

**STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PROSPECTS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT (IN THE CASE OF FERGANA VALLEY)**

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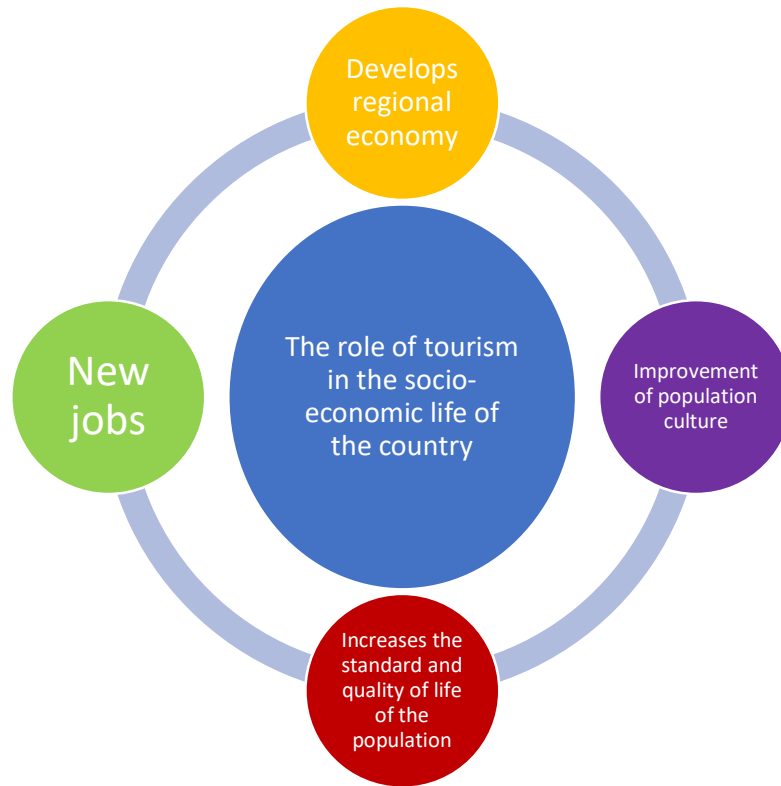
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**Abstract:** Tourism, as one of the important sectors of the economy, serves to increase the well-being of the population. Due to this, the need to improve this network in every region of the country, including the regions of Fergana Valley, namely Namangan and Andijan regions, by effectively using the available opportunities, is demanded by the current era.

**Keywords:** tourism, economic growth, strategy, gross regional product, diversification.

**Introduction**

The presence of several ancient cities in the Fergana Valley is proof of its long history. Among such ancient cities, such cities as Margilan, Ko'kan, Rishton, and Kuva can be included. The history of these cities dates back to 2500-3000 years. It is also known from history that the Great Silk Road passed through these cities. These places are of interest to the people of the world. Due to this, the opportunity to develop international tourism in the Fergana Valley is very large. In recent years, large-scale activities aimed at the development of the tourism sector, in particular, increasing the flow of foreign tourists coming to our country, expanding domestic tourism, are being carried out. It plays an important role in coordinating the socio-economic development of the regions, creating new jobs in the region, and improving the cultural life of the region. This can also be seen in the image below. (Figure1).



**Figure 1. Socio-economic tasks of tourism**

#### **Analysis of the literature on the topic**

Several scientists of our country have conducted research in this regard. These include M.Q. Pardaev, [1] N. Tukhliev, [2] Berdiyrov B, [3] Kh.R.Matyakubov, [7] B.S. Berdiyrov [8] can be included.

In the strategic development of the tourism industry in our country, especially in the Namangan region, along with the opening of travel agencies of various directions, the production of souvenir products, the organization of hotel facilities providing modern services, and the provision of services to tourists at the level of world standards are being launched.

**Research methodology** Scientific abstraction, systematic approach, comparative analysis, sociological surveys and generalization, economic-mathematical methods, factor analysis and statistical methods were used in the research process.

#### **Analysis and results**

Based on the importance of the tourism sector, this sector has been in the center of constant attention of the President and the government of the country. In particular, according to Presidential Decree No. 6002 dated May 28, 2020, targeted interest-free loans are being granted to accommodation facilities and tour operators to maintain their employees by paying wages during the pandemic. As a result, the growth rate of tourism development in Fergana Valley shows that this indicator has developed sharply since 2016. This can also be seen from the table below. (Table 1).

