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Restoration of Population Health as a Factor in the Socio-Economic Stability of the State

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ABSTRACT

The paper justifies the need to develop a new direction of tourism in Uzbekistan – medical (health) tourism. The national tourism's SWOT-analysis was carried out and its outcomes enabled to make recommendations for the restoration of national tourism in the postCOVID period based on the UN report "COVID-19 and the transformation of tourism". In order to increase competitiveness some factors are to be adjusted.

Keywords: recreation, treatment, SWOT-analysis, competitiveness, diversification, pandemic, public health.

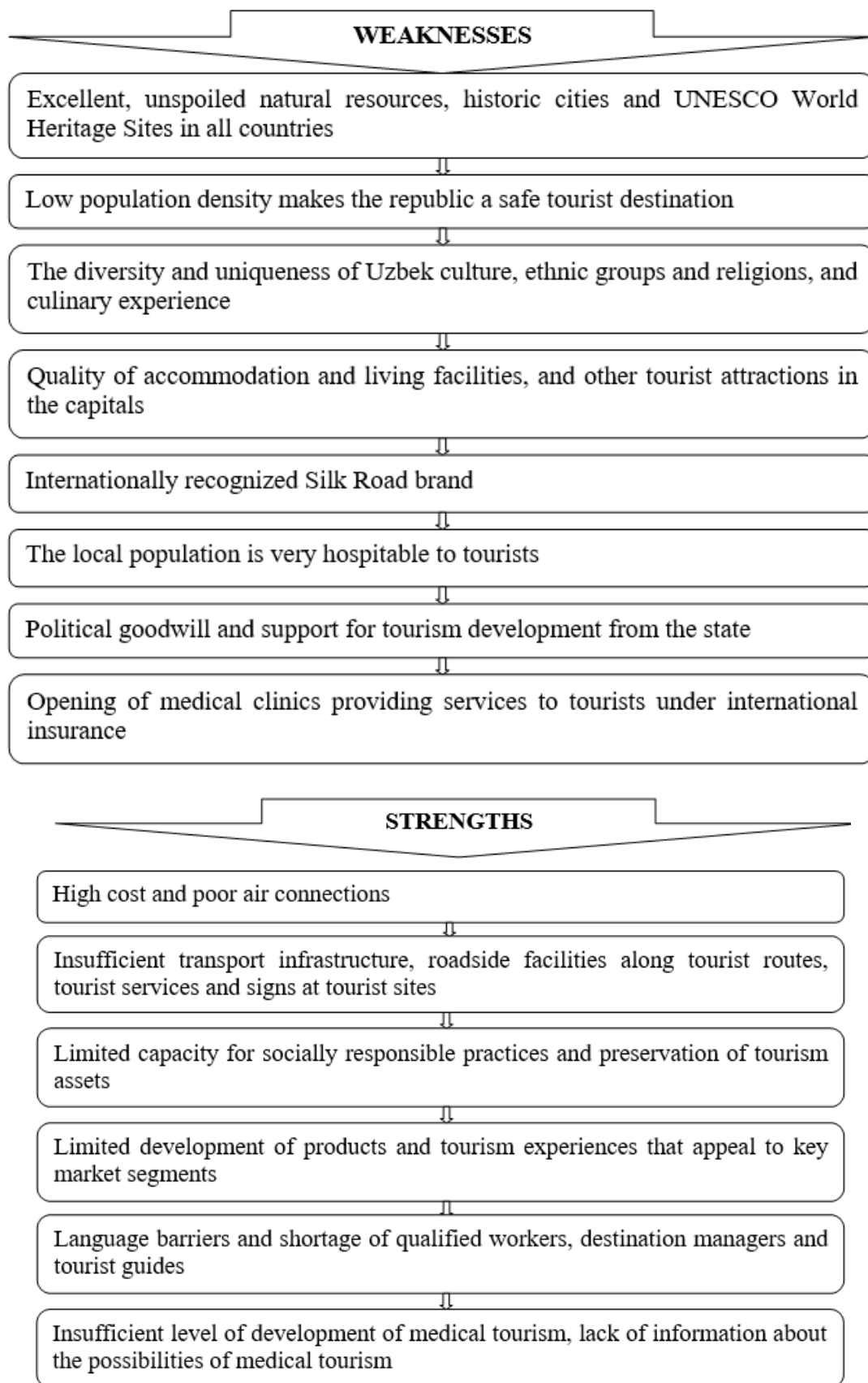
Introduction. In the current conditions of overcoming the consequences of the pandemic and political instability in neighboring states, the priority task of the state is the speedy restoration of national tourism and a consistent increase in the competitiveness of the industry based on the transition of tourism from a traditional to an investment-innovative development model. This approach is consistent with the Concept for the Development of the Tourism Sector in the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2019-2025, which is aimed at achieving increased efficiency of ongoing reforms to create favorable economic conditions and prerequisites, developing priority goals and objectives for the accelerated development of the tourism industry, increasing its role and contribution to the economy, diversifying and improving the quality of services, as well as improving the tourism infrastructure.

