

## **ANNOTATION**

**of the dissertation work of Takhtaeva Rimma Shaimardanovna on the topic "Organizational and economic aspects of cluster development of tourism in the Republic of Kazakhstan and its impact on the economy of the country", submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the educational program 8D04105 - "Economics"**

**Relevance of the dissertation research.** One of the priority directions of development of the economy of our country is recognized as the creation of clusters as a way of production of goods and services competitive in the world markets in various spheres of economic activity. The tourism industry is included in those activities where the formation of clusters can bring the greatest socio-economic effect through increasing the efficiency of the market of tourist services and, thus, the growth of the welfare of the population of the country.

Speaking at the first session of the Parliament of the VIII convocation the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan K.K.Tokayev noted the necessity of development of not fully disclosed potential of the tourism industry of the country, the expansion of which is seen in the complex solution of infrastructural issues and cardinal improvement of service quality.

The realization of breakthrough projects, including in the tourism industry, using tourism potential of the country and the creation of clusters of high redistribution is noted in the Address of the President of Kazakhstan K.K.Tokayev to the people of Kazakhstan "Economic course of Fair Kazakhstan" from September 01, 2023.

However, tourism plays an extremely small role in the economy of Kazakhstan. In the international tourist flow, the share of Kazakhstan is also low: in 2022, the number of international tourist arrivals in our country amounted to 4.7 million people or 0.5% of the global value of this indicator. At the same time, Kazakhstan's potential opportunities are estimated much higher than those it has. According to experts, Kazakhstan uses its tourism and recreational potential only by 10-15%, and consequently takes only 66th place in the world ranking of the World Economic Forum. The gap between the tourist potential and the actual level of its development has developed due to the low quality of tourist products created in most domestic regions. The underdevelopment of the material base, weak cooperative links between tourist enterprises and organizations located in the territory of the country are also not in favor of cluster development of tourism.

Overcoming these problems is impossible without the introduction of an effective organizational and economic mechanism of modernization of the domestic tourism industry. The cluster approach to the organization of the tourism industry is an innovative direction of economic development, which requires theoretical, methodological and practical application, including with respect to the regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which determines the relevance of the topic of this dissertation research.

**The degree of scientific elaboration of the research topic.** In modern economic literature, there is a number of scientific studies and publications, covering

to a greater or lesser extent various organizational and economic aspects of cluster development of tourism, including at the level of the region.

The ideology of clustering originates from the late XIX century in the works of Marshall A. through the study of localization, innovation and territorial economic development.

Further advancement of the theory of cluster development is observed in the works of the recognized founder Porter M., who made a huge contribution to science by studying this problem through the study of competitive positions of industries in different countries.

Russian researcher Rudneva P.S. considers a cluster as a set of geographically limited interrelated companies, manufacturers and importers of equipment, components, additional services, infrastructure, as well as research organizations, higher education institutions and other institutions that interact with each other and enhance the competitive advantages of individual companies and the cluster as a whole.

The system approach of effective cluster operation from the position of such elements as integration of tour companies with authorities and research organizations, their common goals and interests, innovative developments, exchange of experience and knowledge, improvement of knowledge and acquisition of new skills is supported in the works of Russian researcher Voynarenko M.P.

A group of research scientists represented by Montford M., Beni M., Levchenko T.P., Rodriguez A.V., Nordin S., etc. consider the ideas of tourism clustering from different positions and points of view, but adhering to the general idea of the effectiveness of cluster development of tourism rather than its extra-cluster development.

The issues of clustering of industries, including tourism, were studied by experts of international organizations such as the World Bank, Eurasian Development Bank in conducting relevant studies, where clusters are considered as a tool for the effective development of countries, regions, companies, industries and related subjects of economic activity.

Kazakhstan experts of scientific organizations consider cluster development in the framework of industry, where the activities of the state and the private sector are aimed at effective assistance in the process of participation and financing of the developed sectoral actions.

Thus, many scientific works and studies are devoted to the problems of clustering and cluster development of tourism. Nevertheless, the still insufficient implementation of theoretical and methodological approaches of tourism cluster development, considered through the prism of organizational and economic mechanism, including in the regional context, determined the choice of the topic, object and subject of the dissertation research, setting its goal and objectives.

