



# REGIONLARIN SOSIAL-IQTISADI İNKİŞAFI VƏ COĞRAFİ PROBLEMLƏRİ

Beynəlxalq elmi-praktik konfransı



# SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND GEOGRAPHICAL PROBLEMS OF REGIONS

International scientific-practical conference

18-19 mart 2025. Bakı, Azərbaycan  
March 18-19, 2025. Baku, Azerbaijan



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**Baş redaktor: c.ü.f.d., dosent Zaur Tahir oğlu İMRANI**

Azərbaycan Respublikası Elm və Təhsil Nazirliyi akademik Həsən Əliyev adına Coğrafiya İnstitutunun baş direktor vəzifəsini icra edən

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Azərbaycan Respublikası dövlət müstəqilliyini bərpa etdiyi vaxtdan keçən dövr ərzində qarşısına qoyduğu əsas və prioritet istiqamətlərdən biri iqtisadi sabitliyə və regional inkişafa nail olmaq olmuşdur. Demokratik dövlət quruculuğu və bazar iqtisadiyyatı şəraitində ölkədə aparılan genişmiqyaslı islahatlar nəticəsində demək olar ki, bu istiqamətdə müəyyən müsbət göstəricilər əldə edilmişdir. Bu da sahibkarlıq fəaliyyətinin genişləndirilməsinə, yerli və xarici investorlar üçün əlverişli mühitin yaradılmasına, qabaqcıl texnologiyaların əmək fəaliyyətinə cəlb edilməsinə, rəqabətə davamlı məhsulların istehsal gücünün artırılmasına, yeni iş yerlərinin açılmasına səbəb olmuşdur. Lakin bu inkişaf özü ilə müəyyən coğrafi problemlərin: landşaftların transformasiyası, havanın çirklənməsi, torpaqların deqradasiyaya uğraması, su resurslarının azalması, ekoloji risk zonalarının yaranması və s. gətirib çıxarmışdır. Bu baxımdan, təbii resurslardan səmərəli istifadəni və ətraf mühitin etibarlı mühafizəsini nəzərə alaraq Coğrafiya İnstitutu 18-19 mart 2025-ci ildə “Regionların sosial-iqtisadi inkişafı və coğrafi problemləri” adlı Beynəlxalq elmi-praktiki konfrans keçirmişdir.

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Since it regained its independence, one of the primary priority directions set by the Republic of Azerbaijan has been to achieve economic stability and regional development. As a result of the large-scale reforms that have been implemented in the country under the conditions of democratic state-building and market economy, it can be articulated that certain positive outcomes have been achieved in this direction. This, in turn, has led to the expansion of entrepreneurial activity, the creation of a favourable environment for local and foreign investors, the introduction of advanced technologies into labour activity, the increase in the production capacity of competitive products, and the creation of novel workplaces. However, this development has culminated in the emergence of certain geographical problems: transformation of landscapes, air pollution, land degradation, depletion of water resources, creation of ecological risk zones, etc. In this regard, taking into account the efficient use of natural resources and reliable protection of the environment, the Institute of Geography held an International Scientific and Practical Conference on “Socioeconomic Development and Geographical Problems of Regions” on March 18-19, 2025.

We would like to acknowledge the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan for supporting the conference.

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# ASSESSMENT OF TOURISM AND RECREATION POTENTIAL IN ENSURING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Bukhara city is recognized as one of Uzbekistan's historically significant and prominent tourist destinations. The city's ancient history, rich cultural and spiritual heritage, architectural monuments, unique natural landscapes, and sacred pilgrimage sites create vast opportunities for tourism and recreation sectors, which are crucial for ensuring sustainable development. Currently, Bukhara possesses favorable conditions for developing numerous tourism sectors, and various decrees and resolutions aimed at enhancing tourism are significantly contributing to the sector's expansion.

**Keywords:** Bukhara, sustainable development, tourism, recreation.

## DAVAMLI İNKİŞAFIN TƏMİN EDİLMƏSİNDƏ TURİZM VƏ RERERASIYON POTENSİALININ QİYMƏTLƏNDİRİLMƏSİ

Buxara şəhəri Özbəkistanın tarixi əhəmiyyətli və görkəmli turistik yerlərindən biri kimi tanınır. Şəhərin qədim tarixi, zəngin mədəni-mənəvi irsi, memarlıq abidələri, bənzərsiz təbiət mənzərələri, müqəddəs ziyarət yerləri dayanıqlı inkişafın təmin edilməsində mühüm əhəmiyyət kəsb edən turizm və rekreasiya sektorları üçün geniş imkanlar yaradır. Hazırda Buxarada çoxsaylı turizm sahələrinin inkişafı üçün əlverişli şərait vardır və turizmin inkişafına yönəlmiş müxtəlif fərman və qərarlar bu sektorun genişlənməsinə mühüm töhfə verir.

