



Uzbekistan Legal Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2024

Some of the most significant legal developments in September 2024 included specific changes to the Law "On Competition," aimed at liberalizing competition regulation; Presidential decisions regarding the more effective use of land for investment purposes and the introduction of public health insurance; and resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers on the development of tourism.

1. LIBERALIZATION OF COMPETITION LAW

A Law liberalizing specific competition law requirements has been adopted. It introduces the following changes:

- a business entity shall be considered a natural monopoly only if it engages in a relevant natural monopoly activity as its primary activity;
- fines will not be imposed on business entities for first-time violations with a low economic impact; instead, they will receive a written warning. The Cabinet of Ministers will approve the list of violations deemed to have a low economic impact.

[Law No. ZRU-954 of 4 September 2024](#)

2. USE OF LANDS FOR INVESTMENT PURPOSES

The President has signed a Decree on better use of lands for investment purposes. The Decree, among other things, envisages the following:

- starting from 1 January 2025, a Single Classifier of Types of Permitted Use of Lands and Construction Objects will be introduced with main, conditionally permitted, and auxiliary types of use being distinguished. This Classifier will apply to both allotted lands and those intended for allocation. A type of permitted use will affect, among other factors, the appraisal of land, its transfer price, the starting price at land auctions, applicable construction permits, and relevant tax rates. Where a specific land use is conditionally permitted, compensation will be payable for the additional burden on social and infrastructure facilities, based on rules to be established by the Cabinet of Ministers;
- the acquisition of ownership and lease rights to non-agricultural and agricultural lands can be paid in instalments. If full payment is made within 15 business days, a 20% discount will be granted, except when the starting price of the land has been decreased by more than 50%;
- where land is allotted directly by the Cabinet of Ministers, the applicable payment may be made in instalments or may be converted into a state share in a project company using the land in accordance with the rules set forth in [Annex 1](#) to the Decree;
- in the case of a new allocation (sale) of non-agricultural lands with ownership, lease, or permanent use rights, the timelines for the design, commencement, and completion of construction, as well as the commissioning of the facility, must be specified. If these timelines

are not met, local municipalities shall initiate court proceedings to cancel the land use. More specific rules are provided in [Annex 5](#) to the Decree;

- land tax rates are reduced by 50% for newly allocated land plots for a period equal to the period of commissioning of a relevant facility but not exceeding 3 years, except for lands located in Tashkent, Nukus, and regional centers.

[Presidential Decree No. UP-135 of 6 September 2024](#)

3. PUBLIC HEALTH INSURANCE

The President has signed a Resolution on the gradual implementation of public health insurance across the country by 1 October 2026. This insurance will generally be funded through taxes - the population will not incur additional charges for covered medical services.

According to the Resolution, by the end of 2024, the Ministry of Healthcare will approve a guaranteed package of free medical services, which will include medications and laboratory tests for common diseases. Organizations providing primary health care and citizens of Uzbekistan assigned to them (as well as foreign citizen recognized tax residents of Uzbekistan) will have to conclude relevant agreements for medical services. To access the medical services included in the guaranteed package free of charge, patients must complete necessary medical examinations within established timeframes and, when required, consult a family doctor or medical team (except in cases of emergency or urgent care). Family doctors will issue electronic referrals to specialized doctors or, if necessary, to hospitals, in accordance with established treatment and diagnostic standards.

Both public and private medical organizations will participate in providing the services included in the guaranteed package. Financing for their activities will be based on, among others, agreements with the State Health Insurance Fund.

Medications included in the guaranteed package will be provided to patients by pharmacies free of charge based on electronic prescriptions issued by doctors. The costs incurred by pharmacies will be covered by the Fund.

A schedule for implementing public health insurance in various regions is outlined in Annex 1 of the Resolution.

[Presidential Resolution No. PP-311 of 5 September 2024](#)

4. DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM

The Cabinet of Ministers has adopted two Resolutions on the development of tourism. The following is, among other things, envisaged:

- a number of state agencies are instructed to take measures to facilitate development of new types of tourism, including industrial tourism, geotourism, science tourism, military tourism, and tours to places of state governance;
- starting from 1 September 2024, the Fund for Reconstruction and Development will allocate funds in national currency equivalent to USD 50 million to provide preferential loans to commercial banks. These loans shall be used to finance expenses incurred by tour operators resident in Uzbekistan for attracting foreign tourists;
- by the end of 2024, some specified state agencies shall ensure the following: (i) local and foreign car rental companies (Hertz, Avis, Sixt, etc.) provide services at airports and railway stations; (ii) tourist destinations and routes are integrated into the Apple and Google Maps and regularly updated; and (iii) international online payment systems (such as Paypal, Alipay, UniPay, Apple Pay, and Google Pay) become operational in the country with applicable legal acts being amended where required;
- starting from 1 October 2025, as part of an experiment, the "Tourist Map" interactive portal will be launched at the Samarkand International Airport. There are plans for a full rollout of the portal at other busy airports, railway stations, and bus terminals by 1 September 2026;

[Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 582 of 18 September 2024](#)

[Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 610 of 27 September 2024](#)

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