

## **Pilgrimage Tourism And Its Importance In The Tourism Industry**

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### **Abstract**

the article mainly contains information about the importance of the development of pilgrimage tourism in the development of tourism. We know that in the countries rich in history, we can observe many activities related to religious or pilgrimage tourism. In addition, information was given about the directions of development of all infrastructure related to the development of pilgrimage. The article also analyzes the opinions of scientists who worked on pilgrimage tourism and gave conclusions and suggestions.

**Keywords:** pilgrimage tourism, destination, shrines, infrastructure, branding, marketing, culture.

### **Introduction**

Today, the tourism industry is one of the most profitable and rapidly developing sectors of the world economy. Its wide-ranging developing directions are becoming a great source of income for the economy of many countries. The research of scientists revealed that tourism has become one of the most important economic sectors today. As a result, numerous nations are making every effort to advance this sector of the economy, build up infrastructure that satisfies international standards and boost tourism.

In general, there are primarily two categories of religious tourism. This type of travel is religious and pilgrimage-based, with an emphasis on exploration and enlightenment. In the first scenario, trips that include stops at monasteries, temples, museums, and exhibitions are the main draws for tourists. Moreover, some visitors might not practice any religion at all or they might not be followers of the faith they visit. It should be mentioned that religious topics are frequently included in trips that combine culture and education.

Direct participation in religious cults is something that pilgrims are interested in this direction. Compared to religious tourism, pilgrimage tourism has a far narrower socio-psychological foundation. The primary reason pilgrims travel to sacred sites is to worship them<sup>1</sup>.

The pilgrimage movement expanded noticeably in the 15th and especially in the 16th centuries. Along with the growth of its scale, the heterogeneity of flows increases. For many of those who went to the Holy Land, the pilgrimage served only as a cover for the realization of their interests, sometimes very far from religion<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://vuzlit.com/89023/istoriya\\_religioznogo\\_turizma](https://vuzlit.com/89023/istoriya_religioznogo_turizma)

<sup>2</sup> [https://tourlib.net/books\\_tourism/aleks43.htm](https://tourlib.net/books_tourism/aleks43.htm)

In recent years, laws and decrees of our President and the Cabinet of Ministers on the development of pilgrimage tourism in Uzbekistan have been defined and assigned to relevant organizations.

In the decision of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 232 dated 04/30/2022 was given the next tasks: formation of the list of holy sites and pilgrimage sites and posting on the unified national tourist information portal, "calling point" of the republican territories of the objects on the list of holy sites and pilgrimage sites together with the association of private tourism organizations to ensure that it is included in tourism destinations and widely promoted, to organize interregional trips and send travelers while sustainably developing domestic and pilgrimage tourism, and to sign and implement bilateral memorandums, transport passengers within the framework of the "Pilgrimage Tourism" program introduction of up to 50 percent discounts on published tariffs for the main types of ground services provided to aircraft of foreign airlines<sup>3</sup>.

At the same time, the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 100 dated 24.02.2021 defines the following tasks: to establish proper propaganda in the direction of pilgrimage tourism and scientifically based information about pilgrimage objects establishment of the coordination council for the development of pilgrimage tourism in order to provide information; To fully study the potential of Uzbekistan's pilgrimage tourism, to systematize information, to form scientifically based information about places of pilgrimage, scholars and their scientific heritage; preparation of scientific brochures, advertisements, videos and promotional materials related to the promotion of the potential of the republic in the field of pilgrimage tourism in our country and abroad; taking measures to regularly organize promotional events in the direction of pilgrimage tourism, involving experts, scientists, media representatives and students<sup>4</sup>.

### **Literature review**

According to Uzbek Islamic scholar B.M. Bobojonov, "holy shrines" are the most popular kind of pilgrimage sites in Central Asia when it comes to pilgrimage tourism. One of the main areas of research for scientist I.Azimov is the architectural analysis of historical artifacts from the Surkhandarya regions. Poslavskaya, B. Sattorov, A. Mamanazarov. O., S. Jorayeva also went into detail regarding the history of pilgrimage tourism with regard to Sufi figures' shrines and pilgrimage places. It's necessary to consider the rank and degree of personification (saint, pir, said, khoja) of the individual who bears the shrine's name when researching the topic of shrines on Uzbekistani soil.

