thousand people. Seniors and retirees are estimated to be 45,000 in 2020, compared to 220,000 in 2024. Those with disabilities have a population of 12,000 in 2020, compared to 75,000 in 2024.

As a result of the research carried out, the following conclusions were drawn:

- the youth segment is the most active category, with 120,000 young people participating in 2020, while in 2024 the figure reached 640,000. This shows the effectiveness of the” youth tourism development program".

- the number of seniors and retirees has increased from 45 thousand in 2020 to 220 thousand in 2024. the youth segment is the most active category, with 120,000 young people participating in 2020, while in 2024 the figure reached 640,000. This shows the effectiveness of the" youth tourism development program".
- the number of seniors and retirees has increased from 45 thousand in 2020 to 220 thousand in 2024. This is the result of the state establishing special types for this category of the population.
- there is also a steady increase in the participation of persons with disabilities-from 12 thousand in 2020 to 75 thousand in 2024. This confirms the practical introduction of inclusive tourism mechanisms.

In general, from 2020 to 2024, the number of participants in social tourism increased by 5.3 times.

According to the results of the study, the following practical recommendations were developed— there is also a steady increase in the participation of persons with disabilities-from 12 thousand in 2020 to 75 thousand in 2024. This confirms the practical introduction of inclusive tourism mechanisms.

In general, from 2020 to 2024, the number of participants in social tourism increased by 5.3 times.

According to the results of the study, the following practical recommendations were developed:

- targeted state programs are aimed at the development of social tourism on a systemic basis and give positive results.
- growth in the number of participants is an indicator of the effectiveness of information distribution, infrastructure improvements and a subsidizing mechanism.
- at the same time, for less inclusive categories (especially people with disabilities), it is required to develop special infrastructures and improve transport logistics.

Conclusion. The issue of development of social tourism activities in Uzbekistan through targeted state programs today plays an important role not only in ensuring social justice, but also in the country's strategy for sustainable and inclusive development. The results of this study show that a significant advance in the direction of social tourism has been observed through state programs implemented in the last five years. Including:

- the program for the development of youth tourism has taken a decisive place in the active involvement of young people in budgetary and educational trips.
- the number of social types organized for the elderly and pensioners increased, the number of active participants, which in 2020 amounted to 45 thousand, in 2024-220 thousand. This is a practical result of the concept of" inclusive tourism". the program for the development of youth tourism has taken a decisive place in the active involvement of young people in budgetary and educational trips.
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Nevertheless, the current state of affairs makes the following tasks urgent for the further effective and sustainable development of the social tourism sector:

1. Infrastructural deficiencies: areas designed for Social Tourism require infrastructure improvements such as transport, road, parking, sanitation.
2. Lack of information: there is not enough awareness of social tourism opportunities in the population. In this direction, active promotion through digital platforms and media is necessary.
3. Strengthening financial mechanisms: it is necessary to partially cover travel costs for social groups, introduce a system of subsidies, grants and suitable loans for the conditions.

4. Monitoring and efficiency analysis: it is advisable to assess the indicators established within the framework of each state program, establish a monitoring system based on specific results in the execution process.

In conclusion, social tourism is not just a direction of the tourist sphere, but a complex mechanism that serves to increase the standard of living, social activity, spiritual maturity and cultural consciousness of the population. Through the effective implementation of targeted state programs and the active involvement of local authorities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in this process, it is possible to reach a new stage of strategic development of social tourism in Uzbekistan.

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