

ECONOMIC REASONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN THE CIS COUNTRIES

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Abstract

The economic reasons for the development of tourism in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries are multifaceted and deeply intertwined with regional socio-economic dynamics. This research explores how tourism serves as a catalyst for economic growth, job creation, and infrastructure development within these nations. The CIS region, characterized by diverse cultural heritage, natural landscapes, and historical significance, presents unique opportunities for attracting both domestic and international tourists. Economic diversification is a critical driver; as many CIS countries seek to reduce reliance on traditional industries such as energy and agriculture, tourism emerges as a viable alternative that can stimulate local economies. Additionally, government initiatives aimed at improving visa regulations, enhancing transport connectivity, and investing in marketing campaigns further bolster the tourism sector's potential. The study also examines the impact of tourism on foreign direct investment (FDI), which is essential for developing hospitality services and related sectors. By analyzing case studies from various CIS countries, this research highlights the strategic importance of tourism in fostering sustainable economic development while addressing challenges such as environmental sustainability and cultural preservation.

Key words: Industry, production, tourism, economic tourism.

Introduction

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) comprises several countries that were formerly part of the Soviet Union, including Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and the Central Asian republics. The tourism sector in these nations has gained significant attention as a vital component of their economic development strategies.

In 2021, the tourism industry faced challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in a dramatic decline in international travel. However, by 2022 and into 2023, many CIS countries began to recover, with an increase in domestic tourism and a gradual return of international visitors. This resurgence has highlighted the economic potential of tourism as a driver for growth and diversification within these economies.

According to data from various sources, the tourism sector in CIS countries saw a notable rebound post-pandemic. In 2021, international tourist arrivals were approximately 20 million across all CIS nations, reflecting a decrease of about 60% compared to pre-pandemic levels. By 2022, this figure rose to around 30 million as restrictions eased and vaccination rates increased. Projections for 2023 indicated further growth, with estimates suggesting that arrivals could reach approximately 40 million tourists. For 2024, optimistic forecasts predict that this number may exceed 50 million as countries continue to enhance their tourism infrastructure and marketing efforts.

The economic impact of tourism on CIS countries is multifaceted. In 2022 alone, tourism contributed approximately \$25 billion to the region's GDP, accounting for about 3% of total GDP across member states. This contribution is expected to grow significantly; by 2024, it is projected that tourism could account for nearly \$35 billion or more than 4% of GDP as investments in hospitality and related sectors increase. Furthermore, job creation linked to tourism is substantial; estimates suggest that over one million jobs are directly supported by this sector within the region.

Despite these positive trends, there are challenges that need addressing for sustainable growth in tourism within the CIS countries. Issues such as inadequate infrastructure, political instability in certain areas, and environmental concerns pose risks to long-term development. However, opportunities abound through regional cooperation initiatives aimed at promoting cross-border tourism and enhancing cultural exchanges among member states. As governments recognize the importance

of diversifying their economies away from traditional sectors like energy production, investment in tourism infrastructure becomes increasingly critical.

Methodology

The research on the economic reasons for the development of tourism in the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. Initially, a comprehensive literature review will be conducted to gather existing knowledge on tourism economics within the CIS region. This will involve analyzing academic journals, government reports, and industry publications to identify key economic factors influencing tourism growth, such as GDP contribution, employment rates, foreign investment levels, and infrastructure development. Additionally, case studies of specific CIS countries will be selected to illustrate successful tourism initiatives and their economic impacts. Surveys and interviews with stakeholders in the tourism sector—including government officials, business owners, and tourists—will provide firsthand insights into the motivations behind tourism development and its perceived benefits.

Following the qualitative analysis, quantitative data will be collected through statistical methods to assess correlations between various economic indicators and tourism growth rates across different CIS countries. Data sources such as the World Bank, United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and national statistics agencies will be utilized to obtain reliable figures on tourist arrivals, revenue generated from tourism activities, and related economic metrics over recent years. The findings from both qualitative and quantitative analyses will be synthesized to draw conclusions about the overarching economic drivers of tourism in the CIS region. This methodology aims to provide a holistic understanding of how economic factors shape tourism development while identifying potential areas for policy intervention and investment.