**Table 1**  
**The dynamics of the number of tour operators in the Fargan Valley regions in 2016-2020**

Years	Andijan region		Namangan region		Fergana region		By region	
	Number, in unity	Growth rate, %	Number, in unity	Growth rate, %	Number, in unity	Growth rate%	Number, in unity	Growth rate, %
2016	8	100,0	1	100,0	6	100,0	15	100,0
2017	12	150,0	2	200,0	9	150,0	23	153,3
2018	19	237,5	7	700,0	18	300,0	44	293,3
2019	39	487,5	23	2300,0	40	666,7	102	380,0
2020	31	387,5	25	2500,0	41	683,0	97	646,7

As can be seen from the data in this table, the number of tour operators in the Fergana Valley increased by 6.5 times (646.7%) during the analyzed years 2016-2020. It increased sharply in Namangan region. In 2016, there was only 1 tour operator, but by 2020, there were 25 and it shows an increase of 25.0 times. It can also be seen that despite the fact that Namangan region has a lot of touristic potential, tourism is almost not developed. There has been a sharp increase in the last three years. In 2016-2020, the number of tour operators in Fergan region was almost the same as in Namangan, that is, it increased by 6.8 times (683.0%). However, the growth in Andijan region is slightly lower. During this period, it increased by 3.9 times (387.5%) in this region.

The observation of growth in the analyzed process is positive. But their structural changes are also important in diagnosing the problem. For this purpose, we believe that it is necessary to look at the changes in the structural structure of the number of tour operators in the Fergana Valley during the years 2016-2020. For this, we recommend making the following table (table 2).

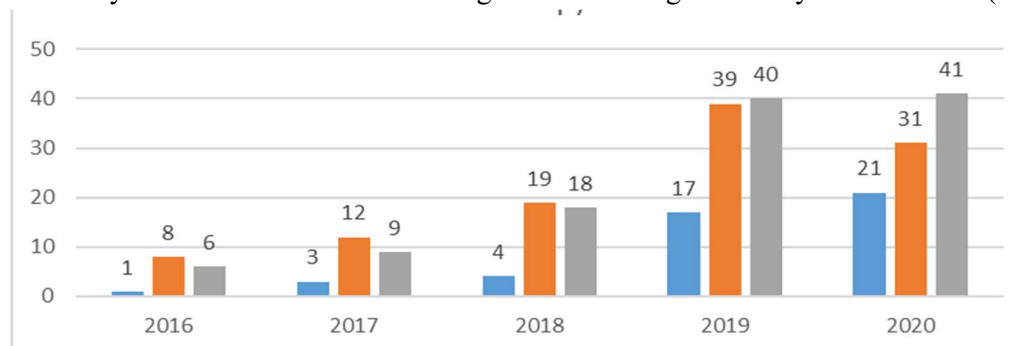
**Table 2**  
**The dynamics of the share of tour operators in the Fargan Valley regions in 2016-2020**

Years	Andijan region		Namangan region		Fergana region		by republic	
	Number in unity	Share, %	Number, in unity	Share %	Number, in unity	Share %	Number in unity	Share, %
2016	8	53,3	1	6,7	6	40,0	15	100,0
2017	12	52,2	2	8,7	9	39,1	23	100,0
2018	19	43,2	7	15,9	18	40,9	44	100,0
2019	39	38,2	23	22,6	40	39,2	102	100,0
2020	31	32,0	25	25,8	41	42,2	97	100,0

As can be seen from the data of this table, the number of tour operators in Namangan region is 25.8% among the regions of Fergana Valley. Of course, in 2016, this figure was only 6.7%.

Little has changed in terms of structural changes in Fergana region. In 2016, 40.0% were tour operators, and by 2020, it will be 42.2%. However, even a decrease was observed in 2017 (39.1%) and 2019 (39.2%). However, the number of tour operators in Andijan region has decreased in its structural structure due to the low growth trend. In 2016, 53.3% of the region was covered by tour operators, but since this year, it has systematically decreased, and in 2020 its level will be 32.0%. It can be seen from these that the level of utilization of the existing tourism potential in the regions of Fergana Valley is very low. Because the share of tourism in the gross regional product (GDP) in all three regions is only around 1.0%.

