

## CLUSTER TECHNOLOGIES IN THE POSITIONING OF THE TOURISM MARKET

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The article on the basis of theoretical analysis substantiates the necessity of formation and application of tourist clusters for increasing the competitiveness of the national economy. Important tasks that the tourist cluster allows to solve, as well as, the positive effect that is possible from uniting enterprises into a typical cluster are presented. Theoretical analysis of information sources of a number of scientists made it possible to identify certain aspects, characteristics and components of the cluster, which in turn allowed the authors to define their own regional tourist cluster. The authors of the article emphasize that the application of the cluster approach will create a successfully competing tourist destination based on an innovative platform, generate and implement new proposals on the market, stimulate entrepreneurial activity and the growth of accompanying and supporting industries.

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**Keywords:** Tourism infrastructure, regional tourist cluster, state regulation of tourism, forecasting of tourism development, tourism development strategy

In present, the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2013-2017, adopted by the Decree of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic on January 21, 2013, which refers to the importance of the development of the tourism industry and emphasizes: "In the Republic has a high tourist and recreational potential, on its territory is concentrated a wide range of unique natural and recreational resources, objects of national, cultural and historical heritage. At the same time, there are a number of problems hampering the further development of the tourism industry. And to solve these problems, a policy is formulated where one of the first and main measures is: "the creation of *tourist clusters*, which involves the concentration within the limited territory of enterprises and organizations engaged in the development, production, promotion and sale of tourist products".

To date, despite the fact that fundamental scientific research has been carried out on the development of tourism in some foreign countries, in Kyrgyzstan the issues of managing the development of the tourist market are still not deeply researched and required in-depth analysis and scientific reflections. The formation and application of tourist clusters is determined by the need for theoretically substantiated and practically significant developments providing an effective management system in the regional tourist cluster.

The tourist cluster allows to solve such important tasks as the inventory of tourist resources; creation of a modern tourist market; priority development of domestic and incoming tourism in the territory; formation of a system of state regulation of tourism; development of various types of tourism; support for the development of various types of entrepreneur-

ship (medium and small) in the tourism sector; integration of the territory into the system of the domestic and world tourism market and development of international cooperation in this field; attraction of extra-budgetary sources for the reconstruction and construction of tourist facilities; creation of a modern system of training, retraining and advanced training of tourist personnel; implementation of comprehensive basic scientific research in the field of tourism, taking into account territorial features.

### Literature review

In economic studies of the prospects for the development of various sectors of the domestic economy, in particular regional tourism, the concept of "cluster" is used. The cluster approach is applied as one of the paradigms for the development of the tourist industry.

As a consequence, the problems of identifying clusters, the use of cluster technologies in the tourism industry, the assessment of their impact on the economy of the Kyrgyz Republic, and the management of their development in this area are becoming increasingly important.

The cluster approach was originally applied to industrial production, one of the founders of which was A. Marshall. Today, according to many researchers, the cluster ideas for increasing regional competitiveness are promoted by Michael Porter the professor of Harvard Business School. According to his classical definition of the term "cluster" means "geographically concentrated groups of inter-related companies, suppliers of goods and services, firms specializing in relevant industries, as well as related organizations that compete with each other, but at the same time engaged in joint activities" [10].

According to another, more refined definition of M. Porter, a cluster is understood as “a geographically close group of related companies and interacting institutions in a specific area, bound by communities and complementarities” [11]. To date, there are more than 20 well-known definitions of the cluster.

Classic examples are the cluster of computer technologies in Silicon Valley (USA), the logistical cluster in Rotterdam (Netherlands), the cluster of offshore programming in Bangalore (India) [6].

Theory of the cluster or the application of cluster technologies is currently being implemented in many sectors of the economy by many countries of the world and quite successfully. As for tourism, countries such as Canada, the United States, many European and Asian countries (Greece, Croatia, Finland, Italy, China, Singapore, Malaysia, etc.), using this approach as a development tool, managed to achieve positive results.

The main theoretical provisions concerning the application of the cluster approach in various sectors of the economy were determined by P. Fischer and D. Jakobson; among Russian authors we note D.A. Yalova, R.Kh. Khasanov, V.B. Kondratyev and others.

