

INNOVATION POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN: ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS

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Annotation: The innovation policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan has undergone significant changes in recent years. The article examines the development of the innovation sector in the country in the period from 2023 to 2024. The article provides an analysis of key initiatives aimed at stimulating research and technological activities, improving the investment climate in high-tech industries, as well as the impact of these changes on the economic development of the country. A comparative analysis of statistical data makes it possible to assess the effectiveness of implemented programs and identify further ways to develop Uzbekistan's innovation policy.

Keywords: innovation policy, the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2023, 2024, economic development, research activities, technological progress, investments in innovation.

By Presidential decree dated July 6, 2022, the Strategy of Innovative Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2022-2026 was approved. The goal is to develop a continuous ecosystem of "industry - region - scientific/higher educational organization" from the organization of jobs to the creation of capital in the formation of a creative economy in the country. In the first year of the document's implementation, systemic reforms have taken place aimed at increasing the scientific potential of the republic, improving innovation infrastructure, and improving systemic measures to stimulate innovation in the regions. Key areas and mechanisms of development have been identified, as well as targets that serve as benchmarks for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the strategy.

Innovation has become one of the most important drivers of economic growth in global practice. The Republic of Uzbekistan, following the current trends of globalization, has adopted a number of strategic decisions aimed at improving the innovation ecosystem. The most important of these were reforms in the field of science and technology, as well as the development of infrastructure to support start-ups and small innovative enterprises. In the period from 2023 to 2024, Uzbekistan's innovation policy is focused on increasing the country's competitiveness and attracting highly qualified specialists in various technological fields. This article will present an analysis of the current situation in the field of innovation in Uzbekistan, focusing on the achievements and challenges of the past two years.

Innovation policy of Uzbekistan: key initiatives and strategic goals Since the early 2020s, Uzbekistan has begun to implement ambitious projects in the field of innovative development. One of the key policy directions was the creation of an ecosystem for startups and support for scientific research at universities. In 2023, Uzbekistan announced the expansion of its program for the digitalization of the economy, with an emphasis on the development of artificial intelligence (AI), big data and blockchain technologies. Against the background of global changes in the field of high technologies, the Republic of Uzbekistan is actively developing partnerships with the world's leading research centers, which allows the country to develop unique innovative solutions for various sectors of the economy. In 2023, the Innovative Development Plan for 2023-2025 was approved, under which it is planned to increase the share of high-tech sectors in the country's gross domestic product.

According to the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, in 2023, the share of

innovatively active enterprises in the country was 14.2%, which is a significant increase compared to 12.6% in 2022. This indicates a growing interest in the introduction of new technologies in industry and other sectors of the economy.

The country's innovative development during these periods amounted to:

- 2023: Uzbekistan ranked 82nd out of 132 in the Global Innovation Index, but at the same time retained the status of an economy developing innovation at a faster pace. In Central and South Asia, the country took the second place, losing the championship to Kazakhstan.
- 2024: In the Global Innovation Index for 2024, Uzbekistan dropped by one position compared to 2023 and took 83rd place out of 133. The innovation index is based on 81 indicators, which include such parameters as the political environment, education, infrastructure and the level of business development. The largest growth was recorded in such areas as information technology, biotechnology and the production of renewable energy sources. For example, in the information technology sector, the volume of investments in 2023 amounted to 3.5 billion US dollars, which is 18% more than in the previous year. In 2024, a further increase in these indicators is expected, especially. An important indicator of the effectiveness of innovation policy is the number of registered patents and scientific developments. In 2023, the number of patents for new technologies in Uzbekistan increased by 9%, which confirms the growth of the country's scientific and technical potential. For comparative analysis, in 2022 this indicator was at the level of 7%.

One of the key features of Uzbekistan's innovation policy is the active attraction of investments, both public and private. In 2023, the total investment in research and development amounted to more than 1.2 billion US dollars, which is 15% higher than in 2022. Startup and young entrepreneur support programs such as Tashkent IT Park play an important role in stimulating private investment in innovative projects. In 2024, the number of startups is expected to increase, especially in areas such as artificial intelligence, finance, technology and healthcare, due to the growing interest in these sectors in global markets.

Impact on the economy: forecasts and prospects Innovations have a direct impact on the economic development of the country. Forecasts based on current trends indicate that the share of high-tech sectors in the Uzbek economy will continue to grow, and the country itself will become more competitive in the international arena. In 2024, it is expected to create more than 300 new high-tech companies and introduce more than 200 new products and solutions. First of all, this concerns the expansion of production in such industries as energy, mechanical engineering, information technology and biotechnology. It is expected that the development of innovative industries will lead to an increase in the country's GDP by 4-5% annually.

The innovation policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2023-2024 demonstrates significant achievements in the field of scientific and technological progress and entrepreneurial activity. The adopted government programs and strategies are aimed at maintaining and developing high-tech sectors of the economy, which in turn contributes to improving the investment climate and increasing the country's competitiveness. A comparative analysis of statistical data confirms the effectiveness of the ongoing reforms and creates the basis for the formation of a long-term strategy for innovative growth in Uzbekistan. Thus, the Republic of Uzbekistan continues to implement innovative solutions, which contributes not only to economic growth, but also to improving the quality of life of the population.

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