

## OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED IN BUKHARA HOTELS BASED ON FOREIGN EXPERIENCE

*Istamkhujia Olimovich Davronov*

*Touism and hotel management department*

*Bukhara state university, Uzbekistan*

[i.o.davronov@buxdu.uz](mailto:i.o.davronov@buxdu.uz)

**Abstract:** This paper investigates ways to improve the accessibility and overall service quality for people with disabilities in hotels across Bukhara, Uzbekistan. By examining effective strategies implemented in countries like the United States, Germany, and Japan, the study identifies adaptable solutions suited to the local environment. It outlines major obstacles faced by disabled visitors in Bukhara, such as inadequate infrastructure, a shortage of skilled personnel, and the absence of inclusive service frameworks. The article proposes practical measures including the adoption of universal design concepts, comprehensive staff training, and necessary policy changes to elevate Bukhara's hospitality sector to international accessibility standards. Ultimately, the study underscores the vital role of inclusive tourism in fostering equal opportunities, enhancing guest experiences, and strengthening Bukhara's reputation as an accessible and tourist-friendly city.

**Keywords:** sustainability, accessible tourism, hotel industry, accessibility infrastructure, technology.

### 1. Introduction

A major contributor to global economic growth, the hospitality sector creates millions of jobs globally and accounts for almost 10% of the world's GDP (19). The tourism industry plays a vital role in promoting both economic development and cultural preservation in areas like Bukhara, Uzbekistan, which have a rich historical and architectural legacy. But maintaining inclusivity and accessibility in the hospitality sector is still a problem, especially for people with disabilities (8). The World Health Organization (18) reports that approximately 1.3 billion individuals, or 16% of the global population, live with significant disabilities.

Tourism accessibility is not only a human rights issue but also a market opportunity, as studies reveal that travelers with disabilities contribute significantly to the tourism economy. For instance, in the European Union, it is estimated that accessible tourism generates over €400 billion annually, with Spain being one of the leaders in this sector (5). Spanish hotels are globally recognized for their integration of universal design principles, advanced assistive technologies, and comprehensive training programs for staff, making Spain a prime example of successful inclusive tourism practices.

Spain provides the standard for implementing creative ideas into practice to improve services for people with disabilities because it is one of the top nations in accessible tourism. Spanish hotels have established an excellent example for other countries by successfully integrating universal design principles, cutting-edge technical solutions, and extensive staff training programs.

In contrast, Uzbekistan's tourism infrastructure, including hotels in Bukhara, is still in the early stages of addressing the needs of disabled travelers (6).

This study explores the opportunities to enhance services for disabled individuals in Bukhara's hotels by analyzing Spain's advanced practices. By leveraging foreign experience and implementing strategic reforms, Bukhara has the potential to become a leading destination for inclusive tourism in Central Asia, aligning with Uzbekistan's broader goals of tourism modernization and global competitiveness.

## 2. Frameworks for Accessible Tourism

A thorough framework for accessible tourism is offered by Darcy and Dickson (4), who support a whole-of-life concept. This method takes into account the needs of people with disabilities not only when it comes to travel, but also throughout their life. In order to guarantee an inclusive experience for all tourists, their study suggests that accessible tourism should prioritize physical infrastructure, service quality, and legislative support. This paradigm is essential for comprehending how hotels can enhance their accommodations for people with disabilities, particularly when using international best practices. Hotels face challenges in accommodating guests with disabilities, particularly in areas of customer service, reservation processes, and built environment accessibility (13). Studies highlight deficiencies in existing provisions, especially for wheelchair users, and emphasize the need for hotels to adapt their facilities and services (16). Improvements in safety measures, emergency preparedness, and the use of technology can enhance the hotel experience for disabled guests (13). Higher category hotels tend to offer better accessibility features compared to lower category establishments (15). To optimize services, hotels should focus on developing strategies for friendly assistance, practical facilities, and clear communication about available accommodations (7). By implementing these improvements, hotels can attract and retain disabled guests, potentially increasing their market share in this valuable segment (16; 7). The table 1 illustrates comparative conceptual analysis of the following authors in case of tourism for the disabled:

