

STUDY OF THE PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF SMALL TOURISM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY OF ALMATY

Yerlan ISSAKOV 

Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Institute of Natural Sciences and Geography,
Department of Geography and Ecology, Almaty, Kazakhstan, e-mail: erlan.issakov@gmail.com

Gulsara KAMELKHAN 

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Faculty of Geography and Environmental Sciences,
Department of UNESCO chair for Sustainable, Almaty, Kazakhstan, e-mail: guoyan82@mail.ru

Bagdagul IMANBEKOVA 

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Department of Geography, Faculty of Geography and
Environmental Sciences, Land Management and Cadastre, Almaty, Kazakhstan, e-mail: saulet.78@mail.ru

Kairat ZHOYA 

Almaty Technological University, Faculty of Economics and Business, Department
of Tourism and Service, Almaty, Kazakhstan, e-mail: hairat.altai@mail.ru

Assan ZHELDIBAYEV 

Almaty Technological University, Faculty of Economics and Business, Department
of Tourism and Service, Almaty, Kazakhstan, e-mail: zheldibaev.asan@mail.ru

Dinara MOLZHIGITOVA 

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Department of Geography, Faculty of Geography and
Environmental Sciences, Land Management and Cadastre, Almaty, Kazakhstan, e-mail: dikosh.m@mail.ru

Lóránt Dénes DÁVID 

John von Neumann University, Faculty of Economics and Business, Kecskemét, Hungary; Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life
Sciences, Institute of Rural Development and Sustainable Economy, Gödöllő, Hungary, e-mail: david.lorant.denes@gtk.uni-neumann.hu

Citation: Issakov, Y., Kamelkhan, G., Imanbekova, B., Zhoya, K., Zheldibayev, A., Molzhigitova, D., & Dávid, L.D. (2023).
STUDY OF THE PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF SMALL TOURISM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY OF
ALMATY. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 46(1), 293–303. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.46133-1027>

Abstract: This study is based on an understanding of the state of development of small tourism businesses in Almaty, one of the oldest settlements located along the Great Silk Road. The aim of the study was to obtain accurate data on the current state of development of small tourism businesses in Almaty and to identify problems and prospects. In the course of the research, 655 questionnaire responses from business owners and managers meeting the selection criteria were selected and rigorously monitored over a period of 3 months. As a result of the study, the most important problems of small tourism businesses in Almaty were identified, which include: 75.7% of respondents lacked knowledge about tourism activities; 53.6% of entrepreneurs do not conclude contracts with employees; 82% of business representatives do not have marketing plans; and, as a consequence, inability to obtain loans from banks; and the consequences of the war in Ukraine. However, we also saw some positive trends in the survey: the willingness of respondents to overcome the consequences and the crisis of the covid pandemic-19; motivation to develop their own business; 28.7% of young entrepreneurs; 74.7% of individual entrepreneurs invest in small tourism businesses. Thus, this study is an auxiliary tool for solving the problem of sustainable development of tourism infrastructure of Almaty, service activities, problems arising in small tourism business.

Key words: Small tourism businesses, problems and prospects, Almaty City, Kazakhstan

* * * * *

INTRODUCTION

In today's global economic environment, tourism is becoming one of the leading and dynamic industries. After all, tourism contributes to the development of key sectors of the economy by increasing tax revenues to the budget, the inflow of foreign currency, the number of jobs (Haque and Islam, 2018; Mirsayakova, 2016). Tourism can also represent socio-economic and cultural heritage, create jobs, increase investment and products, and provide technological development (Aktymbayeva et al., 2020; Tlesova et al., 2020). Tourism business as an academic field with interdisciplinary linkages focuses on the personal qualities of entrepreneurs, the entrepreneurial process, especially the venture creation process, and the entrepreneurial environment, relationships and interactions (Kirzner, 2009; Abouelhassan et al., 2021).

* Corresponding author

Entrepreneurship plays an important role in the formation and development of tourism business destinations (Russell and Faulkner, 1999, 2004; Li, 2008; Shaw and Williams, 2004). A small tourism business is a tourism business with less than 50 employees (Tomassini et al., 2021), so many scholars consider any business offering travel-related services to be a small tourism business, including travel agencies, hotels, eateries, gift shops and more (Thomas and Thomas, 2005).

Small tourism businesses are of great importance within the national economy as they create conditions for job creation, increase total production and relative investment and production (Ateljevic, 2007). In addition, it helps to balance disparities in development between regions ready to adhere to technological development and increase competition. It enables adaptation to innovation in a changing economy. Small tourism enterprises play a key role in local tourism development (Orlovskaya and Bogdanov, 2022). In comparison, in terms of technology and capital, it allows people to start a business, meet the employment needs of the business owner, and gain direct employment for family and other locals (Getz and Petersen, 2005; Bhagat et al., 2022). However, the lack of theoretical and empirical evidence in the study of small tourism businesses is one of the problems of current research. Given the scale of tourism business in many countries, sample surveys or regional studies are usually the only available basis for many academic studies (Ateljevic and Doorne, 2004; Ateljevic, 2022). Kazakhstan is located not only in a favourable geopolitical environment, but also possesses natural (mountains, rivers, lakes, reservoirs), and recreational resources and world historical and cultural heritage sites. Kazakhstan has all the prerequisites to become a major player in the tourism business in Central Asia (Dávid, 2004; Duda-Gromada, et al. 2010; Tóth, et al, 2010; Baiburiev et al., 2018).

However, at present, the pace of tourism business development is declining, and the socio-economic effect on the scale of the country is insignificant. The reason is that the quality of services is low and the price is high (Tursynova et al., 2019). Therefore, it is very important to increase the capacity of the industry by reducing barriers and strategic planning in order to increase the tourist flow across the country (Dávid et al., 2007; Allayarov et al., 2018). In this regard, domestic scholar Yerdauletov et al. (2013) point out that the driver of the tourism industry in the Republic of Kazakhstan is the city of Almaty. Indeed, in the economy of Almaty, the tourism business is in second place after light industry (Kozbagarova et al., 2022).

Thus, the city of Almaty, playing an important role in the development of Kazakhstan's economy, leads in the formation of the tourist market, development of competition, satisfaction of demand for goods and services, introduction of new technologies. However, for the city of Almaty there is no sufficiently accurate data regarding domestic or international travel, tourism revenues, employment in the tourism sector and small tourism businesses. There is no information other than that provided by the Statistics Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand the current state of small tourism businesses in Almaty (assessing their contribution to the development of the tourism industry), to obtain accurate data and to identify problems and prospects for small tourism businesses based on tourism planning in the region. This study helps to understand barriers to increasing efficiency of small tourism business in Almaty, marketing aspects, human resource management structure, the level of development of small tourism business industry, strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and risks of tourism enterprises, major problems and prospects of small tourism business.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. The concept of entrepreneurship in the tourism business

Entrepreneurship in tourism business covers the fields of behaviour and activities of entrepreneurs, individuals in small business, entrepreneurship education and training, new business and corporate entrepreneurship (Page et al., 1999; Aitzhanova, 2019). Entrepreneurship, as an academic field with interdisciplinary overlap, aims to better understand the social phenomenon of new venture creation. However, as most research is based on individual entrepreneurs and small businesses, research into the venture creation process is limited (Kazmagambet, 2018). Therefore, the decisions made by entrepreneurs directly determine the direction in which the business will evolve. The study of tourism entrepreneurship focuses on the personal qualities of entrepreneurs, the entrepreneurial process, especially the process of setting up an enterprise, and the entrepreneurial environment and the relationships between them. Indeed, the physical and social environment of a region has a significant impact on entrepreneurship. For example, Davidsson and Henrekson (2002) noted the importance of values, beliefs, culture, networks and other regional factors. This is because a free and competitive market, profit generation, introduction of incentive programmes, compliance with business legislation and limited taxation are all conducive to small business development. It also offers significant opportunities for entrepreneurs operating in a rapidly changing environment (Mallinguh et al., 2022). The European Union has defined a small tourism business as a tourism business with less than 50 employees. Thus, there are different types of small tourism businesses.

