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### **Assessment of Kazakhstan's tourist attractiveness for foreign visitors**

**Abstract.** The article is devoted to the implementation of Kazakhstan's tourism potential and the assessment of tourism facilities attractiveness for foreign consumers. The interrelation of tourist attractiveness of the country with the category of tourist potential, factors of tourist attractiveness are considered. It is concluded that tourist attractiveness is based on the tourism potential of the country, contributes to the growth of its competitiveness, the transformation of tourism supply into demand, is associated with various types of its assessment and is the result of the entire previous development of the republic. The article presents a study of the tastes and preferences of foreign tourists to type of tourism in Kazakhstan. Negative factors restraining the development of inbound tourism in the country are identified and recommendations are proposed to eliminate existing problems. The considered resources and tourist opportunities of Kazakhstan lead to the fact that it is appropriate to form a modern tourist product. The development of a new tourism product in Kazakhstan would be competitive in the global market for tourism services and promote to attract foreign tourists to Kazakhstan.

**Keywords:** marketing, consumers, inbound tourism, tourism potential, placements, tourist attractiveness.

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### **Introduction**

Steady economic growth of our country, increasing prosperity, increasing free time of the population and strengthening the relationship in all areas of activity have significantly expanded the geography of travel, increased the volume of tourist exchange.

Starting from the end of the past century, Kazakhstan often becomes a participant in the international relations, also in the matters concerning tourism. The questions of tourism potential realization in our country as a whole and in particular are in a very hot discussion. Nowadays, the tourism complex of other regions of the country are in great demand, mostly, by Kazakhstani tourists, and in less demand by foreign visitors, that is mainly due to the poor awareness of potential customers. It should be noted, that the attitude of foreign visitors to Kazakhstan is improving every year. The potential of our market is huge and that's why it is important to introduce attractive tourism products to our citizens of the country as well as to foreign tourists.

The aim of research is the assessment of tourism attractiveness of the country to increase its competitiveness, also draw out the factors which influence on tourism attractiveness.

### **The tasks**

The following tasks were set to reach the aim of research:

- 1) To highlight theoretical approach and instruments, which help to assess the degree of tourism attractiveness;
- 2) To define the specific elements of domestic tourism attractiveness to attract tourists and investors;
- 3) To suggest the system of participants interaction of tourism market on the basis of functioning tourism informational-coordination center with client-oriented base for country positioning in tourism market.

As it was mentioned in N.A.Nazarbaev's message, the President of RK, in 2019, "the growth

of well-being of Kazakhstani people: the increase of income and quality of life”, “the success of commercial activity in tourism market is defined, first of all, by tourism product attractiveness”[1].

Kazakhstan, having rich tourism-recreational potential, is characterized by low level of tourism development. Its GDP share (only services on living and food) amounts to 0.9%. In 2017, the volume of income from tourism activity made up 236.4 bln.tenge, that is 2 bigger than in 2010 (126.5 blntenge). The employment number in this field is 103.6 thousand people. The paid taxes and other obligatory payments from tourism activity into the budget of the republic amounts to 11.0 bln.tenge in 2017. In 2018 there were 2031 tourism organizations, 2754 places with capacity 138 062 beds, that is 16.6% bigger the index of the previous year.

According to the country of origin: non-residents-24.3% residents of the Russian Federation, from Uzbekistan-37.7%, the People’s republic of China-1.8%, the USA-0.4%, Turkey-3.4%, Germany-2.4%, Italy-1.3%, and other countries -27.8% (Table1).

