

# The importance of congress tourism in the development of economic integration.

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**Abstract:** The article analyzes the essence, development trend and possibilities of congress tourism. also, the effects of congress tourism on the process of economic integration and its importance are shown.

**Keywords:** economy, tourism, MICE tourism, congress tourism, economic integration, Meetings, Incentives, conferences, exhibitions, small business

MICE tourism accounts for almost 30% of the income from tourism in the world. MICE tourism, popularly known as congress tourism, is a type of tourism that is needed to enhance the role of regions by promoting many industries and strengthening the industries related to the region in which they are established. In particular, MICE is an acronym formed by the initials of the words "Meetings, Incentives, conferences, exhibitions", and congress tourism is a travel and organization organized mainly to benefit the sectors in which it operates, as well as related sectors consists of works. In general, MICE or congress tourism, first of all, lays the groundwork for comprehensive deepening of inter-country socio-economic and political relations and further strengthening of the process, as well as multi-faceted integration of national markets. In addition, MICE tourism generates a variety of benefits in various sectors in addition to the revenue generated from the main activity. In particular, attendees and speakers at conferences held in the city spend by visiting other tourist and local attractions in the city. Income from accommodation, food and beverage, and entertainment from people who come to the region for a convention or fair are some of the different income areas impacted by MICE tourism. At the same time, countries and regions hosting MICE tourism are promoted much faster and more effectively. The meaning of words denoting MICE is considered separately, including:

**Meetings** — meetings: companies prioritize or organize activities such as large-scale business meetings, seminars, industry-related trainings directly in centers of interest or in regions of geographic importance for the sector. MICE is a form of tourism.

**Incentives** - Incentives: To increase the motivation of employees working for companies, to promote and organize motivational activities in order to increase productivity to the highest level.

**Conferences** — Conferences: Conferences organized by organizations or sector representatives, such as units and associations serving a specific purpose, constitute the conferences part of MICE tourism.

**Exhibitions** - Exhibitions: Along with the above, the activities of fairs organized and attracting hundreds of participants to the region are one of the most important branches of MICE Tourism.

Countries or institutions that make the necessary investments in congress or MICE tourism on a global scale will benefit greatly from this sector. The leading countries for congress tourism are the USA, followed by Germany and Spain. In particular, Turkey held 221 congresses in 2013 and took the 18th place in terms of congress tourism, however, this indicator recorded a downward trend after 2013 and fell to the 52nd place as a result of the organization of 55 conferences in 2018. The cities that have hosted the most congress tourism in this country are Istanbul, Izmir, Antalya and Ankara, which have sufficient infrastructure, in particular, congress halls, exhibition and fair grounds. In addition, there are many hotels in Turkey with favorable conditions for organizing and conducting congress tourism. By creating the necessary investment and organizational conditions, it is possible to generate income both at the national and regional levels. Because, considering that congress tourism brings income to the country and region, to about 50 industries, it is necessary to give importance to this industry, both at the level of large business and at the scale of small business, to foreign economic relations and the tendency to integrate into the world market. Congress tourism is a type of tourism that is increasing day by day as a result of meetings and congresses. Congress tourism increases during the off-season, extending the tourism season, targeting high-income and cultural groups, and the economic benefits it brings to the region are more effective than other types of tourism. Therefore, congress tourism brings many benefits to the region due to its features, such as ensuring effective advertising and representation of the organized city and region in the local and international market.

The tourism sector is one of the fastest growing and rapidly developing sectors in the world in recent years. In 2010, international trips amounted to 910 mln. per person, the income from tourism is 919 billion. amounted to a dollar. about 15% of these trips consisted of trips made for business and professional purposes. Today, the number of tourists is more than 70% of the world's population at the local level, and more than 20% at the international level. At the same time, congress tourism is rapidly developing along with all tourism sectors. Convention tourism in cities and regions can be developed as the conditions and supporting attractions allow. In particular, congress centers, congress halls, high-capacity hotels and accommodation facilities,

infrastructures, conditions and transport options, climate, geographical location are important for the development of congress tourism. A congress delegate coming from abroad to participate in congresses has the status of a tourist because they also fulfill their needs in terms of accommodation, food and drink, shopping activities, entertainment events in small hotels or destinations in cities. therefore, in short, congress tourism is a two-way type of travel. After all, the tourism event is a complement to the congresses. According to the International Congress and Convention Association, in 2009, a total of 8,924 congresses were held in the world, and approximately 5.2 million people attended these events. person is involved. if we take into account how much growth has taken place in the field of tourism, the scope of congress tourism can be imagined to a certain extent. According to the World Tourism Organization, in 2010, 15 percent of world travel was for business and professional tourism, while in 2011, the United States held 759 international congresses and took the absolute first place in the world. this field is progressive it is possible to imagine when the rise began in the countries.

The Congress tourism in the world is mainly carried out in industrialized developed countries. In recent years, congress tourism has been tending to countries with a lot of tourist resources. since congress participants consist of people with high cultural and income potential, they have the opportunity to relax and at least visit a touristic city and take pleasure trips in addition to participating in congresses. from this point of view, up to the theme of the congress, the location, city and region where it will be held are of particular importance. therefore, the country that aims to develop congress tourism and take advantage of it within the framework of economic integration, together with the theme of the conference or scientific conference, organizational conditions, infrastructures, additional tourist opportunities and events are organized it is required to pay priority attention to the location, city and territory, historical and cultural aspects, natural environment and climate of the object.

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