Many scholars believe that the category of small tourism business includes any enterprise providing travel-related services (Thomas et al., 2011), which includes accommodation, catering, souvenir shops and more. Compared to large and medium-sized tourism enterprises, small tourism enterprises are characterised by low investment, lower margins and flexibility of operations (Sakhidauletulu, 2019). The goal of most small tourism business owners in the UK is to create family needs, income and a better lifestyle (Shaw, 2011). Relatively speaking, life-oriented entrepreneurs get better market opportunities, deliver innovative products to their destination, create market segments and promote the sustainable development of directions (Kassai et al., 2016). Also, as a result of the review of the literature, factors affecting the attraction of entrepreneurs to tourist destinations were named, which include: natural beauty and climate; sports, recreational and educational institutions; infrastructure; cultural and social characteristics; accessibility of the region; price level; trade and commercial facilities; and attitude towards tourists, etc (Bujdosó and Dávid, 2013).

Russell and Faulkner (2004) note that tourist destinations are constantly evolving, creating different opportunities for entrepreneurs. Later, based on the study of the Gold Coast of Australia, he additionally explained how it works. A case study conducted by Fuchs (2022) showed that the development of entrepreneurship is significantly influenced by regional

characteristics and the business environment. The business environment and direction support are key factors in entrepreneurial success. The more popular the entrepreneurial culture in society, the more prone people are to risky actions and failures, and they stimulate the financial independence of young people, helping to develop entrepreneurship, exchange resources. Shaw and Williams (1996) stressed the importance of cooperation and communication within destinations for small tourism businesses. The quantity and quality of support from the local community and the government plays a decisive role in the creation of small tourism business enterprises (Priatmoko et al., 2021).

Thus, it can be said that the study of the impact of regional conditions on entrepreneurship is limited. Although researchers have listed potential influencing factors, it is very rare to find empirical studies of decisions about setting up a venture capital enterprise, especially location decisions. At the same time, all current statements and conclusions are based on the experience of a developed society, therefore, an empirical study of developing economies is necessary. Otherwise, entrepreneurs may have opportunities for cross-border cooperation (Bujdosó et al., 2015).

2.2 Economic importance of small tourism business

Small business is known to all of us as an important participant in economic development, job creation, innovation, income generation and national and international economy, health and well-being. Due to the importance of small business, many international and national agencies around the world provide various support for small business development. However, as practice shows, support programs (the specific needs of target small enterprises) did not achieve the desired results due to the fact that they were not taken into account when creating programs. It is known that small enterprises make up a statistically significant share of the national and international economy. For example, small businesses account for 98.4% of all enterprises in Turkey, 99.7% of all firms in the US and about 70% of all jobs in Japan, 99.2% of all enterprises in the UK and about 99% of all enterprises in the European Union (Akbaba, 2012). These statistics are also reflected in the tourism industry. Internationally, the tourism industry has traditionally been described as a small, independent, peripheral, seasonal and often family-run business. Despite the importance of small businesses to a country's economy and their significant role in the tourism industry, the study of small tourism business is insufficient (Sergeeva, 2019). Most studies of small tourism businesses focus on agro tourism, with a particular focus on the accommodation sector (Plokhikh et al., 2022; Ogutu et al., 2023). In addition, small tourism businesses are often less visible in urban and resort settings than large ones, so they receive less attention. Although small enterprises share many characteristics, the medium-sized sector in which they operate needs to be considered when analysing the performance, features or management issues of small enterprises.

From a review of small business and tourism literature, access to the general definition of small tourism business is a big problem. Most studies in this area do not specify the definition they use. Rhodri Thomas and Huw Thomas (2005) define small businesses as "independent commercial enterprises that make operational decisions." Also, the small tourism business considered: "an enterprise with a small number of physical capabilities, production capacity, services, market share and staff, financed by one person or a small group and managed by its owner (s)" (Thomas and Thomas, 2005).

As mentioned in this definition, there are various indicators that can be used to determine the size of the tourism business. Number of employees; salary paid over a period of time; amount of capital; sales revenue; number of rooms / beds; provision of some premises such as conference rooms, banquet halls and restaurant halls and their capacity; availability of ancillary services such as swimming pool, parking, shops, etc.; all this can be counted as the basis for classification. Among them, the number of employees is the most accepted and used indicator. In his research, Thomas et al. (2011) defined a small business as "an enterprise that employs fewer than 50 people." In the world, many countries use the definition of "small business" that Thomas uses. The use of the same definition not only makes it possible to apply a comparative methodology, but also to cover a significant part of tourist enterprises, since the small tourism business makes up the majority of the industry (Bekzhanov, 2018). Morrison and Teixeira (2013) say that "traditionally the tourism industry has been dominated by small businesses". In the UK, the share of small and medium - sized enterprises in the tourism industry is relatively high - they account for 80% of the sector's enterprises (Morrison and Teixeira, 2013).

The Australian Bureau of Statistics defines small businesses as businesses with fewer than 20 people employed, accounting for 91% of businesses in tourism-related industries. A similar picture is observed in Turkey. In Turkey, small enterprises account for 98.4% of all enterprises, they account for 47.1% of employment and 14.1% of gross value added. The situation is similar in the Turkish tourism industry (Yıldırım et al., 2015).

Small enterprises are of great importance in the analysis within the framework of national economies, as they allow creating jobs, increasing the total volume of production and, relatively speaking, investments and products. In addition, it helps balance development inequality between regions that are willing to follow technological development; supports individual accumulation and provides flexibility to adapt to changing economic conditions and innovation. In addition to these general benefits that small businesses offer, they also offer special benefits for the region and community in which they operate. Small tourism business provides jobs for local residents, contributes to economic diversity and stability; accelerates the development of the region and helps to increase the level of Social Development (Orymbaeva, 2014).

Bengtson, Pahlberg and Pourmand (2009) noted that strategic marketing activities in small travel firms are neither permanent nor complex. These shortcomings are the cause of many difficulties in doing business, and this leads to low productivity, failure in business. The development of small tourism business in developing countries is hampered by a number of factors. There are no such factors in developed countries. Rural tourism in South Africa, for example, is dominated by the number of informal sector enterprises operating at the lowest level of livelihood; government support services in marketing, infrastructure, supply chains, business communities and information are essential. According to the Rogersons, structures inherited from the colonial period can interfere with the entrepreneurial activity of residents or restrict them to certain sectors. Incoming or returning migrants often dominate entrepreneurship, while local elites prefer to

develop business ties with international travel agencies (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2010). On this occasion, Getz and Carlsen (2005) studied small and family businesses on the Danish island of Bornholm, noting that these businesses can easily adjust the degree of participation in terms of investment and time. In the low season, many business owners prefer to temporarily suspend their activities and engage in other activities, while in the high season they may restart or even expand the business to cover the increase in demand. Such flexibility is important to minimize the impact of extreme seasonality for the destination.

Although the generally accepted definition of local economic development remains unclear, there is a certain consensus that includes focusing on a particular territory, as well as taking care of sustainable economic, social and environmental well-being. The development of small tourism businesses is consistent with these comprehensive ideas, as they open up the prospect of using local resources and skills and provide significant and proven development benefits for local communities. It is believed that having a small business makes it easier for the local population to control their economic participation and the development of tourism, in addition, it provides greater independence and dynamism in dealing with changing economic conditions. This corresponds to one of the main features of local economic development, namely, it seeks to stimulate growth and diversify the local economic base.