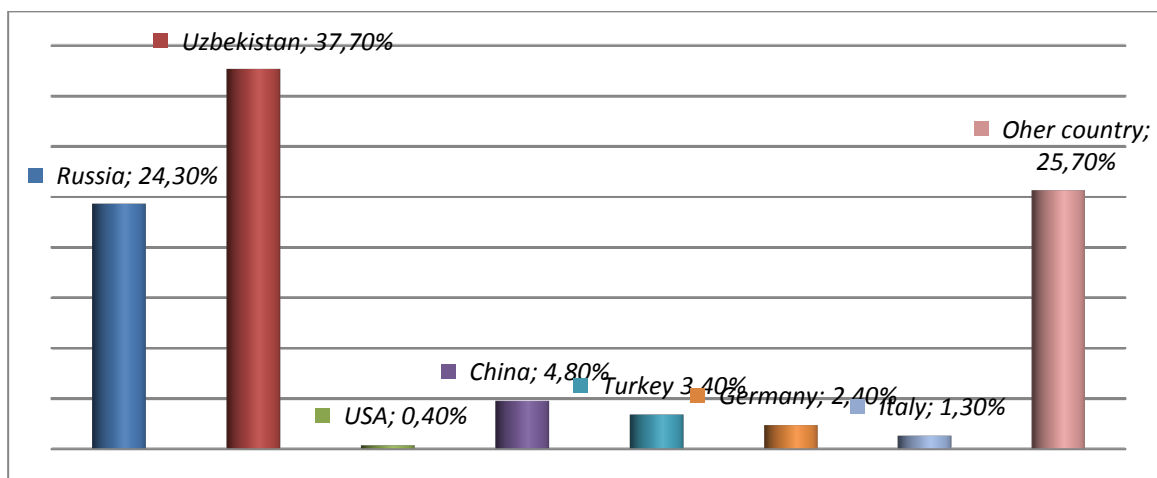


Table 1- The structure of visitors according to countries in 2018

If we consider according to the purpose of the visit, we can note the following: business and professional- 54.1%, vacation and holiday-45.6%, other purposes-0.3%, in 2013 the structure of the visit aim was in the following way:business and professional-60.0%, vacation and holiday-33.7%, visiting friends and relatives-3.7%, religion and pilgrimage-0.4%, treatment and recreational procedures-0.4%, shopping-0.4%, and other purposes-1.4%. It is interesting that, in comparison with foreign visitors Kazakhstani people travelled with the aim to rest and spend vacations (51.7%), as for non-residents, they had business and professional aim (81.7%) (Table 2).

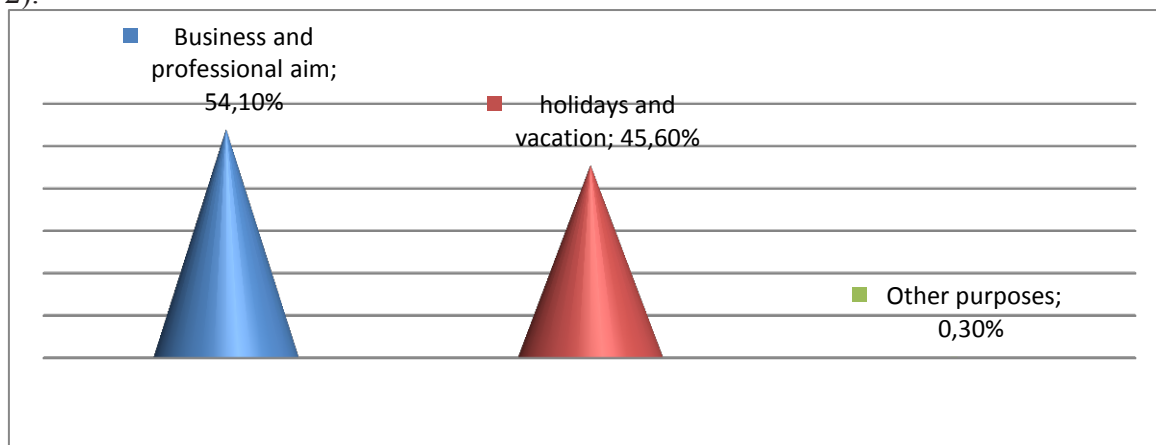


Table 2- The structure of served visitors according to the aim of their visit in 2018

So, tourism in Kazakhstan mainly is based on local people, also on non-residents' business and professional aims.

The total number of all foreign visitors who visited Kazakhstan in 2018 is 6509.4 thousand people, that is 1.2% bigger than in 2017. The big number of foreign visitors were mostly from three neighboring countries as: Uzbekistan (37.8%), Russia (24.4%), and Kirgizstan (20.7%).

The main aims of the visit were private visits (75.4%), business travel(16.2%),tourism –less than 1% (Table 3).