**The object of the study** is the cluster development of the tourism ecosystem of the country, including within the Abai region, Republic of Kazakhstan.

**The subject of the study** is organizational and economic relations arising between the economic agents of the tourism cluster.

**The objective of the dissertation research** is to analyze the organizational and economic aspects of the cluster development of tourism in the Republic of Kazakhstan, including in the regional context on the example of the Abai region, and to develop practical recommendations for its formation and improvement.

**In accordance with the stated objective, the following tasks were addressed in the dissertation:**

- To determine the economic essence of cluster development in tourism, its functional system, and main characteristics;
- To develop a step-by-step algorithm for the formation and development of a tourist cluster;
- To examine international experiences in tourism cluster development;
- To analyze the current state of the tourism industry in the Republic of Kazakhstan;
- To assess the cluster development of the tourism sector in Kazakhstan and provide an evaluation of the organizational and economic foundations for its formation;
- To conduct an analysis of cluster development in the tourism industry in the Abai region of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
- To study regulatory issues in Kazakhstan's tourism business and propose solutions;
- To develop priority strategies for improving cluster development in Kazakhstan's tourism;
- To evaluate the organizational and economic foundations of cluster development in the Abai region.

**The scientific novelty** of the dissertation work includes the following:

- A clear evolution of the substantive views on cluster development in tourism has been traced;
- An author's addition to the definition of the composition of cluster development in tourism has been introduced;
- Based on the developed scheme of cluster development in tourism and its economic indicators, an algorithm for analyzing the tourist cluster and conducting relevant calculations has been developed;
- The necessity of developing and implementing new legislative projects for cluster development in Kazakhstan's tourism, aimed at improving state regulation of tourist clusters in accordance with the country's strategic documents, has been justified by the author based on the analysis of the current state of the tourism industry in Kazakhstan;
- Tools for the step-by-step development of the tourist cluster and an organizational-economic model for cluster development in the Abai region of the Republic of Kazakhstan have been developed based on the organizational-economic approach;
- Priority solutions for regulatory issues in the tourism business have been proposed, with the assignment of responsible entities for each task;

- An assessment of the effectiveness of the interaction between government authorities and business structures in the Abai region of the Republic of Kazakhstan within the framework of cluster development in tourism has been conducted using an author's calculation formula, with a range of evaluations presented.

**Key propositions for defense:**

1. An author's addition to the evolution of views on cluster development in tourism.
2. A scheme of cluster development in tourism and its impact on the national economy.
3. An algorithm for cluster development in tourism.
4. Measures for state support of cluster development in Kazakhstan's tourism.
5. An evaluation of the organizational-economic foundations of cluster development in the tourism sector of Kazakhstan, including the Abai region.
6. An assessment of the effectiveness of the interaction between government authorities and business structures in the Abai region of the Republic of Kazakhstan.
7. The degree of influence of cluster development in tourism on the economy of the Abai region of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

**The theoretical and methodological basis of the dissertation research** comprises scientific works by domestic and foreign researchers and publications from the World Tourism Organization. The methodology includes dialectical, historical, logical, systematic-structural, economic-statistical, empirical, comparative analysis, methods of generalization, and expert assessments.

**Theoretical and practical significance of the dissertation research** lies in the results and conclusions that can be applied to future theoretical and applied research on cluster development in tourism.

Additionally, the theoretical and statistical material presented in the dissertation is recommended for use in developing lectures and seminar classes for courses such as "Tourism," "Organization of Tourist Services," "Tourism and Hospitality," "Service Industry," and others.

**The practical significance of the dissertation research** is that the recommendations developed in it are aimed at cluster development in tourism and related industries, as well as improving the welfare of the population. These recommendations can be utilized by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports of the Republic of Kazakhstan and regional authorities responsible for the tourism industry.

