

## PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PILGRIMAGE TOURISM IN BUKHARA REGION

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**Аннотация.** Туризм сегодня признается одной из наиболее динамично развивающихся и значимых отраслей. Бухара, известная как “Жемчужина Востока”, славится своей богатой историей, культурой и вкладом в науку. Этот уникальный оазис с выдающимися архитектурными памятниками и земля, подарившая миру великих ученых, играет важную роль в культурном наследии региона. В статье анализируются тенденции и перспективы развития туризма в Бухаре.

**Ключевые слова:** туризм, экономический рост, благосостояние, реформы в туризме, достопримечательности, паломник, потенциал, технико-экономические основы.

**Abstract.** Tourism is recognized today as one of the most rapidly developing and important sectors. Bukhara, renowned as the “Pearl of the East,” is famous for its rich history, culture, and contributions to science. This unique oasis, which boasts outstanding architectural monuments, is a land that has produced great scholars. The article analyzes the trends and prospects for tourism development in Bukhara.

**Keywords:** tourism, economic growth, prosperity, tourism reforms, places of pilgrimage, pilgrim, potential, technical and economic foundations.

Bukhara is recognized as the cradle of Islamic civilization, as it has produced such prominent figures as Imam Abu Hafs al-Kabir, Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari, Abu Bakr Narshakhi, Abu Bakr Kalabadi, Abdul Khaliq Ghijduvani, Muhammad Arif Revhari, Mahmud Anjir Fagnawi, Khwaja Ali Romitani, Muhammad Baboi Sammasi, Amir Kulol, and Bahauddin Naqshband.

The prospects for the development of pilgrimage tourism in the Bukhara region are quite promising. The following factors contribute to these prospects:

**1. Historical and Cultural Heritage.** Bukhara has played a significant role in Islamic history. Mosques, madrasahs, and mausoleums such as the Samanid

Mausoleum and Bukhara Fortress attract many pilgrims. The abundance of historical sites offers great opportunities for pilgrimage tourism development.

**2. Land of Scholars.** Bukhara's association with many holy figures and scholars makes it a key destination for Muslim pilgrims. An increase in the number of visitors seeking spiritual experiences is expected.

**3. Government Support.** The government of Uzbekistan has launched several programs aimed at tourism development. Investments in infrastructure and services will help boost tourism.

**4. Improvement of Transportation Infrastructure.** Access to Bukhara is becoming easier. Development of air and road transport creates favorable conditions for visitors.

**5. Cultural Events and Festivals.** Organizing cultural events and festivals is essential to further develop pilgrimage tourism. Such events play a vital role in attracting pilgrims and encouraging the active participation of local communities.

**6. Participation of Local Communities.** The active involvement of local communities in the tourism process creates authentic and engaging experiences for visitors and positively impacts the local economy.

**7. Sustainable Tourism Practices.** Emphasis must be placed on sustainability when developing pilgrimage tourism. Preserving natural resources and protecting cultural heritage are crucial.

**8. Marketing.** Effective marketing strategies that showcase Bukhara's unique features will help attract more pilgrims. Collaboration with other pilgrimage sites in Uzbekistan would also be beneficial.

Tourism is critically important for the economic growth and development of every country, playing a key role in overall prosperity. The growing significance of tourism underscores the necessity of its development. Uzbekistan has great potential for developing its tourism industry. In recent years, active efforts have been made to boost tourism across the country. As a result of reforms, the tourism sector has grown fivefold over the past three years: around 1 million tourists visited Uzbekistan in 2016, 2.7 million in 2017, and more than 5.3 million in 2018. By 2025, it is expected that the number of foreign tourists will reach 7 million, with annual foreign currency earnings reaching \$2 billion<sup>117</sup>.

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<sup>117</sup> Analytical collection of the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan for tourism development, 2019

Currently, Uzbekistan is focusing on attracting pilgrims from countries with a high potential for pilgrimage tourism, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Arab countries, to its historical cities, especially Bukhara. Bukhara is revered in the Islamic world as the "Center of Islam," the "Noble City," the "Proud City," and the "Imam of Cities." Names such as Imam al-Bukhari, Imam al-Tirmidhi, Imam al-Maturidi, Bahauddin Naqshband Bukhari, and Al-Zamakhshari are famous not only in Uzbekistan but throughout the Muslim world.

The mausoleums of such great Islamic figures, who hold an eminent place in the Islamic world, represent a major potential direction for developing tourism in Uzbekistan. The shrines of Abdul Khaliq Ghijduvani, Arif Revgari, Anjir Fagnawi, Ali Romitani, Boboi Sammasi, Amir Kulol, and Bahauddin Naqshband—the 10th to 16th links of the “Golden Chain” (Silsilat al-Zahhab) that began with the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)—being located in one region, significantly enhance Bukhara’s value for pilgrimage tourism. In addition to resources and favorable conditions, the development of the tourism sector also requires a strong legal foundation. In line with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-60 dated January 28, 2022, which approved the “Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026,” and to fulfill the state program for the "Year of Honoring Human Dignity and Active Mahalla, “the Cabinet of Ministers adopted Resolution No. 543 on September 28, 2022, “On measures to further develop the tourism sector in the Bukhara region for 2022-2026.”

According to the resolution, more than 800 cultural sites in the Bukhara region are scheduled for restoration. As a result of these efforts, by 2021, the number of tourists visiting Bukhara reached 2.2 million, including over 48,900 foreign tourists. This indicates that, compared to 2020, domestic tourism increased eightfold and foreign tourism by 3.5 times. [Narziev, M., Ermakov, A., and Babakulov, A. (2015). Current state and development trends of the tourism and hospitality industry in Uzbekistan. Service Plus, No. 2 (9), 42-43.]

Bukhara continues to attract tourists from all over the world, particularly from Muslim countries. In recent years, magnificent structures, cultural recreation centers, and pilgrimage sites have been established across Uzbekistan. As the number of tourists and demand for services grow, the number of accommodation facilities in Bukhara is also increasing. Tourism and the hotel industry always go hand in hand,

and today, numerous hotels offer tourists more choice, value, and appeal. Thanks to the increased attention and improved conditions, the scale of tourism in Bukhara has significantly expanded. Thus, developing competitive tourism products and services and promoting them in domestic and international tourism markets, as well as expanding promotional and informational activities, is a current necessity.

### 1-Jadval

**Tourism Indicators in Bukhara Region**

Year	Foreign Tourists (thousands)		Domestic Tourists (thousands)		Tourism Export (million USD)		Tour Operators (number)	
2022	55 6,2	Mi ng nafar	29 61,1	M ing nafar	13 8,2	ml n AQSH dollari	1 20	ta
2023	13 87,8	Mi ng nafar	34 90,0	M ing nafar	33 9,1	ml n AQSH dollari	1 43	ta
2024	15 00,0	Mi ng nafar	40 00,0	M ing nafar	45 0,0	ml n AQSH dollari	1 45	ta <sup>118</sup>

In conclusion, the Bukhara region has great potential for the development of pilgrimage tourism. Through strategic planning, involving local communities, and adopting sustainable practices, Bukhara can become a major center for pilgrimage tourism, benefiting both locals and visitors. Further development of infrastructure will enhance the region's tourist appeal and attract even more tourists.

<sup>118</sup> Muallif tomonidan ishlab chiqildi

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