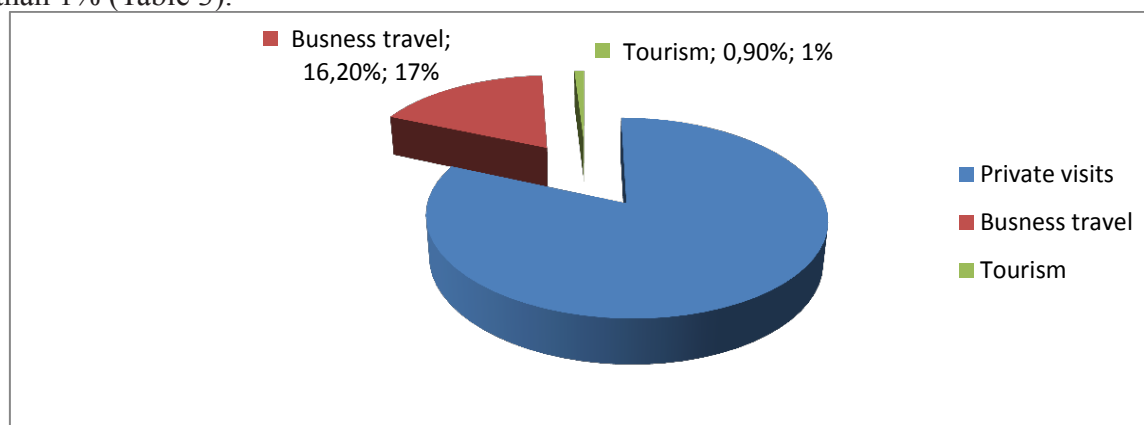


Table 3- The proportion of foreign residents who visited RK in 2018

Many foreign visitors who come to Kazakhstan stay in friends' or relatives' houses, pass by transit or with one day visit (one day visitors).

Analyzing the official information of Statistics Committee of the Ministry of National Economy of RK for the 1st half period of 2019, we can say that, the number of tourists increased, international tourism for 3.7% in a year, up to 4.64 mln. people, inbound and domestic tourism for 20.5%, up to 3.56mln.people, and for 9.3%, up to 2.26mln.people [6].

The placement of people in the 1st half of 2019 were 415.3 thousand foreign tourists, that is 28.4% higher than the previous year and 1.76 million domestic tourists, exactly in 2019rose up to 16.9% in comparison with 2018. The increase of tourism flow is connected with the exhibition pavilion EXPO-2017 in summer time which was of course a magnet for tourism. The total number of people's visit of all exhibition rooms during its working day amounted to 29.14million people.

It should be noted that, in 2016 the first group of Chinese tourists, visited Kazakhstan and they were the main moving force in developing the world tourism. 2017 is the year of Chinese tourism in Kazakhstan. By the way, the tourists from the East are technologically highly developed and to show them the qualitative service, it is necessary for our domestic tourism market to take actively modern technological solution to satisfy their needs.

### **Methods of investigation**

The marketing research of tourism service market create the basis for effective use of territorial potential of the country, so as the marketing research in tourism is directed not only to the investigation of demand and defining their potential clients but also to the formation of demand taking account the development and use of existing tourism potential of definite territories.

### **Results of investigation**

The marketing research has been done to assess tourism attractiveness in Kazakhstan. On the basis of research, segments of foreign consumers on socio-demographic factors were defined in the following way: English people-10% from all tourist flow of Kazakhstan, age from 35 to 54, with secondary and higher education, families-26%; second group-Korean people make up 8 %,

age from 25-to 54, with higher education, 39%- married couples: the 3rd group is- French people make up 6%, age from 25 to 54, with secondary and higher education, 24%-married couples, the 4th group is- German people, aged from 35 to 54, secondary and higher education, 24%- married couples, the 5th group is- Japanese people make up 1%, aged from 45 to 65, higher education, 10% married couple.

The consumer preferences of foreign tourists on the basis of market research are suggested in Table 4.

