



## DOMESTIC TOURISM AS THE POST PANDEMIC RECOVERY IN TOURISM INDUSTRY: CASE OF UZBEKISTAN

Kayumov Azam<sup>1</sup>,

Khursandova Guldasta<sup>2</sup>

Teacher at the department of hospitality and tourism Management Termez State University, Uzbekistan

azam.9124@mail.ru<sup>1</sup>,

Graduate student of Termiz State Pedagogical Institute<sup>2</sup>.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7262904>

### ARTICLE INFO

Received: 08<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Accepted: 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Online: 29<sup>th</sup> October 2022

### KEY WORDS

tourism industry, domestic tourism, post-pandemic tourism, pandemic recovery.

### ABSTRACT

*The worldwide health catastrophe caused by the Covid-19 outbreak has brought the globe to a standstill. According to the World Tourism Organization, tourism is the industry that has been damaged the most out of all major economic activity. Unfortunately, there was a decline not only in Uzbekistan tourism industry but also over the world. Today, after the disease has subsided, the flow of tourists has revived, in particular, the number of tourists visiting Uzbekistan is growing. In this context, it is important to expand the range of services in order to restore pre-pandemic performance and achieve even better results. This article discusses the role of domestic tourism in the recovery of the tourism industry after the pandemic and the experience of developing domestic tourism in Uzbekistan, as well as success in tourism industry, the analysis of the results and recommendations.*

The country has seen significant growth in tourism industry after Presidential decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan about “On measures to ensure the rapid development of tourism industry of the republic of Uzbekistan” (DP-4861-02.12.2016. *On Measures to Ensure the Rapid Development of Tourism Industry of the Republic of Uzbekistan, n.d.*).

In particular, the number of international tourists visited Uzbekistan in 2016 amounted to 2 million and by 2019 this figure reached 6.7 million. Also, the number of domestic tourists increased from 8.8 million people in 2016 to 14.7 million people in 2019 (Appendix 1).

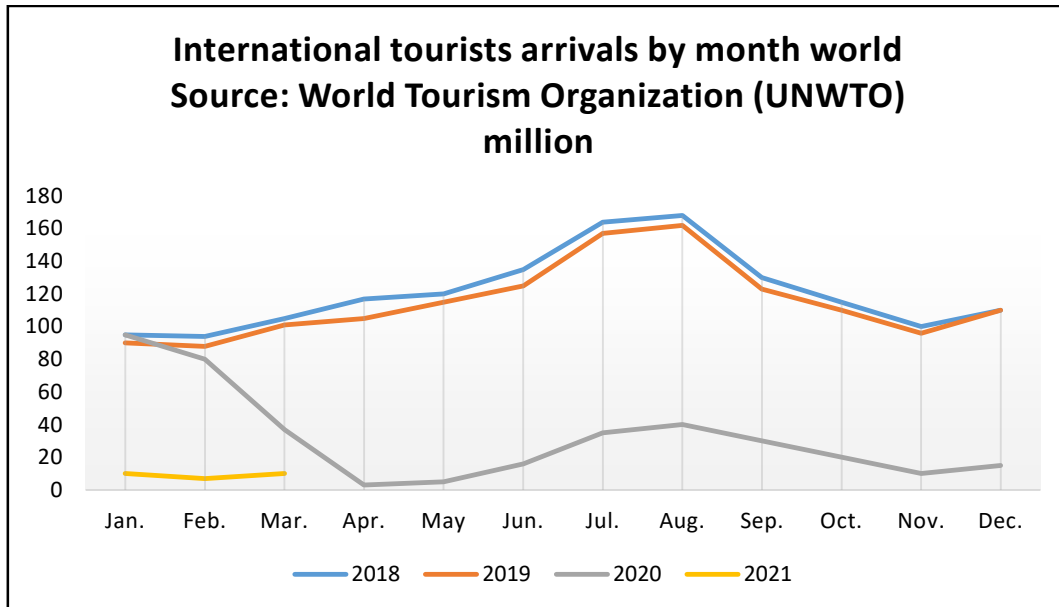
According to the information provided by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the number of tourists visited Uzbekistan increased by 27.3% in early 2020 compared to 2019, and Uzbekistan took the fourth place in the twenties as the fastest growing tourist destination in the world. The Tashkent times emphasized that the top 40 vacation spots for 2019 were revealed by The Guardian, British daily newspaper, and they included Samarkand (*The Guardian Included Samarkand to Its Top Destinations for 2019, n.d.*).