BACKGROUND

1. The state of small tourism business in Almaty

The city of Almaty is one of the oldest settlements on the Great Silk Road, known in the first millennium of our era (Aktymbayeva et al., 2020). It is considered the southern capital and financial center of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The city is located in the foothills of Alatau, has a tourist status, is one of the unique places in Kazakhstan where tourist activity is developed. Therefore, the city of Almaty has a unique natural potential for the development of tourism, a rich historical and cultural heritage, a developed transport and logistics infrastructure and the opportunity to develop the tourism business (Tóth et al., 2012). Strategic priorities for the development of tourism in the country are set out in the state program for the development of the tourism industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2019-2025 (Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated May 31, 2019). Within its framework, the mountain cluster of the Almaty region was included in the top-10 destinations of the country (Figure 1) (Makenova et al., 2020). This will help to develop a small tourist business, taking into account the importance and priority of the development of eco and mountain tourism in the region.

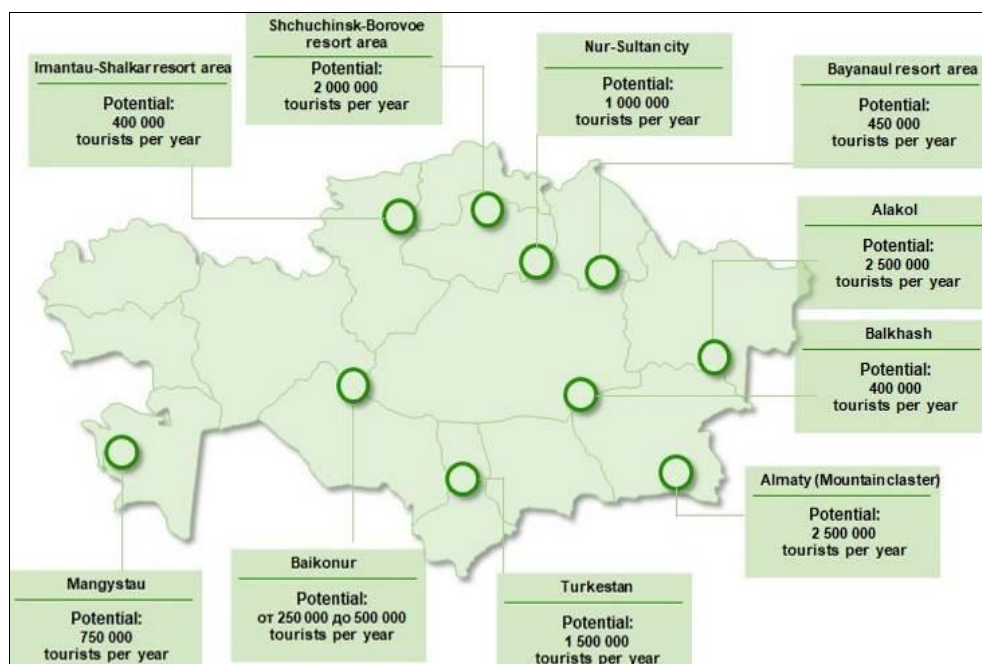


Figure 1. Priority tourist territories for the development of the tourism industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Source: Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated May 31, 2019)

Before the onset of COVID-19 in Almaty, there was a positive dynamics in the growth of tourists every year. Every second foreign tourist of Kazakhstan comes to Almaty. In the period from 2015 to 2019, the number of foreign tourists in the city increased 1.4 times from 301 thousand to 435.6 thousand, and the number of domestic tourists increased 2.1 times from 420 thousand to 898 thousand. The average annual growth rate was 10-12%. The largest influx of foreign tourists is observed from Russia (26%), China (8%), Uzbekistan (6%), Kyrgyzstan (5%), India (5%) (Research on the portrait of the consumer of travel services in Kazakhstan for May, 2020). There are also tourists from Turkey, South Korea, Germany, USA, France, Italy, Hong Kong and Japan. Most of the tourists from these countries came to the city to participate in business events, while the rest came on a personal visit and to participate in various events. Among them, there is a special demand for the types of excursion, mountain and event tourism (Dávid, 2009).

According to the calculations of the International Tourism Organization (UNWTO), due to the pandemic, international tourist flows around the world fell by 74% (according to the results of 2020). A similar situation was observed in Almaty.

For example, in 2020, 163.8 thousand foreign tourists visited Almaty. This is 72.7% less than in 2019. The number of domestic tourists amounted to 624.9 thousand people (-30.4%, in 2019 – 898.5 thousand people). Taking into account the opinion of international experts, the Department of Tourism of Almaty, according to forecasts for improving the epidemiological situation, will determine the number of tourists by 2024 to the level of 2019 (1.2 million people). The goal was set to achieve. Further, the annual growth is planned to be 6-7% (Report of the mayor's Office of Almaty for 2021).

According to the analysis conducted by the international consulting company "KPMG" by the survey method, it was found that almost half (46.7%) of foreign tourists visiting Almaty received information about the city of Almaty from school textbooks. And the remaining 53.3% marked as sources of information social networks, internet platforms such as "TripAdvisor", "Booking" (Transparency Report. KPMG., 2020). Also, the analysis conducted by Kazakh Tourism JSC showed that Kazakhstan's budget for marketing tourism promotion is 4 times less than in Azerbaijan, 5.5 times less than in Georgia, and 21 times less than in Turkey. However, according to the results of 2021, investments in the tourism industry of Almaty amounted to 56.8 billion tenge (2.4 times more than in 2020). This is 10% of the total investment in the city (Official website of JSC National Company "Kazakh Tourism"). Thus, the tourism industry and small tourism business in Almaty began to gain momentum thanks to the state program for the development of the tourism industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2019-2025 and the efforts of the local administration. Light industry, trade and tourism occupy an important place in the economy of Almaty. Among them, the tourism industry ranks second after the light industry. There are few reliable, accurate data on the small tourism business of Almaty for domestic or international visits, revenues from tourism, employment in the field of tourism, etc. Only general statistics are available. Also, since any successful planning of the city of Almaty requires accurate and reliable data on the current situation in the tourism industry, and small tourism enterprises are the basis of this industry, data on the characteristics of the Almaty tourism industry is of great importance.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The lack of academic research on small tourism business and their role in tourism leads to the perpetuation of some generally accepted decisions (Rogerson, 2004). There are several assumptions and opinions on this issue in the literature. For example, the tourism industry is usually characterized by small and medium-sized businesses, the small tourism business is one of the means of spreading the economic and socio-cultural benefits of Tourism and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of Tourism. Therefore, Morrison and Teixeira (2013) point out the need to reassess and welcome traditionally accepted realities in small tourism business studies for new knowledge and ideas to flourish. In this regard, this study was aimed at a better understanding of the problems and prospects of small tourism business through the analysis of certain aspects of small tourism business in Almaty, the Republic of Kazakhstan. To determine the development of a small tourism business in the study Thomas et al. (1997), Page et al. (1999), Morrison and Teixeira (2004), Akbaba (2012), Koens and Thomas (2015), Fuchs (2022) conducted a theoretical analysis of the research. This made it possible to draw a number of generalizations, as well as to study small businesses in the field of Tourism.

Given the small number of reliable data on the small tourism business of Almaty, we received comprehensive data through an independent survey that gives an idea of the current state of the small tourism business and serves as the basis for planning tourism in the region. The preparation of the questionnaire began with a review of the literature. Relevant literature, survey tools used in other studies and information from small tourism business owners formed the basis for the development of the "survey". The survey was developed to obtain data on the characteristics of the small tourism business, marketing, human resource management and problems of the small tourism business. The survey was attended by representatives of the small tourism business of Almaty, owners and managers of enterprises answered fifteen planned questions. The study involved enterprises that meet the selection criteria, both small (with 1-49 employees) and located in the city. However, companies were identified over the phone to see if they were willing to participate in the study. The main study was carried out from March to September 2022. This period was chosen deliberately, since some tourist enterprises work only in the summer. The survey was distributed among enterprises that agreed to participate in the study and <https://docs.google.com> the site was implemented with the help of. Thus, we received survey responses from 764 enterprises. However, to ensure the accuracy of the research results, 655 responses were selected from enterprises that fully meet the requirements. The selection passed strict control for 3 months. Of the 8 districts of Almaty that took part in the survey, the most active were small tourism business enterprises of Medeu, Auezov, Bostandyk and Almaty districts. At the district level, this level of response was achieved by calling the owner and managers of each enterprise in advance.