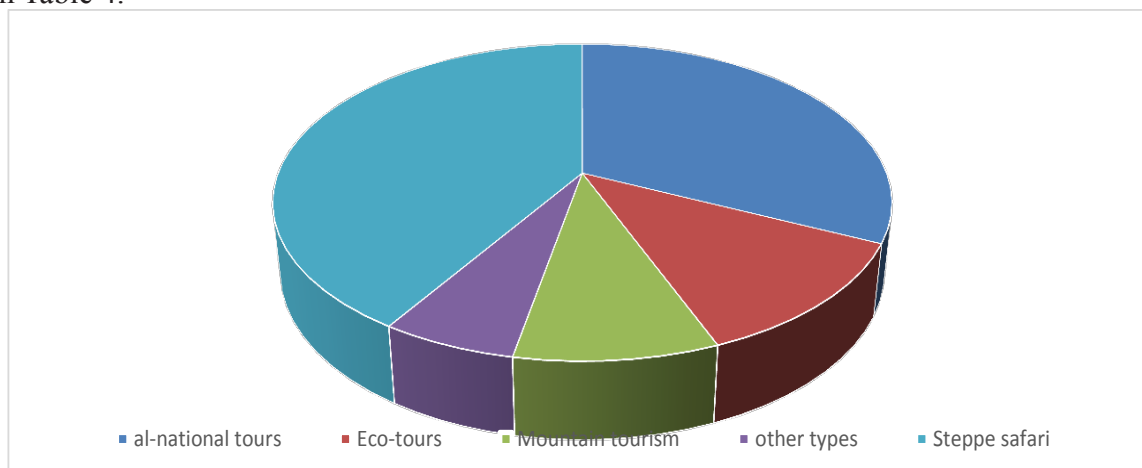


Table 4- Foreign tourists' preferences on types of tourism in Kazakhstan

As we can see from the given data, the steppe safari is in great demand among foreign consumers, exactly driving on Jeep in the steppe and national hunting. There are 20 landscape zones in Kazakhstan, with salt and fresh water lakes in the steppe, according to this type of tourism. The following conclusions were made on the basis of analysis of second data: There are all necessary resources and infrastructure in Kazakhstan to attract foreign tourists. Taking into account the scale of foreign tourists' interests to the type of tourism, we can conclude that, there are all resources for the most popular steppe safari tourism in Kazakhstan, but at the same time we can observe the low level of infrastructure development. Despite the lack of infrastructure, the organization of travel and attraction of foreign tourists are possible, because it doesn't require big financial contribution.

Cultural-educational tourism, which is presented by Kazakh national culture, tradition and mentality takes the second place. It is popular in the context of interest among European and American tourists. The 7 zones are picked out for this type of tourism which include the Silk way path, the nomad's culture, more than 9 thousand historical monuments, among them the mausoleum of "Hodja-Akhmet Yassauy", "Aisha-Bibi", "Babadja-Khatun", "Karakhan", "Davutbek", the mysterious town "Akyrtas", underground mosque Beket-ata. Most of the historical monuments of Kazakhstan were restored and are being restored [3, туризмр 130].

The part of the Great silk way attracts foreign tourists attention: tourists can immerse into the atmosphere of ancient battles, pass through the ways of middle age period batyrs, to see the ruins of ancient cities, mausoleums, famous for all the steppe the bathhouse of the city Otyrar, a lot of monuments of Stone age, petroglyphs, to take part in excavation. The basis for the development of the above mentioned tourism can be national yurta cities, restored and revived traditions.

The ecological tours are in the third place in the rate among foreign tourists, so as there are attractive natural resources and reserved places in Kazakhstan. Ecological tourism is one of the low-cost and attractive type of tourism. Kazakhstan has beautiful and attractive nature, flora and fauna. Ecological tourism in Kazakhstan gives an opportunity for tourists to see the natural environment, natural monuments and sightseeing, to observe birds and animals, suggests unity

with nature.

It is suggested 900 attractive routes on national reserved places and parks, “bird’s paradise” in reserved places, a special attention is given to Korgalzhyn reserve [5]. Foreign tourists have the opportunity to observe rare and endangered species of animals, such as snow leopard, Tyan-Shan bear, karakal, lynx, jeyran, and many others.

Mountainhiking also develops in Kazakhstan: the formation and building of ski base have begun. There are 20 mountain zones, presented by such mountains as Medeo, Chymbulak, Tabagan, Ak-Bulak and Kazakhstan mountains Alatau, Tyan-Shan.

