

## Eastern Anatolia Region With Respect To Tourism Based Development

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### ABSTRACT

Significant developments and changes happened in economic, technological, political, social and cultural fields in recent years crucially affected tourism sector/segment. Despite the fact that Turkey, which possesses a major potential with rich cultural, historical and natural values, has a remarkable advantage in terms of tourism, it couldn't enjoy this advantage for long years. Development of tourism sector/segment in Turkey is encountered in post 1980 era. In this era Tourism Incentive Law, taking decisions regarding Promotion of Foreign Exchange Earning Services and Businesses, enactment of Foreign Capital Law, decisions taken on the subject of bending law no. 31, Protection Order of Turkish Currency Value became crucial factors in development of tourism. As a result of these decisions taken, tourism income, which was 326 million USD in 1980, has risen up to 35 billion USD in 2017. Tourism's share in GDP has risen from %0.6 to the level of %4 for the same years. Tourism sector/segment is gaining greater importance in decreasing regional derangement/conflict, developing of underdeveloped regions which lack sufficient resources and opportunities for agriculture and industrial sector on the other hand have rich tourism potential. Main purpose of this research is measuring potential usability of Eastern Anatolia Region, which has a unique beauty in terms of tourism, so much the more Hakkari zone and providing recognisability by destroying negative image of this zone.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Development, Employment and Eastern Anatolia Region

### INTRODUCTION

Turkey has got a rich potential with respect to touristic, cultural, historical and natural aspects. However Turkey is not able to benefit from those resources properly. In order to be able to benefit from those resources, Turkey needs to follow social, cultural, environmental and technologic developments and build strong and efficient bonds with outer world and increase tourism dependant income by using touristic assets rationally. Tourism sector, in which Turkey has the most important advantage for competing, can be improved by developing education and income level of individual citizens. Also modernization and enlargement of alternative demands, spreading environment friendly and responsible tourism understanding may increase tourism potential as current historical, natural, cultural and SPA like health related sites' infrastructures are improved strengthening Turkey's position in the competition. Together with the increasing income level, transportation and tourism opportunities made the tourism sector fastest developing one in the world.

International tourist number, which was 901 million in 2007, reached to 1.035 billion in 2012 with a 14.9% increase and approximated to 1.250 billion in 2016. On the other hand, tourism income was 858 billion dollar in 2007 and reached to 1.075 billion dollar in 2012 then to 1.500 billion dollar in 2016 (TÜİK data). In Turkey, tourism income reached to 32 billion dollar in 2016 and tourist number reached to 35 million people (Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı). Again according to TÜİK, 77.5% of this income from foreigners and 22.5% of it obtained from Turkish

citizens living abroad. In order to develop tourism in Turkey, there are higher education institutions in 67 cities. In Turkey, 154 of 523 vocational high schools and 99 of 154 universities taught tourism education. 72% of the students, who received tourism education at higher education level, are graduated from vocational highschool while 28% of them graduated from highschools or faculties which are 4 years old. Most of those school are located at Marmara, Aege and Mediterranean regions intensively in Istanbul, Izmir and Antalya. Number of the students in those schools is higher than 70 thousand.

Fundamental purpose of this research is to explain the tourism potential of Eastern Anatolia Region which has an alternative tourism potential and encourage making investments for tourism sector.

### **ROLE OF TOURISM IN THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

From past to today, there have been differences in the development of regions. Sometimes it appeared at the distribution of underground and terrestrial resources and sometimes at population and human capital and sometimes at historical and cultural build ups. Those differences which are seen between regions of a country caused economic, social and cultural inequalities between those regions making some of them more attractive.

Tourism sector gains a great attention at decreasing regional imbalances between regions which has not got enough opportunities at agriculture and industry but having a rich tourism potential. Tourism sector affecting the other sectors plays an important role at development of the region. However Turkey having 7 geographic region all of the regions of it has got different tourism potentials. While Aege, Mediterranean and Blacksee regions have got those opportunities, Eastern Anatolia and Southeastern Anatolia regions has got unique beauties with respect to mountain and summer camping grounds. Some precautions must be taken activating this potential and using it for dynamic for regional development.

First of all, the region should be publicly promoted [2]. After this publicity, as the number of the tourists may increase the number of the touristic institutions, transportation facilities and communication means should be increase to meet the needs of the tourists. Citizens of the region should be made conscious of benefits of the tourism for economically and socially by telling them those. The people of the region should be informed about tourism and the benefits of the tourism to the economic and social structure of the region should be told.

Economic development of a country never started in all of the regions of it at the same time and at the same pace. The regions which are advantagous with respect to the factors like geographic structure, human capital, population, education level, human capital etc. develop faster than the rest. This situation causes imbalances among regions. Regional imbalance is defined as economic, social and cultural inequalities between a country's regions.

Another aspect of the tourism about regional development is that its big dependence on nature, climate, history, culture, folklore and environment. Those factors attract tourism. Those mentioned assets can be turned into values by the help of tourism. In the Transportation and Tourism 2023 vision pre-report of TUBITAK it is assumed that 3S(sun, sea, sand) is replaced with 3E(exciting, educational, entertainment). Eastern Anatolia Region (EAR) has got a serious potential with respect to being an alternative tourism center. The region is very rich of archeological, historical, natural and cultural values. The alternative tourism potentials of EAR are those:

### Pastoral Sites Tourism

As being covered with forests, climate of EAR is quite good for human health. Average temperature in summer is about 18-32 C. which is normal for human life without too much perspiring.

### Upland Tourism

Even though Black Sea Region is the first one that comes to mind with respect to uplands, Eastern Anatoli Region is not far from it. Upland tourism is a rich potential of EAR. There are plateaus in the range of 2000-3000 m.