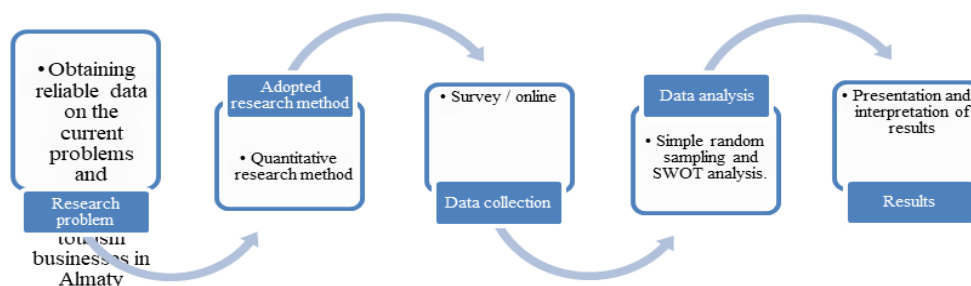


Figure 2. Research method flowchart

RESULTS

The results of the study were obtained through an independent survey of small tourist business enterprises of Almaty (the largest metropolis of Kazakhstan), located along the Great Silk Road and in the foothills of the Trans-Ili Alatau. 764

enterprises from 8 districts of the city took part in the survey, and a total of 655 respondents were selected. The selection passed strict control in the amount of 3 months. Therefore, in the city: 39 hotels, 147 restaurants, 36 banquet halls, 158 cafes, 109 pubs or bars, 27 karaoke, 48 coffee shops, 6 souvenir shops, 2 museums, 11 tour operators and 72 travel agencies met the requirements (Table 1). Entrepreneurs from Medeu, Auezov, Bostandyk and Almaly districts were active in the study, making up 68.7% of the total number of respondents (Figure 3).

Table 1. Number of small tourist enterprises surveyed, N=655 (compiled by the authors)

Name of the district	Hotel	Restaurant	Banquet halls	Cafe	Pub / Bar	Karaoke	Coffee shop	Souvenir shop	Museum	Tour operator	Travel agent	By district
1. Alatau	4	12	7	10	3	2	5	2	-	-	3	48
2. Almaly	6	23	4	17	14	3	4	-	1	3	18	93
3. Auezov	9	17	1	33	27	5	9	1	-	2	11	115
4. Bostandyk	5	19	6	21	18	7	10	-	-	1	7	94
5. Medeu	6	27	2	27	34	8	14	2	1	5	22	148
6. Nauryzbay	4	21	5	9	6	1	-	-	-	-	6	52
7. Turksib	3	13	7	28	5	-	2	1	-	-	3	62
8. Zhetysu	2	15	4	13	2	1	4	-	-	-	2	43
Total / N	39	147	36	158	109	27	48	6	2	11	72	655

After analyzing the responses of the respondents who answered the survey, the sex distribution of the respondents was 53% of men and 47% of women. This result deserves attention, after all, many researchers note the predominance of women leading small businesses in tourism and the hotel business. Getz and Carlsen (2005) declare that culture can influence gender roles and can be the owner or manager of a small tourism business. The data on gender segregation obtained during this study can be interpreted as a consequence of these facts. The largest proportion of respondents (33.4%) falls on the age group 46-55, followed by the age group 36-45 (29%). It was found that the majority of respondents were the sole owner (70.1%) and shareholders (20.1%). The remaining 8.8% were managers (Figure 4). These results show that the survey covered the target audience of business owners or managers who gave an idea of their business and involvement in tourism. Respondents to the question about education in the survey (62.9%) indicated that they have a diploma of incomplete higher education (Bachelor's degree); it turns out that only 13.7% of respondents have a higher education (Master / PhD), and the remaining 23.4% of respondents have a secondary education (college diploma / school graduation certificate). 75.7% of the participants reported that they did not receive any education in the field of Tourism. While the remaining 24.3% of the 151 participants who claimed to have knowledge in the field of Tourism, 71.5% (108 participants) took one or two - month short-term vocational training courses organized by local authorities and private enterprises. As for the characteristics of enterprises, a significant part of enterprises (27.9%) have worked for 11-14 years and (5.6%) for more than 15 years (Figure 5).

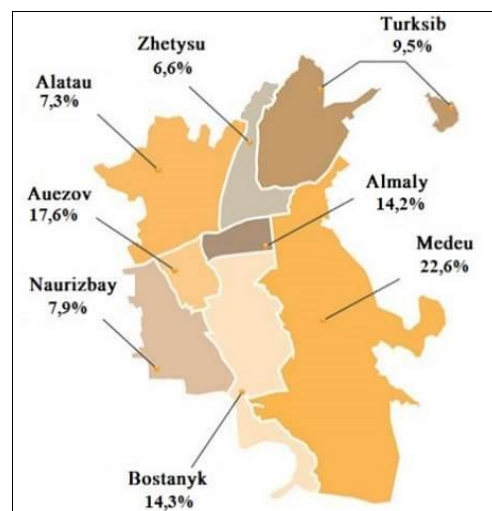


Figure 3. District share of small tourism enterprises that participated in the survey, % (compiled by the authors)

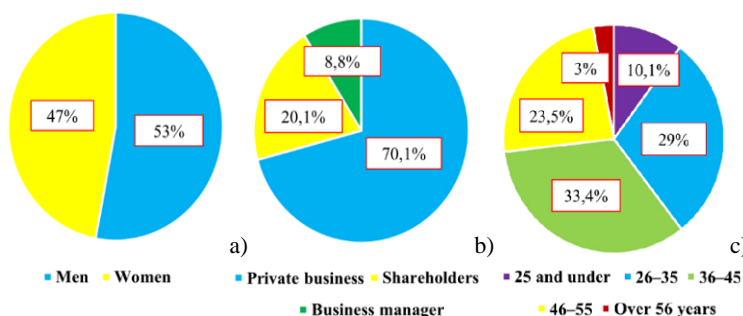


Figure 4. Gender (a), Respondent (b), Age (c). Profile of respondents, % (Source: compiled by the authors)

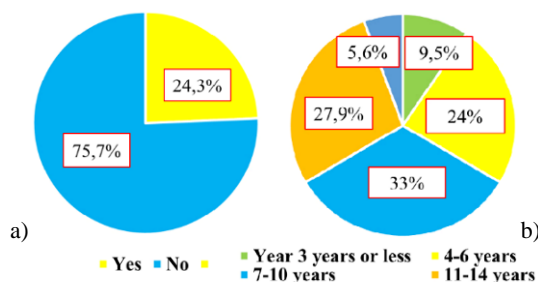


Figure 5. Education in the field of Tourism (a), Work experience in the field of Tourism (b). Education and work experience in the tourist industry, %

When the survey asked about methods of mutual contracting with employees, it was found that 351 respondents (53.6%) used verbal agreements to fill vacancies, while 230 respondents (35.1%) wrote personal statements. 74 (11.3%) respondents who indicated a different choice stated that they or family members worked in the business, so they did not need to contract with anyone. Interestingly, no businesses used the local or national press to find employees. Currently, in the Almaty context, special applications and websites (olx.kz, qyzmet.kz, zarplata.kz and so on) are mostly used. As for the marketing aspect of the business, out of the 655 respondents surveyed, only 118 respondents (18 %) stated that they had a formal or informal marketing plan. Among them were only 21 (17.8%) enterprises with an official plan, the plans of the remaining 97 (82.2%) enterprises were unofficial. In the case of Kazakhstan, banks and other financial institutions

that provide loans or stimulate business require formal planning, therefore, as this study shows, 17.8% of small businesses can receive funds from banks and government sources. From this we can see that the share of enterprises implementing the official marketing plan is very low. However, the report on the state of development of small and medium-sized businesses in Kazakhstan of the Entrepreneurship Development Fund of the Republic of Kazakhstan "Damu" (Joint Stock Company) notes that the portfolio of loans to small businesses in Almaty increased by 33.4% (Report on the state of development of small and medium-sized businesses in Kazakhstan, 2022). As you may have noticed, there is a discrepancy between the report of private small businesses and the reports of the Government (Joint Stock Company "Damu" Entrepreneurship Development Fund). In the survey, we asked respondents to indicate which advertising methods they had used in the last 3 years. As a result, we found that the most frequently used method was "internet networking" (50.7%). Of those, the highest proportion of social media was Instagram (25.6% of respondents), Facebook (10.5%) and Tik-Tok (6.3%). However, among small entrepreneurs, the share of "direct advertising" creators was 16.5%. Another oddity in this result is that 1.8% of respondents said they do not use advertising methods.

