

ANALYSIS OF THE CONDITIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICAL TOURISM IN UZBEKISTAN AND ITS SITUATION

Talipova Malikakhan Husan kizi

International Nordic University, Master's student

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10869969>

Abstract. *This article is dedicated to the study of the conditions for the development of medical tourism in Uzbekistan and the analysis of its current state. Also, this article analyzes the importance of medical tourism in the country's economic development, and the ongoing work on the development of medical tourism in our country. During the research, methods such as empirical, induction-deduction, analysis-synthesis and comparative analysis were used, in which the existing conditions for the development of tropical tourism in our country and the legal comparative analysis of foreign countries with developed potential in the regions, as well as advanced Based on experience, suggestions are made for the development of medical tourism in our country. Also, taking into account the natural-geographical location, ecological situation and population, the existence of all conditions for the development of medical tourism in our republic, the potential of Uzbekistan to become a center of medical tourism for Central Asian countries is also reflected in clear examples.*

Keywords: *medical tourism, medical tourism market, medical treatment, tourism infrastructure, geographical location, health infrastructure, tourist potential, medical services, tourist.*

The growing importance of transforming the economy makes the development of tourism, which is considered one of the strategic branches of the national economy, an objective necessity. After all, tourism is one of the most profitable types of business in the world, it has become an integral part of the market economy and a rapidly developing strategic industry in many countries of the world. Tourism is a catalyst for socio-economic development of not only developed, but also developing countries and regions with a relatively low level of development. One new job created in the field of tourism is 20 times cheaper than in the industrial sector, every 30 tourists visiting a country gives the opportunity to directly create one or two new jobs.

It should be noted that the field of medical tourism has been growing in popularity for the past several decades. Currently, this industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. As a result, millions of people from different countries are currently traveling to foreign countries for high-level medical care and treatment.

Medical tourism means a trip that provides an opportunity to use medical services outside of one's country for the purpose of treatment. In the world, the tourism sector is embodied as a socio-economic phenomenon that directly and indirectly affects the development of all infrastructures. Modern tourism is based on the high level of development of medical tourism, transport, social and service sectors, which makes it a highly profitable sector of the economy.

The availability of cheaper treatment for various conditions in many countries supports the growth of the medical tourism market. More than 50 countries of the world have adopted special national programs for the development of medical tourism. According to the Center for Economic

Research and Reforms, the size of the international medical tourism market grew by an average of 21% in 2021-2022. As a result, 14 billion in 2021. It is forecasted to reach 53.5 billion dollars in 2028. According to the International Medical Tourism Association (MTA), more than 14 million people around the world travel to other countries for treatment every year.

According to the annual ranking compiled by the Association of Medical Tourism, the countries listed in this table in the world in 2021-2022 were recognized as the most developed countries in tourism and took the following places:

Countries with the most developed tourism in the world in 2021-2022

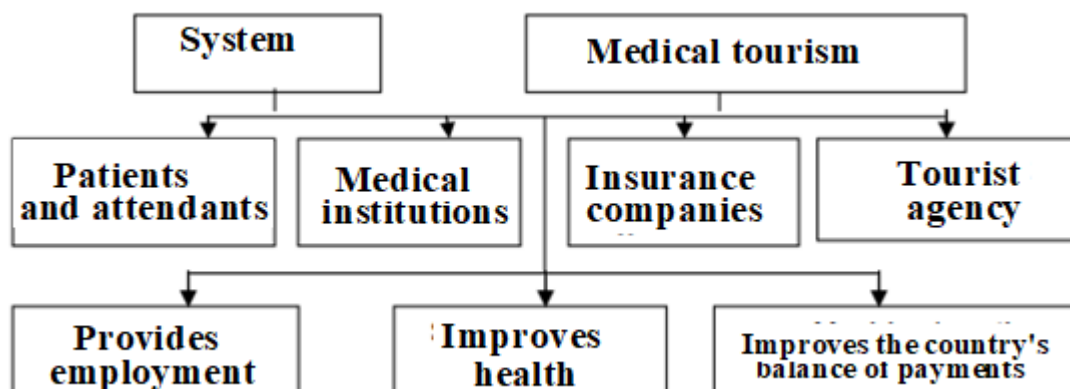
- 1 Canada
- 2 Singapore
- 3 Japan
- 4 Spain
- 5 Great Britain
- 6 Dubai
- 7 Costa Rica
- 8 Israel
- 9 Abu Dhabi
- 10 India

Source: compiled by the author.