In order to clearly express the information in the above table, it is advisable to look at their diagram. For this purpose, it is possible to see the changes of the organizations (tour operators) that carry out tourist activities in the regions of the Fergana Valley in 2016-2021 (Fig. 2).



**Figure 2. Changes in 2016-2020 of organizations (tour operators) that carry out tourist activities in the regions of the Fergana Valley**

It can be seen from these that, as mentioned above, there are still great opportunities for the development of tourism in the regions of the Fergana Valley. Due to this, it is necessary to develop "Roadmaps" and programs of measures aimed at the development of tourism and its specific types in each region. This also requires a more in-depth analysis of this area.

If we look at the history of the valley, it is considered one of the most ancient regions. According to historical sources, in particular, the visit of the Chinese diplomat Zhang Jianya to the valley in 128 BC, this area was called Davon. There were more than 70 settlements in it. It is recognized that there are fertile lands in this area, and the economy is developed, agriculture and handicrafts are developed. Cultivation of viticulture from horticulture, wheat and rice cultivation from agriculture is well established in the valley. Thoroughbred horses are bred in cattle breeding. Because of this, alfalfa cultivation was also developed. It is recognized in history that there was a Davon-Chinese war in 104-102 BC for the horse of Davon. Later, diplomatic relations were established between these parties and peaceful coexistence was achieved.

Tourism organizations of our country organize a number of exhibitions or regularly participate in international exhibitions in almost all major cities of the world, including Moscow, Beijing, Delhi, Madrid, Riga, Berlin, Paris, Tokyo, London, Istanbul. It is known that the tourist constantly repeats the field of seasonal nature and raises the issue of expanding this direction based on the needs of the times. In order to ensure the fulfillment of these tasks, appropriate programs have been developed in all rights of our country. Local history museums are

operating in all regions for the development of domestic tourism. It is especially appropriate to use it in the process of teaching pupils and students of general, secondary and higher education. The revival of national traditions, such as the Flower Festival, Atlas Festival, "Sabantoy", honey festival, and soup festival, which have become a tradition in the valley regions, serve as a basis for the development of tourism. There are 41 tourist organizations operating in Fergana region, more than 30 in Andijan region, and 25 in Namangan region.<sup>1</sup> The task now is to dramatically increase and develop tourism organizations, firms and companies engaged in this field. The arrival of tourists does not happen by itself. In order to organize it, relevant organizing entities are needed.

Tourism organizations located in the valley regions, in particular in the Namangan region, organize trips to historical cities such as Bukhara, Samarkand, Khiva, and Shahrisabz, and make this sector one of the leading sectors of the region's economy. Today, one of the main tasks of tourism firms is to achieve a sharp increase in the export of services.

The tourist companies located in the valley are providing information about the rural resorts of Andijan, Fergana and Namangan regions, which embody the ancient and rich history of the region. At present, the work of some touristic organizations is noteworthy. For example, the tourist company "Holis Utaj" in Andijan region has established cooperation with tourist companies not only in our country, but also in the United Arab Emirates, China, Malaysia, Singapore, and Turkey, and has been providing them with extensive information about tourist facilities in the region. Along with visiting these countries, citizens of our country are engaged in bringing tourists from those countries, welcoming them and making them travel not only around the region, but also throughout Uzbekistan. In this way, it makes a significant contribution to the increase of export of services. In 2020, the number of tourist facilities in Andijan and Namangan regions is 301 in Namangan region alone. Of them, only 6.6% of tourist destinations are used. This figure is 12.7% in Fergana and 14.3% in Namangan. Of course, it can be seen from these indicators that there are still great opportunities for the development of tourism in the valley regions.

It is known that all regions of the Fergana Valley regions have tourist facilities such as museums, recreation centers, shrines, and archeological monuments. It is being used as a tourist object in the region. These tourist facilities include historical and cultural heritage sites of international importance. But the arrival of foreign tourists to them is not up to the demand. Due to this, it is necessary to pay great attention to this direction.

