

## Main Directions of People's Diplomacy Between Uzbekistan and Germany

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### Abstract

This article analyzes the role and significance of people-to-people diplomacy within the system of international relations in the context of globalization. Specifically, it offers an academic analysis of the main tools of the citizens diplomacy in the bilateral relations between Uzbekistan and Germany, such as intercity cooperation, cultural days, museums, academic collaboration, and the activities of non-governmental organizations. The article also supports the role played by cultural and humanitarian relations to encourage mutual rapprochement among peoples, encouraging intercultural communication, and enhancing interstate relations.

**Keywords:** People-To-People Diplomacy, Uzbekistan–Germany Relations, Intercity Cooperation, Cultural Days, Cultural Dialogue, Public Diplomacy

### 1. Introduction

At present, the need to utilize the instruments of people-to-people diplomacy within the international community is steadily increasing. This trend is particularly evident in the establishment and development of bilateral relations. Relations between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Federal Republic of Germany are distinguished by their broad scope, within which the role and significance of people's diplomacy are especially substantial. An examination of cooperation in this area shows that it is primarily developing within the framework of intercity partnerships and cultural days[1].

In the development of mutual people-to-people diplomacy between the two states, well-established cooperation between the capital cities of Tashkent and Berlin is of particular importance. At the same time, direct cooperation has been established between major cities and regions of both countries. Particular ones are sister cities and administrative unions like Bukhara Berlin and Andijan Saarbrücken. These relationships provide the possibility to promote relations between states on the level of local authorities, to develop relations between peoples closer and to encourage the cultural dialogue development. Besides, they contribute directly to the growth of economic relations by provision of good business atmosphere to entrepreneurs[2].

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## 2. Research Method

This article is based on a research methodology grounded in the principles of historicism, systematic analysis, and logical consistency. The study employs methods of analysis and synthesis, comparison, generalization, and historical-analytical approach. Archival documents, official statistical data, periodical publications, and scholarly sources related to people-to-people diplomacy between Uzbekistan and Germany serve as the primary empirical base. In addition, a factual and systematic approach is applied to examine the practical aspects of cultural and humanitarian cooperation, allowing for a comprehensive assessment of the role of public diplomacy in the development of bilateral relations[3].

## 3. Result and Discussion

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the history, art, and culture of Uzbekistan in Germany. A clear illustration of this trend is the extensive presentation of Uzbekistan's musical, visual, and theatrical arts in major German cities including Berlin, Potsdam, Dortmund, Bonn, Stuttgart, Hamburg, Munich, Hanover, and Wiesbaden—within the framework of the Days of Uzbek Culture held from 2000 to 2026. During this period, prominent figures from Uzbekistan's theater and film sectors also actively participated in festivals organized in Tübingen, Berlin, Cottbus, Mannheim, and Mülheim [4].

At the same time, sources confirm that the Days of German Culture were likewise successfully and consistently held in the Republic of Uzbekistan during this period.

It should be particularly emphasized that cultural days, regularly organized on the basis of bilateral cooperation, play an exceptionally important role in further expanding cultural relations and strengthening mutual closeness between the two peoples [5]. These events are held almost annually and are primarily conducted in the form of musical performances, theatrical productions, film screenings, and photographic exhibitions.

One of the major and significant cultural events of this kind was held in the city of Tashkent between September and December 1996. Within the framework of these cultural days, concerts were performed by the German Youth Philharmonic, the Bavarian Chamber Music Ensemble named after Georg Glazl, the Singer Pur vocal group, and the rock band M. Walking on the Water. The program also included stage productions by the Ketturket Plastic and Puppet Theatre, performances by organist M. Schönheit, screenings of German films accompanied by meetings with filmmakers, as well as seminars dedicated to German literature. These events generated considerable interest among art enthusiasts in Uzbekistan, contributed to a deeper understanding of the cultural heritage and traditions of the German people, and further enhanced respect and appreciation for them [6].

It is no secret that German people have traditionally been heavily interested in the culture, history, art, and traditional values of the East. It was in this regard that a large photo exhibit was held in the city of Freiburg, Germany, on June 11, 2001, as part of the events of the Days of Uzbekistan. The exhibition showed the history of Uzbekistan, outstanding philosophers, architecture, and other aspects of the cultural heritage to the photography lovers. At the opening of the exhibition, German scholars emphasized the country's contribution to the development of global science and culture and acknowledged its worthy place in human civilization.

The Days of Uzbek Culture were held in Germany from March 28 to 30, 2016, in the cities of Freiburg, Heidelberg, and Offenburg [7]. Over the three-day program, lectures and

presentations were delivered by prominent scholars of the Federal Republic of Germany focusing on Uzbekistan's historical heritage, its contemporary development, and the distinctive features of the Navruz holiday.

