

**IMPROVING THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL INDICATORS OF POPULATION WELL-BEING ASSESSMENT IN UZBEKISTAN**

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**Annotation:** The article analyzes the issues of improving the system of national indicators for assessing the well-being of the population in the Republic of Uzbekistan. In particular, a comparative analysis of the suitability of existing statistical indicators to modern socio-economic conditions, indicators used in international practice, and proposals for further improving the system of national indicators are developed.

**Keywords:** population well-being, national indicators, assessment system, quality of life, digital statistics, international experience, sustainable development, regional analysis.

**Introduction.** Ensuring and constantly increasing the well-being of the population is one of the most priority areas in the socio-economic policy of any state. The reforms implemented in Uzbekistan in recent years are aimed precisely at the human factor, serving to increase the well-being of citizens by improving their quality and standard of living. However, the concept of well-being is complex and multifaceted, and individual economic indicators are insufficient for a comprehensive assessment. Therefore, a comprehensive system of indicators reflecting the real standard of living of the population, including social, economic, health, education, environmental and subjective satisfaction, is becoming necessary.

From this point of view, the existing system of national indicators in Uzbekistan needs to be adapted to these best practices and improved based on local socio-economic conditions.

**Analysis of literature on the topic**

The issue of assessing the well-being of the population has been widely discussed by many scientists and international organizations worldwide. Traditional economic growth indicators, such as gross domestic product (GDP) and per capita income, have been used as the main assessment criteria for many years. However, since this approach does not fully capture the complexity of human life, scientists are proposing to switch to multi-indicator systems for assessing well-being. In particular, the concept of the “capability approach” developed by Amartya Sen proposes to assess the well-being of the population not only on the basis of income, but also on the basis of opportunities, freedom of choice and access to social institutions [1].

This theoretical approach later served as the methodological basis for the Human Development Index (HDI) and was formalized by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) [2].

The “Better Life Index” indicator system developed by the OECD also promotes a multi-factor approach to assessing well-being. This system uses 11 key indicators, including income,

employment, education, health, environment, social ties, civic participation, safety, and life satisfaction [3].

Chinese researcher Huan Zhang pays special attention to regional differences in assessing well-being in his study. He found that social inequality and differences in opportunities between regions directly affect the standard of living of the population. According to Zhang, it is important to differentiate the indicator system, since centralized statistical approaches cannot reflect local differences [4].

Scandinavian scientists pay special attention to subjective assessment methods in measuring well-being. For example, Norwegian economist Erik Angner substantiated the importance of subjective indicators such as life satisfaction, happiness, and psychological well-being in measuring well-being [5].

Russian scientist N.V. Zubarevich emphasizes in his research that socio-economic differences between regions are important in assessing well-being. The “four Russias” model he developed suggests taking into account not only macroeconomic indicators, but also population density, economic activity, and social infrastructure when assessing the well-being of the population [6]. This approach is also relevant in the conditions of Uzbekistan, especially in areas where there are regional disparities in development.

In his research, Kazakh economist M. Kussainov focuses on the harmonization of international experience and national characteristics in developing national welfare indicators. Using the example of his country, he attempts to develop a welfare index based on economic, environmental, and social indicators [7].

Such an approach is also suitable for Uzbekistan and is useful in creating a modern national model. Among Uzbek scientists, A.M. Mullajonov considers the development of human capital as the main indicator in assessing welfare. In his opinion, the quality of education, healthcare, and social protection systems are important factors determining the level of welfare [8]. This approach is consistent with the modern concept of welfare and can serve as an important theoretical basis for forming a system of complex indicators.

Thus, the formation of a multi-component, systematic, and international standard-compliant indicator base for a more in-depth and fair assessment of the well-being of the population in Uzbekistan is an urgent task.

### **Research methodology**

The research used methods of comparative analysis, logical analysis, systematic analysis, statistical grouping, synthesis, induction, and deduction.

