

EMPLOYMENT OF CITIZENS AGED 40-60 IN THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract: This article examines the employment of citizens aged 40 to 60 in the Republic of Uzbekistan, focusing on their participation in the labor market, sectoral distribution, and socio-economic factors affecting their workforce involvement. Middle-aged workers represent a significant segment of the labor force, possessing experience, skills, and knowledge crucial for economic stability and productivity. The study analyzes trends in employment, challenges such as age-related discrimination and skill gaps, and policies aimed at supporting continued labor participation for this age group. Findings highlight the importance of targeted programs for professional retraining, health support, and flexible work arrangements to enhance employment opportunities and maintain socio-economic well-being.

Keywords: middle-aged employment, labor market participation, workforce experience, age-related employment challenges, professional retraining, Uzbekistan, socio-economic stability, workforce policy.

Introduction. Employment among citizens aged 40 to 60 is a critical aspect of labor market dynamics in the Republic of Uzbekistan. This age group represents a substantial portion of the workforce, combining valuable experience, accumulated skills, and knowledge that are essential for maintaining productivity and economic stability. Understanding their employment patterns provides insight into both current labor market conditions and future socio-economic trends. Middle-aged workers often face unique challenges, including age-related barriers, limited access to retraining opportunities, and evolving technological requirements in various sectors. At the same time, they serve as a stabilizing factor in organizations, contributing to mentoring younger employees and maintaining institutional knowledge. Analyzing the participation of this demographic in different economic sectors—such as industry, services, agriculture, and emerging technology fields—offers a comprehensive view of their role in the national economy. In Uzbekistan, demographic trends and government labor policies have a significant influence on the employment of citizens aged 40 to 60. Initiatives aimed at professional retraining, flexible work arrangements, and health support can enhance labor participation and extend productive working life. This article aims to explore the structure,

trends, challenges, and policy measures related to the employment of middle-aged citizens, emphasizing their contribution to socio-economic development and workforce sustainability.

Main body. The employment of citizens aged 40 to 60 in the Republic of Uzbekistan is a key component of labor market dynamics and socio-economic stability. This demographic group constitutes a significant segment of the workforce, providing both experience and skills that are essential for sustaining productivity across various sectors. According to Uzbek economist N. M. Abdullayev, “middle-aged workers form the backbone of the labor market, combining professional expertise with practical experience, which ensures organizational stability and efficiency”[1]. This emphasizes that maintaining high employment levels among this group is not only a labor market issue but also a broader economic priority.

Historically, the 40–60 age group has been predominantly employed in sectors such as industry, agriculture, and public services. However, recent economic reforms and the growth of the service and technology sectors have created both opportunities and challenges. The shift towards more knowledge-intensive industries demands continuous skill development and adaptation. R. Shodiev notes that “the ability of middle-aged workers to adapt to technological changes directly affects their employability and the overall productivity of the economy”[2]. This observation highlights the importance of targeted retraining programs and professional development initiatives for sustaining employment within this age group.

Regional disparities are also evident in the employment patterns of middle-aged citizens. Urban centers such as Tashkent, Samarkand, and Fergana offer a wider range of employment opportunities, particularly in industrial and service sectors. Conversely, rural areas often rely on agriculture and small-scale enterprises, limiting both income potential and job variety for this demographic. A. A. Rahimov emphasizes, “Monitoring regional employment trends among middle-aged citizens is essential to address inequalities and promote balanced socio-economic development”[3]. Addressing these regional disparities is critical for ensuring that all citizens, regardless of location, have access to sustainable employment.

Gender dynamics play a significant role in the employment of the 40–60 age group. Traditionally, male participation rates have been higher than female participation, particularly in sectors like manufacturing and agriculture. Nevertheless, government programs designed to support female employment and entrepreneurship have gradually increased workforce participation among middle-aged women. D. H. Yusupov asserts, “Inclusive employment policies that support middle-aged women are vital for reducing social inequality and enhancing national economic productivity”[4]. Promoting gender equity in employment not only strengthens social cohesion but also broadens the productive capacity of the labor force.