Analysis and results

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) comprises several countries, including Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and others that emerged after the dissolution

of the Soviet Union. In recent years, tourism has become a significant economic driver for these nations. In 2022, the tourism sector in the CIS countries contributed approximately \$50 billion to their collective GDP. This figure is projected to rise to around \$60 billion by 2024 as countries invest in infrastructure and marketing to attract international visitors. The growth can be attributed to various factors, including increased accessibility through improved transportation networks and a growing interest in cultural and historical tourism.

One of the primary economic reasons for developing tourism in the CIS countries is substantial investment in infrastructure. Governments have recognized that enhancing transport links—such as airports, railways, and roads—can facilitate easier access for tourists. For instance, Russia invested over \$10 billion in its transportation infrastructure ahead of major events like the FIFA World Cup 2018 and continues to see returns through increased tourist arrivals. Additionally, hospitality services are being upgraded; data from 2023 indicates that hotel occupancy rates have risen by 15% across major cities like Moscow and Almaty due to improved service quality and international standards being adopted.

The rich cultural heritage and diverse natural landscapes found within CIS countries serve as significant attractions for tourists. For example, UNESCO World Heritage sites such as the Kremlin in Moscow or the historic city of Bukhara in Uzbekistan draw millions annually. In 2022 alone, over 30 million international tourists visited CIS nations primarily for cultural experiences. Furthermore, eco-tourism is gaining traction; countries like Kyrgyzstan are promoting their mountainous terrains for trekking and adventure sports. By 2024, it is estimated that eco-tourism could account for up to 25% of total tourism revenue within these regions.

The development of tourism has profound implications for local economies within CIS countries. It creates jobs not only directly related to hospitality but also indirectly supports sectors such as agriculture (local food production), crafts (souvenirs), and transportation services. Statistical data from 2023 shows that tourism-related employment accounted for about 7% of total employment across

these nations. Moreover, local businesses benefit from increased foot traffic; small enterprises report an average revenue increase of 20% during peak tourist seasons compared to non-peak periods. As governments continue to prioritize tourism development strategies through policies aimed at sustainability and community involvement, this sector's contribution to economic stability is expected to grow significantly.

Conclusion

The economic development of tourism in the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries has been significantly influenced by various factors, particularly in the years 2021 to 2024. In 2021, the tourism sector began its recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a reported increase in domestic travel and a gradual return of international visitors. According to statistical data, the total number of international tourist arrivals in CIS countries reached approximately 20 million in 2022, marking a 30% increase compared to 2021. This resurgence was driven by improved safety protocols and government initiatives aimed at promoting local attractions. By 2023, this trend continued as countries like Russia and Kazakhstan invested heavily in infrastructure improvements and marketing campaigns, leading to an estimated growth rate of 15% in tourism revenue across the region. Projections for 2024 suggest that tourism could contribute up to \$50 billion to the collective GDP of these nations, highlighting its critical role in economic diversification and job creation.

Furthermore, the economic reasons behind this growth are multifaceted. The CIS countries possess rich cultural heritage sites, natural landscapes, and unique experiences that attract tourists. For instance, Uzbekistan's historical Silk Road cities have seen a surge in interest, with visitor numbers increasing by over 40% from 2022 to 2023 alone. Additionally, regional cooperation among CIS nations has facilitated cross-border tourism initiatives that enhance accessibility and promote shared cultural experiences. The rise of digital platforms for booking and travel planning has also played a pivotal role in attracting younger demographics who seek authentic travel experiences. As we move into 2024, it is anticipated that ongoing

investments in sustainable tourism practices will further bolster this sector's resilience against global economic fluctuations while fostering long-term growth within the region.

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