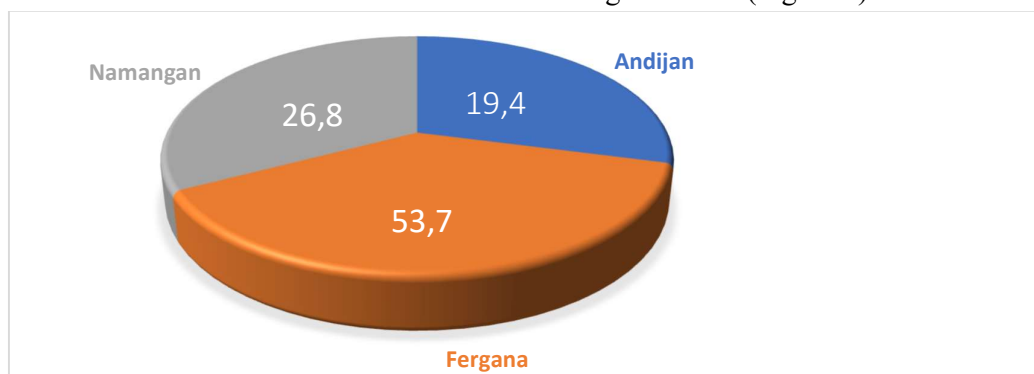
Bobur recreation center, which has become a beauty of Andijan, is of great importance in the development of domestic tourism. Large-scale improvement works were also carried out here: Babur's symbolic mausoleum, "Babur and world culture" museums were built. These tourist facilities leave a great impression on visitors and tourists. The royal palace of Khudoyorkhan, the Khan of Kokand, built in 1871 in the only city of Kokand of Fergana region, is one of the large buildings that demonstrate the traditions of eastern architecture in Orda. The area of this palace is 4 hectares, it has 112 rooms with 7 courtyards. According to historical sources, 16 thousand people and 80 craftsmen participated in the construction of this palace. Currently, 2

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the data obtained from the statistical offices of the respective regions.

courtyards and 19 rooms have been preserved from this palace. Norbo'tabek madrasa in Kok, built in the 13th century, Shahon Dakhma built by Umar Khan in the 19th century, Mausoleum of Madarikhana, Kamal Qazi madrasa, Jome Maschit built in the same period, silk weaving tradition of Margilon, Pir Siddiq complex, Khoja Magiz mavalei, which ensures the continuity of the art of pottery in Rishton district. such as the Pottery Dynasty are considered to be major objects for the development of domestic and inbound (international) tourism.

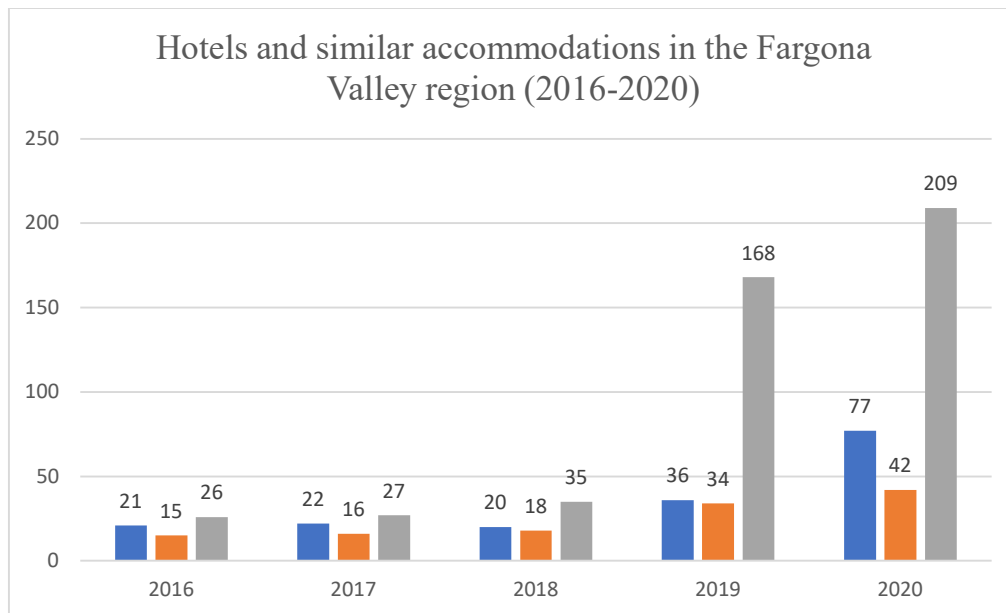
Tourist facilities are being rebuilt in the regions of the Fergana Valley. The service quality of 21 hotels in Andijan region, 29 in Namangan region, and 58 in Fergana region is improving. The structural structure of these is shown in the figure below (Figure 3).