Due to the pandemic, one of the sectors that suffered the greatest losses in the world was the tourism and hotel sector.



According to the data provided by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the number of tourists in 2020 decreased by 74% compared to 2019. Before the pandemic, the tourism business was

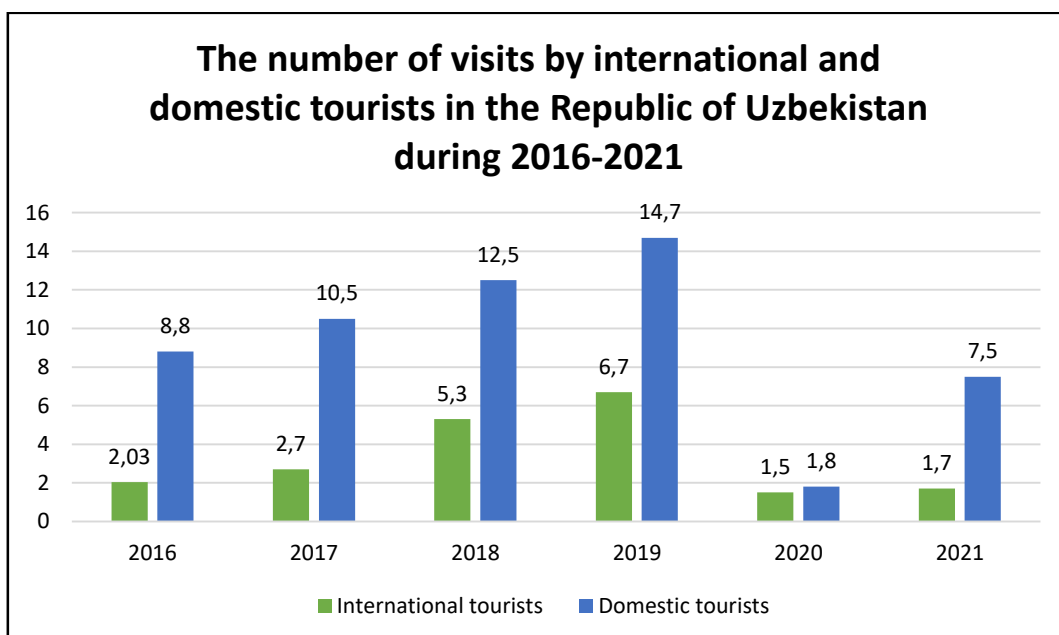
considered a big business, accounting for more than 10% of global GDP. In countries dependent on tourism, this indicator is even higher (Appendix 1) (*World tourism barometer, vol 19, issue 3, May 2021*).



#### Appendix 1

Due to the restrictions introduced against the coronavirus pandemic outbreak and the consequences of the resulting global crisis, the tourism industry has suffered huge losses.

In particular, the number of foreign tourists who visited Uzbekistan in 2020 decreased by 96% to 1.5 million, the volume of provided tourist services amounted to 261 million dollars (Appendix 2).



#### Appendix 2



After the global problem, the pandemic, the government of Uzbekistan initially paid great attention to recover and develop the tourism sector. At the video selector meeting held by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh. Mirziyoyev on April 26, 2022 on measures to develop tourism and improve its infrastructure, the current state of tourism infrastructure was analyzed and shortcomings were pointed out (*The Tourism Development Directions Outlined, n.d.*).

Also, The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan signed a decree on additional measures to diversify domestic tourism services dated 30 April 2022.