Treatment and recreation in Uzbekistan will be a new competitive product for both foreigners and locals. High-quality inexpensive laboratory tests, diagnostic tests and basic medical procedures can be included in the tour content. In the "Concept for the Development of the Healthcare System of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2019-2025", in order to develop medical tourism in the republic, the task is to develop a strategy for the development of inbound medical tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan and a "road map" for its implementation, aimed at radically increasing the tourism potential of domestic medical organizations.

Analysis and results.

According to UNWTO, from January to August alone, the drop in export revenue from international tourism amounted to \$730 billion compared to the same period in 2019. This is more than 8 times higher than the losses incurred as a result of the global economic and financial crisis

of 2008–2009. At that time, due to the economic downturn, rising fuel prices and falling demand for tickets and package tours, dozens of air carriers and tour operators around the world left the market.



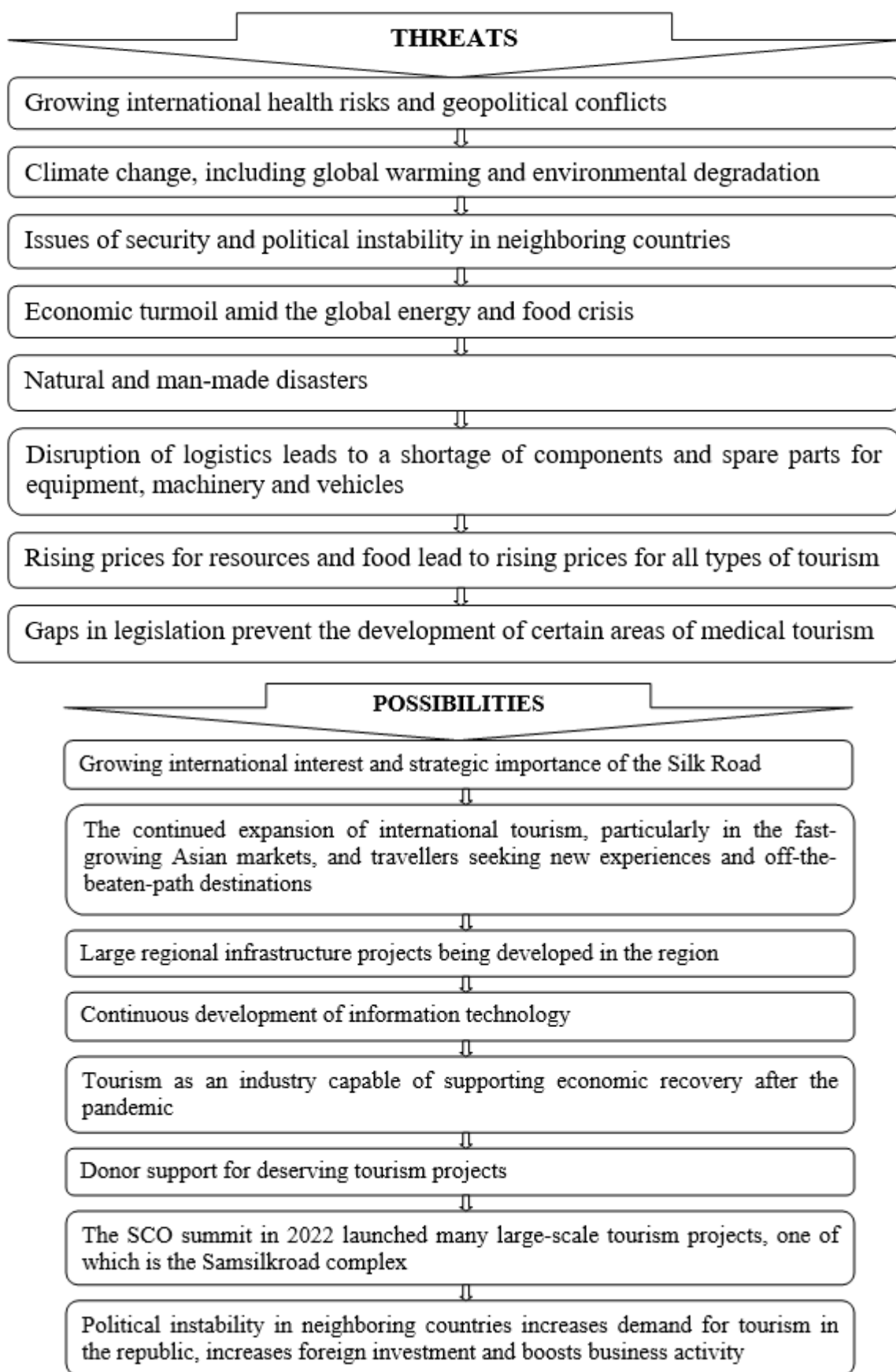


Figure 1. SWOT analysis of the competitiveness of national tourism in Uzbekistan in the context of overcoming the consequences of the pandemic.

The conducted SWOT analysis of competitiveness will allow developing a concept for the development of national tourism in the post-COVID period. Moreover, coordination and cooperation with global regulators in the field of tourism and healthcare are of no small

importance here. A separate destination, a state, can strengthen its competitive advantages through the development of domestic tourism, but inbound tourism is impossible without coordinated actions and joint projects for further development.

An integrated approach to the development of regional tourism allows partners to coordinate their policies and actions, develop and implement events that help compete in the fight for consumers. Therefore, when discussing the competitiveness of a tourism organization, it is impossible to consider it without the competitiveness of the destination and tourism. This relative property of the organization arises only in the conditions of competitive conditions both in the region and in the country as a whole. The interest of the government, regulators, and local community in the development of tourism creates fundamental conditions for the formation of competition in the tourist services market.