### Mountain Tourism

It is an advantage for the ones who like mountain tourism that there are many mountains in the EAR. For example Ağrı, Sübhan, Cilo and Hakkari mountains can be counted.

### Eco Tourism

The pastoral and rural areas are important for natural and cultural inheritance which contributes to tourism as well. As eco tourism; tracking, rafting, bird observation, endemic plant observation, photography, orienteering, under water observation and rock climbing can be counted.

### Culture Tourism

Cultural tourism is one of the most important tourism branches. These include local cuisine, dress patterns, handicrafts, historical values, art and music culture.

### Other Tourism Types

Water Sports and Stream Tourism, Cave Tourism, Lake Tourism, Wildlife and Hunting Tourism, History Tourism, Faith Tourism and Sports Tourism.

## IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM FOR RURAL AREA DEVELOPMENT

The aim of rural development is to improve the income level of people living in rural areas. Today about 30% of Turkey's population lives in rural areas. It is planned to reduce the imbalances between rural-urban areas by rural development policy. According to this plan, it is aimed to continue the existence of rural areas, to develop ways to utilize the natural resources in an environmentally sensitive way from rural areas, to increase the contributions of local administrations and CSOs, to improve the living conditions of rural society, which is mostly provided by economic activities based on agriculture and husbandry [3]. In the following Table 1, Between Urban-Rural Development of the population in Turkey is seen.

**Table 1: Urban-Rural Development of the population in Turkey, Resource: TÜİK,(2017)**

| Years/<br>Population | Rural population |      | Urban population |      | Total |
|----------------------|------------------|------|------------------|------|-------|
|                      | (Million)        | ( %) | (million)        | (%)  |       |
| 1927                 | 10.9             | 80.2 | 3.3              | 24.2 | 13.6  |
| 1940                 | 13.4             | 78.8 | 4.3              | 24.4 | 17.8  |
| 1950                 | 15.7             | 75.6 | 5.2              | 25.0 | 19.0  |
| 1960                 | 18.9             | 68.9 | 8.8              | 31.9 | 20.9  |
| 1970                 | 22.0             | 62.0 | 13.6             | 38.4 | 27.7  |
| 1980                 | 26.1             | 59.2 | 19.6             | 43.9 | 35.6  |
| 2000                 | 23.9             | 44.3 | 44.0             | 64.2 | 44.7  |
| 2010                 | 23.0             | 35.0 | 47.0             | 65.0 | 67.8  |
| 2015                 | 22.1             | 33.0 | 50.2             | 67.0 | 72.1  |
| 2016                 | 21.0             | 28.0 | 58.2             | 72.0 | 79.2  |
| 2017                 | 17.0             | 21.0 | 63.2             | 79.0 | 80.1  |

Decrease income of agriculture in national distribution, imbalances in income distribution and socio-economic differences between rural and urban areas can be counted among the most important reasons of migration from rural area to urban areas. So several policies have been applied in order to increase welfare of citizens living in the rural areas [4]. Among them:

- Regulation of land distribution,
- Increasing efficiency of agricultural productivity,
- Paying attention to rural development projects
- Promotion of cooperatives,
- Implementation of village-city and central village-like projects

can be counted.

By the way, according to Village Law no. 442, settlements are defined according to the populations where villages have got less than 2000 population, towns have got population between 2000-20000 and cities have got more than 20000 population.

### **ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF TOURISM SECTOR**

Tourism sector has got many benefits for regional development. First of them is employment. Tourism builds a relationship between the employed labor force and the development level of the regions. As it is known, tourism sector needs intense labor force. So consumption expenditures in the tourism sector directly and indirectly have positive effects on the employment. The sector's effect on the employment is seen in three forms. Firstly, number of employed people at hotels, restaurants and tourism related workings increases. Secondly, employments of subsidiary sectors like transportation, communication, entertainment and food increase as well. Thirdly, the employment increases in a macro level with multiplier effect resulting from the re-spending of revenues. Another benefits of tourism sector is the increase of national income and decrease in the foreign trade deficit.

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

By decreasing the foreign trade deficit, increasing the employment and providing an income opportunity, tourism has always been an important sector whose importance increases from past to today. Tourism, which is placed in the services sector, has become an industry by today. While its importance was not known in 1960s, thanks to development of communication and transportation systems, tourism became fourth sector nowadays. While the approximate number of visitors that came to Turkey in 1980s is about 1 million, this number reached to 5 million in 1990s and then converged to 40 million in 2017. Moreover, while the approximate income obtained from tourism is 336 million in 1980, it came up to 35 billion dollars in 2017.

Tourism merges and unites foreign people and changes prejudices of them about each other. Historical characteristics, wildlife, geographic structures like mountains, caves, valleys, lakes, rivers and etc. are the factors that flourishes the tourism. Those factors exist in abundance in the Eastern Anatolia Region however the number of tourists is too few. Therefore this region needs suitable infrastructural improvements and proper platforms should be established.

Also it is urgent that terror events should be finished for increasing tourism in this regions. Terror affects the fundamental markets of macroeconomy very closely. First of all, agriculture and husbandry can be counted. Villagers living in the region and making a livelihood based on agriculture and husbandry migrates to cities due to lack of security. This fact triggers other sociological problems in those cities while harming agriculture and livestock market greatly. Tourism and services sectors are affected from the terror too. Due to insecurity and doubt, it is almost impossible to host foreigner and domestic tourists eventhough the region has got a

rich potential. Especially foreign tourists are affected from this situation wrongly assuming that whole country is in this terror turmoil and the region and Turkey make loss morally and materially.

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