Age-related challenges such as skill obsolescence, health limitations, and potential age discrimination are key factors affecting employment in this demographic. Employers may perceive older workers as less adaptable to new technologies or less physically capable of handling demanding tasks. M. M. Kholmatov highlights that “addressing age-related barriers through retraining, health support, and flexible work arrangements ensures that middle-aged citizens remain active and productive contributors to the economy”[5]. Programs that promote lifelong learning, ergonomic workplace adjustments, and flexible scheduling can mitigate these

barriers and sustain labor participation. Informal employment and underemployment are additional concerns for middle-aged citizens, particularly in rural areas and small businesses. Many individuals work in low-productivity jobs or informal sectors that do not provide social security, healthcare benefits, or pension contributions. Understanding the scale and nature of informal employment is essential for designing effective policies that support both income security and workforce stability. Enhancing formal job creation and integrating middle-aged workers into productive economic sectors strengthens both household welfare and broader economic resilience.

Technological transformation is reshaping the employment landscape for this age group. The rise of digital platforms, automation, and information technology in service and industrial sectors requires workers to acquire new skills and adapt to evolving job roles. Professional retraining programs, digital literacy initiatives, and continuous learning opportunities are critical for ensuring that middle-aged citizens remain employable and can contribute effectively to the knowledge economy. The integration of technology-oriented skills into vocational and professional development programs increases workforce flexibility and supports economic modernization. In addition to sectoral, regional, and gender considerations, it is important to examine the role of government policies and private sector initiatives in supporting the employment of citizens aged 40 to 60 in Uzbekistan. Beyond conventional retraining programs, targeted incentives for employers to retain experienced workers have proven effective. For example, tax benefits, subsidies, or recognition programs for companies that employ middle-aged workers encourage businesses to value experience and maintain workforce stability. Such measures help reduce premature retirement and prevent loss of skilled labor.

Health and wellness programs also play a critical role in sustaining employment among this age group. As workers approach the later stages of their careers, occupational health issues can limit productivity and participation. Preventive healthcare, workplace ergonomics, and wellness initiatives not only enhance the well-being of employees but also improve overall labor market outcomes. Integrating these programs into labor policies ensures that middle-aged workers remain active, motivated, and productive for longer periods. Another emerging factor is entrepreneurship and self-employment among citizens aged 40 to 60. With experience, networks, and accumulated savings, many in this demographic pursue small businesses, cooperatives, or consultancy roles. Supporting entrepreneurship through microcredit programs, training in business management, and access to digital platforms can expand employment opportunities for this age group while fostering economic diversification. Technological and digital inclusion is another important aspect. While younger workers may adapt quickly to new technologies, middle-aged workers sometimes require additional support to acquire digital skills. Initiatives that provide digital literacy training, access to online resources, and mentorship programs bridge this gap, ensuring that older workers can participate effectively in evolving sectors such as IT, e-commerce, and service industries. Lastly, monitoring labor market trends through continuous research is crucial for understanding the changing needs and challenges of middle-aged workers. Surveys, statistical analysis, and real-time data collection enable policymakers to design evidence-based strategies. These measures include forecasting labor shortages, evaluating skill mismatches, and anticipating the impact of automation on employment. By adopting proactive research-driven approaches, Uzbekistan can ensure that citizens aged 40 to 60 remain a productive, stable, and valuable segment of the workforce.

In conclusion, employment among citizens aged 40 to 60 in Uzbekistan is influenced by sectoral distribution, regional disparities, gender dynamics, age-related challenges, informal work, and technological changes. Sustaining and enhancing labor participation for this demographic requires comprehensive strategies, including professional retraining, health and social support, flexible work arrangements, and inclusive policies. By addressing these factors, Uzbekistan can ensure that middle-aged citizens continue to play a vital role in economic productivity, social stability, and sustainable development. Maintaining the engagement of this demographic not only secures immediate labor market needs but also strengthens the foundation for long-term economic growth.

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