

A CHRONIC SHORTAGE OF TOURIST GUIDES AND DRIVERS IN ITALY



Italy is a well-liked tourist destination, but there is a shortage of key professionals, such as tourist guides and drivers. This problem has become more apparent in recent months as tourists have started to arrive again.

Giampiero Campajola, the coordinator of Fiavet's National Incoming Committee, explains that the COVID pandemic caused many guides to change jobs, reducing their numbers. This issue has been persistent for a long time due to the lack of new competition, and now it has become a significant problem for the sector. Additionally, there is an administrative problem where the regions face difficulties in launching new tenders. Even when called for, they are often called back at the last minute, creating a hole that cannot be overcome. This short-circuit also threatens to affect the level of service provided to travelers. The lack of tourist guides makes organizing personalized experiences that meet travelers' expectations more difficult.

The Drivers

The tourism industry needs more drivers, not only large tourism buses but also drivers of cars and minivans used for individual travel and small groups. The sector is also understaffed due to the failure to issue new permits. These issues are putting strain on an already stressed sector. Experts say that doing another year like this would be madness. The COVID-era regulations need updating, including museum group size limits. The rules require the presence of a guide for every 20/30 people, but the limit justified during the pandemic today does not allow us to mitigate the impact of this chronic shortage.

The lack of a price ceiling is also significant. With the surge in demand, there is no tariff, and today, we are suffering from a disproportionate price increase, which creates a further disadvantage for Italy. At this point, Italy risks exiting the market.

After a ten-year wait, the law regulating the tourist guide sector will finally be approved in the Chamber by December 31st. Following this, implementing decrees will be issued. Experts are optimistic that the situation can be unblocked as early as 2024, providing many young people who are currently looking for work with the opportunity to pursue this profession.

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