Five priority areas for transforming tourism after the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Mitigation of socio-economic consequences (preservation of jobs, strengthening of trust and security). For this purpose, it is necessary to develop a systemic approach to solving problems both at the government level by adopting regulatory legal acts that adjust previously adopted documents taking into account the impact of the pandemic, and at the level of local governments through the implementation of employment promotion programs by involving the Employment Promotion Department, organizing a program for reorienting the qualifications and skills of young people in accordance with the requirements of the labor market, introducing innovative employment, a fair system of support for low-income groups of the population based on maintaining social journals;
- Increasing competitiveness and sustainability (development of tourism infrastructure and improvement of the quality of services provided, diversification of products and markets, promotion of domestic tourism). The development and implementation of the Concept of year-round tourism in Uzbekistan will increase the level of competitiveness of national tourism, open new destinations in the republic, increase the relevance, prestige and profitability of domestic tourism. Of course, all this is possible based on the transition to an innovative and investment model of competitiveness;
- Digitalization (digitalization of the tourism ecosystem, creation of innovative solutions, investments in digital skills). Promotion of the national brand, information about innovations in the field of entry into the country, quarantine measures, visa support, booking can be improved by creating a national tourism platform that provides services to both tourism organizations and tourists;
- Greening (promoting sustainable development, implementing carbon-neutral solutions, developing ecotourism). To green the economy, it is necessary to use a set of financial and investment instruments - introduce a stock environmental index that will allow investors to direct funds to shares of the most environmentally responsible enterprises. In this way, it is necessary to turn the environmental effect into a factor in business capitalization. The business that is more environmentally friendly and transparent should be worth more than the business of less efficient and more closed enterprises;
- Coordination and partnership for sector transformation and sustainable development goals. A successful transition to a more sustainable and resilient tourism model will depend heavily on public-private cooperation and partnerships. To ensure the effective implementation of recovery plans, it is necessary to strengthen cooperation between key actors along the tourism value chain, at the international and destination levels, and prioritise inclusive and participatory approaches.

Conclusion:

Tourism recovery financing must seek to balance the immediate assistance needed to ensure businesses survive, jobs are preserved and tourism activity resumes, with longer-term goals such

as protecting ecosystems and addressing climate change, which not only underpin the global economy but also provide opportunities for decent and green jobs. This will require innovative financing solutions and combined public-private approaches.

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