Table 2. Advertising distribution tools (total number and percentage %) (compiled by the authors)

Methods	Type	Price	Entering the target audience	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Information tools	Television	High (-)	Low (-)	18	2.7
	Radio			23	3.5
Internet network	Information sides	Low (+)	High (+)	37	5.7
	Facebook			69	10.5
	YouTube			13	2.0
	Instagram			168	25.6
	Tik-Tok			41	6.3
	Others			4	0.6
Periodicals	Magazines and newspapers	Average (\pm)	Low (-)	11	1.7
External and internal advertising structures	Billboards	Average (\pm)	Low (-)	35	5.3
	Video screens			16	2.5
	Roller displays			7	1.1
	Electronic scoreboard			19	2.9
	Direct advertising			108	16.5
	Poster stands			3	0.4
	Decorative indicators			-	-
Email-distribution	Send message	Free	Average (\pm)	17	2.6
PR-event	Presentation	Average (\pm)	Average (\pm)	36	5.5
	Conference			9	1.4
	Briefing			2	0.3
	Sponsorship activities			5	0.8
Other	-	-	-	2	0.3
Did not use advertising methods	-	-	-	12	1.8

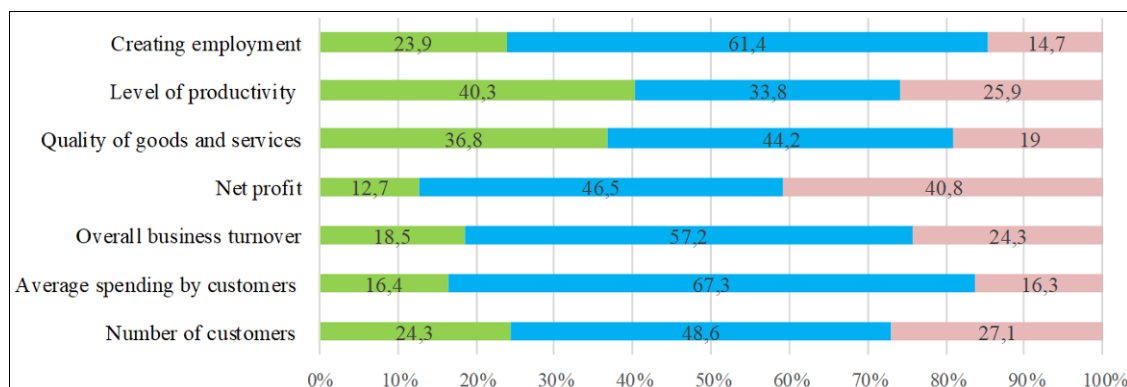


Figure 6. Performance indicators of small tourism business enterprises of Almaty in 2021, % (compiled by the authors)

As for the economic consequences of business, a number of business indicators were studied to study the respondents' perception of trends in business over the past year. These were the number of customers over the past year, average customer costs, net profit, quality of goods and services, productivity level, number of successful new products, and job creation. The results of the answers to these questions can be seen in Figure 6. We asked the respondents if they see any obstacles to improving the efficiency of their business. 18.9% of respondents cited high rental rates (office rent) as the main obstacle, followed by high interest rates in obtaining loans (16.5%) and lack of consumer demand (14.6%) (Figure 7). Of the obstacles, competition among local entrepreneurs was 11.7%, which showed the development of small businesses in the city. In this regard, if we compare the competition between enterprises with the results of the Turkish Akbaba study (2012), we can see that its result showed a percentage of 8%. The respondents' concern about the unstable conditions in the country is explained by the socio-economic structure of the country and the ongoing war in neighboring countries (Ukraine and Russia) and political instability (China and the United States) (Dávid et al., 2007). This can be considered concern, the proximity of the country to this region and membership in small tourism business organizations and business associations,

as well as insufficient support and recommendations from local executive bodies. However, in the course of the study, we conducted a SWOT analysis of the work of 11 tour operators and 72 travel agencies that responded to the survey to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the small tourism business. As a result, the strengths and weaknesses of tourist enterprises and opportunities and threats were clearly known (Table 3). Thus, in order for small travel firms to maintain their competitive position and position in the market, it is necessary: to develop a powerful advertising campaign; develop customer service programs; develop new tourist destinations and be as open as possible to their regular customers. Also, organizational measures aimed at increasing the competitiveness of travel agencies can be presented as follows:

- ensuring quality indicators that prioritize the products of a travel agency in the market;
- identify the advantages and disadvantages of similar products produced by competitors and correctly use the results in the interests of the travel agency;
- research of competitors' similar products that appear on the market and develop measures that give them an advantage over competitors;
- it is necessary to determine the possible types of tourist product by improving such qualitative characteristics as reliability, external design.

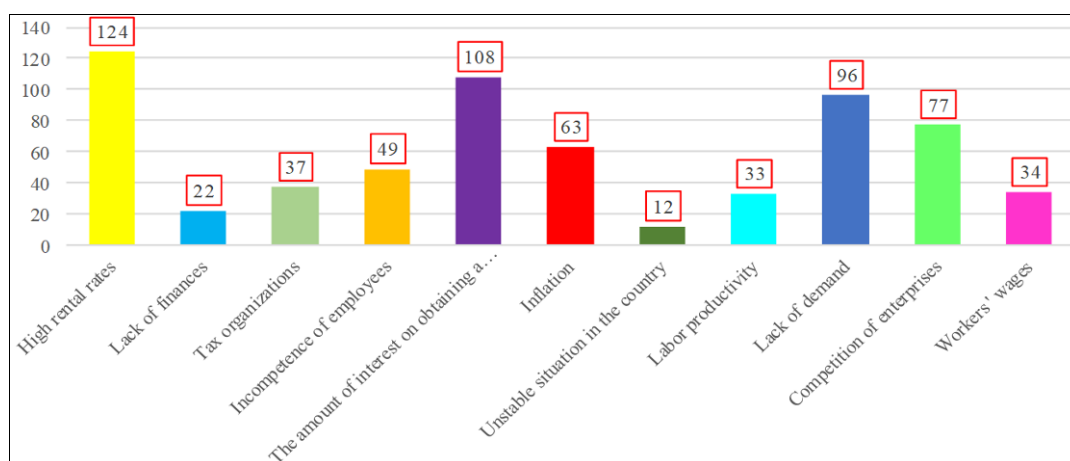


Figure 7. Barriers to improving the efficiency of small tourism business, Quantity (compiled by the authors)

Table 3. SWOT analysis matrix (compiled by the authors)