**Figure 3. Share of hotels in Fergana Valley regions as of 2020<sup>2</sup>**

As can be seen from the picture, 53.7% of hotels in the valley belong to Fergana region, 26.8% to Namangan region and 19.4% to Andijan region. Therefore, the potential of receiving tourists is different in the valley regions. Tourism infrastructures are developing based on recently adopted programs. This condition can also be observed for years (Fig. 4).

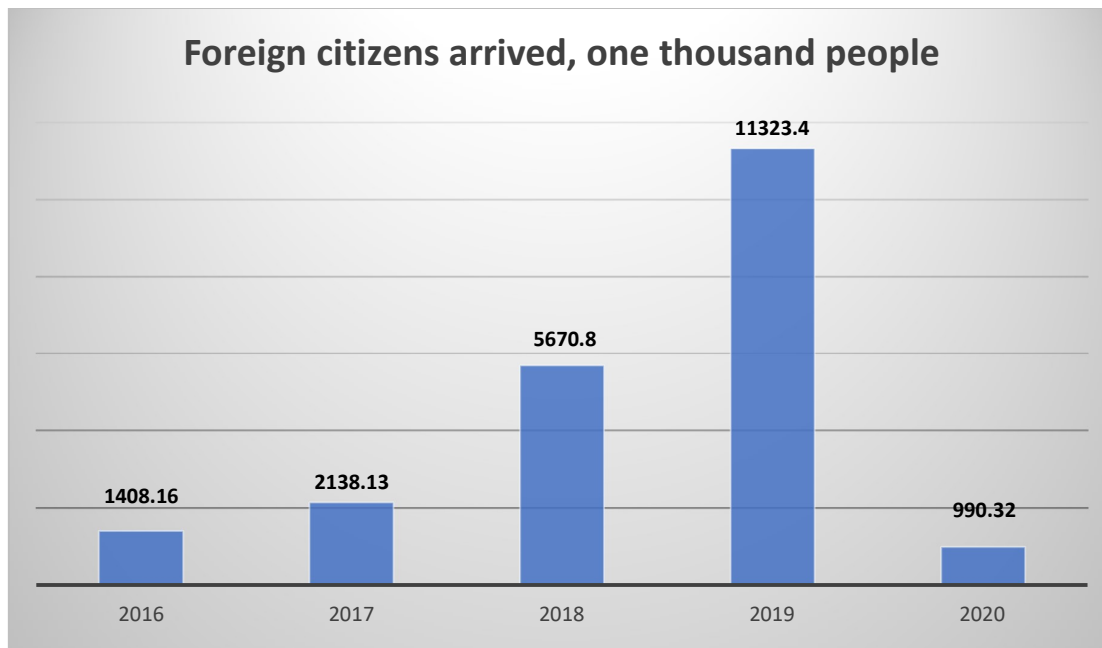
<sup>2</sup> The data of 2020 was developed by the author based on the data of the Fergana Region Regional Administration of the State Committee for Tourism Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan.



**Figure 4. 2016-2020 dynamics of hotels and other means of accommodation in the regions of the Fergana Valley**

As can be seen from the data of this chart, when we analyze the Fergana Valley, the number of hotels and similar facilities in Fergana region increased by 8.0 times during 2016-2020. In Namangan and Andijan regions, this indicator has increased by 3.3 times. It can be seen that the diversification of tourism accommodation services has a sharp development trend. The growth rate is slower in Namangan and Andijan regions. It also requires the development of programs for the development of diversification of tourist accommodation services in the regions. In 2016-2019, there was a sharp increase in the number of foreign citizens visiting touristic facilities in the Fergana Valley, in particular in the Fergana Region. However, it decreased sharply in 2020 (Figure 5).