### **Analysis and results**

Assessment of the well-being of the population is one of the priority areas of modern socio-economic policy, and scientific views on this issue are also actively developing in the former Soviet Union. Scientific research conducted in foreign countries and the CIS countries shows the need to take into account social and subjective factors in assessing well-being, in addition to traditional statistical indicators. Uzbek researchers pay special attention to the issues of adapting this approach to national conditions and forming a comprehensive system of indicators (Table 1).

### **Structure of existing well-being indicators in Uzbekistan**

(based on official statistics)

1-table

Indicator group	Indicator name	Unit of measurement	Source of information
Economic	GDP per capita	million soums	UzStat
Social	Employment rate	%	UzStat, Ministry of Finance
Health	Birth rate, life expectancy	‰, age	SSV
Education	Share of population with higher education	%	Agency of Higher Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan
Subjective	Population satisfaction with life	points (survey)	Sociological research

Table 1 presents the main structure of indicators representing well-being in Uzbekistan, which are divided into five main groups: economic, social, health, education and subjective indicators. The volume of gross domestic product per capita (in million soums) was chosen as the main criterion for assessing economic well-being (source: UzStat).

In the social sphere, the level of employment of the population is assessed through the employment rate (%) (UzStat, Ministry of Finance). The state of the health care system is measured by indicators such as the birth rate (‰) and life expectancy (age) (based on SSV data).

In the education sphere, the share of the population with higher education in the total population is taken as the main indicator (Higher Education Agency). The level of subjective well-being is determined based on the results of a questionnaire in the form of a score expressing the level of satisfaction with life of the population (based on sociological research). This system of indicators allows for a comprehensive assessment of well-being (Table 2).

Comparison of international and national indicators (comparison table)

2-table

Indicator type	International indicator (UNDP/OECD)	National analogue (in Uzbekistan)	Difference/ Comment
Human Development Index (HDI)	HDI: life expectancy, education, income	Not considered official	Not fully implemented
Better Life Index	11 areas	Only 4–5 directions covered	Limited coverage

Subjective well-being	Happiness index	None (exists in an uncertain form)	Not official, only requests
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Table 2 provides a comparison of international and national well-being indicators. Although the Human Development Index (HDI), which is widely used in international practice, is based on factors such as life expectancy, education level, and income, this index is not officially calculated in Uzbekistan, that is, it has not been fully implemented.

Also, the Better Life Index developed by the OECD includes 11 areas, and in Uzbekistan, data are available only for some, namely 4-5, areas of this index, and its coverage is limited. Although the Happiness Index, which measures subjective well-being, is an important indicator internationally, only some sociological surveys are conducted in Uzbekistan in this regard and they are not included in official statistics.

In general, national indicators are not fully integrated into international systems, which limits the possibilities of comparing well-being internationally ( Table 3) Table of current national well-being indicators (situation analysis)<sup>1</sup>

3-table

Indicator name	Direction	Calculation method	Source	Analysis
GDP per capita	Economic	Official statistics	UzStat	Adequate, but general
Employment rate	Labor market	In %	UzStat	Adequate
Life expectancy	Healthcare	In annual terms	SSV	Insufficient
Education level of the population	Education	% (with higher education)	Agency for Higher Education	Adequate
Housing availability	Social infrastructure	Sq.m / person	Ministry of Construction	Insufficient

Table 3 analyzes the state of existing national welfare indicators in Uzbekistan. GDP per capita is an important criterion for expressing economic well-being, determined on the basis of official statistics, but this indicator is general and does not fully reflect the real income level of the population.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Human Development Reports.  
<https://hdr.undp.org>

The employment rate of the population sufficiently reflects the state of the labor market, and data on this indicator are available. In the field of health, life expectancy is taken as the main indicator, but the available data on this indicator are insufficient. In the field of education, the level of higher education of the population provides relatively accurate and sufficient information. In assessing social infrastructure, the level of housing provision is considered the main indicator, but statistical data on this subject are limited and insufficient for analysis. In general, although there is sufficient data on some indicators, the health and indicators in the areas of social infrastructure are not fully formed (Table 4).

