

Digital Breakthrough: The Five-Year Path of Legalization of Taxi Aggregators in Uzbekistan (2020-2025)

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Abstract. Below is a scientific article analyzing the experience of legalizing taxi aggregators in Uzbekistan for 2020-2025 and offering recommendations on scaling this approach to other sectors of the digital economy.

Keywords: Taxi aggregators, regulatory economy, "White" economy, digital transformation, taxation, Self-employed drivers.

Over the past five years (2020-2025), Uzbekistan has consistently reformed the legal regulation of taxi transportation: from the monopoly of taxi companies to a full-fledged "white" market of self-employed drivers aggregators. As a result, the aggregator market was fully digitized, licensing and taxation procedures were simplified, which allowed more than 500,000 self-employed drivers to enter the white light and create a market volume of almost 6 trillion soums (2024)¹. 2024 was an important stage on the way to whitewashing the taxi market in Uzbekistan. The Tax Committee has ensured transparency in this area, contributing to the growth of legal turnover and reducing the share of the shadow sector through the integration of aggregators.

According to the results of last year, 155 taxi aggregators were integrated with the information systems of tax authorities² (in April last year - 6, in August – 142). A total of 320 million trips were made. The turnover from taxi services approached 5.9 trillion soums. Of these, almost 4.5 trillion soums or 76.3% are cash payments; 1.4 trillion soums or 23.7% are non-cash payments.

The average cost per check was 18,456 soums (in August – 18,000 soums). About 498,000 self-employed drivers are engaged in passenger transportation through aggregators. More than half of drivers (57%) aged 30 to 50 are 283,680, 179,245 (36%) under 30, and 35,004 (7%) over 50.

The number of female drivers has increased almost 4 times: if at the beginning of last year there were 1,053, by the end of the year 4,124 women were already working through aggregators.

1. About 4.7 thousand drivers earned more than 100 million soums per year on transportation.;
2. 50-100 million soums - 23.1 thousand drivers;
3. 10-50 million soums - 114.6 thousand drivers;
4. 5-10 million soums - 63.5 thousand drivers;
5. 1-5 million soums - 136.4 thousand drivers;
6. up to 1 million soums - 155.5 thousand drivers.

In 2024, aggregators paid 156.8 billion soums in taxes, 66.2 billion soums of which were VAT.

¹ <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2025/02/28/taxi/>

² <https://t.me/solignews/13211>



Picture 1 General overview of the results of the 2024 transition of taxi aggregators in Uzbekistan

A comparative analysis of the experience of Turkey, Germany, and Denmark demonstrates that rapid and comprehensive regulation of digital platforms is possible with a combination of clear legislation, digital services, and aggregators' responsibility for tax reporting. A methodological model is proposed for scaling this practice into related sectors: food delivery, freelance services, tourism, and retail sales.

Modern digital platforms are radically transforming traditional industries, creating new forms of employment with flexible working conditions and low barriers to entry. However, the lack of a clear legal status for platforms and self-employed workers creates a shadow market, opaque cash flows, and risks for users and the government. The Uzbek case serves as an example of how a sustainable model of the "white" economy of digital services can be built in a short time.

A qualitative analysis of the legislative acts of Uzbekistan (2020-2025), data from large aggregators, government reports and a comparative review of the practices of Turkey, Germany and Denmark were used. We also rely on academic research and reports from international organizations on regulating the platform economy.

The case of Uzbekistan (2020-2025) :³:

- 2020. Taxi services can only be provided by licensed legal entities (taxi companies). The taxi car must be equipped with a taximeter, a walkie-talkie, a cash register and a terminal for accepting plastic cards. The color of the car should be yellow, for Tashkent — "ivory".
- The year is 2021. An experiment in which individual entrepreneurs were allowed to provide taxi services. It didn't fly. Expensive and complicated legalization, the incomprehensible cash flow experiment failed. But for the first time, the term "aggregator" appeared in the legislation.
- The year is 2022. The turning point. The self-employed were allowed to take taxis. So far, as a pilot and until the end of 2024. The requirement to install a windshield light, a taximeter, a walkie-talkie, and a cash register is lifted.
- The year is 2023. The whitewashing of the market begins. All the processes for registering a self-employed person, obtaining a license card, accepting non-cash funds and issuing fiscal receipts for a trip from large aggregators have been worked out and digitized.
- The year is 2024. By the end of the year, 142 aggregators are operating online, through which almost 500 thousand self-employed people receive orders, the market volume was slightly less than 6 trillion soums.
- The year is 2025. Passenger transportation has been added to the list of activities of the self-employed. A regulation has been adopted that regulates all requirements for aggregators and the self-employed.

In Turkey, the regulation of platform transportation began in the mid-2010s, but still remains fragmented. Uber and other aggregators face an ambiguous status: on the one hand, they act as private carriers, on the other, they are fined for not having special licenses⁴. According to the OECD, the lack of clear price regulation in the sector leads to uneven competition and low consumer confidence.

Since the early 2010s, ride sharing in Germany has been regulated through private licenses, but with a number of restrictions: drivers must return to the office after each trip, and prices are not subject to free formation⁵. Court injunctions and fines for unauthorized transportation have exacerbated the situation: UberPop has been banned in Frankfurt and several other countries⁶. Only in 2017, some requirements were relaxed, but the system remains excessively bureaucratic.

In Denmark, the share of platform workers remains low ($\approx 1\%$ of the population), but in 2020, a historic agreement was reached to improve the working conditions of gig workers: supervision of algorithmic systems for the distribution of orders and guarantees of social contributions were introduced⁷. However, it was not possible to achieve a large-scale transition to the "white" economy due to the lack of full integration of taxation and licensing procedures.

Analysis and practical recommendations on the legalization of platform services in Uzbekistan (2020-2025):

1. Clarity and consistency of legislation. Uzbekistan has adopted all key regulations in five years, which is twice as fast as in a number of developed countries. Recommendation: apply comprehensive "legislative and technological packages" for other industries where digital platforms play an essential role (food delivery, freelancing, tourism).

2. Digitalization of procedures. Full electronic registration, licensing and reporting reduce

³ <https://uz.tgstat.com/en/channel/@tkratuz>

⁴ <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/>

⁵ <https://www.wiwi.uni-muenster.de/>

⁶ <https://time.com/3256016/uber-germany/>

⁷ <https://www.etuc.org/en/historic-deal-platform-workers-denmark>

administrative barriers to a minimum. A similar approach is appropriate for small-scale sales and service sectors that require massive involvement of the self-employed.

3. Responsibility of aggregators. The transfer of tax collection and transfer functions to the platforms has simplified the control of tax authorities and reduced tax evasion. This mechanism should be extended to marketplaces and freelance service exchanges.

4. Social protection. For the stability of the market, it is important to provide basic social guarantees (minimum rate, insurance) without losing the flexibility of employment.

5. Unification of industry standards. The creation of a standard package of standards for different platform models will avoid a "cascading" regulatory wave and accelerate the integration of new services.

Conclusion

Uzbek experience shows that consistent and digital regulation of aggregators based on self-employed workers can be implemented as soon as possible and produce a sustainable economic effect. The transfer of this model to other sectors of the digital economy will require adaptation of industry requirements, but the basic principles ("clarity of norms", "digitalization of procedures", "responsibility of platforms") remain universal. This methodological approach will allow countries with dynamically developing platform economies to effectively legalize new forms of employment and strengthen the "white" component of the market.

List of literature

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