

Opportunities, Provided To Entrepreneurs In The Field Of Tourism In Condition Of “Covid-19” Pandemic

Ravshanov Tuyli Gulmurodovich

Chief specialist of the Compliance Control and Internal Audit Service of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports of the Republic of Uzbekistan, independent researcher of the Institute for Tourism Development.



Abstract – The rise in tourist flow as a result of benefits and privileges granted by the government to businesses (tour operators) functioning in the country in the sector of domestic and pilgrim tourism in a pandemic is the subject of this article.

The subject of granting subsidies to tour operators, travel brokers, and lodging facilities to pay part of the costs of firms planning excursions for foreign and domestic tourists in the years 2020-2021 is also explored in the article.

Keywords – Ziyarah tourism, subsidies, “Covid-19” pandemic, touroperators, “Halal” standart

Presidential Decree No PD-6165 was issued on February 9, 2021, and Government Decree No 100 was issued on February 24, 2021, in order to effectively harness the country's strong tourist potential, particularly the development of domestic and pilgrimage tourism in the context of pandemic Covid-19.

Flights to the cities of Bukhara, Nukus, Termez, and Urgench, as well as the Fergana Valley, where domestic and pilgrimage tourism is high, as well as Fergana-Urgench-Fergana, Termez-Urgench-Termez, and Karshi-Urgench-Karshi flights and the Andijan-Khiva-Andijan railway, are all permitted under this Decree and Resolution for tours organized by tour operators.

According to it, the special commission's decision on determining the amount of subsidized air and rail routes, airline tickets, and hotel services was approved, which established air and rail routes with a subsidy of 25% of the cost of tickets for domestic flights and 15% of the cost of air and rail tickets for domestic tourists' tours organized by tour operators and travel agents.

The signing of the Presidential Decree on the Development of Domestic and Pilgrimage Tourism allowed people of the Fergana Valley to go to Bukhara, Samarkand, and Khorezm, as well as the population of these regions to visit the Fergana Valley.

In particular, aircraft employment increased by 43.7 percent in the first month of the Urgench-Fergana-Urgench route, which began in February this year, while additional employment for tour operators and travel agents increased by 87.9% in March.

As a result of this decision, a total of 386.5 million soums were given from the national budget for travel organized by travel organizers for citizens of our country and stateless persons permanently residing in the Republic of Uzbekistan during the first four months of this year.

