

## Excursion Activities in Uzbekistan

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### *Annotation*

*This article discusses the specifics of organizing excursions and training guides in the Republic of Uzbekistan.*

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The tourism industry of Uzbekistan, like other areas, is going through a period of rapid reform and global revision of the course of government policy aimed at accelerated development, ensuring employment of the population, and increasing general well-being.

In a short period, an unprecedented package of regulatory and legal acts was adopted, including a new law on tourism, which creates a solid legal basis for the gradual reform of the tourism sector, in particular, providing the necessary conditions and a comfortable environment for interested business entities.

It is necessary to especially emphasize the efforts made by the President of our country, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, in terms of accelerated development of the tourism industry of the republic, giving it a strategic vector of development. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism has been given serious tasks to implement promising projects included in the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022–2026 years. Specific goals have been set to increase the number of local tourists to 12 million or more and foreign tourists to 9 million.

According to the State Statistics Agency of Uzbekistan, the number of tourists arriving in the country from abroad in 2022 increased by 2.8 times compared to the previous year and reached 5 million 200 thousand people. Most tourists came to the country from Kazakhstan – 1 million 551 thousand 100 people.

Kazakhstan is followed by Tajikistan with 1 million 447 thousand 800, Kyrgyzstan with 1 million 356 thousand 900, Russia with 567 thousand 700, Turkey with 75 thousand and South Korea with 19 thousand 900 people.

It is planned to widely introduce infrastructure without barrier tourism in the main tourist cities of the country and increase the number of people employed in tourism to 520 thousand people by 2026.

Of course, industry reform and its growth rates place special demands on the quality of human resources. At the moment, tour guides are in demand in the tourism labor market more than ever. It should be noted that thanks to the ongoing reforms, the number of guides in 2022 increased by an average of 33 percent compared to 2016.

According to the Research Institute for the Study of Problems of Cultural Heritage Objects and Tourism Development, as of January 1, 2023, 2,500 people are engaged in excursion activities in the republic. The largest number of guides is concentrated in Samarkand region - 36.7 percent, the city of Tashkent - 28.9 percent, the Bukhara region - 16.7 percent, Khorezm region - 8.6 percent, of which 54 percent is men, 46 percent is women.

The largest group among guides (54%) is people aged 22–35 years. They represent the most mature part of the workforce, with mobility and flexibility, the ability to adapt to the changing needs and trends of the tourism market, in other words, they are the foundation for the further development of excursion activities.

Today excursions in Uzbekistan are conducted in 20 languages. The most in demand in 2022 were guides with knowledge of Uzbek, Russian, English, Turkish and Korean. Guides mainly provide excursion services in one language - 54 percent, two languages - 33 percent, three languages - 11 percent, more than four languages - 2 percent.

Currently, guide training in the republic is carried out by 31 educational organizations, of which 12 are higher educational institutions, 8 are colleges/technical schools of tourism and cultural

heritage, and 11 are private educational institutions. In 2022, educational organizations trained 176 people, which is 2 times more than in 2021. It is also worth noting the fact that before January 1, 2017, only 5 educational organizations were training guides in Uzbekistan.

When organizing the activities of tour guides, the following criteria are considered:

- The clarity of the organization of the excursion is the most convenient and specific route for the excursion group to follow, facilitating the disclosure of the topic. It is built depending on the most correct sequence of inspection of objects for a given excursion, the availability of sites for the group, and the need to ensure the safety of excursionists. The organization of display of objects is presented in a logical sequence and provides a visual basis for revealing the theme.
- Ability to interest tourists. Concerned with evoking empathy and reflection in listeners by appealing to their emotional and rational memory. To evoke appropriate associations, techniques such as analogy, references to precedents, and imagery of statements are used.
- Literacy. It is necessary to consider the cultural and educational level of students, their life and work experience.

We should never forget that many people hear what they want to hear. Hence the need to consider the emotional and psychological stratifications of each audience. To increase accessibility, a very effective technique is to communicate little-known information (novelty and originality), as well as to combine diverse information and its reliability.

- Knowledge of the topic, ability to answer questions. It is based on a pre-thought-out distribution of new thoughts and arguments throughout the entire space of speech, and periodic interpretation of what was previously said.
- Ability to communicate. Includes mastery of oratorical techniques, clarity and volume of speech. As well as competent sentence construction, correct word stress, use of metaphors, etc.
- Emotionality. It is expressed in the emotionally intense speech of the speaker, his facial expressions, gestures and posture, indicating complete dedication. Passion, genuine joy or sadness, compassion - all these are specific forms of expressiveness.
- Originality and originality. The ability to joke at the right time and insert a witty remark. Humor creates a natural break for people to relax, brings people closer together and puts them in a favorable mood.

It is noteworthy that in 2019, the profession “Tour guide” was included in the list of self-employed persons, which significantly simplified the process of state registration of labor activity and further calculation of work experience for these specialists in the tourism industry. At the same time, in 2022, 138 guides received the status of self-employed persons.

In 2023, the tourist flow in Uzbekistan is expected to increase to 7 million people. The following factors contribute to this: attracting 20 new foreign airlines to fly to the republic from countries such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman, Qatar, Vietnam and others; resumption of flights with China; expansion of the geography of visitors (guests from South America, Portugal, China, Malaysia, Indonesia and other countries); opening of new tourist sites.

According to experts, the number of new guides on the labor market will double by the end of

2023.

Currently, active work is underway in Uzbekistan to diversify the tourism product. Thus, in 2023, it is planned to introduce new directions in excursion activities: a guide-sign language interpreter, a “green” guide and a guide in the direction of “ziorat tourism”.

In the first quarter of 2023, with the support of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the first group of guides and sign language interpreters of 11 people was trained. Also, in April of this year, a new project “Tourist mahalla: green guide” was launched, which will involve young people in rural areas in excursion activities, which will generally popularize the historical, cultural and natural potential of tourist mahallas, villages and villages.

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