	Opportunities	Threats
	1) Development of technologies in the field of Tourism. 2) Development of relations between countries. 3) Introduction of a flexible system of discounts for regular customers.	1) Economic crisis. 2) Deterioration of the situation between Ukraine and Russia. 3) The emergence of new competitors.
Strengths:		
1. Well-established work with major tour operators	1) Increase sales, improve development dynamics, offer new directions. 2) Possibility of faster processing of documents, reduction of the cost of the services provided.	1) Leads to a decrease in sales volume. 2) Development of low-cost tourist routes. 3) Tourist safety on new routes.
2. Highly qualified staff.	1) The same leads to customers reusing the firm's services. Becomes a regular customer.	1) An increase in extreme tourist routes. 2) Outflow of customers due to the provision of similar services by competitors.
3. High quality services provided	1) Leads to an increase in the client base. 2) Customers will be confident in the quality of the service provided.	1) Improving customer service technology and retraining of tourist packages. 2) Increase in costs.
4. Stable financial position of the firm	1) Gain a large market share. 2) Become a leader in the tourism services market. 3) Increase sales.	1) The cost of the tourist package increases significantly, which leads to a decrease in the net income of the enterprise.
Weaknesses:		
1. Poor development of tourism services to European countries and the Americas.	1) To work out issues of cooperation with tour operators providing tourist routes to these regions.	1) Study and determine the directions of tourist routes to other regions. 2) Prevent the departure of customers by creating individual programs and routes.
2. Weak advertising	1) Strengthen your advertising campaign to gain a larger market share and build your own brand	1) Explore new competitors, apply all the management mechanisms, try to become a leader.
3. Employees do not upgrade their qualifications	1) Sending employees to various trainings, courses, conferences, exhibitions to strengthen competitiveness.	1) Ensuring high-quality professional development of employees, both in financial and practical terms.

In conclusion, the indicators of most small tourism enterprises were neither good nor bad, as evidenced by the indicators of the level of satisfaction with business growth and competitiveness, respectively. Business growth was more of a macroeconomic problem than a problem at the individual level, as high-satisfaction respondents and low-satisfaction respondents were grouped in different directions, and no statistically significant differences in demographic and business characteristics were observed between the two groups. This suggests that the development of a small tourism business, that

is, the popularization of the destination, is still important. It was not surprising that the respondents had an impartial assessment of the competitiveness of the business, since in the city enterprises offer the same goods and services.

DISCUSSION

In the World Tourism literature, there is very little research on the tourism business of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The existing tourist research itself is of a natural and geographical orientation. And there is almost no research on the problems and prospects of business development. Therefore, in this study, we aimed to study the problems and prospects for the development of the small tourism business of Almaty. It was also important to understand the current state of the tourism industry by obtaining data on the general characteristics of small tourism business in Almaty, marketing aspects, Human Resource Management and the level of district development of small tourism business. In this study, we used the survey method to identify and understand the potential of the small tourism business of the city. The study was attended by 655 enterprises from 8 districts of Almaty (total: 39 hotels, 147 restaurants, 36 banquet halls, 158 cafes, 109 pubs or bars, 27 karaoke, 48 coffee shops, 6 souvenir shops, 2 museums, 11 tour operators and 72 travel agents) who shared their current problems and prospects for development. After selecting and analyzing the results of the survey, we saw a set of problems of small tourism business in Almaty. These include: 75.7% of respondents do not have any knowledge in the field of tourism or services; 53.6% verbally conclude mutual contracts with employees; 82% do not have a marketing plan of the enterprise; as a result, 17.8% cannot receive funds from banks and public sources; the ongoing war in neighboring countries (Ukraine and Russia) and political instability (political discord between China and the United States). Therefore, this study differs significantly from the results of a similar study in Turkey, Great Britain, Thailand, New Zealand and South Africa. This is due to the fact that when evaluating the results of the study, the authors set clear limits for 8 districts of Almaty. Thus, the relevant results do not include results for the Republic of Kazakhstan or other areas of mass tourism.

However, since the small tourism business in Almaty accounts for a significant share of the tourism industry of Kazakhstan, all reliable data and results obtained play an important role in the planning of the tourism business. This is due to the fact that the results of entrepreneurs of the local small tourism business show the tourist potential of developed and developing regions and districts (Baiburiev et al., 2018), professional competence of specialists in the tourist and local lore, cultural sphere (Issakov et al., 2022; Ayzhan et al., 2021), the motivation for the use of technology (Nurbol et al., 2020), discloses the socio-economic and environmental situation (Mukhambetov et al., 2014; Dávid et al., 2012). Consequently, the results of this study can be useful for the whole population. Consequently, future studies could use alternative approaches to fully reach out to small tourism entrepreneurs and involve them in voluntary participation. For example, by getting support from local administrations, tourism organisations and other business communities or by providing some kind of incentive to those who agree to participate in the study. Future studies could expand the research area to cover more or less different aspects of small tourism businesses. In this regard, Tinsley and Lynch (2001) believe that family business development plays an important role in the small tourism business, although very little research has been done in this promising area. This is due to the fact that the problems of small family business continue to be the result of neglect in the study of small tourism business. The largest economic profit in Almaty, in comparison, comes from small business owners with limited income of their own. Enterprises run mainly by marginalized groups bring much less economic benefits. However, the above analysis does not mean that the development of small businesses as part of urban tourism is not profitable. Instead, the competent authorities should recognize the complexity of the socio-economic situation of settlements. It should also appropriately consider business development measures and promptly develop small businesses after Covid-19. Although many negative situations are associated with COVID-19, one of the main conclusions is the sustainability of local small tourism business owners, which allowed them to adapt to these conditions and change their business models. This will allow businesses to survive the crisis and lay the necessary foundation for their future achievements. Therefore, we hope that these changes are an automatic, but temporary reaction to the pandemic, and after the start of normalization, enterprises will return to their previous business models.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, as a result of the theoretical and practical study of the small tourism business of Almaty, the problems and promising areas of small business were identified, and we came to the following conclusion on the way to increasing the competitiveness of the business:

1. Small business in the tourism industry includes the behavior, activities, professional knowledge and training of entrepreneurs and individuals, family business, new business and corporate entrepreneurship.

2. Small tourism enterprises play a key role in the development of local tourism. In terms of technology and capital, in comparison, it allows entrepreneurs to start their own businesses. The business not only meets the employment needs of the owner, but also serves as a direct source of income for the owner's family and other residents.

3. The analysis of the survey showed that 75.7% of respondents do not have any knowledge in the field of tourism or services; 53.6% verbally conclude mutual contracts with employees; 82% do not have a marketing plan of the enterprise; as a result, 17.8% cannot receive funds from banks and government sources; the consequences of the ongoing war in neighboring countries (Ukraine and Russia) and political instability (political disagreement between China and the United States) were identified as the main problems of the small tourism business in Almaty.

4. As well as resilience of respondents to positive development, overcoming the consequences and crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic and willingness to use gained experience and knowledge for the future; motivation of 655 respondents who agreed to take part in the study to develop their businesses; predominance of men 53%; 28.7% of respondents (36-45) are young entrepreneurs; 74.7% are individual entrepreneurs; investment in small tourism business and contribution to the development of small tourism business in Almaty city can be attributed to.

5. In future studies, it is necessary to try to use incentive methods to fully cover representatives of small tourism businesses and involve them in voluntary participation. For example, the provision of incentives from local administrations, tourist organizations and other business associations.

6. Almaty's tourism infrastructure, technology, services, inter-city trade and logistics, education systems and digitalisation need to be developed.

Acknowledgments: We would like to express our gratitude to the executives and managers of the 764 enterprises (respondents) who took part in the survey in Almaty for their participation in the survey and for their contribution to our research.