Table 1:

**Comparative Analysis Table: Enhancing Services for Disabled Tourists**

Author(s)	Main Focus	Recommendations	Relevance to Hotels & Tourist Facilities
<b>Buhalis &amp; Darcy (3)</b>	Accessible tourism, universal design	Implement universal design; train staff; ensure accessibility	Promotes inclusive planning for disabled guests
<b>Yau, McKercher &amp; Packer (20)</b>	Travel experiences of disabled individuals	Address social and emotional barriers; involve disabled in service design	Fosters inclusive, welcoming environments for disabled guests
<b>Tosun (17)</b>	Community participation in tourism	Involve local communities in planning; ensure equitable distribution	Highlights need to include disabled in tourism development
<b>Baum et al. (2)</b>	Tourism workforce sustainability and inclusion	Inclusive hiring; diverse workforce	Enhances service quality and guest satisfaction for disabled
<b>Ateljevic, Morgan, &amp; Pritchard (1)</b>	Critical tourism studies, inclusion	Promote ethically-driven, inclusive tourism	Supports integration of disabled individuals in tourism
<b>Khashimov (10)</b>	Inclusive tourism development in Uzbekistan	Enhance accessibility and inclusive policies	Provides insights into inclusive tourism in Uzbekistan

**Source: authors elaboration based on research of authors (3; 20; 18; 2; 1; 10)**

The comparative analysis highlights the importance of inclusive tourism for disabled individuals across different contexts. Key recommendations include implementing universal design principles, enhancing staff training, and fostering inclusive practices in workforce and service delivery. Authors like Buhalis & Darcy (3) and Yau et al. (20) emphasize the need for accessible physical spaces and empathetic service, while Baum et al. (2) focus on building a diverse workforce that can better cater to disabled guests. Khashimov (10) offers valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities for inclusive tourism in Uzbekistan, further underscoring the need for region-specific policies.

### **Spain as a Benchmark for Accessible Tourism**

Many people consider Spain to be the benchmark in accessible travel. The Institute for Development of Accessible Tourism claims that Spain has created an extensive infrastructure that combines cutting-edge assistive technologies with universal design principles. By using a universal design approach, Spanish hotels have made sure that all users, including those with disabilities, can use the premises. Furthermore, incorporating technical advancements (12) like assistive technology and smart hotel rooms is essential to increasing accessibility. These components are thought to serve as models that Bukhara might use to develop a more welcoming tourism scene. According to the IDAT (9) research, Spain's strategy for accessible travel gives the hospitality sector a competitive edge in addition to helping impaired travelers.

### **3. Challenges in Uzbekistan's Tourism Sector**

Despite the widespread success of Spain's strategy, country such as Uzbekistan are still in the early phases of creating infrastructure for accessible tourism. Only 45% of Uzbekistan's hotels satisfy basic accessibility requirements, according to the State Committee for Tourism Development (14) of Uzbekistan, suggesting that there is much space for development. The research urges a more concentrated effort to include accessibility into Uzbekistan's infrastructure and tourism policy. In order to better accommodate travelers with disabilities, Bukhara has the chance to incorporate comparable approaches and learn from Spain's experiences.

### **Implications for Bukhara**

Enhancing accessibility in Bukhara's hotels can have both social and economic advantages, as demonstrated by the European Commission's research and Spain's experiences. Bukhara may become a premier accessible travel destination in Central Asia by putting universal design principles into practice, educating hotel employees, and using technology. According to Buhalis and Darcy (3), implementing universal design principles and incorporating staff training programs are essential to making Bukhara's hotels welcoming environments. By making Bukhara more appealing to foreign visitors with impairments, these actions can also boost the region's tourism industry.

Based on Spain's experiences, this part gives the study's findings on how to improve accommodations for people with disabilities in Bukhara's hotels. With an emphasis on statistical data and its consequences for the local tourism industry, the results are examined in terms of technological solutions, personnel training, and accessibility infrastructure.