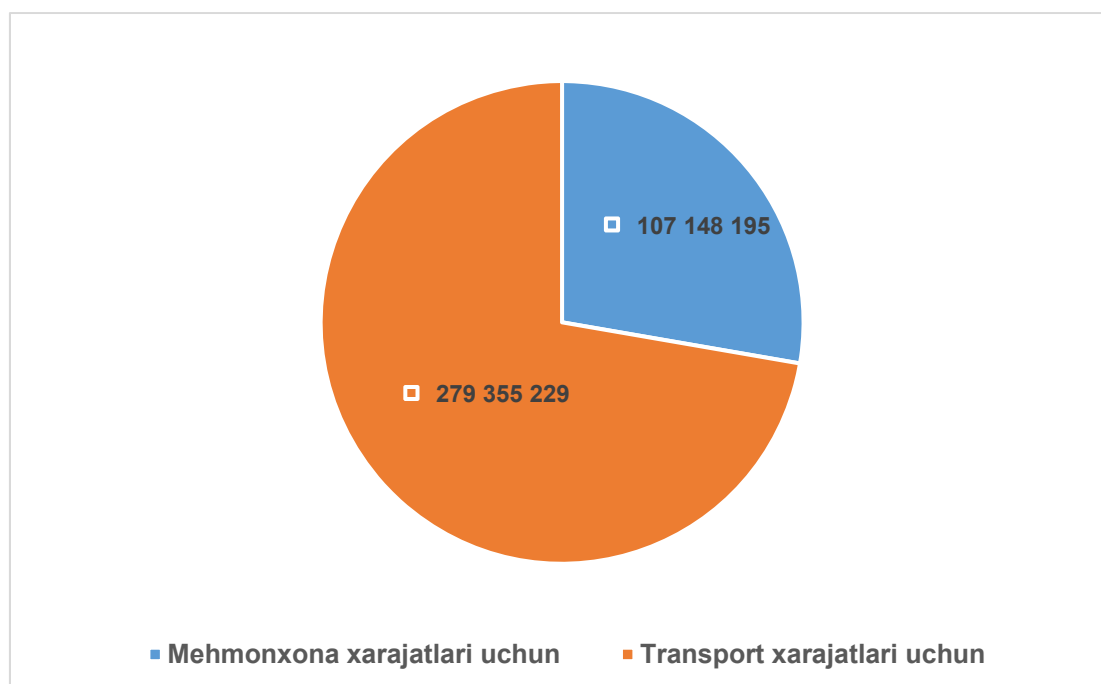


Fig.1. From the republican budget in May-August this year the amount of subsidies allocated to tour operators¹ (sum)

As a result of the increased number of trips arranged by tour operators, their need for lodging facilities has increased. In particular, the employment rate of accommodation funds in the Bukhara and Samarkand regions, which have a high potential for pilgrimage and domestic tourism, was only 15.8 % and 16.2 %, respectively, in January of this year. However, travel arrangements, which took into account the country's caratine restrictions, resulted in a 25.1 % and 34.2 % increase in occupancy rates for accommodations located in these regions, respectively.

Short videos on the potential of our country's material and cultural legacy, as well as the shrines of scholars renowned in the Islamic world for their expertise, were created in order to extensively promote their potential.

The "Suzuk"otamain complex in Tashkent, Yunuskhon mausoleum, Kaldirgochbiy mausoleum, Sheikh Khovand Tohur complex, Imam Moturidi, and the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan were all featured in videos.

In addition, in order to create comprehensive conditions for tourists from Muslim countries and to promote pilgrimage abroad, promotional materials such as **"7 reasons to celebrate Ramadan in Uzbekistan"**, **"Uzbekistan - the center of Islamic civilization"**, **"Happy Ramadan"** and others were distributed, the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Indonesia, Russia and other countries were prepared..

Halal tourism services for the administration of products and services for tourists, including lodging, travel, tourist guides, and other tourist services, while taking into account the needs and wants of pilgrims. general needs for tourism It has been introduced the DSt OIC / SMIIC 9: 2021 (Halal tourism services - general requirements (OIC / SMIIC 9: 2019) standard.

The services supplied at lodging facilities, he claims, are classified according to honest tourism criteria. Specifically:

¹Prepared by the author based on the information provided by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports of the Republic of Uzbekistan.



Fig.2. Requirements for honest (halal) tourism services²

As a result of this practical work, in the first quarter of this year alone, 2 hotels "Musafir Hotel" and "Chinor Garden Hotel" and 2 restaurants "Aksu" and "Aban" began work on the certification system "Halal".

As a result of the difficult situation with the Covid-19 pandemic in the world, tourism has become one of the most affected sectors of the world economy. According to statistics provided by the World Tourism Organization, only 147 million people traveled in the first five months of this year due to the pandemic, a decrease of 85% and 65%, respectively, compared to the same periods in 2019 and 2020.

Reducing the negative impact of the coronavirus pandemic in our country, supporting tourism and related industries, maintaining many jobs and qualified professionals, in addition, in order to accelerate the recovery of the tourism sector due to the improvement of the sanitary and epidemiological situation, the President and the Government have adopted more than 20 normative and legal acts in the field of tourism and related industries. Including:

- Presidential Decree № PD-6002 on May 28, 2020 "On urgent measures to support the tourism industry to reduce the negative impact of the pandemic coronavirus;
- Presidential Decree on June 19, 2020 № PD-4755 "On additional measures to develop tourism in strict compliance with the requirements of enhanced sanitary and epidemiological security;
- Presidential Decree № PD-6165 on February 9, 2021 "On measures for the further development of domestic and pilgrimage tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan";
- Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan on October 6, 2020 № 602 "On support for tourism entities in the economic situation caused by the pandemic coronavirus, and the development of tourism infrastructure";
- Among them is the Decree № 100 on February 24, "On additional measures for the development of domestic and pilgrimage tourism".

Despite the pandemic, 136 new hotels, 468 new family-run guesthouses and 121 new tourist organizations were launched in 2020 as a result of the support of businesses working in the field.

