



## Article

# Impact of Creative Economy on Tourism In Uzbekistan: Development Trends And Management Peculiarities

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**Abstract:** This paper discusses the creative economy and its intersection with tourism, the impact of creative tourism on the creative economy. It analyses the views expressed by various researchers on creative economy and mentions the main directions of creative economy. The co-operation of tourism industry with creative economy industries, the gradual development of tourism towards creative tourism, the differences between cultural tourism and creative tourism are also listed. The situation of creative tourism in the conditions of Uzbekistan, prospects and problems of its development will be discussed. Some proposals and conclusions on the development of creative tourism will be presented.

**Keywords:** Creative Tourism, Rural Tourism, Creative Economy, Cultural Tourism, Tourism Services.

## 1. Introduction

It is known that the development of science and technology has brought about major changes in the world economy. Scientists call these turning points 'industrial revolution'. The scientific community unanimously recognises that the history of industry has undergone three such revolutionary stages, clearly distinguished from each other. Science and discovery continue to advance. Some economists have begun to refer to today's widespread use of 3D printers, laser equipment, robots and robotic manufacturing processes as a new phase of industry, the fourth revolution.

Initially, production management was largely based on the principles of scientific organisation and standardisation of work taught by the classical school of management, but by the 1980s the situation had changed radically. At that time, the manufacturing industry began to recognise the need for innovation, skilled labour and flexibility in management.

Have these processes marked the beginning of the fourth industrial revolution? Although researchers have different opinions on this question, they unanimously confirm that a new economic trend called the 'creative economy' has emerged and that its share of the national economy is increasing. In other words, the importance of creativity in knowledge-based sectors of the economy is recognised.

According to studies conducted by the U.N, creative services exports surged to \$1.4 trillion in 2022, marking a 29% increase since 2017. Meanwhile, creative goods exports reached \$713 billion, a 19% increase. Over the past decade, creative services' share of all

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service exports rose from 12% to 19%, while creative goods' share of all goods exports has remained steady around 3% since 2002 [16].

Among many developing countries, Uzbekistan is increasingly supporting the creative economy. According to statistics, from 2020 to 2023, Uzbekistan's IT service exports rose from \$16 million to \$344 million, and the IT sector's share of GDP rose from 1.99% to 3.5% [7]. This shows that the creative economy in Uzbekistan is growing rapidly. By the end of 2022, the country's creative economy will employ more than 150,000 people, or 1.1% of those employed in the formal economy. In addition, the income of those employed in the creative economy represents more than 15% of total income (6.7 trillion soums) [15].

It is also important to use the potential of tourism to develop the creative economy in Uzbekistan. Indeed, tourists are the main consumers of many arts and crafts, shows and concerts, which are products of human creativity. At the same time, the diversification of traditional tourist services, based mainly on historical and cultural heritage, and the creation of new types of services offered to tourists are of great importance today. Accordingly, it should be emphasised that popularisation of 'creative tourism' in our country and its transformation into an important participant of the economy is of particular relevance today.

### **Literature review**

#### **The concept of the creative economy and its outlines**

In the course of our research, we came across numerous definitions of the "creative economy". Although these definitions are close in their general meaning, some differences are also noticeable. The comments of researchers A. Koroleva and Y. Cheren confirm our point. They state that "in some countries, the definitions are closely linked to art and culture. Other countries have broader definitions that include, for example, food and gastronomy, on the basis that food and cooking have both economic and cultural importance. Still other countries have a definition that includes well-established commercial sectors such as publishing, software, advertising and design" [9].

"It was in the context of the redefinition of a political development project conceptualised by New Labour in the 1980s that the notion of the creative economy emerged. In chronological terms, it follows on from the concept of the cultural industries, proposed (initially as a generic singular term) by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer in 1947, then qualified in the 1970s and characterised both by the diversity of sectoral practices and by a set of points in common that distinguish them from other industrialised activities" explains French researcher B. Lefèvre [3].

In a study published by the British Council, 13 areas linked to human creativity are at the heart of the creative economy. These areas are Advertising, Architecture, Art and antiques market, Crafts, Design, Designer Fashion, Film and video, Interactive leisure software, Music, Performing Arts, Publishing, Software and Computer Services, Television and radio [16].

According to T. Flew and S. Cunningham, those activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property [5].