It is well known that artifacts related to German culture are preserved in museums in Uzbekistan. At the same time, the presentation of works by German artists and cultural institutions in Uzbek museums has increasingly become a tradition through the organization of special exhibitions. This is evidenced by the exhibitions entitled "Wall Paintings Along the Great Silk Road" and "Woodcut Prints by Albrecht Dürer," organized in 1996 at the State Art Museum of Uzbekistan in Tashkent to introduce the activities of German museums. As a consistent continuation of this cooperation, graphic works from the collection of the Karakalpakstan State Museum were displayed for one month in 1996 at the Chemnitz Art Museum, where they were presented to German art enthusiasts[8].

In recent years, increased attention has been devoted to the identification and scholarly study of historical sources related to Uzbekistan that are dispersed across the global arena. In this regard, cooperation between Uzbek and German scholars has been intensifying and developing within the framework of various joint projects. Several artifacts that depict the history and culture of Uzbekistan are held in museums spread across Germany and some of these museums are located in cities like Berlin, Munich, and Leipzig among others. Another initiative, involving the digitization of archaeological exhibits in collaborative efforts between the Pergamon Museum in Germany and the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan was introduced in 2022 [9]. Simultaneously, German archaeologists are also engaged in the research and protection of the tangible cultural heritage sites at Samarkand and Bukhara[10].

International conferences and roundtable discussions organized on a cooperative basis also play a significant role in the further development of people-to-people diplomacy. One such roundtable was held on April 20, 2018, organized by the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Germany under the theme "Strengthening Friendship and Cultural-Educational Ties with Foreign Countries: The Experience of Uzbekistan and Germany" [11]. The keynote presentation at the event, delivered by Galina Astashova, Executive Director of the Uzbekistan–Germany Friendship Society, entitled "People's Diplomacy as a Guarantee of Peace and Stability," was devoted to the role of non-governmental non-profit organizations in strengthening bilateral cooperation[12].

Participants were also interested in the cultural section of the event. Particularly, the concert by Urozali Toshmatov, a State Institute of Arts and Culture of Uzbekistan instrumentalist was well-received. During his presentation, he expounded on the culture and beliefs of the Uzbek people, history of the countrywide holiday of Navruz and how the whole country celebrates this holiday. The audience gave him a warm applause whenever he performed on the changqovuz and the surnay[13].

It should also be emphasized that the development of bilateral relations serves to strengthen friendly ties between our peoples. At present, a considerable number of residents of ethnic German origin live in Uzbekistan. All necessary conditions have been created for them to preserve and maintain their national traditions and cultural heritage. In this context, citizens of German ethnicity in Uzbekistan are regarded not only as an integral part of Uzbek society, but also as a bridge linking the two states.

Statistical data and analytical assessments indicate that since the 1990s, within the framework of the Federal Republic of Germany's policy of return to the historical homeland, a significant portion of the ethnic German population residing in Uzbekistan migrated to

Germany. As a result of this migration process, a substantial decline in the number of representatives of the German diaspora was observed: in particular, the population decreased from 30,422 in 1991 to approximately 4,000 by 2025. At the same time, the necessary conditions have been established for those members of the diaspora who remain in the country to preserve and further develop their national culture, language, and traditions [14].

The comprehensive command of language, culture, and traditions by members of the diaspora enables them to engage actively beyond official diplomatic circles, acting as distinctive “informal ambassadors” in strengthening intersocietal relations. This effect is practically a good form of people-to-people diplomacy. The organization of events, festivals and projects to encourage cultural exchange between the two countries has assumed systematic and continuous nature in the past years. In this process, the German diaspora in Uzbekistan should be recognized as well as the representatives of the Uzbek diaspora in Germany because they also make meaningful contributions. Since this field of cooperation is very substantial, it is reasonable to examine it in the context of music and dance exchanges, cinema and theater exchanges, cultural days, art fests, and other exhibitions held on the grounds of both countries [15].

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, within the framework of Uzbekistan–Germany relations, people-to-people diplomacy is emerging as a significant institutional and socio-political factor in the consistent development of cultural and humanitarian cooperation, the strengthening of mutual trust, and the rapprochement of the two peoples. Initiatives implemented in the spheres of education, science, culture, the arts, and public engagement serve to deepen cooperation between the two states not only at the level of official diplomacy, but also at the level of intersocietal dialogue. At the same time, representatives of the diasporas residing in Uzbekistan and Germany perform a distinctive “bridge” function by expanding intercultural dialogue, promoting national values, and facilitating processes of social integration, thereby contributing to a deeper mutual understanding between the peoples. The activities of these diasporas reinforce the social foundation of interstate relations and act as an important factor in elevating long-term and sustainable cooperation to a new stage.

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