

THE ROLE OF TOURISM INDUSTRY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

The development of the tourism sector in the Republic of Belarus is recognized by the government as one of the priority areas of the country's economic development. It is one of the main factors creating additional jobs, it accelerates the development of road and hotel construction, stimulates the production of all types of vehicles, and contributes to the preservation of folk crafts and national culture of the regions and the country as a whole.

For many countries in the world, tourism is a major source of income at both the micro and macroeconomic levels world (one of the top 5 sources of income for 83 % of states, the main source of income for 38 % of states).

Tourism has a huge impact on such key sectors of the economy as transport and communications, construction, agriculture, production of consumer goods and others, i.e., it acts as a kind of catalyst for socio-economic development. In turn, the development of tourism is influenced by various factors: demographic, natural-geographical, socio-economic, historical, religious and political-legal ones.

Tourism stimulates the development of infrastructure elements — hotels, restaurants, trade enterprises and the like. It predetermines the increase in the revenue part of the budget due to taxes, which can be direct (visa fees, customs duties) or indirect (i.e., increase in wages of workers causes an increase in the amount of income tax, which is paid by them to the budget). In addition, as noted above, tourism has ample opportunities for attracting foreign currency and various kinds of investments.

One of very important economic functions of tourism is the diversification of the economy, forming industries that serve the tourism industry, it provides an increase in income of the population and improves the welfare of the nation. Also, the impact of tourism on economic development is to increase business activity and expand the production of goods and services as a result of increased demand from foreign and local tourists.

From an economic point of view, the attractiveness of tourism as an industry that provides services lies in a faster return on investment and income in freely convertible currency.

Regarding the economic contribution of tourism to the GDP of the Republic of Belarus, its share in the country's GDP has demonstrated a stable growth in the pre-Covid period and in 2019 amounted to 2,2 %. However, the coronavirus pandemic, the economic sanctions of the EU and the United States became a serious challenge for the tourism in-

dustry in Belarus and led to a decline in both travel agencies and tourists, and consequently affected GDP growth [1].

Reference

1. *Суслова, Н.* Статистика: прошлогодние реалии отечественного туризма [Электронный ресурс] / Н. Суслова // Planeta BELARUS. — Режим доступа: <https://planetabelarus.by/publications/statistika-proshlogodnie-realii-otechestvennogo-turizma/>. — Дата доступа: 01.12.2023.