Opinions regarding many parts of the pilgrimage issue can be found in the research conducted by T. Dadabayev and E. Karimov. For instance, the significance of pilgrimage in the lives of Central Asian peoples and their attitudes toward it across time are examined in the paper co-authored by D. Abramson and E. Karimov<sup>5</sup>.

Pilgrimage tourism is considered by most authors as a type of religious tourism. O.A. Khalyava notes that in religious tourism, many modern researchers such as Babkin A.V., Birzhakov M.B., Hristov T.T., distinguish two main types: pilgrimage tourism and religious tourism of an excursion and educational orientation.

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<sup>3</sup> Decision of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PD-232 dated 04/30/2022.

<sup>4</sup> Resolution No. 100 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 24.02.2021.

<sup>5</sup> Bozarov, N. (2022). History of pilgrim tourism and its place in the field of tourism. Academic research in educational sciences, 3(12), 540-546.

Under religious tourism A.V. Babkin understands the activities associated with providing services and meeting the needs of tourists traveling to holy places and religious centers located outside their usual environment. Pilgrimage tourism, according to the definition of this author, is a combination of trips by representatives of different faiths with pilgrimages.

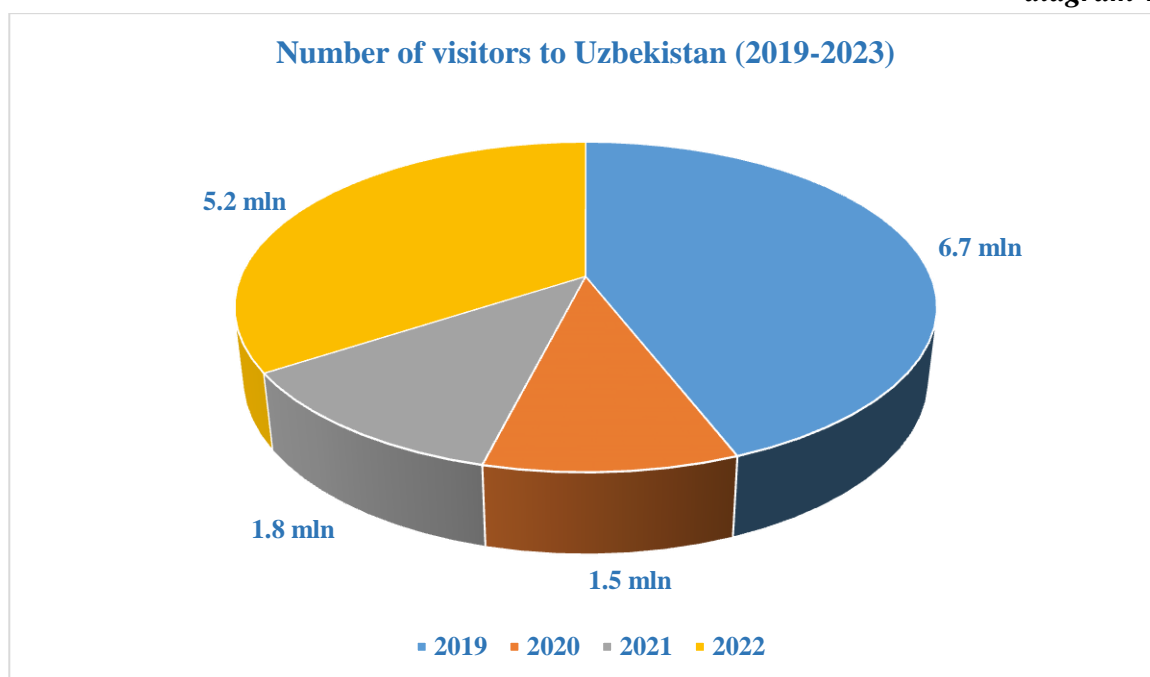
M.A. Vinokurov takes a somewhat broader view of pilgrimage tourism. In his opinion, religious (pilgrimage) tourism aims to visit holy places, centers of concentration of church monuments and relics. This type of tourism involves traveling to participate in important religious ceremonies, educational tours to get acquainted with religious monuments, the history and culture of various religions, as well as scientific trips of specialists related to religious issues. This definition allows participation in pilgrimage tourism not only by religious people<sup>6</sup>.

