

RIGHTS, DUTIES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PUBLIC SERVANTS: CURRENT ISSUES

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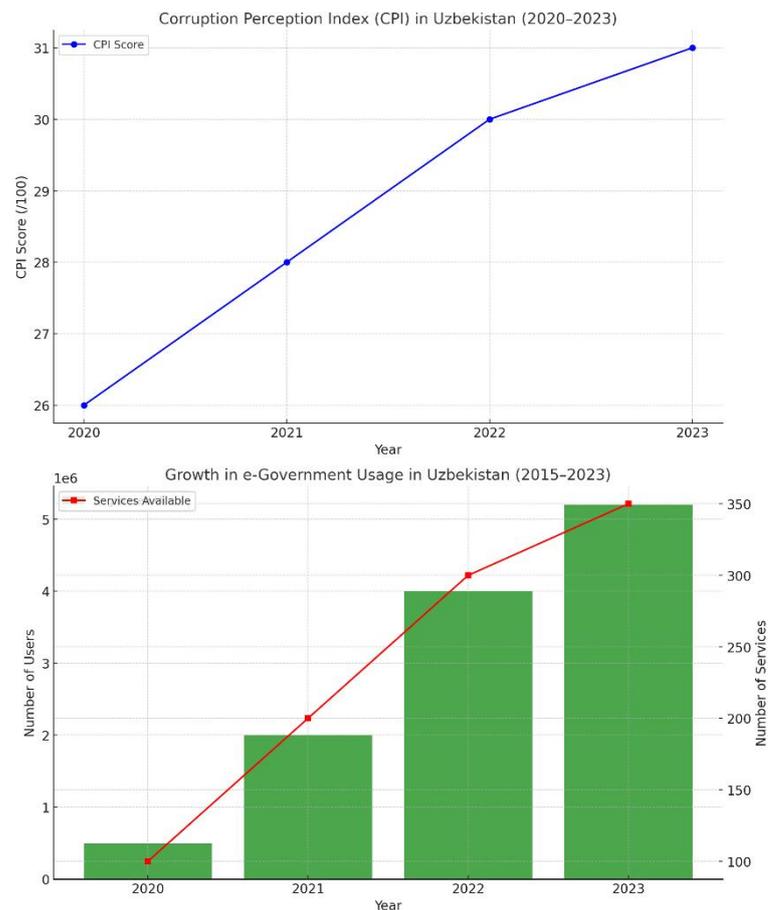
Annotation: This article delves into the evolving public service system in Uzbekistan, focusing on the rights, duties, and responsibilities of public servants. It explores the core legal and ethical principles that guide their work, including ensuring job security, fostering professional growth, and upholding accountability and transparency. The piece also sheds light on significant challenges that hinder progress, such as corruption, regional inequalities, and inefficiencies within bureaucratic processes. Amid these hurdles, the article highlights ongoing reforms aimed at modernizing public administration. These include initiatives like digitalizing services, implementing capacity-building programs, and fostering greater public trust in governance. The discussion concludes with actionable recommendations to enhance oversight, streamline regulations, and encourage active citizen participation in decision-making processes. By tackling these issues, Uzbekistan has the potential to strengthen its public service sector, ensuring fairer and more effective service delivery while building a stronger bond of trust between the government and its people.

Uzbekistan's public service sector is undergoing a transformative phase as part of the country's broader reform agenda. At the heart of this transformation are public servants - individuals tasked with ensuring the delivery of efficient, transparent, and equitable services to citizens. ¹ This article explores the rights, responsibilities, and challenges faced by public servants in Uzbekistan, highlights reform initiatives, and presents actionable solutions to enhance governance and public trust. Public servants in Uzbekistan are the backbone of the country's administrative machinery. Their duties range from policy implementation to service delivery, and their rights and responsibilities are governed by legal and ethical principles. Key aspects include principles and vital terms like job security, professional development and accountability and transparency, ensuring stability for public servants to perform their roles without undue influence or fear of reprisal, providing training and growth opportunities to adapt to evolving administrative needs, adhering to ethical standards and making decisions that serve the public interest. Public service forms the backbone of any nation's governance, ensuring the efficient delivery of essential services, policy implementation, and maintaining trust between the government and its citizens. ² In Uzbekistan, the public service system is undergoing substantial evolution to meet the demands of a dynamic and rapidly changing