The analysis of sources of information shows that in the modern professional literature the concept of a “tourist cluster” is already widely used. It is used by such researchers as A.B. Aleksandrova, E.V. Belyakova, M.M. Makoyev, O.S. Mozgovaya, I.S. Miloslavsky, A.N. Morozov, O.Zh. Ustenova and others.

Scientists such as E.M. Bergman, B.K. Boyd, Courtland L. Bovee, Gohn V. Thill, S. Gronroos, S.J. Page, J. Connell, S. Pike, and A.B. Rodrigues, W. Freyer, J.E. Fletcher, J. Warming, D. Weaver, L. Lawton, M. Montford, M. Beni and S. Nordin were engaged in scientific research in the field of tourist clusters, in particular the application of industrial cluster concepts to tourism.

M. Porter's main points on the cluster approach, applied to the tourist industry, were first taken into account by M. Monford, who paid much attention to the characteristics and components of the cluster. Its concept of a tourist cluster includes the following aspects:

- availability of tourist services;
- impressions of the rest;
- synergetic effect of enterprises in related industries, services for accommodation, meals, excursions, etc.;
- transport infrastructure and accessibility of information about the tourist product;

- briefing and familiarization services, as well as promotion of the territory in the tourist market;

- natural and recreational resources and regional institutional policy [5, p. 67-68].

Unlike M. Monford, who paid attention to the characteristics and components of the cluster, M. Beni stressed the externally observed relationship between agencies, co-operation between them, in the form of networks in the definition of a tourist cluster: “A tourist cluster is a group of tourist attractions in a limited geographical area, secured a high level of infrastructure and services development, which has established social and political ties, as well as well-managed management in the companies that form networks for the production of tourism services, provide strategic competitive and comparative advantages” [15].

A. Rodriguez defined the tourist cluster as “a group of companies and institutions located on a geographical basis and having vertical links (chains of companies that produce a tourist product) and horizontal communications (including industry, regulatory support, information exchange) that produce a tourist product or group of products” [14].

S. Nordin was engaged in theoretical substantiation of the tourist cluster and the possibility of applying this theory in practice.

The configuration of the tourist cluster according to S. Nordin is:

- a complex of tourist resources attracting non-indigenous residents of the territory;
- the concentration of companies aimed at meeting the tourist demand: restaurants, accommodation sector, transportation services, crafts and tourist agencies, etc.;
- sectors and industries aimed at supporting tourism services;
- environmentally friendly and cheap infrastructure (roads, fuel, sewerage, medical care);
- companies and institutions that provide the necessary skills for personnel, information support and financial capital;
- internal agencies that organize and implement the cluster concept;
- state bodies, regulating and coordinating structures influencing cluster formations [15].

Sufficiently short but informative concept of the tourist cluster is illustrated in “International Tourism” textbook by A.Yu. Aleksandrova: “A tourist cluster is a system of inter-related firms, organizations, institutions and related executive authorities that form and serve tourist flows using tourist and recreational potential of the territory” [1].

A.Yu. Alexandrova's claims, clusters are an important factor in the development of the tourism industry.

However, there is no single interpretation of the concept of the "tourist cluster" in specialized literature, especially in the legislation of our country, which allows us to generalize and give the following definition: *"Regional Tourist Cluster" is a form of tourism organization that includes a set of enterprises in the material production sector, tourist specialization and tourist services in a specific territory, as well as related industries, which are united by horizontal and vertical links, the cooperation and activities of which lead to synergy in general and its individual enterprises.*

### Results of research and their discussion

A distinctive feature of the tourist cluster in – it's territorially routing organization. As defined by M.B. Birzhakov the tourist route is a geographically defined path of movement of a tourist or group of tourists, tied to the terrain, and the corresponding tourist stream connect objects, transforming them from competitors into interacting elements of the system [3].

The geographical scales of tourist clusters vary from local and regional to interregional. For example, in Mexico, the tourist cluster is the resort of Cancun, and in Indonesia – a resort on

the island of Bali. Croatia and Slovenia agreed to establish a cross-border tourist cluster [12].

