

THE PLACE OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN IN INTERNATIONAL RATINGS AND INDICES IS A MIRROR OF REFORMS

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Abstract

The article presents a comprehensive analysis of the position of the Republic of Uzbekistan in international rankings and indices in recent years. The importance of ratings as an objective reflection of reforms in Uzbekistan in the international arena is emphasized, and the positive dynamics achieved are noted and areas requiring serious attention are clearly identified. The country's role in enhancing its international prestige is assessed.

Keywords: International rankings, indices, reforms, economic freedom, doing business, corruption, human development, rule of law, freedom of speech, public administration, transparency.

Introduction

In recent years, the Republic of Uzbekistan has been the focus of international attention, and the large-scale reforms it has undertaken have contributed to the country's growing reputation in various fields. International rankings and indices are an objective reflection of this process and clearly demonstrate the country's successes and shortcomings on its path to prosperity.

Reforms aimed at guaranteeing human rights protection, improving living standards, ensuring economic freedom, and developing substantive and procedural norms in the judicial and legal spheres are contributing to the improvement of our country's performance in international rankings and indices. These steps are strengthening Uzbekistan's position on the global stage and attracting the attention of international partners and investors.

National indices based on the assessments and indicators of priority international rankings have already been developed for self-assessment. Systems for rating the effectiveness of civil service agencies, as well as regional socioeconomic

development, have been introduced, along with a procedure for determining the ranking of scientific organizations.

Analysis of decisions made:

International rankings and indices are independent indicators that assess countries' levels of rule of law, security, corruption, gender equality, innovation, and social development. They are developed by international organizations (e.g., the World Justice Project, Transparency International, WHO, and the World Bank) and address issues such as migration, crime, and economic development. These indicators allow for comparisons between countries and the identification of their strengths and weaknesses. For example, rankings show countries' positions and scores, allowing for the monitoring of global trends.

In accordance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated February 25, 2019, No. PP-4210, 14 priority international rankings and indices have been identified to enhance the country's international standing and assess reforms. These rankings measure economic, political, legal, and social development. The key priority rankings are listed below.

Global Competitiveness Index (World Economic Forum)

World Bank Doing Business Index

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Index of Economic Freedom (Heritage Foundation)

Logistics Performance Index (World Bank)

Global Innovation Index (World Intellectual Property Organization)

Governance Indicators (World Bank)

Rule of Law Index (World Justice Project)

Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International)

Open Budget Index (International Budget Partnership)

UN E-Government Development Index

Human Development Index (UN Development Program)

International Credit Ratings (Moody's, Fitch, S&P)

Gender Equality Index (World Economic Forum)

World Bank Tax Rating

Improving positions in these rankings is one of the main goals of structural reforms in Uzbekistan. We discuss these objectives below.

Research Methodology:

The Republic of Uzbekistan's role in international rankings and indices is primarily covered in official sources, such as the National Human Rights Center, the Lex.uz legal information portal, and the yuz.uz news agency. These sources publish and analyze indicators of sustainable development, socio-economic, political-legal, tourism, and gender equality indices. [7]

In our country, work is being carried out on the main sources and directions.

The National Human Rights Center (nhrc.uz) displays and analyzes the country's role in international rankings, including travel and tourism development and the Global Gender Gap Index and Social Development. Information on the Territory Priority Index will also be provided

LEX.uz (National Legislation Database): Presidential and government decisions on improving positions in international rankings, including an action plan (roadmap) for 2025–2026.

yuz.uz (New Uzbek Newspaper): New mechanisms for working with international ratings and indices, reports from government agencies, and changes in ratings.

These resources are the main sources of information for assessing the effectiveness of the reforms being implemented to improve Uzbekistan's position in the global community.

Uzbekistan's ongoing reforms aimed at economic liberalization and improving the business environment are reflected in international rankings. The World Bank's Doing Business Index: Although this index is no longer published, Uzbekistan has made significant progress in recent reports. In particular, the country has repeatedly been ranked among the "best reformers" and has demonstrated significant success in areas such as starting a business, dealing with construction permits, getting electricity, getting loans, and protecting investments. These results have played a significant role in increasing Uzbekistan's investment attractiveness.

Index of Economic Freedom (Heritage Foundation): Uzbekistan has been steadily improving its ranking in recent years. Although the 2023 report categorizes Uzbekistan as "mostly unfree," its overall score is the result of reforms in property rights protection, trade freedom, and financial freedom. The country's efforts to liberalize macroeconomic stability, fiscal discipline, and the foreign exchange market are contributing to the index's growth.

Economic phenomena are analyzed in statistics and dynamics. And if the statistics do not change, then the dynamics will continue. [6]

The World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index (GCI): This index evaluates a country's innovation potential, infrastructure, and market efficiency. Uzbekistan has also shown a tendency to rise above the bottom of the index. Improvements are observed in market openness, infrastructure projects, and some institutional reforms.

