

**ASSESSMENT OF THE LEVEL AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE POPULATION**

**REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN**

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**Abstract:** This article examines the concept of the standard of living of the population, its indicators and types, analyzes the indicators of the standard of living for 2022 in the Republic of Uzbekistan, identifies problems and makes recommendations for improving the country's living conditions in the future

**Key words:** standard of living, standard of living parameters, human development index, development strategies, education level index, unemployment percentage, causes of unemployment, national project, social reforms and programs .

**The standard of living of the population** is a complex socio-economic category that reflects a person's ability to be financially secure. This concept usually refers to the level of income, available goods and services that typically characterizes a particular area or society. The standard of living is based on objective indicators such as the volume of real disposable income per capita and the corresponding volume of consumption of goods, works and services. Forecasting and improving living standards and social protection of the population are an important function of the state. The market itself cannot regulate this area, so the responsibility for regulation in this area rests with the state. According to the UN, the concept of “**standard of living of the population** ” is the totality of the living conditions of the population. As a rule, they are expressed by special indicators that are not always quantifiable. Therefore, the standard of living of the population often needs to be assessed using only a few parameters from the following list, presented in Figure 1.

Per capita income is considered the main indicator by which the standard of living of the population is assessed. As a rule, the calculated values of this indicator make it possible to compare the standard of living of both population groups in one country and between countries. The main factor in the well-being of the population is the economic development of the country, so basic data indicating the state of the economy are often used as generalized data on the level and quality of life. These include gross domestic income, national income and net national income. In modern statistical theories and practices, the issue of creating a single homogeneous indicator of life remains relevant. Such an indicator can be used by the Human Development Index (HDI), developed by experts from the UNDP Human Development Program. It reflects the well-being and quality of life of the population of the state.

Parameters of the standard of living of the population

- Indicators of demographic development,
- Working conditions and level of employment,
- Balance of income and expenses of consumers. The level of consumer prices and their growth rates
- Food consumption

- Sanitary and hygienic living conditions.
- Housing and quality assurance.
- Providing public and private transport. Availability of educational and cultural opportunities.
- Availability of opportunities for recreation and leisure.
- Social security system for the population.
- Level of guarantee and protection of human and civil rights and freedoms

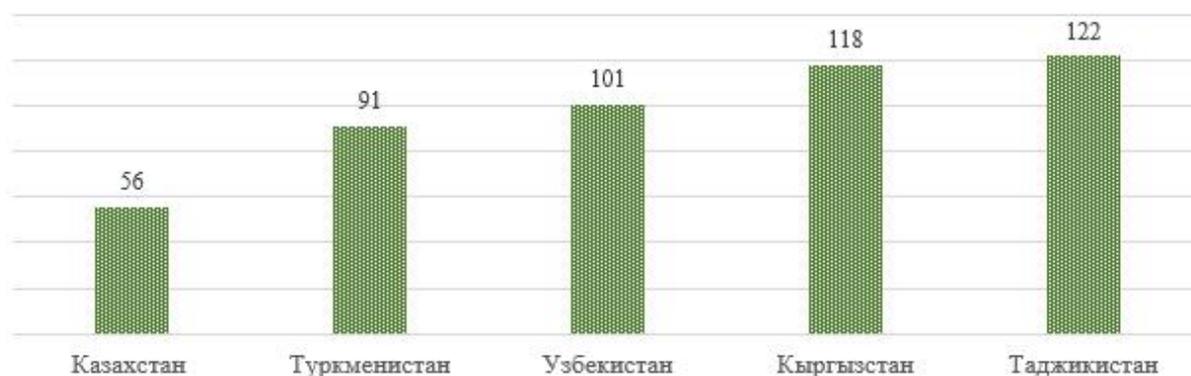
The Republic of Uzbekistan in the HDI took **101st place among 191 countries** with an index value of 0.727 (out of a maximum index value of 1,000) , improving its ranking compared to the 2020 report by +5 positions and an index value of +0.07. Below are the comparative results of the Republic of Uzbekistan on HDI:

Indicator name	2020	2022	Difference
Expected duration at birth, years	71.7	70.9	-0.8
Expected duration of study, years	12.1	12.5	+0.4
Average duration of study, years	11.8	11.9	+0.1
Gross national income per capita in dollars . US PPP	7142	7917	+775
Human Development Index	0.72	0.727	+0.007
Human Development Index ranking	106	101	-5

In the comparative analysis, one can see that **the only indicator that negatively affected** the HDI for Uzbekistan is the indicator **“Life expectancy at birth, years,”** which decreased by 0.8 years compared to 2020. At the same time, the reason for this decrease, according to experts, is the situation with the spread of COVID-19 infection, as well as the weakness of the healthcare system in the fight against this infection. At the same time , a significant increase in per capita income and duration of education indicates the effectiveness of the socio-economic reforms carried out within the framework of the Action Strategy for 2017-2021.

Among the countries of Central Asia, Uzbekistan (Figure 2) ranks third and lags behind Kazakhstan (56th place) and Turkmenistan (91st place), which indicates the need to continue socio-economic reforms provided for in the Development Strategy of the new Uzbekistan for 2022-2026.

**Figure 2 – Rating of Central Asian countries by HDI**



Summarizing the above, it should be noted that Uzbekistan has the necessary potential to improve its rating, and in the Development Strategy it has already outlined tasks, the high-quality implementation of which in the near future can have a positive impact on the HDI. This concerns increasing per capita income by 1.6 times (goal No. 21 of the Development Strategy), the level of preschool coverage to 80% (goal No. 38), higher education to 50% (goal No. 46) and the quality of medical services (goals No. 55-64 ).