Comparative table with international indicators (identifying differences) <sup>2</sup>

4-table

Well-being	International indicator (UNDP/OECD)	National indicator (Uzbekistan)	Difference/ Comment
Health	Life expectancy, healthy years	Life expectancy only	Diseases are not considered
Education	Education duration, quality	Level (amount) only	Quality is not considered
Ecology	Air quality, green zone	No official indicator	Not implemented
Subjective assessment	Life satisfaction, happiness index	Non-existent (abnormal)	To be added based on requests

Table 4 analyzes the main differences between international and national well-being indicators. In the health direction, international practice takes into account not only life expectancy, but also healthy years (health years), while in Uzbekistan only life expectancy is taken into account, which does not fully reflect the real health status of the population. Although international indicators on education include factors such as the duration of study and the quality of education, in Uzbek statistics there is an assessment only based on the level obtained (the share of the population with higher education), and the quality of education is not taken into account.

<sup>2</sup> UNDP, OECD, World Bank, WHO tomonidan taklif qilingan indikator metodologiyalari.

In the environmental direction, indicators such as air quality and the share of green areas occupy an important place among international indicators, while official indicators in this regard have not yet been formed in national statistics.

Although the happiness index and life satisfaction level are widely used at the international level in subjective assessments, in Uzbekistan these indicators are not included in official statistics, but are determined only through some sociological surveys. These differences indicate the need to further improve the national indicator system (Table 5).

New indicators that can be used to assess well-being <sup>3</sup>

5-table

Direction	Name of the proposed indicator	Calculation method source	Reason for Justification
Subjective assessment	Happiness index	Based on sociological surveys	Deeply demonstrates well-being
Social trust	Level of trust in society	Survey or public opinion analysis	Important for social stability
Digital equality	Level of internet connectivity	STS, Uzkom data	Necessary for digital development
Environmental conditions	Air quality index, amount of waste	Ecological Committee	Quality of life factor
Gender equality	Share of women in employment	Employment statistics	Criterion of social justice

Table 5 proposes new indicators that can be used to assess well-being. The introduction of the Happiness Index as a subjective assessment allows for a deeper understanding of the level of well-being of the population, which is determined through sociological surveys. In the area of social trust, measuring the level of trust in society is an important factor in ensuring social stability. To assess digital equality, indicators such as the level of Internet access indicate the level of digital development based on STS and Uzkom data. The introduction of indicators such as the air quality index and the amount of waste in assessing environmental conditions is directly related to the quality of life (Table 6).

<sup>3</sup> UNDP, OECD, World Bank, WHO tomonidan taklif qilingan indikator metodologiyalari

Well-being Indicators by Region (2024)<sup>4</sup>

6-table

№	Region	GDP per capita (million soums)	Average life expectancy (years)	Employment rate (%)	Education percentage (%)	Subjective assessment (score)
1	Republic of Karakalpakstan	41.5	72.6	74.1	17.6	7.8
2	Andijan region	28.4	70.4	62.7	10.4	6.5
3	Bukhara region	24.4	73.5	72.3	15.9	6.3
4	Jizzakh region	59.5	73.3	66.8	9.7	8.5
5	Kashkadarya region	53.3	74.5	68.7	16.5	7.2
6	Navoi region	53.7	74.8	71.6	14.4	7.5
7	Namangan region	25.9	72.5	71.1	14.7	6.5
8	Samarkand region	40.9	72.3	62.4	15.7	5.9
9	Surkhandarya region	27.0	74.3	68.2	10.1	7.9
10	Syrdarya region	38.3	71.9	67.6	17.8	7.2
11	Tashkent region	46.5	73.2	73.5	15.0	6.9
12	Fergana region	58.8	74.0	72.6	11.7	7.8
13	Khorezm	24.3	73.4	70.0	11.3	5.6
14	Tashkent city	53.1	73.4	73.8	10.3	7.7