In recent years, the creation of favorable economic and organizational-legal conditions for the rapid development of medical tourism as a strategic branch of the country's economy, the full and effective use of the huge tourism potential of the regions, the fundamental improvement of the management of the tourism network, the creation of national tourism products and promoting them in world markets, presenting Uzbekistan as one of the important centers of world civilization in the field of medical tourism, creating additional opportunities for business entities operating in this field has become a priority.

For this reason, the number of foreign tourists visiting Uzbekistan is increasing significantly from year to year. In particular, in 2020, 1.5 mln. 1.8 million tourists in 2021 and 5.2 million in 2022.

We consider the following factors: system, medical tourism, patients and attendants, medical institutions, insurance companies, tourist agency, provides employment, improves health, improves the country's balance of payments.



Economic importance of medical tourism.

Within the framework of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-60 on the "Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan" for 2022-2026, 100 goals defining the development of our country have been developed, and the 55th goal of this strategy is medical to significantly increase the income of the tourism sector through the development of services and to increase the number of local tourists from 12 million and the number of foreign tourists visiting the republic to 9 million within the framework of the 35th goal of the program of traveling around Uzbekistan. Of course, medical tourism is important in the implementation of these goals.

In fact, the development of this sector allows to ensure economic stability, improve the employment of the population and expand their source of income, as well as further improve the image of Uzbekistan in the international arena.

Analysis of literature on the topic.

The methodological foundations of tourism development have been studied as an important research subject in the scientific works of foreign and local scientists. The table below shows how each scientist studied tourism.

The direction in which the research was conducted of the scientist who conducted the research.

J.N. Abiyev studied the organizational and economic mechanism of the development of the tourism network in the national economy and the issues of its improvement.

Z.I. Usmonova analyzed the development trends of touristic and recreational services.

Sh.R. Ruziyev, the organizational and economic mechanism of the development of historical and cultural tourism and issues of its improvement were studied.

A.K. Alimov conducted monographic studies on the priority directions and prospects of the development of ecological tourism.

A.A. Eshtayev researched the methodology of developing the marketing strategy of the tourism industry and its management.

O.H. Hamidov has thoroughly studied the issues of improving the methodological foundations of ecological tourism management.

V. I. Azar scientific work was carried out in the field of recreational and gastronomic tourism.

J. Henderson conducted research in the field of health and medical tourism.

American scientists M.Z. Bookman and K.R. Bookman defined medical tourism in their scientific works as two sectors: medicine and tourism, which is an economic activity that combines travel to improve one's health, as well as trade in services. In one of his scientific studies, the Russian scientist G. Shekin emphasized the importance of medical tourism in the tourism market. According to the definition given by the Russian Association of Medical Tourism, medical tourism is a type of travel, the purpose of which is to receive health care and medical services. According to the definition of the Medical Tourism Association (MTA): medical tourism is the simultaneous travel of people living in one country to another city, region or state for medical, dental and surgical care.

Research methodology

Empirical, induction-deduction, analysis-synthesis and comparative analysis methods were used during the research work. In order to ensure the reliability of the main scientific results obtained during the research work, the information of the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan was used.

Analysis and results.

With its rich history, cultural heritage and growing healthcare infrastructure, Uzbekistan is poised to become a prestigious medical tourism destination. The country's favorable geographic location, competitive medical services, and unique cultural attractions have great potential to attract international patients seeking high-quality treatment and wellness experiences. By analyzing the existing conditions and potential for the development of medical tourism in Uzbekistan, we can assess the opportunities and tasks ahead.