**Approbation of the research results.** The main scientific and practical results of the dissertation work are published in the open press in 17 scientific papers, including 4 articles published in journals recommended by the Committee for Quality Assurance in the Field of Science and Higher Education of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 1 article in a journal included in the Scopus database, 1 monograph, 1 textbook, 1 training manual, 9 articles published in the proceedings of international scientific-practical conferences and the results of round tables.

**The hypothesis of the dissertation research** is based on the assumption that the cluster development of tourism has a favorable impact on the economic growth of the country as a whole.

**The structure of the dissertation** consists of introduction, main part, conclusion, and list of used sources in the number of 99 titles, appendices. The dissertation contains 18 figures, 12 tables and 4 formulas.

**Conclusion:** Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The cluster approach to tourism development plays a huge role in the development of the industry, collectively positively influencing the economic growth of the country, the infrastructure of the region with the tourism cluster, job growth, increased investment, as well as the environmental component in the region. The cluster approach to tourism development allows fragmented participants in the tourism market, as well as intersectional connections, to realize themselves as part of a whole within a single cluster system, since cluster development of tourism involves the activities of tourism companies, the presence of tourist attractions and resources in a certain recreational area, united on a voluntary basis. In the context of cluster development, the activities of travel companies are interdependent, and therefore problems that arise in one company affect others, and all companies are involved in solving these problems, since solving them alone is impossible and makes no sense.

2. Based on the scientific conclusions of researchers regarding the definition of the concept of cluster development of tourism, the author's vision of this process is that its functioning, superimposed on the process of production and consumption of tourism services as a result of supply and demand for them, is carried out within the framework of a complex of various types of activities producing goods and providing services for tourists. Cluster development of tourism, carrying out the process of horizontal connections within the territorial and recreational space, occurs in the conditions of the tourist and recreational system, on which tourist and complementary enterprises with available resources, technologies, connections, sales channels, clientele, developed infrastructure, tourism products are localized, due to cooperative organizations of which there is a synergistic effect, leading to an increase in the socio-economic situation and meeting the needs of tourists.

3. The developed algorithm for cluster tourism development simplifies the cluster assessment procedure and makes it possible to build a business environment that can satisfy the needs of the population of the cluster's recreational space. The cluster tourism development algorithm includes seven stages, which include: determining the location of the tourist cluster; cluster frame identification; identification of the potential for cluster formation: study of the external conditions of formation; cluster infrastructure analysis; characteristics of tourism products; assessment of the analysis results and selection of the design model of the tourism cluster.

4. Having studied foreign experience in building tourism cluster development models, it was revealed that the Kazakhstan model of tourism cluster development is not developing according to any separate model used in foreign countries. According to the basic principles of the presented foreign models, the Kazakh model of social

economy is most characterized by a combination of a dirigiste -liberal model, with the presence of various types of tourism, such as cultural-educational , environmental, religious, sports, health, and business.

5. An analysis of the tourism industry showed that imbalances in tourism development remain in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The structure of tourism activity is significantly dominated by outbound tourism (36.5%), which leads to the invisible import of capital - money spent by domestic tourists on foreign trips, payment of transportation costs and other services in the country of temporary residence. It follows from this that the majority of travel companies in Kazakhstan are focused on outbound tourism, thus acting as a kind of agents of foreign tour operators. Therefore, the main direction of development of tourism entrepreneurship today is the development of inbound/domestic tourism, for the active promotion of which it is necessary to develop other places of tourist accommodation (camping, holiday homes, motels, roadside, children's camps, hostels). However, the material base of placements, including hotels, boarding houses, houses and recreation centers, as well as sanatorium-resort institutions, are characterized by a high degree of physical wear and tear (more than 46% by 2022). Today , due to the lack of a category in the vast majority of hotels, the quality of services offered in places of residence for tourists does not meet international requirements. That is, it is necessary to develop infrastructure and expand the number of placements.

6. As a result of the analysis of the tourism industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan, it was revealed that the Entrepreneurship Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as the main regulatory document of the Republic of Kazakhstan on regulating the development of entrepreneurship in the country, does not provide measures of state support for tourism clusters with assigning them the status of a priority direction for the development of the tourism sector. Moreover, it is important to consolidate the status of tourism clusters at the regional level by developing appropriate regulatory documents and programs, which will improve the professional management system of the industry.