In turn, the implementation of the above target parameters of the Development Strategy will increase the human development index from 0.726 to 0.820 and will ensure that our country moves from the category of “Countries with high human development” to the category of “Countries with very high human development”, designated by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 02.06 .2020 No. UP-6003 “On improving the position of the Republic of Uzbekistan in international ratings and indices and introducing a new mechanism for systematic work with them in government bodies and organizations.”

According to the UN, in the ranking of countries in the world by level of education among 191 countries, Uzbekistan is in 80th place, while Kazakhstan is in 36th place, Tajikistan is in 101st place, and Kyrgyzstan is in 76th place. Australia, New Zealand and Iceland are in the leading positions. The last three positions were taken by Niger, Mali and Chad.

The educational attainment index measures a country's achievements in terms of the achieved level of education of its population. The index is considered as one of the key indicators of social development and is used to calculate the human development index. It is worth noting that the index does not reflect the quality of education, nor does it fully show the difference in access to education due to differences in age requirements and duration of education. According to UNESCO, the literacy rate in Uzbekistan has reached 99.99% by 2021. With the involvement of the private sector, it was possible to quadruple the number of preschool educational institutions and, as a result, increase the coverage of preschool education from 24% in 2017 to 62% in 2021, despite the rapid growth of the population. In addition, over the past three years, the number of universities in Uzbekistan has doubled, and enrollment in higher education has tripled and reached 28%. By 2030, this figure is planned to increase to 60%. It should also be noted that in 2022 in Uzbekistan, the level of enrollment of children in preschool education increased by 4.6% and reached 66.6%.

According to the demographic report of the statistics agency under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan , the country's population as of January 1, 2023 was 36.024 million people. Over the year, population growth increased by 2.1%. People under working age make up 31.7%, working age - 56.8% and over working age - 11.5%.

With demographic growth, the need for development and, accordingly, investment in all public spheres increases. Along with demographics, the need for new jobs is growing. The active growth of unemployment is one of the main economic problems in the world community today. Due to this problem, people are forced to travel outside their homeland. When solving this problem, government agencies pay great attention to youth. Since young people, after graduating from educational institutions, are the most vulnerable and often experience difficulties finding employment. It is important to note that youth in Uzbekistan make up 50% of the total working population. Experts and analysts note that the labor market is still at the stage of formation,

despite the creation of thousands of jobs in the Republic. The transition period is characterized by imperfections in the allocation of resources throughout the country and insufficient freedom of the labor market itself. At the beginning of 2023 alone, the Ministry of Employment received 173.2 thousand applications. Of these, 61,900 received jobs, 49,000 were employed in public works, 6,977 were sent for retraining and 3,863 received unemployment benefits.

Among young people from 16 to 25 years old, the unemployment rate reached 17%, and among potential workers under 30 years old this figure was 15.1%. Quite a high percentage of unemployed women. At the beginning of 2019, almost 13% of women in the country were not working.

The reasons for unemployment in the country include the factor of lack of motivation for human development. Among them, experts note: lack of desire to improve their qualifications, financial illiteracy, lack of complete knowledge in a particular area and a number of other reasons. In general, the situation in the labor market of Uzbekistan is improving compared to the period of the pandemic, in particular, wages are increasing, the growth rate of which in 2022 compared to 2021 was 121.3%, unemployment decreased by 0.7 percentage points. It is worth noting that Uzbekistan is among the top ten countries identified as leaders in the accelerated implementation of the UN Youth Strategy 2030, in which a number of youth initiatives supported by the organization are being implemented. In the global ranking of countries in terms of the quality of life of the population among 111 countries, Uzbekistan is in 106th position with an index of 4.767, and is ahead of Tajikistan, which is in 107th place. Russia is ahead of Uzbekistan by one position and is in 107th place with an index of 4.796, while Kyrgyzstan took 103, Turkmenistan 102, and Kazakhstan 96. The first three positions were occupied by Ireland, Switzerland and Norway. The last three are Zimbabwe, Haiti and Tanzania.

With the help of effective national projects it is possible to achieve a real increase in the level and quality of life of the population. The tactics of modern social policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan are contained in the program of the Strategy of Social Reforms. It highlights the following strategic goals of social policy:

- achieving a tangible improvement in the financial situation and living conditions of people;
- ensuring effective employment of the population, improving the quality and competitiveness of the workforce;
- guarantee of the constitutional rights of citizens in the field of labor, social protection of the population, education, health care, culture, housing;
- reorientation of social policy towards the family, ensuring the rights of social guarantees provided to the family, women, children and youth;
- normalization and improvement of the demographic situation, reducing the mortality rate of the population, especially children and citizens of working age;
- significant improvement of social infrastructure.

The necessary conditions for achieving these goals are:

1. Restoring the role of income from labor activity as the main source of cash income for the population and the most important incentive for the development of production and increasing the labor activity of workers.

2. Ensuring fair distribution of income, based on the use of a more advanced system of tax legislation, introducing effective control over real income received by the population.

3. Stimulating the use of income from labor and business activities, income from property for investing and lending to socially significant programs aimed at creating basic living conditions: improving living conditions, medical care, education.
4. Carrying out a balanced employment policy, outlining, on the one hand, the prevention of mass unemployment, and on the other, not impeding the release of surplus labor in connection with the structural restructuring of the economy.
5. Strengthening the targeting of social support for needy citizens based on taking into account the financial situation of families and the applicant principle for assigning benefits.
6. Creation of adequate living conditions for families, women, youth, improvement of living conditions for children.
7. Increasing the role of social insurance as the most important mechanism for protecting citizens in the event of loss of earnings in the event of unemployment, illness, or other social and professional risks.
8. Stable financing of social infrastructure sectors and social programs, guaranteeing access to medical care, social services, education, culture and sports to all citizens.

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