**Açar sözlər:** Buxara, davamlı inkişaf, turizm, rekreasiya.

The "Bukhara Historical Center," which covers an area of 216 hectares and includes a protected zone of 339 hectares, is one of the most frequently visited ancient sites by foreign tourists [1]. The unique characteristics of Bukhara city serve as an important foundation for the development of the tourism sector. Simply put, tourism is a way to understand the world, to comprehend it, and, at the same time, to step onto the global stage.

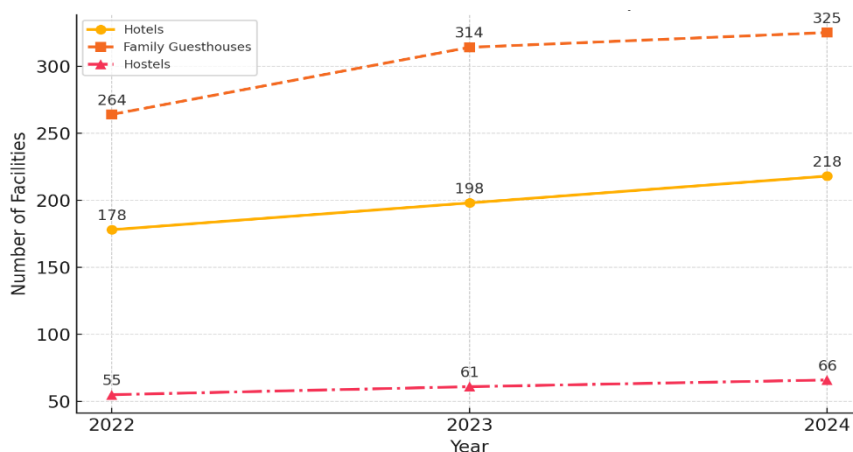
It can be stated that the development of tourism in Bukhara has occurred in two distinct periods. The first period corresponds to the era of the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, I. Karimov (1991–2016), during which reforms aimed at developing the sector were implemented. The second period refers to the last eight years under President Sh. Mirziyoyev, during which large-scale construction and development projects have been carried out to harmoniously integrate the "old" and "new" parts of Bukhara city, elevating the tourism sector to a new stage of progress. According to global experience, tourists show great interest in ancient cities that strive to preserve their historical spirit and appearance. Bukhara, as one of these ancient cities, stands out precisely for this reason. Today, significant efforts are being made to maintain Bukhara's medieval cultural image in its original form and to address the shortcomings that have occurred in this regard.

It is known that during the Soviet era, 350 hectares of Bukhara's 500-hectare historical area were subjected to significant transformations [2]. Between the 1920s and 1960s, most of the old residential houses, neighborhoods, and architectural monuments located along the inner side of the city's ancient defensive walls were demolished together with the walls themselves. In particular, several monuments dating back to the 16th and 17th centuries, such as the Poyanda-Biy Ataliq Mosque, Bozori Gusfand, Khoja Nihol, and Shodimbiy Madrasahs, were completely destroyed [2]. Even within the Ark Fortress of Bukhara, only about 20 percent of the original structures have survived to this day. For this reason, preserving the historical part of Bukhara-one of the brightest and oldest centers of world civilization-is a responsibility for all of us. Today, practical efforts are being undertaken to develop the city's economy, transform it into a major tourist center, preserve its ancient architectural monuments, improve pilgrimage sites, and give a modern appearance to newly constructed areas.

At present, efforts have been initiated in Bukhara to ensure the sustainable development of the tourism and recreation sectors by assessing existing opportunities and implementing measures for their effective use. To this end, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted a resolution on further development of the tourism sector in Bukhara region for the period 2022-2026 [3]. According to this resolution, it is planned to increase the number of foreign and domestic tourists to 5 million by 2026, expand tourist routes by compiling a detailed list of cultural heritage sites, and establish a gastronomic “Street Food” zone based on international experience. Additionally, projects are being implemented to create tourist destinations such as the “Tourism Mahalla,” “Tourism Village,” and “Tourism Settlements”.