REFERENCES

- Abouelhassan, M., Kabil, M., Alayan, R., Magda, R., & Dávid, L. (2021). Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Performance in Egypt: An Empirical Study Based on the Global Entrepreneurship Index (GEI). *Sustainability*, 13 (13), 7171. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13137171>
- Aitzhanova, K. (2019). *Шағын және орта бизнес: мемлекеттен қолдау бар [Small and medium-sized businesses: there is support from the state]*. Kazakh, 21, 4-7, (In Kazakh).
- Akbaba, A. (2012). Understanding Small Tourism Businesses: A Perspective from Turkey. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 19 (1). <https://doi.org/10.1017/jht.2012.1>
- Aktymbayeva, A., Assipova, Z., Moldagaliev, A., Nuruly, Y., & Koshim, A. (2020). Impact of small and medium-sized tourism firms on employment in Kazakhstan. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 32(4), 1238-1243. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.32407-563>
- Aktymbayeva, B., Koshkimbayeva, U., Abisheva, Z., Tokbergenova, U., & Tumazhanova, M. (2020). Tourism industry development and governance: a comparative stage review of Kazakhstan's experience for the years of independence, 1991-2020. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 34(1), 69-76. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.34110-621>
- Allayarov, P., Embergenov, B., & Han, S. (2018). Problems and Prospects of sustainable tourism in the Republic of Kazakhstan. *Business and Economic Research*, 8. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ber.v8i2.12951>
- Ateljevic, J., & Doorne, S. (2004). Diseconomies of scale: A study of development constraints in small tourism firms in Central New Zealand. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 5(1), 5-24. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.thr.6040002>
- Ateljevic, J. (2007). Small Tourism Firms and Management Practices in New Zealand: The Centre Stage Macro Region. *Tourism Management*, 28, 307-316. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2006.07.004>
- Ayzhan, S., Kulyash, K., Kulash, M., Zabira, M., Yerlan, I., & Nurbol, U. (2021). Teaching and Learning foundation of the elective course "Cultural Geography". *World Journal on Educational Technology: Current Issues*, 13(4), 1040-1050. <https://doi.org/10.18844/wjet.v13i4.6297>
- Baiburiev, R., David, L., Abdreyeva, S., Zhakupova, A., & Artemyev, A. (2018). Impacts of tourism activities on economy of Kazakhstan. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 22 (2), 480-488. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.22217-304>
- Bekzhanov, M. (2018). *Шағын және орта бизнесті несиелеу: Кәсіпкерде сұрақ көп, ал құзырлы орындардан жауап жоқ [Lending to small and medium-sized businesses: the entrepreneur has many questions, and there is no answer from the competent authorities]*. Қазақстан іскері, (5), 5-7, (In Kazakh).
- Bengtson, A., Pahlberg, C., & Pourmand, F. (2009). Small firms' interaction with political organizations in the European Union. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 38(6), 687-697. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2009.05.014>
- Bhagat, P.R., Naz, F., & Magda, R. (2022). Role of Industry 4.0 Technologies in Enhancing Sustainable Firm Performance and Green Practices. *Acta Polytechnica Hungarica*, 19(8), 229-248. http://acta.uni-obuda.hu/Bhagat_Naz_Magda_126.pdf
- Bujdosó, Z., & Dávid, L. (2013). Extreme sports and other activities in tourism with special regard to the Mátra Mountain. *Journal of Physical Education and Sport*, 13(1). 39-45. <https://doi.org/10.7752/jpes.2013.01007>
- Bujdosó, Z., Dávid, L., Varga, D., Péntes, J., Gyurkó, Á., & Altynbek, Z. (2015). Tourism development and cross-border cooperation in the Hungarian-Romanian border region. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 16(2), 153-163.
- Davidsson, P., & Henrekson, M. (2002). Determinants of the prevalence of start-ups and high-growth firms. *Small Business Economics* 19, 81-104. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1016264116508>
- Dávid, L. (2004). A Vásárhelyi Terv turisztikai lehetőségei [Tourism opportunities of the Vásárhely Plan], *Gazdálkodás* 2004(9). 86-94.
- Dávid, L., Molnár, F., Bujdosó, Z., & Dereskey, A. (2007). *Biztonság, terrorizmus, turizmus [Security, terrorism, tourism]*, *Gazdálkodás* 2007(20), 160-166, (In Hungarian).
- Dávid, L. (2009). Environmental Impacts of Events. In Raj, R. & James, M. (Eds.): *Event Management and Sustainability*, 66-75. CAB International, Wallingford, UK.
- Dávid L., Tóth, G., Kincses, A., Kelemen, N., Kovács, B. (2009). *A turizmus szerepe a regionális fejlődésben: Az Észak-Magyarország Régió, az I. Nemzeti Fejlesztési Terv 2004-2006 és az Új Magyarország Fejlesztési Terv ÚMFT 2007-2013 alapján [The role of tourism in regional development: the North Hungary Region, based on the 1st National Development Plan 2004-2006 and the New Hungary Development Plan 2007-2013]*, Károly Róbert College, Gyöngyös, Hungary.
- Dávid, L., Vargáné, Cs., K., Kovács, Gy., & Vasa, L. (2012). *Turizmusökológia: zöldülő turizmus-fenntartható turizmusfejlesztés [Tourism ecology: greening tourism-sustainable tourism development]*, Szaktudás Kiadó, Budapest, Hungary, 236p.
- Duda-Gromada, K., Bujdosó Z., & Dávid, L. (2010). Lakes, reservoirs and regional development through some examples in Poland and Hungary. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 5(1), 16-23.
- Fuchs, K. (2022). Small Tourism Businesses Adapting to the New Normal: Evidence from Thailand. *Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal*, 70(2), 258-269. <https://doi.org/10.37741/t.70.2.7>
- Getz, D., & Carlsen, J. (2005). Family business in tourism: State of the art. *Annals of tourism research*, 32(1), 237-258. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2004.07.006>
- Getz, D., & Petersen, T. (2005). Growth and Profit-Oriented Entrepreneurship among Family Business Owners in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 24(2), 219-242. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2004.06.007>
- Haque, Md., & Islam, F. (2018). Problems and Prospects of Tourism Industry at Sylhet Region in Bangladesh. *Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 5(5), 23-32. <https://doi.org/10.9790/7388-05532332>
- Issakov, Y., Laikhanov, S., Mazbayev, O., Ussenov, N., Zheldibayev, A., Kamelkhan, G., & Dávid, L.D. (2022). Opportunities to use mobile GIS applications in the formation of tourist and local lore competencies in students: case study in Almaty, Kazakhstan. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 41(2), 597-605. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.41234-868>
- Kassai, Zs., Káposzta, J., Ritter, K., Dávid, L., Nagy, H., & Farkas, T. (2016). The territorial significance of food hungaricums: The case of pálinka. *Romanian Journal of Regional Science*, 10(2), 64-84.
- Kazmagambet, Z. (2018). *Кәсіпкерлікті дамытудың өзекті мәселелері және оларды шешу жолдары [Actual problems of entrepreneurship development and ways to solve them]*. Fundamentals of economics: teaching at school, college and University, 2 (51), 37-40, (In Kazakh).
- Kirzner, I.M. (2009). The alert and creative entrepreneur: A clarification. *Small Business Economics*, 32(2), 145-152. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-008-9153-7>
- Koens, K., & Thomas, R. (2015). Is small beautiful? Understanding the contribution of small businesses in township tourism to economic development. *Development Southern Africa*, 32(3), 320-332. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0376835X.2015.1010715>
- Kozbagarova, N., Abdrassilova, G., & Tuyakayeva, A. (2022). Problems and prospects of the territorial development of the tourism system in the Almaty region. *Innovaciencia*, 10 (1), 1-9, <https://doi.org/10.15649/2346075X.2962>