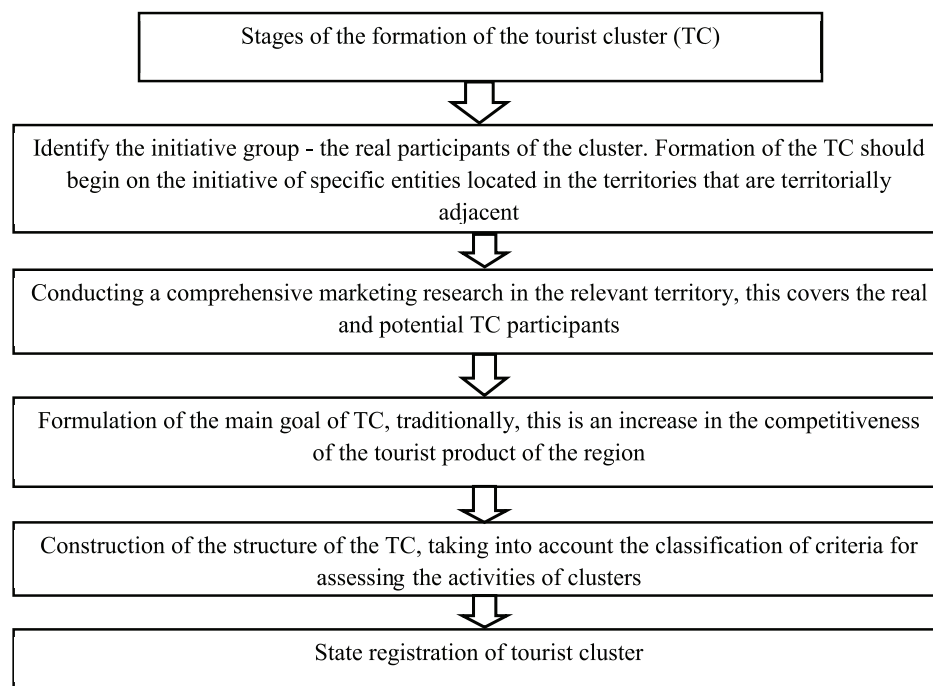
Before starting to form a cluster of tourism, it is necessary to conduct a cluster analysis, make a forecast of its development and choose an effective development strategy.

The application of cluster technologies in the tourism industry of the Kyrgyz Republic, aimed at creating favorable conditions for the development of inbound and domestic tourism, using all the potential opportunities of the republic, will contribute increasing the efficiency and competitiveness of the national economy.

Tourist clusters are characterized by various directions of development, the disintegration of some, the enlargement and expansion of others. However, it is the high competition that pushes them to cooperate, joint partnership and activities with other sector clusters, which is the process of forming a tourist cluster in the region.

This process is characterized by the presence of various signs, the use of which makes it possible to evaluate the development of tourism in the region from a qualitative and quantitative point of view. Evaluation of individual characteristics in groups allows us to identify the conditions for the formation and development of a cluster.

Figure shows the stages of the formation of the tourist cluster.



The formation of the tourist cluster, its main stages

Levels of evaluation of the efficiency of a typical tourist cluster

Subject of evaluation	Possible effect	Possible indicators for the assessment
Sector of production of basic tourist services	Attraction of investments; Increase in the provision of tourist services Optimizing the use of shared resources Decrease in the cost price Development of new types of tourism services Increase in the number of tourists Expansion of sales markets Reducing risks	Profit Revenues from sales; profitability Change in the share of cluster production in the world market Number of new products and services Change in the share of the cluster in the regional gross product.
Service sector	Additional advertising Entering new markets The expansion of the customer base Increase in the volume of travel services provided Increase in profit	Providing graduates with jobs, additional funding Revenues from sales; profitability The number of new markets for which the products of the cluster are supplied The change in the number of economic agents in the cluster Level of investment
Subsidiary sector	Creation of new workplaces Increase in the volume of travel services provided Decrease in cost price Increase in profit Increase in the volume of tax revenues	Profit (increase, loss) Revenues from sales; profitability Number of new jobs Increase in the volume of tax revenues Number of new companies
Sector ensuring the life	Development of marketing strategy Reducing the cost of an advertising campaign Reduction of logistics costs, profitability	The effectiveness of advertising costs in comparison with the "before clustering period", and the cost

Studying the tourist cluster as an economic category makes it possible to distinguish its goals, objectives and main provisions [13; 15].

The formation of a competitive tourism industry remains the main mission of the tourist cluster, including such elements as human resources, attracted places for sightseeing, sights, knowledge, tourism products, capital, etc.

