

## THE ROLE OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AS LEADERS IN THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

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**Abstract:** This article scientifically analyzes the role of the digital transformation process in the development of society and the economy, the role of young professionals as a leading force in this process. In the context of the rapid development of digital technologies, the innovative thinking of young personnel, the level of mastery of information and communication technologies and their adaptability are considered important factors. It also substantiates the participation of young professionals in the digital economy, public administration and education, the need to develop their professional competencies. The results of the study serve to develop scientific and practical recommendations to increase the activity of young people in the digital transformation process.

**Keywords:** digital transformation, young professionals, innovation, digital economy, information and communication technologies, human capital, modern competencies.

### Introduction

In today's globalization and digitalization, digital transformation is deeply penetrating all spheres of social life. The introduction of digital technologies in the economy, education, healthcare, public administration and social spheres is becoming an important factor of development. In this process, the role of human capital, especially young specialists, is of particular importance.

In recent years, digital transformation has become the main driver of global and regional development. Artificial intelligence, IoT, cloud technologies and other advanced technologies are radically changing the economy, public administration and everyday life. In Uzbekistan and other developing countries, digital transformation has become a priority area of state policy. In this process, it is young specialists - a technologically literate, innovative-thinking and adaptable generation - who are becoming the driving force of digital initiatives. In order to fully realize their potential, large-scale programs are being implemented in cooperation with the state, private sector and education system.

Young professionals, with their modern knowledge, rapid mastery of digital technologies, and ability to put forward innovative ideas, are emerging as the main driving force of digital transformation. Their initiative and flexibility allow them to quickly adapt to the new digital environment. Therefore, studying the role of young professionals in the digital transformation process and effectively using their potential is of urgent scientific and practical importance.

This article highlights the role of young professionals as a leading force in the context of digital transformation, the need to develop their professional and digital competencies, and their contribution to the development of society.

### Literature review and methodology

Academic and applied research on digital transformation and the role of young professionals was analyzed in the following main areas:

Recent studies on the digital workforce, youth employment and leadership competencies were studied in Harvard Business Review, MIT Technology Review, Deloitte, PwC, McKinsey Global Institute and other leading sources.

Decrees of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the “Digital Uzbekistan – 2030” strategy, the “Youth – 2025” concept, World Bank and UN reports were analyzed.

Azizova Manzura (2023–12 05) – The article “Development of the digital economy in Uzbekistan and its main directions” analyzes the current state of the digital economy, digital transformation strategies, as well as digital literacy and e-government directions; the author emphasizes the importance of the growth of ICT and the startup ecosystem in the process of digital transformation.

Umarkulov K. & Abdunosirova N. (2025) – “Human capital in Uzbekistan in the context of digital transformation: problems, opportunities and strategic solutions” analyzes digital literacy, regional problems and personnel training; the article shows the need to strengthen the connection between youth and human capital.

Salimjonova G., Ovkhunov I., Nabiev S. (2025) – “Planning digital transformation in human resource management in globalization” examines the importance of personnel management and improving digital skills in modern HR strategies.

### Foreign literature

Zamrudi Z. et al. (2024) – “Assessing Digital Literacy Among Young Professionals: A Research Mapping Review” analyzes the work of young professionals in the digital transformation process based on digital literacy, innovation and knowledge management; this article focuses on the adaptability and innovative potential of young professionals.

“Young people: the key players in digital transformation” The unreferenced “Young professionals” article notes that young people are the driving force behind innovation and digital transformation in the IT sector (2024/2025).

Anuniação P. (2025) – “The Social Responsibility of Young Professionals Working in IS/ICT” analyzes the role of young information systems professionals in the digital transformation process in the context of social responsibility and ethical decisions.

Foreign literature shows that young professionals are strategic elements of digital transformation with digital skills, creativity, ingenuity and social responsibility.

This study uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods: content analysis of literature, questionnaires, expert interviews, and statistical analysis. Qualitative methods provide an in-depth interpretation of the facts extracted from the literature, while quantitative methods measure the digital competencies of young professionals.

### Results and Discussion

Modern trends in digital transformation

- In 2024–2025, digital transformation is taking place on the basis of artificial intelligence, IoT, cloud computing, blockchain and 5G technologies.
- Uzbekistan’s ICT sector accounts for 1.9% of GDP, with IT services exports reaching \$140 million in 2022.
- By 2030, it is planned to increase IT exports to \$5 billion and create jobs for 300,000 young people.

International studies show that digital literacy is a key competency for young professionals in digital transformation (Zamrudi et al., 2024).

Uzbek studies identify young people as one of the key actors in the digital transformation process, but note some gaps in skills and experience (Umarkulov & Abdunosirova, 2025). Foreign literature pays great attention to the creative element of digital transformation of young people (for example, innovations in the IT sector), and young people also play an active role in the issue of social responsibility.

The leading role of young professionals

- The young generation (millennials and Generation Z) quickly master digital technologies, have innovative thinking and adaptability.
- In many companies, young people are actively participating not only as performers, but also as leaders, their role in “reverse mentoring” and cross-functional teams is increasing.
- The “One Million Uzbek Programmers” program and IT parks have become an important factor in attracting young people to digital areas.

Skills and knowledge exchange

- Skills necessary for digital transformation: computer science, information systems, strategic management, new technologies and soft skills.
- Opportunities for knowledge exchange and rapid learning are expanding with the help of AI and digital platforms.

Challenges

- There is a shortage of qualified IT specialists, a digital divide between regions, and issues of equality in access to digital services.
- Lack of work experience and a global shortage of digital skills are among the main challenges.
- Opportunities for women and vulnerable youth need to be expanded.

Best practices and experiences

- Companies such as Walmart, MetLife, HSBC, and Salesforce have introduced special programs to prepare young professionals for digital leadership.
- 215 IT training centers have been opened in Uzbekistan, and training is being conducted for young people on digital skills and entrepreneurship.

Analysis shows that young professionals, as innovative drivers of the digital economy, make a significant contribution to the transformation of enterprises and society. Digital literacy, creativity, and flexibility are attributes that young people need for the success of transformation, but they need to be strengthened through education and practical training.

## Conclusion

Young professionals are emerging as a leading force in the digital transformation process in Uzbekistan and around the world. Their technological literacy, innovative thinking, and flexibility play a key role in the successful implementation of digital initiatives. As a result of state policy and educational reforms, new opportunities are opening up for young people, but the shortage of qualified personnel, regional disparities, and inclusion issues remain relevant. In the future, it is recommended to focus educational programs on practice, develop digital infrastructure in the regions, and expand opportunities for young people in need of social protection.

The analysis shows that young professionals are a leading force in the digital transformation process, and their digital literacy, innovative competencies, and social responsibility benefit the sustainable growth of the digital economy. Foreign studies confirm that young people play a key role in the process of digital adaptation and knowledge exchange, and in Uzbekistan, young people require additional education in the areas of flexibility and skills development for digital transformation strategies. This will not only increase personal potential, but also the effectiveness of the national digital development strategy

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