HOTEL, CATERING BUSINESS AND TOURISM

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INTERNATIONAL TOURISM: PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

In the conditions of modern globalization, international economic integration and rapid development of the service sector, international tourism has become one of the important structural elements of the world economy. Tourism is no longer a service sector limited to meeting people's needs for recreation and leisure, but acts as a complex economic system that ensures the diversification of national economies, the creation of new jobs, increased investment activity, socio-economic development of regions and the expansion of international economic relations. The position of tourism in the modern world economy is also due to its high profitability potential and its status as one of the important directions of service exports [1, p. 15].

The economic importance of the tourism sector stems from its multifaceted interactions with other economic sectors. The expenses incurred by tourists during their trip not only increase the income of accommodation and transport services, but also create additional economic activity in numerous areas such as public catering, retail trade, agriculture, crafts, entertainment, communications, banking and insurance services. In this regard, the income generated in the tourism sector has a multiplier effect on the economy, creating conditions for the formation of new income and employment opportunities. [10, p. 54].

The importance of international tourism in terms of regional development should also be specially noted. In regions with tourism potential, but relatively poorly developed in terms of industry and other economic activities, tourism creates an opportunity for the formation of new economic activities. The creation of accommodation facilities, restaurants, transport and entertainment enterprises stimulates the increase in employment of the local population, the expansion of small

and medium-sized businesses and the renewal of infrastructure in the regions. Thus, tourism can serve the socio-economic development not only of central cities, but also of peripheral and rural areas.

Table 1

Main determinants of tourist demand formation and their characteristics

Factor group	Main characteristics
General economic factors	Real disposable income and material well-being; ratio of working and leisure time; availability of investment and recreational areas; government target programs, tax incentives and institutional support for entrepreneurship
Socio-demographic factors	Age and gender structure of the population, educational level, professional qualifications, family composition, income distribution, urbanization and settlement patterns
Socio-psychological factors	System of spiritual and moral values, consumer psychology, tourism fashions and emerging travel trends, accessibility of consumer credit and specialized tourism programs
Individual and behavioural factors	Lifestyle and leisure culture, individual preferences regarding the use of free time, motivation, value and goal orientations, and religious-cultural preferences

Source: compiled by the author based on [5, p. 54; 6; 7; 8]

The factors systematized in the table show that the formation of tourist demand does not depend on a single factor, but on the complex influence of various determinants. Therefore, when preparing marketing and management decisions in the tourism market, it is necessary to take into account not only the income level of tourists, but also their social, psychological and behavioral characteristics.

It is also necessary to take into account economic and environmental externalities related to the development of tourism. Among the positive effects of tourism, the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, increased employment, expansion of infrastructure investments, and the creation of multiplier effects in related areas occupy a special place. Negative effects can manifest themselves in the form of the outflow of labor resources from the agricultural sector, pressure on

the environment, socio-cultural changes, inflation, and inter-sectoral competition for resources [3, c 54–56; 7].

Table 2

Comparative characteristics of positive and negative externalities of international tourism development

Positive impacts	Negative impacts and potential risks
Stimulation of small and medium-sized enterprises: expansion of entrepreneurial activity in services and related sectors	Increasing environmental pressure: growth in waste generation, consumption of natural resources and pressure on natural ecosystems
Job creation: formation of direct and indirect employment and reduction of unemployment	Weakening of the agricultural sector: outflow of labour from agriculture and decline in local production
Infrastructure development: expansion and modernization of transport, communication and utility infrastructure	Socio-cultural changes: transformation of traditional lifestyles, cultural values and natural landscapes
Multiplier economic effect: stimulation of trade, catering, transport, entertainment and other related sectors	Inflationary pressure: increases in food, service, real-estate and other resource prices due to growing tourist demand
Regional socio-economic development: expansion of income and employment opportunities in rural and peripheral areas	Competition for resources: increasing com-petition between tourism and traditional sectors for land, capital, water and labour resources

Source: compiled by the author based on [2, p. 48; 3, p. 59-63; 4; 7; 10]

The results presented in the table show that the economic efficiency of tourism should not be measured only by the amount of income received. In addition to the additional income generated by tourist activity, it is also necessary to estimate its impact on the environment and the local social and economic system. Limited financial and institutional opportunities, especially in developing countries, make it difficult to compensate for negative external effects. In this regard, it is considered more expedient to use tourist resources at the "optimal" level, and not at the "maximum" level.

Digital transformation has also become one of the main directions of development of international tourism. Artificial intelligence, big data, online booking platforms and digital marketing tools allow more accurate

study of tourist behavior and development of personalized tourist products. The application of digital technologies also significantly changes the process of promoting tourist products, organizing their sales, communicating with tourists and evaluating the quality of service. In parallel, the demand for ecological tourism and models of sustainable tourism is growing. The growing interest of tourists in protecting the environment, reducing carbon dioxide emissions and supporting local communities encourages tourist companies to work in accordance with ecological standards. In this context, sustainable tourism is no longer just an element of environmental policy, but an important condition for competitiveness in the international tourist market.

From the perspective of Azerbaijan, the development of international tourism is of strategic importance in terms of diversifying the non-oil sector, accelerating regional economic development, increasing employment, and strengthening the country's international economic position. To this end, optimal use of tourism resources, expansion of agrotourism and rural tourism, application of digital technologies, strengthening of environmental standards, improvement of service quality, for-mation of professional human capital, and diversification of international marketing strategy should be implemented in a mutually beneficial manner. Such an approach will create conditions for increasing Azerbaijan's competitiveness in the world tourism market not only in terms of the number of tourists, but also in terms of the quality, economic efficiency, and sustainability of tourism services.

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