Accordingly, the achievement of the goal of the cluster is possible by positioning the region or country on the international tourism market by creating an appropriate infrastructure and carrying out activities and initiatives in this area.

Of course, the achievement of the goal requires considerable efforts to address a number of important tasks of the cluster: the preparation of an appropriate regulatory framework or improvement of the existing one; creation of conditions for the construction and modernization of the material and technical basis (MTB), infrastructure; education, training and professional development of human resources; creation of a favorable investment climate; improvement or application of innovative technologies in the tourist industry.

Further efforts to compile the map, core and links of the cluster allow including all in-

terested direct and indirect economic entities, with the construction of a vertical and horizontal structure of interaction.

Cluster meetings provide an open discussion of problems for their solution and initiatives for their development, adoption of joint decisions; development and maintenance of constructive dialogue, provision of assistance and strategic guidance for cluster members. Meetings of working groups are aimed at identifying action plans for solving specific problems, organizing presentations of the results of the working group, attracting international consultants to provide analysis and a strategic plan for entering the market, and to attract investment [2; 9; 11].

It is better to start determining the components of a cluster by considering a large firm or the concentration of similar firms, and then to identify a chain of vertically related lower and higher firms and organizations. Further, it is necessary to go horizontally branches passing through channels that produce products and services. Additional horizontal chains of industries are established based on the use of similar specialized factors of production and technology or are linked through supplies [4; 7; 15].



Successful implementation of the cluster depends on cooperation and trust between the public and private sectors. It is to the private sector that a big role is assigned, as it is represented by a high concentration of enterprises, where the need to create a cluster and guide the cluster is realized. The public sector represents factors such as financial resources, facilitation and processes that develop on the basis of factors [12].

For the efficient assessment of the cluster, various variables are used:

- measuring the overall performance of the cluster (increase in the number of firms, the volume of production, the volume of exports, etc.);
- indicators that characterize the impact of the cluster on the development of the territory or industry (gross regional product, unemployment, income level);
- indicators that assess the performance of each of the enterprises interacting within the cluster (revenue, profit, profitability);
- indicators of the effectiveness of the use of certain types of resources (material resources, capital investments, labor productivity) [13; 16].

Complex analysis shows that a positive effect is possible from the combination of enterprises in a typical cluster (see below Table).

In operation of the tourist cluster, the calculation of its effectiveness has significant differences from the assessment of the effectiveness of the activities of individual organizations, primarily because of the emergence of a synergistic effect.

The activity of a cluster association is evaluated on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the final results of its effectiveness. The economic essence of the efficiency of the tourist cluster is that, with a comprehensive approach to each unit of costs, a more significant increase in profit should be achieved through a synergistic effect than with a single approach of each individual tourist enterprise.

An effective activity of a tourist cluster can be considered only when, in the process of cluster functioning, the effectiveness of not only individual tourist enterprises but also the cluster as a whole is increased by multiplying the positive consequences of mutual support [11].

### Conclusions

In order to activate the state policy in the field of tourism development in the country, which is related to the launch of specific investment and infrastructure tourism projects,

the formation of tourist clusters, it is necessary to create an organizational, legal, coordinating, analytical and expert working groups.

Co-operation of economic entities in the tourism sector makes it possible to effectively use the capabilities of these collectives, and also promotes the development of related industries. The creation of a tourist cluster leads to a diversification and deepening of the specialization of products, the reconstruction of shared infrastructure, the benefit of a joint discussion of complex issues with suppliers. Cooperation of the network promotes the development of innovative models of the production process and organization, the exchange of technical and market information, agreements when buying and selling goods and services, developing a common marketing company. Interaction and synergy, resulting from joint actions, has a clear advantage over isolated companies [6].

International research shows that the establishment and development of a competitive national economy is assigned an important role in any state as a process of economic viability and international recognition, for which it is necessary to use all effective mechanisms.

World experience in the development of successful international companies, transnational corporations, and economic systems shows that the effective form of justification for economic growth is the theory and practice of the cluster mechanism of activating market relations and competitiveness. Thus, the development of the national economy largely depends on the formation and level of development of individual or cluster groups, which poses fundamentally new tasks, such as the choice of a competitive model of the economy and priority sectors that have a prospective economic potential for increasing the country's competitiveness.

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