Except mountain hiking extreme, sports and adrenaline type of tourism attracts foreign tourists. Beach tourism in Caspian sea, Alakol. Balkhash, Bukhtarmyn reservoir is perspective tourism in Kazakhstan. The rafting tourism has also started to function (for example, along the river Katun, or Ile river), and the mountain routes, presented in interesting places and travelling by mountain bikes. Besides, there is a tour with helicopter, paraglider, flying with parachute(aerodrome Baiserke), non-standard games.

Foreign tourists show their interest to Aral sea, the visit gives you opportunity to see unusual landscape: dead seaport, huge ship cemetery, salt valleys. Tour to Baikonur is also interesting, living in the hotels for cosmonauts, to see the start point of legendary spaceship, their models, and to be in the launch of new spaceship.

### **Conclusion**

The analyzed resources and tourist opportunities of Kazakhstan, it would be purposeful to form a modern tourism product. The important component of tourism services market optimization would be to work out a new tourism product of Kazakhstan which will be competitive in the world market of tourism products and conquer the foreign tourist segment for its attraction to Kazakhstan. The following points are outlines as necessary components of a new tourism product:

- use of natural resources of Kazakhstan with benefit to the country and as a less cost segment of tourist product;
- use of historical, cultural, architectural sights which can attract tourists and motivate them to travel, with further use of tourist income for their development and support;
- use of international level equipment (means of accommodation for tourists, restaurant equipment for holidays, sport equipment, etc);
- the transport opportunities, which depend on fashion for different types of transport used by tourists;

The specific peculiarities of tourist products are:

- complex system of interrelation between different material and non-material component of services;
- extreme elastic demand related to the level of income and price, depending on political and social conditions;
- consumption in most cases occur directly in the place of tourism services;
- the existing distance separating consumer from the product and the place of consumption;
- depending on transfer of time and place;
- inflexible production;
- influence of external factors, having force majeure character (weather, nature conditions, policy in tourism field, international affairs, etc).

To introduce competitive national tourism product, it is necessary to take into account its specifics and form it with the unique opportunities of tourism space of the republic, exactly:

- cultural-historical space is rich for different historical- cultural objects: historical monuments, cultural and architectural monuments, including museums, theatres, exhibition centers, parks, reserved zones and etc;



- the natural tourism spaces practically are preserved well and attract tourists with their natural tourist resources giving opportunity to go in for active sport, to contact with virgin nature, and less changed natural landscape. Such type of places are: national parks, reserved places and other nature preservation territories;

- ethnical space- are places where all values of the nation are gathered together and they are connected with concrete historical phenomenon;

It is impossible to create attractive image with the help of country's resources, the whole complex is required here, namely, developed infrastructure, consecutive state policy, different programs and excursions [4, p 268].

Also, while developing the strategy of tourism development, it is necessary to assess negative factors and give recommendations to eliminate existing problems, which can be the followings:

- the high level of risk for tourists- Kazakhstan belongs to unsafe regions. In order to form positive image, it is necessary to promote new associative images of this territory through mass media, to inform positive interesting news, to advertise actively the country abroad.

- Lack of qualified staff- the number of qualified working staff in this sphere is limited.

It is necessary to develop professional-tourism education in the republic to solve the staff problem, also on the basis of advanced experience and international cooperation.

- Ineffective tax policy- tax offices require illegal payments from businessmen, postpones the refund, VAT, taxes for industries. In the given context it is necessary to modify tax policy of the country, particularly in the sphere of improving special tax regimes and optimization of all tax policy in general;

- Limited transport opportunities—limited choice of airlines, inconvenient airline schedules, high price for air tickets, difficult rules to get a visa. It is required to take serious political and economic steps directed to the development of railway transport, building qualitative motorways and all road infrastructures. Today, the development of inbound tourism is a positive factor of steady economic growth of the republic. The formation of developed tourism infrastructure has positive influence on all economic complex of the country, as the growth of inbound tourism flow provides income from such branches as: transport, trade, building, communication and etc. The importance of tourism as one of the priority sphere of national economy proves the fact that, the number of foreign tourists who visited Kazakhstan increased for the last 7 years[3, p127]

The big increase of tourist flow can be observed in Almaty, Astana and the western part of Kazakhstan, where business activities are high.

The development of inbound tourism and indicators of its competitiveness in the country, mostly depend on the following factors as:

- The economy development level of the country;
- Availability of tourism resources;
- Visa system for foreign tourists;
- Development of tourism product and services sphere;
- Product improvement in tourist destinations;
- Transport condition and infrastructure;
- The state policy in tourism sphere;
- Effective marketing.