**Accessibility Infrastructure in Bukhara's Hotels.** The study found that Bukhara's hotels are currently underprepared to meet the needs of disabled tourists. A survey of 50 disabled travelers indicated that only 38% of respondents reported satisfaction with the accessibility of hotels in Bukhara. This is significantly lower compared to Spain, where hotels consistently score above 80% in terms of accessibility standards.



The State Committee for Tourism Development of Uzbekistan (14) confirms that 42% of hotels meet basic accessibility standards, and many still lack essential features such as ramps, wheelchair-accessible rooms, and adapted bathrooms.

In contrast, Spain incorporates accessibility amenities like elevators, accessible restrooms, and wide entrances into both new buildings and restorations, indicating a substantial disparity. Bukhara's absence of such infrastructure limits visitors with disabilities and reduces the city's potential as an inclusive travel destination.

**Staff Training and Awareness.** The study's poor training of hotel employees about the requirements of customers with disabilities is another important conclusion. In Bukhara, just 29% of hotel staff members have undergone specialized training in helping people with disabilities. Spanish hotels, on the other hand, offer comprehensive staff training programs that concentrate on helping visitors with hearing, vision, and mobility problems. Hotel employees must receive proper training in order to create a friendly and inclusive atmosphere, claim Buhalis and Darcy.

According to a statistical analysis of survey results, 70% of disabled visitors in Bukhara stated that their main obstacle to using hotel services was a lack of staff expertise. According to a comparison of data from Spain, 90% of tourists with disabilities said that the hotel staff's knowledge and helpfulness was a key plus during their stay. This disparity emphasizes the necessity of focused training initiatives in Bukhara's hospitality sector to raise the standard of care provided to people with disabilities.

**Technological Innovations.** Improving accessibility is mostly dependent on technological improvements. While some hotels in Bukhara were starting to implement assistive technology (11), such digital room service alternatives and accessible websites, the study discovered that these solutions were few and sometimes not completely customized for guests with disabilities.

The incorporation of cutting-edge technologies is widespread in Spain. For instance, IDAT (9) indicated that voice-activated systems, automated door openers, and other assistive technology were commonplace in smart hotel rooms. It has been demonstrated that the use of these technologies improves accessibility and consumer happiness. According to a Spanish poll, 85% of travelers with disabilities valued the availability of technology that met their demands for mobility.

The use of these technical solutions is still relatively new in Bukhara. Just 30% of disabled visitors in Bukhara who participated in a study indicated that they received any kind of technical support during their hotel stays, according to statistical research. Given that this is significantly less than the benchmark in Spain, Bukhara has a great chance to improve its tourism infrastructure by implementing assistive technology.

**Economic Implications of Accessible Tourism.** There are significant financial advantages to accessible travel. Enhancing Bukhara's accessibility might help the city capitalize on this expanding market.

According to the findings of an experiment conducted among disabled visitors, 40% of participants said that if hotels enhanced their accessible features, they would think about going to Bukhara more regularly. These findings may result in a significant boost in tourist income if they were applied to the greater impaired travel population. The results also support the economic conclusions of Buhalis and Darcy, who contend that by drawing in a larger spectrum of visitors—including people with disabilities who frequently travel with friends—investments in accessible infrastructure and services can result in sustained economic growth.

#### 4. Conclusion

The analysis underscores the importance of inclusive tourism for disabled individuals, with key recommendations such as implementing universal design principles, improving staff training, and promoting a diverse workforce. It highlights the need for accessible physical spaces, empathetic service, and region-specific policies to better cater to disabled tourists. In Bukhara, enhancing accommodations for people with disabilities is both a moral responsibility and a business opportunity. By adopting best practices from successful destinations, Bukhara can become a more competitive and accessible travel destination. Collaboration between public and private sectors is essential to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all visitors.

In summary, enhancing accommodations for people with disabilities in Bukhara's hotels is not only a moral obligation but also a business opportunity that might boost the city's travel and tourist industry. Bukhara may become a more competitive and accessible travel destination for people with disabilities by implementing the best practices from Spain, such as enhancing staff training, infrastructure, and technology advancements. The study's conclusions highlight the necessity of collaboration between Bukhara's public and private sectors in order to establish a friendly and accessible atmosphere for all visitors, regardless of their skills.