¹ https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2024/11/oecd-public-governance-reviews-uzbekistan_65bf7710/2f36d8ec-en.pdf (foydalanilgan sana: 17.01.2025)

² https://mpr.aub.uni-muenchen.de/101806/1/MPPRA_paper_101806.pdf (foydalanilgan sana: 17.01.2025)

society. As the government implements sweeping reforms to modernize public administration, attention is increasingly being drawn to the legal and ethical frameworks guiding public servants, as well as the challenges and opportunities in this critical sector. At the heart of Uzbekistan's governance are its public servants, who are tasked with upholding the principles of accountability, transparency, and professionalism. Public servants in the country work across diverse sectors, including healthcare, education, infrastructure, and law enforcement, ensuring that government policies translate into tangible benefits for citizens. The framework governing public servants is rooted in ensuring job security, opportunities for professional development, and adherence to ethical standards. This structure not only protects the rights of public servants but also holds them accountable for delivering services with integrity and efficiency. Public servants are responsible for maintaining transparency in their actions, providing equitable access to services, and ensuring that the public's interests are prioritized. However, fulfilling these duties is often easier said than done, especially given the systemic challenges that persist in Uzbekistan's public administration.



Uzbekistan employs over 2 million public servants, according to official data from 2023, with workers distributed across education, healthcare, law enforcement, and administrative services. Public servants are the linchpins of governance, tasked with upholding principles of accountability, transparency, and equity. Corruption remains one of the most significant barriers to effective public administration in Uzbekistan. Despite recent progress, informal practices such as favoritism, bribery, and misuse of authority still plague certain sectors. Citizens often encounter delays and additional costs due to corrupt practices, undermining their trust in public institutions. Addressing corruption requires a multifaceted approach, including stronger oversight mechanisms, more transparent processes, and the establishment of independent anti-corruption bodies.³

³ <https://strategy.uz/index.php?news=1397&lang=en> (foydalanilgan sana: 18.01.2025)



Uzbekistan's geographical diversity presents unique challenges to service delivery. Urban centers like Tashkent often benefit from better resources and infrastructure, while rural areas lag behind. For instance, residents of remote villages may need to travel long distances to access basic administrative services, creating a gap in equality.⁴ Bridging this divide requires targeted investments in rural development, enhanced digital access, and capacity-building initiatives for local administrations.

Complex bureaucratic procedures can frustrate citizens and hinder progress. Outdated administrative processes, overlapping responsibilities among departments, and excessive paperwork contribute to inefficiencies that delay service delivery. This not only affects citizens but also limits the productivity of public servants. Streamlining bureaucratic processes and adopting innovative technologies are key to addressing these inefficiencies.

One of the most promising reforms has been the digitalization of public services. Platforms like the "e-Government" portal allow citizens to access services such as tax payments, business registration, and document applications online. These digital solutions reduce reliance on physical offices, minimize the scope for corruption, and save citizens time and effort. According to government data, the adoption of e-governance has already improved service delivery times and increased citizen satisfaction in urban areas. Expanding these services to rural communities remains a priority to ensure inclusivity.

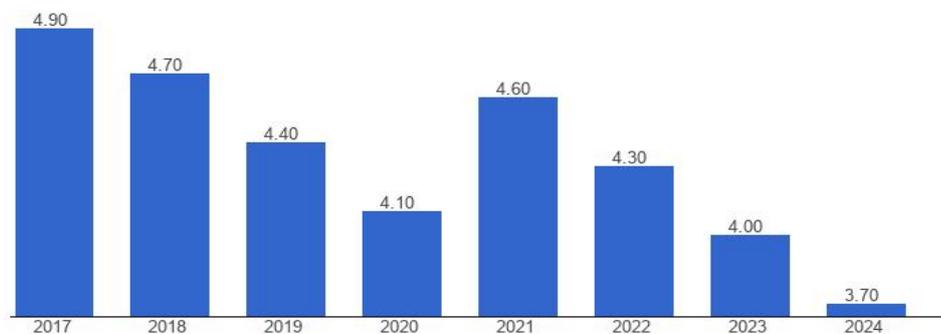
Recognizing that public servants are the driving force behind effective governance, Uzbekistan has invested heavily in their professional development. Training programs focus on enhancing technical skills, fostering ethical leadership, and equipping public servants to adapt to technological advancements. Collaboration with international organizations, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), has further enriched these capacity-building efforts.⁵