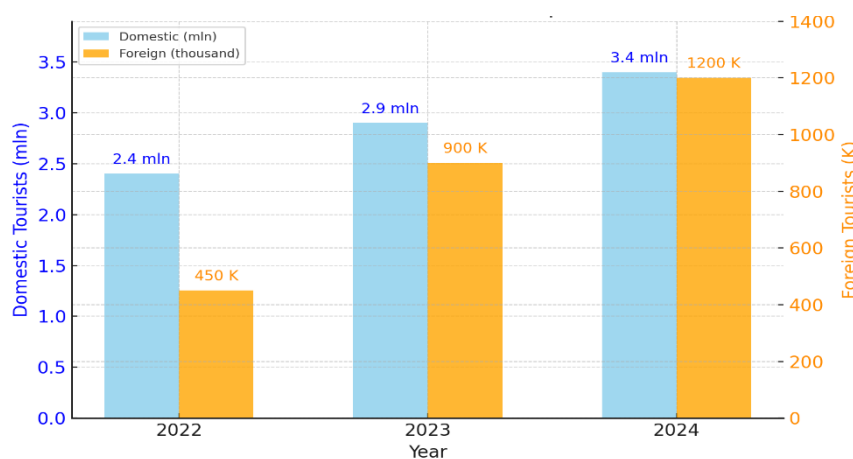
It is well known that gastronomy is one of the key areas of tourism. Over the years, Uzbek national cuisine has played an invaluable role in attracting tourists to Uzbekistan, particularly to Bukhara. At present, efforts are underway in Bukhara to establish a 24-hour gastronomic street aimed at attracting various visitor segments. This gastronomic street showcases both regional and national culinary traditions, while also offering internationally popular dishes that are in high demand among foreign tourists, such as fast food, steaks, spaghetti, and others. The length of the gastronomic street is 820 meters, comprising 36 service and commercial outlets, of which nine are dedicated catering establishments. In addition, the construction of 22 shops and 50 mobile commercial stands is planned. Currently, the “Bravo Lider” restaurant has started operating on this gastronomic street. The restaurant specializes in both national and European cuisines and is designed to accommodate up to 200 guests.

In order to ensure the consistent development of the tourism sector in Bukhara, as well as to further improve the tourism industry and its infrastructure, the number of service institutions catering to tourists is increasing year by year.



Graphic 1. Tourism Infrastructure Growth (Compact View)

As a result, in 2022, the number of domestic tourists visiting Bukhara amounted to 2.4 million, while the number of foreign tourists reached 450 thousand. By 2024, the number of domestic tourists increased to 3.4 million, and the number of foreign visitors rose to 1.2 million [4].



Graphic 2. Tourist Visits to Bukhara (Compact View)

Bukhara city is renowned not only for its architectural monuments but also for its unique intangible cultural heritage, including distinctive national traditions and customs. As a result, the region offers extensive opportunities to attract tourists, and the effective use of these opportunities is of great importance. Since 2001, the traditional “Silk and Spices” festival has been held annually in Bukhara. Until 2015, tourist organizations, artisans, as well as both foreign and local tourists from all regions of Uzbekistan actively participated in this event. Since 2016, the festival has expanded significantly, attracting representatives from the UN World Tourism Organization, the National Company “Uzbektourism,” the “Hunarmand” Association, heads of domestic and international tourism companies, artisans from nearly ten foreign countries, cultural sector representatives, entrepreneurs, tourists, and delegates from more than ten international organizations. In previous years, the festival primarily consisted of silk and spice trade fairs and pilaf celebrations. However, it has since expanded to include national games, sports competitions, traditional costume exhibitions, and various cultural events [5]. Since 2018, the

cheerful “Nasreddin Afandi” festival has been held annually on April 1st in the historical district of the city. This event aims to preserve the rich cultural heritage of the people and promote traditional folk performances, especially comedic shows, folklore, and satirical songs among the younger generation. Additionally, on Arabon Street in Bukhara, the “Usto-Shogird” miniature center was established, based on a 16th-century historical building. The total cost of the project amounted to 1.5 billion UZS [6]. Furthermore, research in the field of tourism, the implementation of joint scientific-methodological projects, and the introduction of the subject “Sustainable Tourism” in the 2019–2020 academic year have laid a strong foundation for the development of the sector and the training of highly qualified specialists.

At present, although the state of tourism in the Bukhara region has significantly improved, a number of challenges still remain. In this process, it is essential to establish environmentally friendly recreational zones and develop new tourist routes that take into account the interests of the local population, while utilizing green energy technologies. It is also important to emphasize the development of modern infrastructure based on international best practices, the improvement of the hotel and service sectors, and the preservation of cultural and historical heritage sites. These measures will contribute to improving the socio-economic conditions of the region's population, creating new job opportunities, and ensuring the sustainable development of the region.

In conclusion, the development of the tourism sector has a significant positive impact on urban infrastructure, the economy, and the living standards of the population. The adoption of the “Bukhara Declaration,” recognizing Uzbekistan as one of the centers of pilgrimage tourism, is further evidence that pilgrimage tourism is rapidly developing and becoming one of the leading trends of the 21st century. The primary goal of tourism development is to strengthen relations of peace and friendship among nations, to support the tradition of intercultural and inter-civilizational dialogue, and to promote mutual respect and tolerance, fostering peaceful coexistence among different nationalities and religions over many centuries.

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