²Prepared by the author based on the information provided by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In order to cover part of the costs of businesses that organize travel for foreign and domestic tourists during the pandemic, in 2020-2021, tour operators, travel agents and accommodation facilities are allocated subsidies of 2.9 billion soums.

In addition, the state budget in 2019-2021 allocated 41.2 billion soums of subsidies to enterprises that have built modern hotels that meet international standards, even in these difficult situations.

As a result of these efforts to support tourism and related industries, the number of foreign tourists who visited our country in the first six months of this year amounted to 761.5 thousand, and the number of domestic tourists - 2,684.2 thousand.

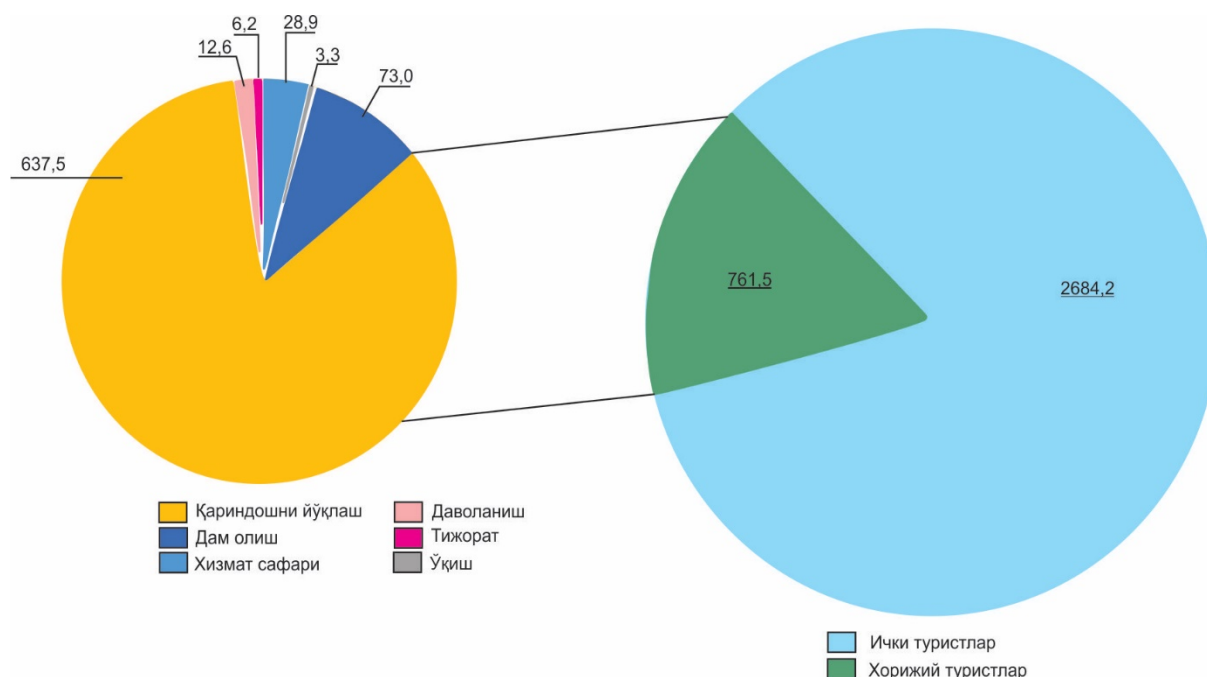


Fig.3. Foreign and local tourists visiting our country in January-June 2021 (thousand people)³

If we consider the tourist destinations of foreign tourists visiting our country, most of them, i.e. 637.5 thousand tourists visiting relatives, 73.0 thousand resting, 28.9 thousand business trips, 12.6 thousand medical treatment, 6.2 thousand merchants and 3.3 thousand coming to study.

Based on the above, in order to further stimulate the subjects of entrepreneurship, carrying out activities in the field of secondary and pilgrimage tourism in our country:

- simplification of the system of subsidies for businesses operating in the tourism and related industries, based on the President's instruction on the "Open Dialogue" with entrepreneurs of the country from August 20 this year;

- in order to further develop domestic and pilgrimage tourism, to support entrepreneurs working in this area, to provide tourists with special benefits, discounts and promotions on holidays;

- in order to further increase the number of visitors from Muslim countries, it is recommended to cover part of the transport and logistics costs of tour operators (travel agents) bringing tourists from these countries.

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