Public trust is essential for any government's legitimacy, and Uzbekistan has taken steps to build stronger relationships with its citizens. Initiatives like public consultations and open-

⁴ <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/735126/uzbekistan-national-urban-assessment.pdf>

⁵ https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2024/11/oecd-public-governance-reviews-uzbekistan_65bf7710/2f36d8ec-en.pdf (foydalanilgan sana: 19.01.2025)

budget discussions provide platforms for citizens to voice their opinions and contribute to



decision-making processes. These efforts signal the government's commitment to transparency and inclusivity.

⁶While significant progress has been made, there is still it still needs improvement including, excessive red tape can slow down administrative processes and frustrate citizens. Simplifying regulations, reducing paperwork, and adopting user-friendly systems can significantly improve efficiency, establishing independent anti-corruption bodies and promoting whistleblower protections can help hold public servants accountable. Enhanced oversight mechanisms ensure that public resources are used effectively and ethically, engaging citizens in governance goes beyond consultations. Developing feedback platforms where citizens can report issues, suggest improvements, and track the status of their concerns can foster greater trust and collaboration, Closing the urban-rural divide requires targeted investments in rural infrastructure, including internet access, transportation, and local administrative offices. Ensuring that rural communities have the same access to services as urban areas is essential for equitable development.

The rights, duties, and responsibilities of public servants in Uzbekistan are rooted in a legal and ethical framework that emphasizes accountability, transparency, and professionalism. However, despite these foundational principles, the effective implementation of these norms remains hindered by systemic challenges such as corruption, regional disparities, and

⁶ https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Uzbekistan/public_services_index/ Uzbekistan: Public service index (foydalanilgan sana: 19.01.2025)

bureaucratic inefficiencies. These issues prevent the public service sector from reaching its full potential and undermine public trust in government institutions. Efforts to address these challenges are evident in the ongoing reforms, particularly those aimed at digitalizing services, building public sector capacity, and increasing transparency. Nevertheless, these reforms face obstacles due to the persistence of entrenched bureaucratic practices and the slow pace of change, making it difficult to achieve the desired outcomes.

To overcome these obstacles, strengthening oversight mechanisms is essential. Independent bodies tasked with monitoring public administration should be empowered to hold public servants accountable, ensuring ethical conduct and reducing corruption. Additionally, simplifying regulations and administrative procedures is crucial to enhancing the efficiency and accessibility of public services. Complex bureaucratic systems must be streamlined to reduce delays and make government services more responsive to the needs of the public.

Promoting greater citizen engagement in governance is another important step. By fostering active participation through consultations, feedback mechanisms, and collaborative policy development, the government can improve public trust and create a more inclusive decision-making process. This, in turn, would help ensure that policies reflect the real needs of the population and increase citizen cooperation.

Addressing regional disparities should also be a priority. Targeted programs aimed at improving infrastructure, public services, and economic opportunities in underdeveloped regions will not only reduce regional imbalances but also promote social cohesion. A more equitable distribution of resources will help bridge the gap between different areas of the country and support national unity.

Expanding capacity-building and professional development opportunities for public servants is another key recommendation. Providing ongoing training in areas such as ethics, public administration, and digital literacy will enhance the quality of governance and enable public servants to meet the evolving needs of the population. Equipping them with the necessary skills will result in a more efficient and effective public service.

Lastly, the digitalization of government services should be accelerated. The expansion of e-government platforms will not only improve service delivery but also increase transparency, as digital systems provide a clear record of decision-making processes. By embracing digital technologies, Uzbekistan can make its public administration more efficient, accessible, and accountable.

In conclusion, by addressing the challenges facing its public service sector and implementing these recommendations, Uzbekistan can achieve a more efficient, equitable, and trustworthy public administration. These reforms would not only improve the delivery of services but also foster a stronger relationship between the government and its citizens, laying the foundation for long-term social and economic progress.

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