Uzbekistan's projects aimed at developing its strategic position and transport and logistics infrastructure in Central Asia contribute to its improved position in the Logistics Performance Index. Work carried out within the framework of the state roadmap is aimed at improving the logistics system, simplifying customs processes, and strengthening regional trade ties.

One of the key areas of reform in Uzbekistan is combating corruption, improving public administration efficiency, and ensuring transparency. Uzbekistan is gradually improving its low scores in the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index. The establishment of the Anti-Corruption Agency, the adoption of legislation aimed at ensuring openness and transparency, and the openness of the public procurement system are contributing to positive dynamics in the CPI. However, this work is not yet complete, and the uncompromising fight against corruption must continue.

The Rule of Law Index (World Justice Project) is the foundation for ensuring justice and stability in the country. Uzbekistan strives to improve its position in this index. Reforms in the judicial system, measures aimed at ensuring judicial independence, and strengthening legal protections for citizens are contributing to the improvement of this index. However, there are other challenges related to the enforcement of court decisions, achieving justice, and fully protecting human rights. Human dignity and well-being are at the center of the reforms. This is reflected in human development ratings.

Development Index (HDI) measures life expectancy, knowledge levels, and decent living conditions. In recent years, Uzbekistan has been in the "moderate human development" category and has been strengthening its position in education, healthcare, and income. The country's programs to modernize the education system, improve the quality of health services, and reduce poverty are aimed at further improving this indicator.

Democracy and freedom of speech ratings are among the most complex and controversial topics in Uzbekistan. Reforms implemented in this area, particularly since 2017, have begun to show "positive changes."

In its Freedom in the World report, Freedom House has traditionally included "not free" countries. While some positive changes have been observed in recent years (e.g., the end of forced labor, increased civil society activity, and relative freedom of the media), there are still shortcomings in efforts to improve the legal awareness of the population.

Uzbekistan has improved slightly in the Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index. Efforts to enhance the role of media outlets, end censorship, and pursue an open policy toward journalists are recognized. However, much remains to be done to ensure freedom of speech in the media.

Analysis and Results: The adoption of the "Digital Uzbekistan 2030" Strategy demonstrates the country's significant focus on innovative and digital development. Uzbekistan is actively working to improve its ranking in the Global Innovation Index. Measures such as investing in research and development, developing digital infrastructure, and supporting the startup ecosystem contribute to increasing innovative potential.

In particular, over the past five years, Uzbekistan has reached 16 positions in the Rule of Law Index, 32 in the Corruption Perceptions Index, 18 in the E-Government Development Index, 31 in the Index of Economic Freedom, and 11 in the Logistics Performance and Global Innovation Index. [2]

In the Index of Economic Freedom, Uzbekistan moved up 9 positions and took 100th place among 184 countries, and in the Sustainable Development Goals Index, it moved up 19 positions and took 62nd place among 167 countries. [5]

Uzbekistan improved its score by 4 notches in the Global Innovation Index, rising to 79th place among 139 countries and taking first place in Central Asia. The draft Action Plan (roadmap) for improving Uzbekistan's performance in 2025-2026 was discussed, with structural indicators showing a decline in the Sustainable Development Goals index remaining unchanged and lacking information. [1]

Within the structure of the central office of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan, a Department for Work with International Ratings and Indices was established, consisting of 6 full-time units within the maximum

number of management personnel and the wage fund of justice bodies and institutions.

As a result of large-scale reforms carried out in Uzbekistan to fundamentally reform the statistical sphere, increase the openness, reliability and quality of information, our country improved its position in the World Bank's Statistical Performance Indicators by 17 positions and rose to 62nd place among 217 countries. [4]

In two of the 11 international socio-economic rankings and indices that are a priority for Uzbekistan, and in four of the nine political and legal rankings, our country's scores have declined. One of these declines is the Corruption Absence Index, in which Uzbekistan dropped two places from 66th to 68th place in 2024. The working bodies of the Republican Council for Work with International Ratings and Indices are tasked with reflecting on the factors that led to the decline in Uzbekistan's performance, as well as the work and practical measures taken to improve our country's position in priority international ratings and indices, and developing proposals for applying the experience of foreign countries that have achieved high results in international ratings and indices to Uzbekistan.

Conclusions and Prospects:

The Republic of Uzbekistan's role in international rankings and indices is evolving. Significant positive changes are being observed in many areas, particularly in economic liberalization, improvements to the business climate, and human development. This demonstrates the state's commitment to reform and readiness for open dialogue with the international community. However, much remains to be done in areas such as governance, rule of law, and human rights. To improve rankings in these areas, it is necessary to continue systemic, comprehensive, and consistent reforms, ensure law enforcement, and strengthen the principles of openness and transparency in society.

International rankings and indices not only demonstrate Uzbekistan's successes but also serve as an important tool for reaching new milestones and addressing existing challenges. Further improvement in these rankings is an integral part of the New Uzbekistan Strategy and will contribute to the country's sustainable development, enhance its international standing, and ensure the well-being of its population. Continuing consistent and targeted work on this path will

undoubtedly lead Uzbekistan to a more prominent position on the international stage.

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