7. Organizations in the tourism sector are insufficiently equipped with information technologies, which are characterized by a weak level of digitalization of tourism services, a low level of integration of tourism technologies and digitization of tourism data, a low level of Internet infrastructure, poor access to the Internet in remote regions of the country, including along tourist routes. Of the 1,230 recreation and entertainment organizations, only 75.4% use computers as of 2022; 74.7% of organizations have access to the Internet. Only 8.1% of organizations use Cloud Computing. 1.1% of organizations conduct big data analysis.

8. A comparative analysis of actual and planned indicators of the implementation of the Concept for the development of the tourism industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2023 showed a lag of about 44.7% in the number of incoming visitors from the forecast values; by 17.3% - the number of people employed in the tourism industry. Using the logarithmic function, the forecast values of the indicator “number of incoming visitors” for the current year were calculated, as a result of which it was revealed that if the probability of deviation of planned and actual indicators remains, this indicator could be reduced to 4.1 million people, which is 12.8

% below the planned level. This indicates that there is a possibility of a drop in demand for tourism services for reasons related to the quality of the tourism product, service or the degree of infrastructure development. This states the fact that the Concept for the development of the tourism industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2019-2025 still shows modest results of its implementation. The adopted Concept for the development of the tourism industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2023-2029 has just begun its implementation, the results of which can be seen after at least a three-year period for the possibility of carrying out appropriate forecast calculations.

9. Due to the inconsistency and non-correlation of the established indicators for the development of the country's tourism industry in state strategic documents, it became necessary to assess the effectiveness of the organizational and economic structure of public administration of the tourism sector using the "SMART" concept, which is quite well known in management practice, which involves the technique of setting effective goals according to a criterion system specificity (" Specific "), measurability (" Measurable "), achievability (" A ttainable "), relevance (" Relevant "), time limitation (" Time -bound "). Using the example of the Tourism Industry Committee of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports of the Republic of Kazakhstan, based on a sociological survey, an expert assessment of the activities of this government body was carried out using the " SMART " system, as a result of which the level of activity of this government agency is assessed by tourism industry experts as "good" (46 points). However, it is important to emphasize the need to correlate strategic goals and initiatives within the framework of the approved documents of the Tourism Industry Committee of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports of the Republic of Kazakhstan with strategic program documents in the field of tourism, which have a conceptual basis for the cluster development of tourism in Kazakhstan. It is important to adjust the strategic indicators and indicators for tourism development in program documents and interconnect them, according to the existing tourism potential of the country.

10. Analysis of the tourism potential of the regional tourism cluster области Abai shows the relevance of the development of such places of tourist accommodation as camping, tourist base, tourist camps, and motels. However, the material base of accommodation in the region is characterized by a high degree of wear and tear (more than 34% as of 2022), to improve which investment in fixed capital is required, the share of which in the total volume of investments in the region in 2022 amounted to 13%. For comparison, in such a tourist region of the country as the Almaty region, the share of investments in the tourism industry in 2022 amounted to 31%.

11. To identify the reasons hindering the development of the tourism sector in the Abai region, a sociological survey was conducted among business entities operating in the field of tourism and related industries on the effectiveness of interaction between government bodies and business structures in tourism sector. According to the results of the survey, the largest share among the factors hindering the development of the tourism cluster in the region is the poor development of transport infrastructure - 20%; high cost of air travel on domestic flights – 15%; underdevelopment of domestic and inbound tourism – 14%; low quality of hotel services – 12%; lack of financial resources – 11%; low digitalization of the tourism

sector – 10%; lack of qualified personnel and low quality of government in the tourism sector – 9% each.

12. According to survey participants in the Abai region, 48.2% are ready to become participants in a tourism cluster, 12.2% refused to participate in the cluster form of economic development without explanation, and 39.6% of respondents refused due to lack of information about the advantages and disadvantages this form of business integration. From the above it follows that business entities operating in the field of tourism or related industries are, for the most part, ready to become participants in the tourism cluster in the region. At the same time, one of the reasons holding back the formation of a cluster in the Abai region is the insufficient level of interaction between government authorities and business.