### Results and discussions

According to the Statistics Agency, in 2022, 5.2 million foreign travelers visited Uzbekistan throughout the year. If we compare this statistic with 2021, it has increased by 3.4 million. Also, compared to 2019, before the coronavirus pandemic, the number of tourists decreased by 1.5 million (diag-1).

The largest number of tourists came to Uzbekistan from Kazakhstan (1.5 million people). The next places were visited by foreign tourists from Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Turkey.

*diagram-1*



*source: statistics agency*

Considering Uzbekistan's ancient and rich history, pilgrimages here usually involve visiting the shrines of prominent figures of various religions. Since the place to be visited is sacred, many people seek to worship there or gain insight into the historical sites. Some shrines and places rely entirely on this impressive power of tourism for their income. This, in turn, affects the surrounding areas.

During the long stretches of independence, the state gave incredible consideration to religious places. Because of the way that our incredible precursors gave serious consideration to

<sup>6</sup> Baylagasov, L. V., & Goppa, M. I. (2016). O klassifikasii palomnicheskogo turizma. Simvol nauki, (10-3), 192-194.

the rebuilding, beautification, and fixing of the spots where they settled, the spots of pilgrimage draw in 1.5 billion Muslims. As of now, since we have taken the improvement of the pilgrimage industry as our principal objective, most importantly, giving serious consideration to the regional association and advancement of strict the travel industry in our country is fundamental. Specifically, we really want to foster alluring foundation to draw in pioneers from the nations of Southeast Asia and West Asia. For this reason, we accept that it is suitable to recognize and sum up the spots of pilgrimage thought about hallowed by individuals of every locale, area, and town, to make strict traveler cards for the republic and district, to make the important circumstances for pioneers, and to concentrate on the transportation prospects.

There is no doubt that religious shrines will become a source of great income with a small amount of money. There are dozens and hundreds of religious temples from all regions of our country. We only know the locations of our figures who served the Islamic world and rose to the level of holiness forever, at the local level, that is, at the district or regional level. Hence, such sacred temples can be converted into religious shrines at national and international level. At the same time, the creation of a targeted road transport system will be ensured, leading to the main places of pilgrimage on the territory of the republic, and the organization of transport routes for residents of the region to make organized trips to other regions<sup>7</sup>.

Also, the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 100 dated 24.02.2021 provides for the ***implementation of the following measures in the development of places of pilgrimage***: current repair of roads leading to shrines; installation of road signs and information signs leading to the shrine from the regional center and other large settlements; launch a convenient traffic plan for tourists to enter and exit the shrine without queues; establishment of separate parking lots for vehicles (cars and buses); in case of queues and traffic jams at shrines, as well as emergency situations, developing and implementing plans for distributing the flow of pilgrims throughout the facility; developing and implementing a scheme for the accommodation of pilgrims in the process of organizing prayer ceremonies (prayer); within the framework of the family entrepreneurship program, to prioritize providing loans of up to 30 million sums for the organization of family guest houses around the shrine; take measures to arrange toilets and aviaries in the pilgrimage site in accordance with sanitary and hygienic requirements; organization and expansion of additional services in places of pilgrimage (stations selling food and souvenirs, sales of items necessary for performing pilgrimages); conditions for visitors to the place of pilgrimage (seats, waiting rooms and areas), maternity and children's room, creating comfortable conditions for persons with disabilities, soft drinks, etc.); to develop manuals about the procedure and manners of pilgrimage in the shrine and take measures to transfer them to the shrines; development and wide dissemination of printed and electronic promotional materials about pilgrimage sites<sup>8</sup>.

It is also desirable to include new pilgrimage sites and infrastructure in the regions of Uzbekistan as part of tourist routes for the development of pilgrimage tourism.

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<sup>7</sup> Bozarov, N. (2022). History of pilgrim tourism and its place in the field of tourism. Academic research in educational sciences, 3(12), 540-546.

<sup>8</sup> Resolution No. 100 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 24.02.2021.



*source: by author-based information which taken from the resolution N-10 Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 24.02.2021*

**Conclusion.** First of all, to add new shrines to tourist packages, to work on a unified pilgrimage tourism brand and promotion concept; creation external content, media content aimed at popularizing the potential of pilgrimage tourism; holding local and international conferences on pilgrimage tourism. Also It is important to develop various thematic routes for countries that come for pilgrimage tourism.

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