Tourism as many other participants deal with digital technology, as the shortest and more effective way to their clients. The digital promotion is very important in tourism sphere, as the final consumers can be thousand kilometers away from the route of their travel. Nowadays 3.5 billion people have internet access. People of different age groups, different income and social status belong to this figure. Before mainly young people used internet, but now many people even adult and old people use it, especially abroad everyday people use social media and use internet to search information. It is necessary to pay attention to the digital marketing. It is planned to make

digitalization of domestic sacred places, in fulfilling the tasks on digitalization set by the head of the State in the Message to the people of Kazakhstan. Large number of sacred objects are in distant places. That's why we should stimulate the people to attend these places by using new technologies, gamification elements, quests.

It is planned to work out a mobile apps implementing "inter game currency", tourists will get coins for visiting objects in sacred places. As a result, they can change them for goods and services of our partners- for example, upgrade-air tickets, paying the part of the goods, bonuses and etc. the tourists can get titles and status if they attend many places.

3D technology elements and additional reality will be used in the apps, which will help to recreate the models of architectural monuments and sacred objects and to be in the recreated models of the object. All of them will be accompanied by big social advertising campaign, motivate people to travel in the country.

It is important to note, that there are tourist information stalls in each oblast center. Also the development of mobile app for gadgets with the opportunity to read the QR code from tourism objects is being carried out at the same time (on operational system ios and android) synchronizing the interface of the portal.

Tourism geo-portal is created in Kazakhstan in the frame of digitalization project- large-scale guideline of sightseeing, sacred places of the oblast, tourist routes. It will show not only the beautiful description and photo, but also modern technologies of geo-location, with added reality, 3D description, booking and etc. In other words a potential tourist can plan his holiday from scratch with the help of tourist geo-portal. The development of international tourism is becoming one of the perspective and priority tasks for Kazakhstan. The questions of competitiveness in the given sphere is actualized by governmental solutions.

On the basis of results of analyzing the formation and development of tourism market, all existing strategies to promote tourism product should be joined into the following direction: the strategy of steady development as important instrument to reach the aim of developing the territory without exhaustion natural and cultural resources and without damaging the environment; the strategy of developing unique historical-cultural and natural territories; the strategy of choosing tourism, based on concrete defining of new perspective market and rapid development of resorts in this market, also the development of necessary infrastructure.

So, the main aim of tourism activity is the creation of competitive tourism industry to provide employment, steady growth of state and people's income by increasing the inbound and domestic tourism. It is necessary to do the following tasks to reach this aim: the tourism infrastructure development, creation of state regulation effective mechanism and tourism support; formation of attractive tourism image of the country; raising tourist potential, formation of zones with recreational and economic specialization.

It is planned to create the national company "Kazakhtourism" for professional management of tourism brand of Kazakhstan, the duties of which will be not only attraction of inbound and domestic tourists, but also motivation of flow of internal and external investments into tourism industry. The attraction of strategic investors who have successful experience in creating tourist clusters, are laid in the nation's plan- that is 57th among the 100 concrete steps[2]. This conception will help to increase the share of tourism in the structure of GDP up to 8% till 2025 and provide 100% growth of inbound tourism in the country. EXPO showed that the development of tourism has positive effect. The exhibition positively influenced on all the sectors of economy.

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### **Шетелдік келушілер үшін Қазақстанның туристік тартымдылығын бағалау**

**Андағпа.** Мақала Қазақстанның туристік әлеуетін жүзеге асыру және шетелдік тұтынушылар үшін туризм нысандарының тартымдылығын бағалау мәселелеріне арналған. Туристік әлеует категориясымен елдің туристік тартымдылығының өзара байланысы, туристік тартымдылық факторлары қарастырылады. Туристік тартымдылық елдің туристік әлеуетіне негізделеді, оның бәсекеге қабілеттілігінің өсуіне, туристік ұсыныстың сұранысқа айналуына ықпал етеді, оны бағалаудың әртүрлі түрлерімен байланысты және республиканың барлық алдыңғы дамуының нәтижесі болып табылады. Мақалада Қазақстан туризмінің түрлері бойынша шетелдік туристердің талғамдары мен қалауын зерттеу келтірілген. Елде келу туризмін дамытуды тежейтін жағымсыз факторлар анықталды және бар проблемаларды жою үшін ұсынымдар ұсынылды. Қаралған ресурстар мен Қазақстанның туристік мүмкіндіктері қазіргі заманғы туристік өнімді қалыптастыру орынды екендігіне әкеледі. Қазақстанның жаңа туристік өнімін әзірлеу туристік қызметтердің Әлемдік нарығында бәсекеге қабілеттілігімен ерекшеленер еді және Қазақстанға шетелдік туристерді тартуға ықпал етер еді.