13. According to the results of a survey in the Abai region, 36.5% of respondents, for the development of the tourism cluster, it is important to invest on the terms of public-private partnership in education: in personnel training, advanced training and retraining of personnel. 29.4% - in transport services and logistics. 17.3% - into the production of goods and services for related industries (for example, sewing bed linen, workwear). As we can see, investing in education remains a priority. This makes it possible to improve the quality of educational services, organize leisure time for students, and create new jobs.

14. In the Abai region, there is no regional program aimed at the formation and development of a tourism cluster; the corresponding regulatory framework has not been formed, which provides for such aspects as preferences, benefits and responsibilities of cluster participants. That is, there is no structural approach to the formation of a tourism cluster in the region. Moreover, there is no separate program for tourism development in the region. The general directions of tourism development in the region are reflected in the Comprehensive Plan for the Social and Economic Development of the Abai Region in 2023 -2027. For the regional cluster program for the development of tourism in the Abai region, it would be optimal to develop a master plan, within the framework of which research will be carried out in such areas as the development of a portfolio of tourism products, demand analysis and the development of tourism clusters. The development of the Master Plan requires the participation of the Tourism Industry Committee of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the regional body coordinating and regulating the tourism sector.

15. A package of tools for the development of the tourism cluster in the Abai region has been developed, allowing local executive bodies and other stakeholders involved in tourism development to be guided in building the effective operation of the regional tourism cluster. Such a phased implementation of regional tourism cluster development tools will serve as an assistant to various decision-makers, including managers and staff of tourism companies, tourism associations, tourism promotion organizations, relevant educational institutions and other groups working in the tourism industry.

16. As a result of studying the regulatory documentation for regulating tourism activities in the Republic of Kazakhstan, it was revealed that the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Tourism Activities” does not reflect all subjects and objects



involved in the provision of tourism services. The Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan does not contain an interpretation and definition of the types of classification of tourism activities; there are no necessary concepts associated with the creation of priority tourist territories and the mechanism of their functioning is not comprehensively presented. The Law does not provide a definition of a tourism cluster; its main elements, principles and functioning mechanism are not legally established. The provisions of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Tourism Activities” regarding the development of tourism business in the country do not correlate with the provisions of the Entrepreneurial Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Law does not reflect the form and procedure for carrying out preventive control without visits in accordance with the Entrepreneurial Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Law does not reflect provisions related to the functioning of the national company JSC Kazakh Tourism ". In addition, the Law does not provide for provisions on the possibility of creating self-regulatory organizations in the tourism industry. There is no single legislative act regulating the cluster development of tourism within the framework of the Law “On the Cluster Development of Tourism of the Republic of Kazakhstan”, designed to determine the legal, economic, social, organizational foundations of the cluster development of tourism in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

17. Cluster development of tourism requires, first of all, infrastructural development of the tourism industry, for which, based on the existing base of legislative acts for the development and support of the tourism sector, it is advisable to introduce a national rating assessment of regions according to the level of development of tourism infrastructure. The rating should cover such assessment levels as “good”, “satisfactory”, “unsatisfactory”. The rating covers priority areas according to the Map tourism \_ It is proposed to include in the rating being developed such a criterion as “Tax contributions to the budget” in nominal and relative terms, as well as as a share of total tax revenues for the calendar year. This indicator reflects the amount of tax revenue received by the state from the tourism industry. It includes taxes and fees that are levied on tourists, travel companies, hotels, restaurants and other entities in the tourism industry. The Kazakhstani tourism industry needs to work to improve its rating, making the tourist balance positive. To do this, first of all, it is necessary to work on regulating the tourism market by stimulating the activities of tour operator companies operating on Kazakhstan’s tourism and recreational resources, whose activities must be supported by government measures in the form of providing tax benefits in the first three years of their activity. Or the activities of travel agent firms need to be directed to the domestic market to sell Kazakh tourist packages using similar incentive methods.