As A. Koroleva and J. Cheren argue, the concept of intellectual property (in other words, the value of an idea that can be protected by copyright, patents, trademarks or other regulatory mechanisms to stop it being copied or turned to commercial advantage without the permission of the person whose idea it was) is considered central to any understanding of the creative industries and continues to be so [9].

#### **Can tourism become a player in the creative economy?**

There are different opinions about tourism being a participant in the creative economy. A new concept and trend known as "creative tourism" is increasingly utilised in recent tourism research.

Researchers L. Safaa and B. Szostak describe the concept of creative tourism as follows “creative tourism is the set of activities based on the culture, creativity and heritage of the environment visited; people travelling for leisure or business have the opportunity to experience such activities. This new form of tourism transforms traditional tourism activities and raises new issues in the economics and management of creativity [4].

According to I. Tukhliyev, creative tourism is a type of tourism, unlike traditional tourism activities, aimed at obtaining new and attractive experiences through national culture and cultural heritage. In this type of tourism, tourists become familiar with the customs and traditions of the local population in which they participate [7].

At the same time, a new concept of “creative tourist” has already started to be used in practice among representatives of the tourism industry. Some of them describe the concept as follows “creative tourists are travelers interested in actively participating in cultural experiences and engaging with local communities during their trips. They are seeking more immersive and hands-on activities that allow them to learn about local traditions, arts, and crafts. Creative tourists are usually curious, open-minded, and interested in exploring the cultural heritage of their destinations. They seek authentic and unique experiences that go beyond typical tourist attractions” [19].

Researchers such as G. Richards and C. Raymond emphasize that creative tourism is a tool that serves to enhance the creativity of tourists. Tourism which offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday destination where they are undertaken [10].

## 2. Materials and Methods

The aim of this article is to study the role and share of tourism in the creative economy of Uzbekistan, as well as to identify the factors hindering its development. Within the framework of the article, the methods of empirical observation, analysis and synthesis of statistical data were used to discover the relationship between the creative economy and tourism, the level of cooperation between these spheres and the ways to develop this cooperation. The study examined creative tourism and the factors affecting it, as well as the opinions of foreign and domestic academics. The results of the study are summarised and described in the final section.

## 3. Results

Erkin Gadoev, Chairman of the Committee on Budget and Economic Reforms of the Senate of Uzbekistan, reported that today there are 9,600 enterprises in the creative industry in Uzbekistan. They have 84,000 employees (205 IT centers, 100 design centers, 60 animation centers, 30 game development centers and more than 20 art galleries). There are also 28,000 artisans working in this area [13].

In addition to being a sector of the creative economy, the handicrafts industry is also an integral part of Uzbekistan's tourism sector. This is because souvenirs, national handicrafts and artworks bought by tourists are the creation of local craftsmen and, in turn, the creative economy. Tourism contributes to the creative economy of Uzbekistan through handicrafts. Through tourism, many types of crafts are being developed. Wood carving, embroidery and miniature art are considered to be particularly important areas of creativity.

Another area of Uzbekistan's creative economy, closely related to tourism, is festivals and shows. More than 10 international festivals are regularly organised in Uzbekistan, which are of great importance for attracting foreign tourists.

Many of the key festivals are directly commissioned and funded by Government: these tend to be focused on Uzbekistan's traditional music and arts. There is also a

growing range of independently organised events, often focusing on more contemporary forms of music, film, and other performing arts [17].

In addition, concert programmes of many famous stars are of great importance in local tourism. Such concerts are welcomed by local tourists with great interest. According to statistics, in 2023 compared to 2022, theatre ticket sales increased by 54.4%, the number of performances increased by 35.3%, the number of people visiting the theatre increased by 52.6%, and the number of domestic tourists increased by 35.3%. 35.2%. Another area of Uzbekistan's creative economy that is closely related to tourism is festivals and shows. More than 10 international festivals are regularly organised in Uzbekistan, which are of great importance for attracting foreign tourists [14].

Research has shown that areas of the creative economy such as music and performing arts are important for local tourism, and areas such as festivals, crafts and artwork are major draws for international tourists.

At the same time, the interest of foreign tourists in participating in local life and traditions gives rise to certain changes in cultural tourism, which is the main tourist direction of Uzbekistan, and the formation of creative tourism. Currently, more and more new creative tourism services are offered outside historical cities, as well as in rural areas.

#### 4. Discussion

From the above, it is clear that although the tourism sector is not mentioned among the 13 areas of the creative economy listed above, it is necessary to note the role and significance of tourism as an important consumer of the products of the creative economy. Because tourism directly influences and stimulates the creative economy through consumption.