**The number of foreign citizens who came to Fergana region (2016-2020)**



**Figure 5.**

**The State Committee for Tourism Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan is based on the information of the regional administration of Fergana region**

In 2016, 1408.16 thousand foreign citizens visited Fergana region, which increased by 8 times compared to 2019 (11323.40 thousand people), compared to 2016 and 2020 (990.32 thousand people), it decreased by 1.4 times. since March, the indicator has decreased in the Republic of Uzbekistan due to the pandemic. Along with cultural heritage sites of several thousand years of history, every corner of Fergana Valley has a beautiful and picturesque nature that will captivate anyone. All these are places that are loved by foreign tourists as well as the development of domestic tourism. There is a lot of work to be done in order to further improve the service system for the development of tourism in these places, to create the tourist infrastructure in accordance with the needs of the times. There are 5 higher educational institutions training specialists in the field of tourism in our country, including the Singapore Institute of Management Development in Tashkent and more than ten secondary specialized educational institutions. On June 28, 2018, the decision of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the establishment of another specialized higher education institution "Silk Road International University of Tourism" was adopted. The purpose of establishing this higher educational institution is to "organize the system of training professional personnel in the field of international tourism and implement the initiatives of the republic in the field of scientific research and creative work, and improve the historical, cultural and humanitarian relations of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization." directed..

Currently, personnel working in the field of tourism should use the most advanced modern innovative and scientific technologies, the latest achievements of science and technology. Because personnel working in the field of tourism directly communicates with and provides



services to not only the residents of our country, but also the residents of foreign countries. This requires them to be highly qualified professionals who meet national and international standards. This demand requires further improvement of the personnel training system.

Introducing the experience of leading foreign educational institutions to the field of tourism, improving and modernizing the personnel training system is also one of the directions of providing tourism with modern personnel. To achieve this, it is necessary to improve the existing literature on each direction of tourism and create new ones based on the modern demand. In these works, the issue of ensuring harmony of foreign experiences along with theory is also important. Today, the training of qualified personnel along with the retraining system and improvement of both is another direction aimed at the development of the industry. Nowadays, especially in the field of tourism, the issue of ensuring the harmony of education, production and scientific activity is very important to increase the efficiency of the sector. It's no secret that currently, like all students, tourism students are taught mainly in classrooms. This is not enough in our opinion. It is advisable to conduct practical lessons with them in museums, hotels, along with tourists on tourist routes.

The results of a sociological survey conducted with tourists in Namangan region showed that it is important to systematically conduct sociological surveys with tourists in the modernization and diversification of services in the field of tourism. It is precisely the results of sociological surveys that were used in the introduction of services in hotels and the formation of tourist routes, in the improvement of this process.

It is known that in the decree of the President of December 2, 2016 "On measures to ensure the rapid development of the tourism sector of the Republic of Uzbekistan", the issue of ensuring the rapid development of the tourism network, giving tourism the status of a strategic sector of the economy, and ensuring that it becomes an important factor in the effective use of tourism potential in the regions was set as a priority. Decree No. PF-6002 of May 28, 2020 "On Urgent Measures to Support the Tourism Sector to Reduce the Negative Impact of the Corona Virus Pandemic", On August 27, 2020, Decree No. PF-6053 "On measures for the rapid development of tourism by introducing a special management procedure in Bostonliq district" accepted. A number of measures and "Roadmaps" aimed at ensuring the implementation of these decrees have been drawn up. Of course, this cannot be achieved by itself.

### **Discussion of the results of the study**

As a result of our research, great importance was attached to the wide range of opportunities for the development and prospects of tourism in the regions of the Fergana Valley and their effective use. Because conditions, climate, geographical location are close to each other in all three regions, we focused on developing ways of tourism development in this area. These are listed in the table below.

(Table 3).