- Li, L. (2008). A Review of Entrepreneurship Research Published in the Hospitality and Tourism Management Journals. *Tourism Management*, 29, 1013-1022. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2008.01.003>
- Makenova, G., Tuleubayeva, M., Issayeva, A., & Daurenbekova, A. (2020). Analysis of the Development of International Tourism and Its Impact to Tourism Market: Evidence of Kazakhstan. *Journal of Environmental Management & Tourism*, 11(8), 2053-2067. <https://journals.aserspublishing.eu/jemt/article/view/5813>
- Mallinguh, E., Wasike, C., Bilan Y., & Zeman, Z. (2022). The impact of firm characteristics, business competitiveness, and technology upgrade hurdles on R&D costs. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 20(4), 264-277. [https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.20\(4\).2022.20](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.20(4).2022.20)
- Mirsayakova, V. (2016). *Значение туризма в мировой экономике [Role of tourism in the world economy]*. Young scientist, 5, (109), 17-19.
- Morrison, A., & Teixeira, R. (2004). Small Business Performance: A Tourism Sector Focus. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 11, 166-173. <https://doi.org/10.1108/14626000410537100>
- Morrison, A., & Teixeira, R. (2013). Small Firm Performance in the Context of Agent and Structure: A Cross Cultural Comparison in the Tourist Accommodation Sector. *Small Firms In Tourism: International Perspectives*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780080517285>
- Mukhambetov, T.I., Jangutina, G.O., Esaidar, U.S., Myrzakulova, G.R., & Imanbekova, B.T. (2014). The life cycle of sustainable eco-tourism: A Kazakhstan case study. *WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment*, 187, 39-49. <https://doi.org/10.2495/ST140041>
- Nurbol, U., Kairat, Z., Bakhadurkhan, A., Marat, M., Kenjekey, T., & Usenova, M. (2020). Students' Views on the Use of Technology in Geography Course. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET)*, 15(23), 42-51. <https://www.learntechlib.org/p/218464/>
- Orlovskaya, V.P., & Bogdanov, E.I. (2022). *Технология и организация предприятия туризма [Technology and organization of the tourism enterprise]*. M Infra-M, 176. (In Russian).
- Orymbaeva, A. (2014). *Шағын және орта бизнестің экономикадағы маңыздылығы мен артықшылығы және кемшіліктері [Advantages and disadvantages of small and medium-sized businesses in the economy]*. Modern education in school, college, university, 6 (42), 3-6.
- Ogutu, H., Adol, G.F.C., Bujdosó, Z., Benedek, A., Fekete-Farkas, M., & Dávid, L.D. (2023). Theoretical Nexus of Knowledge Management and Tourism Business Enterprise Competitiveness: An Integrated Overview. *Sustainability*, 15, 1948. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15031948>
- Page, S.J., Forer, P., & Lawton, G.R. (1999). Small business development and tourism: Terra incognita? *Tourism Management*, 20(4), 435-459. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177\(99\)00024-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177(99)00024-2)
- Plokhikh, R., Fodor, G., Shaken, A., Berghauer, S., Aktymbayeva, A., Tóth, A., Mika, M., & Dávid, L.D. (2022). Investigation of environmental determinants for agritourism development in Almaty region of Kazakhstan. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 41(2), 354-361. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.41203-837>
- Priatmoko, S., Kabil, M., Purwoko, Y., & Dávid, L.D. (2021). Rethinking sustainable community-based tourism: A villager's point of view and case study in Pampang Village, Indonesia. *Sustainability*, 13(6), 3245.
- Rogerson, C.M. (2004). Urban tourism and small tourism enterprise development in Johannesburg: The case of township tourism. *GeoJournal*, 60, 249-257. <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:GEJO.0000034732.58327.b6>
- Rogerson, C.M., & Rogerson, J.M. (2010). Local economic development in Africa: Global context and research directions. *Development Southern Africa*, 27(4), 465-480. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0376835X.2010.508577>
- Russell, R., & Faulkner, B. (1999). Movers and Shakers: chaos makers in tourism development. *Tourism Management*, 20(4), 411-423.
- Russell, R., & Faulkner, B. (2004). Entrepreneurship, chaos and the tourism area lifecycle. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(3), 556-579.
- Sakhidautelulu, O. (2019). *Шағын және орта бизнестің дамытудың тиімді тәсілдері [Effective approaches to the development of small and medium-sized businesses]*. Law newspaper, 187, 3-7. (In Kazakh).
- Sergeeva, A. (2019). *Халықаралық туризм географиясы [Geography of international tourism]*. Folio, Nursultan, 194 (In Kazakh).
- Shaw, G., & Williams, A.M. (1996). *Critical Issues in Tourism: A Geographical Perspective*. 162, 101-102 <https://doi.org/10.2307/3060254>
- Shaw, G., & Williams, A. (2004). *From Lifestyle Consumption to Lifestyle Production: Changing Patterns of Tourism Entrepreneurship*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-044132-0.50010-1>
- Shaw, J. (2011). Business Population Estimates for the UK and Regions - Introducing improved statistics on the UK enterprise population. *Econ Lab Market Rev*, 5, 47-67. <https://doi.org/10.1057/elmr.2011.41>
- Thomas, R., Friel, M., Jameson, S., & Parsons, D. (1997). *The national survey of small tourism and hospitality firms: Annual report 1996-1997*. Leeds Metropolitan University, Leeds, England.
- Thomas, R., & Thomas, H. (2005). Understanding tourism policy-making in urban areas, with particular reference to small firms. *Tourism Geographies*, 7(2), 121-137. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616680500072323>
- Thomas, R., Shaw, G., & Page, S.J. (2011). Understanding small firms in tourism: A perspective on research trends and challenges. *Tourism Management*, 32(5), 963-76. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2011.02.003>
- Tinsley, R., & Lynch, P. (2001). Small tourism business networks and destination development. *International journal of hospitality management*, 20(4), 367-378. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0278-4319\(01\)00024-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0278-4319(01)00024-X)
- Tlesova, A., Primbetova, S., Sultanova, M., Yessengaliyeva, S., & Yerzhanova, Z. (2020). Innovative activities in the field of hotel business and tourism aig. *Journal of Environmental Management & Tourism*, 11(8), 1973-1987. [doi:https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v11.8\(48\).10](https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v11.8(48).10)
- Tomassini, L., Lamond, I., & Burrai, E. (2021). Global Citizenship & Parrhesia in Small Values-Based Tourism Firms. *Leisure Sciences*, 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2021.1874574>
- Tóth, G., Dávid, L., & Vasa László (2012). A közlekedés szerepe az európai turisztikai áramlásokban [The role of transport in European tourism flows], *Területi Statisztika*, 15(2). 160-176 (In Hungarian). <https://doi.org/10.3986/AGS54205>
- Tóth, G., Dávid, L., & Bujdosó, Z. (2010). A hazai folyók által érintett települések társadalmi-gazdasági vizsgálata [Socio-economic analysis of the municipalities affected by domestic rivers], *Földrajzi Közlemények* 134(2), 189-202, (In Hungarian).
- Tursynova, T., Berdenov, Z., & Faley, R. (2019). Problems and prospects of development of tourism infrastructure in the Republic of Kazakhstan. *Journal of Geography, Politics and Society*, 9(1), 28-32. <https://doi.org/10.26881/jpgs.2019.1.04>
- Yerdauletov, S., Aizholova, G.R., & Mukatova, D.M. (2013). *Алматы – Международнй туристский центр [Almaty – International tourist center]*. International Journal of Applied and Fundamental Research, 9, 100-104 (In Russian).
- Yıldırım, D., Unal, T.O., & Gedikli, A. (2015). Financial Problems of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Turkey. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 5, <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v5-i1/1397>
- *** Report of the mayor's Office of Almaty for 2021. <https://www.gov.kz/> (In Kazakh).
- *** Official website of JSC National Company "Kazakh Tourism" (In Kazakh). <https://qaztourism.kz/>
- *** Report on the state of development of small and medium-sized businesses in Kazakhstan. Entrepreneurship Development Fund "Damu". Almaty, 2022, Issue No. 14 (In Kazakh).
- *** Research on the portrait of the consumer of travel services in Kazakhstan for May 2020 (Domestic tourism), Kazakhstan Tourism Association: http://www.kaztourassociation.com/news/news_062020/news_18062020portret-kz-tourista.htm (In Kazakh).
- *** Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated May 31, 2019 No. 360 on approval of the state program for the development of the tourism industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2019-2025 (In Kazakh).
- *** Transparency Report. KPMG. Year ended 31 December 2020. <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/kz/pdf/2021/03/2020-Transparency-Report.pdf> (In Kazakh).