1. Healthcare infrastructure and quality services. Uzbekistan is investing in the modernization of healthcare infrastructure and improving the quality of medical services. The presence of well-equipped hospitals, specialized clinics, and highly qualified medical specialists creates a solid foundation for the development of medical tourism. The availability of advanced medical technologies and treatment methods, affordable health care costs make Uzbekistan a competitive player in the world medical tourism market.

2. Cultural and health facilities. Along with medical treatments, Uzbekistan's rich cultural heritage and natural healing resources help make it attractive as a holistic destination for medical tourists. The country's historic cities, healing hot springs, and tranquil landscapes offer additional experiences that promote overall well-being and relaxation. Combining cultural and wellness activities with medical treatments can enhance the overall experience for international patients and their companions.

The Republic of Uzbekistan also has recreation and health facilities. More than 100 sanatoriums such as Charvoq, Beldersoy resorts, "Mersian", "Botanika", "Turon", "Zomin" are famous all over the world. Currently, more than 150 private clinics and treatment centers provide medical services to the population in our country.

3. State support and policy foundations. The government of Uzbekistan has recognized the potential of medical tourism and introduced supportive policies to help develop it. Initiatives such as simplification of visa processes, investment incentives for healthcare facilities and regulatory frameworks for international patient care demonstrate a commitment to the development of medical tourism. Continued cooperation between government agencies, medical professionals and tourism stakeholders is important to create a favorable environment for the industry.

In order to support the development of tourism in our country, a number of legal frameworks have been created that comprehensively regulate the tourism sector. In particular, in 2019, the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Tourism" was adopted, a number of decrees and decisions of the President, government decisions were adopted and implemented. Through these documents, measures are being taken to effectively use the available touristic opportunities of each region of our republic.

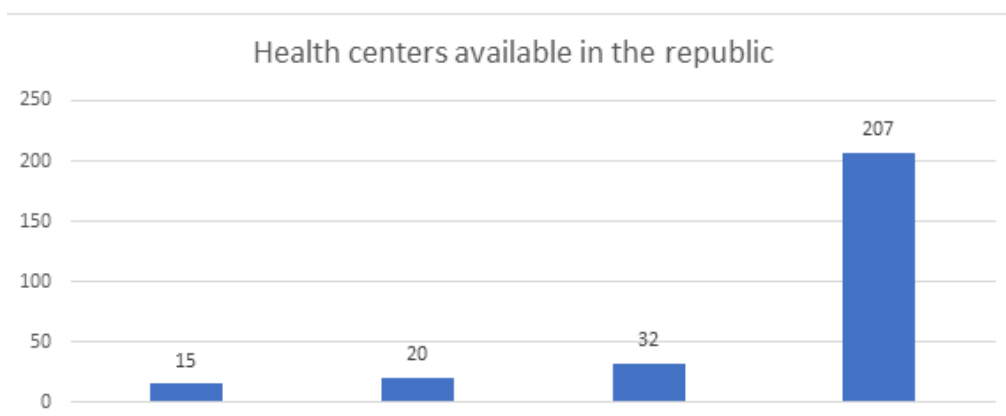
Within the framework of these documents, the efficiency of using the tourist potential of our country has increased, favorable conditions are being created for foreign and domestic tourists, measures are being taken to rapidly develop modern infrastructure, expand and improve the quality of the provided tourist, hotel and transport services. For this, tourism organizations were given additional benefits and preferences. The establishment of a separate higher education institution expanded the possibility of providing this field with personnel with modern knowledge and skills. In accordance with the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 433 of 10.07.2020 on measures to create favorable conditions for the restoration and development of the tourism industry in the Republic of Uzbekistan on measures that cannot be delayed to support

the tourism industry in order to reduce it" from the budget for interest-free subsidies, compensation and interest-free loans provided to tourism industry entities based on Decree No. PF-6002 of May 28, 2020 except the funds allocated to the Tourism Sector Support Fund and the funds of the Fund for Combating the Crisis under the Ministry of Finance are not withdrawn if they are not used in the reporting year, and then the funds under the State Committee for Tourism Development funds are used in the prescribed manner and for the purposes.