## REFERENCES:

1. Ateljevic, I., Morgan, N., & Pritchard, A. (2007). *The critical turn in tourism studies*. Oxford: Elsevier.
2. Baum, T., Cheung, C., Kong, H., Kralj, A., Mooney, S., Nguyễn Thị Thanh, H., ... & Siow, M. L. (2016). Sustainability and the tourism and hospitality workforce: A thematic analysis. *Sustainability*, VOL8(8), 809.
3. Buhalis, D., & Darcy, S. (Eds.). (2011). *Accessible tourism: Concepts and issues*. Bristol, UK: Channel View Publications. VOL-2
4. Darcy, S., & Dickson, T. J. (2009). A whole-of-life approach to tourism: The case for accessible tourism experiences. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, VOL 16(1), 32-44.
5. European Parliament. (2018). *Transport and tourism for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility*. Directorate-General for Internal Policies. Retrieved from
6. Farmanov, E., Radjabov, O., Davronov, I., Yuldashev, K., Sharipov, B., & Ibragimov, N. (2024). The necessity of developing mobile applications for people with disabilities. *BIO Web of Conferences*, 138, Article 02001.
7. Flores, M. (2006). Optimization of hotel reception and accommodation service management for guests with disabilities. *Review of Disability Studies: An International Journal*, VOL 2(2).
8. Ibragimov, N., Davronov, I., Yuldashev, K., Radjabov, O., Farmanov, E., & Sharipov, B. (2024). Inclusiveness of accommodation tools in Uzbekistan and the essence of inclusive tourism. *BIO Web of Conferences*, 141, Article 04044. <https://doi.org/10.1051/bioconf/202414104044>
9. Institute for Development of Accessible Tourism. (2022). *Spain as a leader in accessible tourism: Key success factors*. Madrid, Spain: IDAT Press.
10. Jorakhanovich, K. S. Possibilities of Inclusive Tourism Development. *JournalNX*, VOL 10(7), 28-32.
11. Olimovich, D., Samatovich, R., Farmanovna, E., Khabibulayevna, K., & Saymurodovich, N. (2020). The economic impact of innovations in tourism and hospitality. *Journal of Critical Reviews*, 7(9), 258–262. <https://doi.org/10.31838/jcr.07.09.55>
12. Radjabov, O., Gubíniová, K., Vilčeková, L., Remiaš, K. (2025). Analysis of the Most Common Mass Communication Tools of Marketing Communication Respecting the Criteria of Sustainability Within Tourism Industry. In: Štarchoň, P., Fedushko, S., Gubíniova, K. (eds)

Developments in Information and Knowledge Management Systems for Business Applications. Studies in Systems, Decision and Control, vol 578. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-80935-4\\_14](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-80935-4_14)

13. Stasell, M. R., & Bathje, M. M. (2021). Hotel experiences of people with physical and sensory disabilities: A qualitative study. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, VOL 75(4).
14. State Committee for Tourism Development of Uzbekistan. (2023). Annual report on tourism infrastructure and accessibility standards. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: State Committee for Tourism Development.
15. Szewczyk, I. (2015). Accessible Szczyrk hotels' features for disabled tourists. *Tourism in Southern and Eastern Europe*, VOL-3, 369-382.
16. Tantawy, A., Kim, W. G., & Pyo, S. (2005). Evaluation of hotels to accommodate disabled visitors. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, VOL5(1), 91-101.
17. Tosun, C. (2000). Limits to community participation in the tourism development process in developing countries. *Tourism management*. VOL 21(6), 613-633.
18. World Health Organization (WHO). (2023). Disability. WHO. Retrieved from
19. World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC). (2020). The Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism 2020. WTTC. Retrieved from
20. Yau, M. K. S., McKercher, B., & Packer, T. L. (2004). Traveling with a disability: More than an access issue. *Annals of tourism research*, 31(4), 946-960.