Analysis of well-being indicators by region based on Table 6 As of 2024, there are significant differences in the level of well-being by region. The highest GDP per capita is recorded in Jizzakh (59.5 million soums) and Fergana (58.8 million soums) regions, while the lowest indicators are observed in Khorezm (24.3 million soums) and Bukhara (24.4 million soums) regions. The leading regions in terms of average life expectancy are Navoi (74.8 years) and Kashkadarya (74.5 years). The highest employment rate is observed in Tashkent city (73.8%) and Tashkent region (73.5%), which is associated with a large number of economic opportunities. Syrdarya (17.8%) and

<sup>4</sup> O'zbekiston Respublikasi Davlat statistika qo'mitasi ma'lumotlari asosida (O'zStat). Muallif ishlanmasi. <https://stat.uz>.

Karakalpakstan (17.6%) are the leaders in the share of education, which indicates that these regions pay high attention to education.

In terms of subjective assessment (level of satisfaction with well-being of the population), Jizzakh (8.5 points) and Surkhandarya (7.9 points) regions are ahead. On the contrary, this indicator is lower in Khorezm (5.6 points) and Samarkand (5.9 points) regions, which indicates less satisfaction with well-being of the population (Table 7).

Uzbekistan is gradually improving the following indicators <sup>5</sup>

7-table

Stage	Work to be done	Responsible organizations	Expected result
Stage 1 (analysis)	Assessment of existing indicator base	UzStat, Ministry of Economy	Status is determined
Stage 2 (adaptation)	Comparison with international indicators	Higher scientific institutions	Differences are identified
Stage 3 (implementation)	Integration of new indicators into the official system	Ministry, Scientific institutes	New indicators are developed
Stage 4 (monitoring)	Annual evaluation and reporting	UzStat, Presidential AAK	Become the basis for the state strategy

Analysis of the stages of improving indicators based on Table 7. In order to correctly assess the level of well-being and development in Uzbekistan, the system of indicators is being improved step by step.

At stage 1, the existing indicator base is analyzed by the UzStat and the Ministry of Economy, and the current situation is determined. At the 2nd stage, indicators are compared with international standards with the participation of higher scientific institutions and differences are identified.

At the 3rd stage, new indicators are developed by ministries and scientific institutions and integrated into the official statistical system.

At the 4th stage, annual monitoring and reporting are carried out by UzStat and the Presidential Statistical Committee, which serves as the basis for the formation of state strategies.

### Conclusion and suggestions

<sup>5</sup> O'zbekiston Respublikasi Davlat statistika qo'mitasi ma'lumotlari asosida (O'zStat). Muallif ishlanmasi. <https://stat.uz>.

Our analysis shows that the current official statistical system in Uzbekistan relies more on economic indicators, but a multi-component system that fully reflects well-being has not yet been formed.

Therefore, taking into account the above foreign experiences, it is proposed to improve the system of national indicators as follows:

- it is necessary to add indicators such as health, education, environmental status, civic participation, and security to the system of indicators;
- it is necessary to introduce a system of assessing well-being at the territorial level;
- it is necessary to form subjective satisfaction indicators based on sociological surveys;
- it is necessary to harmonize the national system with the methodologies used by international organizations;
- it is necessary to form a system of multi-component indicators that are consistent with the socio-economic characteristics of Uzbekistan, based on international experiences (HDI, OECD Better Life Index, Gross National Happiness);
- it is necessary to create a system for assessing indicators such as the level of satisfaction of the population with their lives, sense of security, psychological state, and level of participation in society through regular sociological surveys;
- it is necessary to develop a system of indicators at the level of regions, districts, and cities to achieve a separate assessment of the level of well-being in each region;
- it is necessary to create the possibility of real-time monitoring by digitizing the collection and analysis of indicators;– it is important to introduce the practice of making decisions based on indicators in the fields of state budget, social policy, healthcare, education and ecology.

Implementing these recommendations will provide a more accurate, equitable, and comprehensive assessment of the population's well-being in Uzbekistan, as well as to manage social policy through scientifically based indicators.

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