**Directions of strategic development of tourism in Fergana Valley regions**

№	Directions of tourism development	Ways to implement proposals and what results they will bring
1.	To provide the sector with specialist personnel for the development of tourism	There are 5 higher educational institutions training specialists in the field of tourism in our country, including the Singapore Institute of Management Development in Tashkent and more than ten secondary specialized educational institutions. There are no such higher educational institutions in the valley regions. Therefore, it is appropriate to start preparing bachelor's and master's degrees in the field of tourism in this area, because there are not enough students in this specialty to higher education institutions in other cities (Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Khorezm).
2.	Improvement of tourism infrastructure, in particular, establishment of many hotels in the regions	Current hotels are located only in cities, but there are not enough hotels to develop tourism in the regions. Because of this, most guests come to people's homes and stay there.
3.	Organization of "Eco-Logic House Cluster" to promote ecotourism in all regions of the valley.	"Ecological house cluster" is a house representing simple national traditions, in which all the consumables are the property of the owner of the house and are given to him. Bread is baked here, cows are raised for milk, fish are kept alive in the water from here, and meat is also grown here.
4.	In order to develop domestic tourism, it is necessary to establish "Guest Houses" in rural areas, designed to host families with all their members.	Now, great opportunities have been created for the development of domestic tourism. Opportunities for family trips have also been created. But there are not enough family-friendly hotels specifically for families. Because of this, it is advisable to think deeply about this matter and organize such houses in the regions.
5.	Development of new eco-routes for the development of ecological tourism.	It is advisable to organize such routes as "Travel to the fresh air", "We are together with nature", "Waterfalls - natural fountains" for effective use of the quiet places of the valley.
6.	Organization of tourist routes combining "Pilgrimage-Travel-Trade" using the	Sociological surveys have shown that people who visit a place want to spend time in and around that place and at the same time buy handicrafts of the

	opportunities of the valley regions.	valley. Because of this, organizing routes combining these three processes is also a demand of the times.
7.	Giving special importance to the development of agrotourism.	To organize an organized demonstration to the residents of other regions, especially to the youth, that every centimeter of land in the valley regions is being used effectively. For this purpose, it is necessary to organize routes in the relevant directions and to show gastronomic tourism typical of the valley.
8.	Based on the opportunities of the valley regions, development of tourist routes for the popularization of new tourist destinations such as mountaineering, traveling on horses, camels, bicycles, hunting fish and other animals, educational tourism, medical tourism.	There are great opportunities for effective use of tourism potential in the valley regions in these areas. Hunting is possible in one of the areas, mountaineering in the second, and trips on horses, camels and other vehicles are available in the third. Effectively using these, it is appropriate to apply measures that will raise tourism to the level of a strategic sector of the economy of this region. These activities contribute not only to the growth of the regional economy, but also to the employment of the population.
9.	Establishment of separate tourism areas in Fergana Valley regions.	Currently, such an area is being organized only in Fergana region. It is desirable to organize this in all regions of the valley, because such an opportunity is also available in other regions of Andijan and Namangan. The organization of this work will give these regions not only economic, but also a great social effect, such as providing employment to the population and increasing their income.
10.	One of the modern promising types of tourism is unique natural mass-canes. To make effective use of great opportunities for the development of tourism with the uniqueness of the valley regions with rich fauna and flora, unique landscape, national traditions and cuisine.	In order to make full use of these opportunities, it is necessary to develop special programs, organize charter flights to valley cities and increase the number of railways, develop domestic tourism, improve tourist facilities, and improve the quality of service. For this purpose, it is necessary to support the creation of opportunities to improve the qualifications of personnel working in the field of tourism in foreign countries.
11.	Based on the opportunities of the valley regions, to make	In the development of tourism, participation in tourist exhibitions and conferences held in foreign

tourism a source of income not only seasonally, but throughout the year, to strengthen relations with foreign partners, to effectively use new methods and approaches in attracting tourists.	countries, popularization of the unique national cultural heritage of the valley abroad, in order to attract more foreign tourists to the region, to demonstrate the attractiveness of the valley by regularly participating in international exhibitions held in major cities of the world, as well as using the possibilities of the Internet and information technologies and holding various exhibitions and public events designed to attract the population of our country and the general public in order to develop domestic tourism.
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### Conclusions and suggestions

In conclusion, the opportunities for tourism development and prospects in the regions of Fergana Valley are still wide. There is still work to be done to effectively use them, and there are several ways to implement them. The use of these opportunities, in our opinion, will give tourism the status of a strategic sector of the economy in the valley regions, effectively use the potential of tourism in this region, and create a great basis for increasing the efficiency of tourism and its development.

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