**Түйінді сөздер:** маркетинг, тұтынушылар, кіру туризмі, туристік әлеует, орналастыру орындары, туристік тартымдылық.

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### **Оценка туристской привлекательности Казахстана для иностранных посетителей**

**Аннотация.** Статья посвящена вопросам реализации туристского потенциала Казахстана и оценке привлекательности объектов туризма для иностранных потребителей. Рассматриваются взаимосвязь туристской привлекательности страны с категорией туристского потенциала, факторы туристской привлекательности. Делаются выводы о том, что туристская привлекательность базируется на туристском потенциале страны, способствует росту её конкурентоспособности, превращению туристского предложения в спрос, также она связана с различными видами её оценки и является результатом всего предыдущего развития республики. В статье приведены исследования вкусов и предпочтений иностранных туристов по видам туризма Казахстана. Определены негативные факторы, сдерживающие развитие въездного туризма в стране, и предложены рекомендации для устранения существующих проблем. Рассмотренные ресурсы и туристские возможности Казахстана подводят к тому, что целесообразно сформировать современный туристский продукт, отличающийся конкурентоспособностью на мировом рынке туристских услуг и способствующий привлечению иностранных туристов в Казахстан.

**Ключевые слова:** маркетинг, потребители, въездной туризм, туристский потенциал, места размещения, туристская привлекательность.

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- 3 Erdavletov S.R. «Geografija turizma» [«Geography of tourism»], Dlja dannogo turizma vydeleno 7 zon, v sostave kotoryh imejutsja otrezok Velikogo shelkovogo puti, kul'tura kochevnikov, bolee 9 tysjach pamjatnikov, sredi kotoryh mavzolei «Hodzha-Ahmeda Jassaui», «Ajsha-Bibi»,

«Babadzhi-Hatun», «Karahana» i «Davutbeka», zagadochnyj gorodishhe «Akyrtas», podzemnaja mechet' Beket-Ata [For this tourism, 7 zones have been allocated, which include a segment of the Great Silk Road, nomad culture, more than 9 thousand monuments, including the mausoleums of Khoja-Ahmed Yassau, Aisha-Bibi, Babaji-Khatun, Karakhan and «Davutbeka», the mysterious ancient settlement «Akyrtas», the underground mosque of Beket-Ata], Bol'shujy chast' istoricheskikh pamjatnikov Kazahstana restavrirovali i prodolzhat vosstanavlivat' [Most of the historical monuments of Kazakhstan have been restored and continue to be restored](Atamura, Almaty, 2010, 360 p.)

4 Babaev U.P. Turisticheskij biznes [Travel business], Sozdanie privlekatel'nogo imidzha nevozmozhno tol'ko s pomoshh'ju resursov strany, dlja jetogo nuzhen celyj kompleks, a imenno razvitaja infrastruktura, posledovatel'naja gosudarstvennaja politika, raznoobraznye programmy i jekskursii [Creating an attractive image is impossible only with the help of the country's resources, for this a whole complex is needed, namely, developed infrastructure, consistent state policy, various programs and excursions] (Finistat, Moscow, 2009, 350 p).

5 Vorobyov V.A. Marketing:tehnologija uspeha [Marketing: technology success], V Kazahstane predstavleno 900 attraktivnyh marshrutov po nacional'nym zapovednikam i parkam, «ptichij raj» v zapovednikah, osobennyj interes projavljajut turisty k Korgalzhinskomu zapovedniku [There are 900 attractive routes in national reserves and parks in Kazakhstan, bird paradise in nature reserves, tourists are especially interested in the Korgalzhinsky nature reserve]. 3, 20-21 (2009)

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