18. Educational programs of universities in the Republic of Kazakhstan do not fully meet the real needs of the tourism sector due to their low focus on practical work, as a result of which personnel in specialized tourism specialties remain unclaimed. The development of related types of professions in the tourism industry requires further development, taking into account the needs of the modern market of tourism services. It is important for the Kazakhstan education market to strengthen its educational training programs in the specialty “tourism”, “hotel management”, and other elective

courses, with a reorientation of personnel training in favor of tour operators. First, this applies to the country's specialized universities in tourism, such as the Kazakh Academy of Sports and Tourism, the International University of Tourism and Hospitality, and other Kazakh universities that have educational programs in tourism, as well as specialized colleges and schools. The teaching staff of universities and TIPO organizations specializing in tourism specialties must have the title of "tourism instructor", issued because of successful completion of the relevant course, passing an exam organized by specialized schools, and also complied with all the requirements for conferring this title. It is important for the authorized bodies in the field of education - the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan - to carry out certifications and issue licenses for the right to carry out activities of universities and vocational training organizations in tourism specialties with teaching staff having this title.

19. A tool for promoting tourism business within the framework of cluster tourism development is the development of a public-private partnership mechanism, which is the basic structure for attracting extra-budgetary investments in various areas: development of infrastructure, recreational potential, training and retraining of tourism specialists, expansion of the scientific and information base, stimulation of innovation. To implement PPP projects in the tourism sector, it is advisable to use such organizational and legal models as concession, which is currently not observed in the country. The regulatory framework of the Republic of Kazakhstan for PPP for the development of the tourism cluster is not diversified, but is presented within all sectoral and industrial spheres, and therefore the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Public-Private Partnership" should represent the tourism sector within the framework of concession agreements and other forms cooperation, not limited to the contractual form of PPP. Along with concession agreements, the implementation of tourism projects within the framework of PPP is optimally carried out within the framework of concluding long-term budgetary obligations under a long-term target program.

20. For the effective functioning of cluster tourism development, it is advisable to finance within the framework of Islamic financial instruments, which are directly related to the production process and allow localizing existing risks. This issue is especially relevant in connection with the task set in the country to increase the share of Islamic financial institutions in financing the national economy to 10% and increase the volume of capitalization

21. Despite the work of state support programs, many entrepreneurs face great difficulties in obtaining loans, which are associated, first of all, with the reluctance of banks to issue loans to existing businesses, and with some difficulties for beginning entrepreneurs. The main reason is the increased risk associated with business lending, the inability of entrepreneurs to correctly draw up a business plan, lack of information and lack of knowledge. In this connection, the issue of providing qualified consulting to entrepreneurs on the development and preparation of business plans, market research, calculations of possible risk options and ways to resolve them becomes relevant.

22. The overall coordination of the tourism sector in the Abai region should be focused on the basis of the created Committee of Tourism, Trade and Services of the Chamber of Entrepreneurs of the region in the Abai region, whose powers must include solving issues of cluster development of tourism in the region, forming a new structural unit - the Department of Cluster Tourism Development, which could take on the functions of creating a system for accounting for clusters and exchanging best practices , as well as summarizing and representing the common interests of the cluster society in interaction with government agencies, as well as becoming a platform for discussing important issues related to the development of cluster industries.

23. In order to increase the efficiency of the tourism industry within the framework of cluster development of the Abai region, an assessment of the effectiveness of interaction between government authorities and business structures was carried out, which is determined using a calculation formula we developed, as a result of which it was calculated that the effectiveness of interaction between government authorities and business structures in the region is assessed as “good” (2.6), against the backdrop of fulfilling all its duties, functions and assigned tasks, which means the prospects for building a tourism cluster in the Abai region, requiring the development of appropriate regional strategic program documents regarding the cluster development of tourism, as well as the adoption appropriate measures and implementation of specific actions for the successful implementation of the assigned tasks.

24. Based on the assessment of the effectiveness of interaction between government authorities and business structures in the tourism sector in the Abai region, the degree of influence of cluster development of tourism on the economy of the region, expressed as an index (0.047), meaning a high degree of influence, the implementation of which will improve the activities of the tourism sector in the region, increase tax payments to the budget, create new jobs, improve the ecological component of the region.