In this decree, in order to develop local tourism, part of the expenses for hotel, transports, museums and other cultural objects is returned based on the "Travel around Uzbekistan" program, and additional transport routes are launched during the tour season and it was also noted that a system of covering 20% of the costs of domestic tour from extra-budgetary funds will be established for all employees of state organizations once a year. In addition, construction of many buildings is mentioned in the decision such as "Caravans" on the highway, beach zones in Aydarkol Lake, Aqchakol Lake, Zikri Lake, Ashshi Lake, Todakol Lake and Tuzkon Lake areas, special "tourist streets" with tourism demonstration objects. In addition, in order to support the youth of Uzbekistan, the "Youth Tourism Month" and the "Youth Tourism" congress were organized in July 2022. It was also noted that in 2023, the "Youth Tourism Week" will be held in the first decade of January and the third decade of March. By developing the tourism infrastructure of the city of Tashkent, in order to turn it into

a regional tourist center, the implementation of new investment projects on the construction of large entertainment and tourism facilities, the reconstruction of large museums and the Uzbek state circus in Tashkent, interactive information based on modern information technologies to establish services, to regulate the archival fund of museums, to determine the schedule of cultural and entertainment events and festivals, including international events which is organized in Tashkent in 2022-2024, and to develop a modern and well-known tourist brand of Tashkent, and approval of measures for its promotion is determined (*PQ-232-30.04.2021. Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on additional measures to diversify domestic tourism services. n.d.*).

Also, in 2022, during Navruz traditional holiday, additional days of rest were given to local residents, discounts were announced in more than 250 hotels and museums, pilgrimage sites were made free of charge, and this stimulated the development of domestic tourism. As a result, the flow of local tourists to Samarkand and Bukhara increased by 110,000 people. In addition, our people were given another 5 days of rest in connection with Ramadan and Eid al-Adha. On the first day of Eid al-Adha, representatives of Malaysian tourist companies visited the country in order to widely promote the potential of Uzbekistan's pilgrimage tourism in Malaysia. It is the result of the reforms carried out in the direction of the development of pilgrimage tourism in our country.

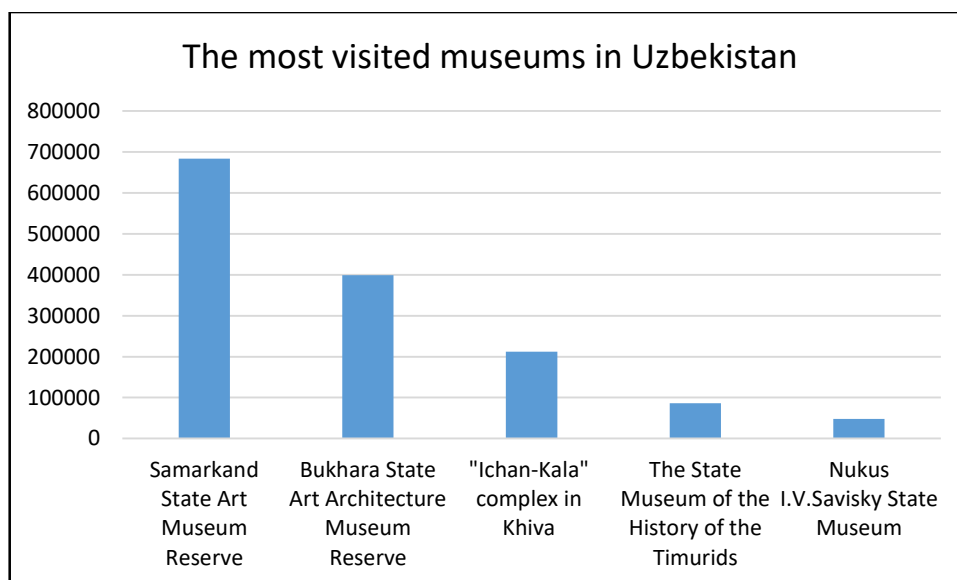
Effective organization of museum activities is also important in the development of



tourism. Therefore, instructions were given to thoroughly check the exhibits of all museums across the country, create their electronic database, and improve the skills of museum managers and employees. For information, according to the data of the State Statistics Committee on museums as of January 2022, the number of museums in Uzbekistan is 127, and 5 million 100 thousand people visited in 2021. The following museums were reported to be among the five most visited museums (Appendix 3):