4. Marketing and advertising strategies. Effective promotion of Uzbekistan as a medical tourism destination requires targeted marketing strategies that emphasize its unique health services and recreational experiences. Collaborative efforts between health institutions, tourism agencies and private sector partners can increase the country's visibility in international markets. The use of digital platforms, medical exhibitions and cooperation with medical travelers can expand the coverage of Uzbekistan's medical tourism brand.

5. Quality assurance and international accreditation. Maintaining quality and safety standards in the health care sector is important for building trust and confidence in the medical tourism industry. International accreditation and certification for healthcare facilities, along with adherence to best practices in patient care and medical ethics, instills confidence in prospective medical tourists. Continuous improvement and transparency in healthcare delivery is critical to developing long-term relationships with international patients and healthcare partners.

Based on the above conditions, today, taking into account the natural-geographical location, ecological situation and population, there are all conditions for the development of medical tourism in our republic, and Uzbekistan has the potential to become a center of medical tourism for the Central Asian countries.



The diagram above shows the number of health centers in our country. Compared to neighboring countries, all types of medical services - diagnostics, surgery, dentistry, sanatorium, folk medicine services are developed in our republic, and they are provided at relatively high quality and low prices. There is an opportunity to increase the number of foreign tourists from the current 80,000 to 200,000 due to the development of recreation and wellness tourism in Arnasoy, Bakhmal, Zomin and Forish districts of Jizzakh region alone.

A number of practical works on the development of medical tourism are being carried out in our republic. Today, in order to increase the quality and volume of medical services, companies that provide medical services, sanatoriums, sanatoriums, health care services receive from turnover tax, profit tax, land tax for occupied land areas, from abroad. exemption from VAT and customs duty for imported medical equipment and equipment makes a significant contribution to the development of private medicine and medical tourism. The "Development Strategy of New

Uzbekistan for 2022-2026" stipulates the establishment of medical clusters in Namangan, Fergana, Syrdarya, Kashkadarya, Navoi, Tashkent regions and Tashkent city, which in turn will attract medical tourists. will also encourage the growth of the flow. In addition, providing services to tourists from Central Asian republics for medical treatment in the border regions of our country has a positive effect on the socio-economic development of the regions. Zomin, Chimyon, Beldersoy, Nevich, Aydarkol, Kitab, Hisar, Chotkal, Chinabad, Aktash and many other places of Uzbekistan have opportunities to attract medical tourists from neighboring countries. In particular, our country has the potential to attract medical tourists from Kazakhstan to the specialized scientific centers of the republic in Tashkent, from Kyrgyzstan to the regions of the Fergana Valley, from Afghanistan and Tajikistan to the highly qualified medical service centers in Termiz, the center of the Surkhandarya region.

Conclusions and suggestions

In conclusion, it can be said that favorable conditions for the development of medical tourism in Uzbekistan are the country's developing health infrastructure, cultural attractions, state support, marketing strategies, hospitality services and quality assurance. related to his desire. As Uzbekistan emerges as a competitive player in the world medical tourism landscape, strategic cooperation and sustainable efforts are important to fully realize its potential. In order to create a sustainable and inclusive medical tourism ecosystem, Uzbekistan needs to use its unique strengths and solve existing problems. By prioritizing patient-centered care, cultural integration, and international cooperation, Uzbekistan can thrive as a major destination for medical travelers and contribute to the country's health sector and overall economic growth.

In order to further develop medical tourism, it is necessary to carry out a number of other works along with the increase of such clinics. Including:

- introduction of paid and free medical care system at prestigious medical centers;
- establishment of medical insurance;
- in the organization of medical services to the population, not only the use of state or private forms of ownership, but also hospitals based on joint ownership (for example, state and private, foreign) hospitals, cooperatives, joint-stock societies, based on other forms of ownership, prevention, sanatoriums, health care establishment of centers;
- attraction of foreign medical specialists engaged in the field of medical tourism;
- encouraging the training and upgrading of local medical staff abroad. Reducing the tax burden for expenditures in this direction;
- non-governmental medical tourism facilities should be established.

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