Indeed, on the one hand, the association between tourism and creative industries can also promote the construction of a brand image and the creation of an atmosphere, and contribute to attracting talent [1]. And on the other hand, creativity is the process of transforming this knowledge into new knowledge, and into inventions that may (or may not) become innovations [2].

The studies published by the OECD on this issue are also very important. They demonstrate the following distinctive features that distinguish cultural tourism and creative tourism from each other (Table 1). As noted in these studies, in cultural tourism a considerable part of the supply is administered or financed by the public sector; creative tourism, on the other hand, involves a greater share of commercial supply and participation [1].

**Table 1.** Distinctions between cultural tourism and creative tourism (OECD)

	CULTURAL TOURISM	CREATIVE TOURISM
<i>Orientation</i>	Past	Future
<i>Externalities</i>	Conservation	Innovation
<i>Structure</i>	Products	Platforms and content
<i>Process</i>	Interpretation	Co-creation
<i>Value creation</i>	Value chains	Value networks
<i>Value focus</i>	Upstream	Downstream
<i>Funding</i>	Public	Commercial

In our opinion, these differences are also applicable in the context of Uzbekistan and serve to better distinguish the newly formed creative tourism from the traditionally existing cultural tourism. And this, in turn, allows for more widespread support for creative tourism.

It should be noted that, judging by the experience of many countries, such as England, the USA, Japan, China, the UAE, the development of creative tourism is directly related to the level of development of science and the innovative and economic potential of the country. Research shows that developing countries mainly export creative goods, while developed countries dominate the export of creative services. However, developing countries have significantly increased their share from 10% in 2010 to 20% in 2022 [16].

From this we can realize that the future of tourism and its further development will necessarily require new creative approaches to tourism. This process can only be realized in deep cooperation with the creative economy. That is, in a word, the tourism industry needs creativity and cannot develop without it. The development of creative economy, in turn, contributes to the development of tourism.

In the Uzbekistan context, this need is particularly evident in rural tourism. As noted by many researchers, Uzbekistan tourism, which is mainly based on historical cities and cultural heritage, needs diversification. Rural tourism and related industries are considered important areas for tourism diversification in Uzbekistan. However, it is impossible to create a new type of product without creativity in rural areas not visited by tourists.

This was confirmed by studies conducted on issues of rural tourism development, and 39.4% of respondents who participated in them complained about a lack of knowledge and business ideas [12]. The shortage of educated creative professionals in Uzbekistan is also reflected in the British Council's reports, which state the following: "as we found in our previous study, there continues to be a lack of familiarity with or critical appreciation of contemporary arts, including independent cinema and music. Our respondents told us that most audiences in Uzbekistan prefer 'more familiar' and traditional artforms. This is seen as a legacy of the soviet period with its limitations on creative expression and its formal education system, but some of our respondents expressed concern that students are still not given sufficient opportunity to experience or participate in cultural events." [17].

In addition, Uzbekistan faces the problem of financing new ideas and start-ups in the field of creative tourism, which is also related to the state of local legislation and the venture capital market.

## 5. Conclusion

In our opinion, it is impossible to give an unambiguous answer 'yes' or 'no' to the question whether tourism can be a direction of creative economy. Because the tourism product is formed from a set of services formed in the sectors of the economy of different origin and nature, and is a complex set in terms of structure. It includes both traditional sectors of the economy, such as hotels or transport services, and creative sectors of the economy, such as artworks and concerts. Perhaps, with time and technological progress, solutions will be offered to create products with new structures and characteristics, but for the moment the basic characteristic of tourism, which unites many sectors around a single purpose, has not fundamentally changed.

Therefore, we are confident that creative tourism together with creative economy sectors will become more popular in the future as a new direction of tourism and will open new opportunities for development. We believe that it is necessary to pay more attention to creative tourism in Uzbekistan, which is especially important for the development of rural tourism. Because the untapped tourism resources in rural areas of Uzbekistan can only be mobilised by creativity.



Unfortunately, so far only a small number of specialists work in tourism in Uzbekistan, and this sphere has become specific for representatives of a narrow circle. The majority of the population does not have sufficient knowledge in this field. In particular, the fundamental obstacles to the development of creative tourism are the low level of foreign language skills in rural areas, shortcomings related to infrastructure and information technology, the lack of skills of the population in entrepreneurship and service delivery, and a number of similar problems.

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