### Appendix 3

Samarkand State Art Museum Reserve - 683.9 thousand people  
Bukhara State Art Architecture Museum Reserve - 399.4 thousand people  
"Ichan-Kala" complex in Khiva - 211.9 thousand people  
The State Museum of the History of the Timurids - 86,500 people  
Nukus I.V.Savitsky State Museum - 48,300 people  
*(The Most Popular Museums in Uzbekistan, 2022).*



### Analysis and results

As of January 1, 2021, the number of tangible cultural heritage objects is 8,208. According to their importance, 5759 are object of cultural heritage at the republican level, and 2449 at the local level (*Number of Objects of Tangible Cultural Heritage, 2021*). It should be said that the results of the survey conducted by the UNWTO in January 2022 showed that the importance of domestic tourism in the restoration of the tourism sector is extremely great (*Impact Assessment of the COVID-19 Outbreak on International Tourism | UNWTO, n.d.*). The development of

domestic tourism in Uzbekistan can be divided into the following two directions:

#### 1. *Increase people's tourism culture:*

Wide involvement of the population of Uzbekistan in domestic tourism and interest of children in the field of tourism from school age; Teaching the field of tourism in school in connection with the science of history; Formation of knowledge skills of the population about the objects of cultural heritage and natural recreation places located in the territory of Uzbekistan; To carry out continuous promotion activities through mass media about the culture of rational use of



domestic tourism, hygiene requirements and queuing culture;

## 2. *Improving the infrastructure:*

Creating conditions and opportunities for the people to use tourism services; Modernization of infrastructure of cultural heritage objects; Establishment of free, modern, clean WCs in places; Improving the transport system and increasing the number of trips; Reforming the geolocation network so that tourists can easily find their destination; Also, including the addresses of cultural heritage objects, tourist information centers, hospitals, stations, and WCs in geolocation; Increasing the Wi-Fi network and improving the quality of the Internet Speed;

### **Summary**

In conclusion, it can be said that many works have been done to develop domestic tourism. As a proof of this, the decision of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated April 30, 2022 "On additional measures for the diversification of

domestic tourism services" No. PQ-232 can be an example.

In addition, the opening of the "Great Silk Road" international tourist center in Samarkand region aims to increase the flow of tourists to 9 million within 5 years. And it should be noted that on September 16, the 22nd meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was held in Samarkand. After that, the summit of the Organization of Turkic States in November 2022, the 25th assembly of the World Tourism Organization in 2023, and the participation of more than 2,000 tourism agencies from 158 countries are expected to be the basis for the further improvement and strengthening of our country's position in the field of tourism. It can be said that the results achieved in the field of tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan from 2016 to 2019 will be quickly restored in the coming years, and we hope that Uzbekistan will rise in the ranking of the rapidly developing tourism countries of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

### **References:**

1. DP-4861-02.12.2016. On measures to ensure the rapid development of tourism industry of the Republic of Uzbekistan. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://lex.uz/docs/4612734>
2. The Guardian included Samarkand to its top destinations for 2019. (n.d.). Tashkent Times. Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <http://tashkenttimes.uz/world/3365-guardian-included-samarkand-to-its-top-destinations-for-2019>
3. World tourism barometer, vol 19, issue 3, May 2021
4. The Tourism Development Directions Outlined. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://president.uz/en/lists/view/5155>
5. PQ-232-30.04.2021. Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on additional measures to diversify domestic tourism services. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://lex.uz/uz/docs/5991967>



6. The most popular museums in Uzbekistan. (2022, May 18). The state committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on statistics. <https://stat.uz/en/press-center/news-of-committee/21695-18-may-xalqaro-muzeylar-kuni-o-zbekistondagi-eng-ommabop-muzeylar-3>
7. Number of objects of tangible cultural heritage. (2021, October 21). The state committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on statistics. <https://stat.uz/en/press-center/news-of-committee/13220-moddiy-madaniy-meros-obyektlari-soni-3>
8. Impact assessment of the COVID-19 outbreak on international tourism | UNWTO. (n.d.). Retrieved October 28, 2022, from <https://www.unwto.org/impact-assessment-of-the-covid-19-outbreak-on-international-tourism>