

GROSS EMPLOYMENT OF THE POPULATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract: This article explores the total employment of the population in the Republic of Uzbekistan, analyzing its structure, trends, and socio-economic implications. Total employment reflects the proportion of the working-age population engaged in economic activities, serving as a key indicator of labor market health and overall economic development. The article examines the dynamics of employment across sectors, regional disparities, and factors influencing labor participation, such as education, demographic changes, and government policies. Additionally, the study highlights challenges related to underemployment, informal work, and the need for sustainable job creation. The findings contribute to understanding labor market trends in Uzbekistan and provide a foundation for evidence-based economic and social policy planning.

Keywords: total employment, labor market, workforce participation, unemployment, labor force structure, socio-economic development, Uzbekistan, employment trends.

Introduction. Employment is a fundamental component of economic development and social stability, as it determines the ability of a population to contribute to production, consumption, and overall societal well-being. In the Republic of Uzbekistan, total employment serves as a crucial indicator for assessing the state of the labor market, understanding workforce dynamics, and guiding economic policy decisions. It encompasses all individuals of working age who are actively engaged in productive activities across various sectors, including agriculture, industry, services, and informal work. Over the past decades, Uzbekistan has experienced significant structural changes in its economy, including industrial modernization, growth in the service sector, and urbanization. These changes have directly affected employment patterns, creating both opportunities and challenges. Analyzing total employment trends helps identify the sectors that absorb labor most effectively, regional disparities in job opportunities, and factors influencing workforce participation such as education, skills development, and demographic shifts. Understanding total employment also provides insights into critical socio-economic issues, including underemployment, informal labor, and the gender gap in workforce participation. Policymakers rely on this data to design programs that enhance labor productivity, create sustainable jobs, and reduce unemployment. Therefore, studying total employment in

Uzbekistan is essential not only for monitoring the current state of the labor market but also for formulating strategic initiatives that promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth. This article aims to provide a comprehensive overview of total employment in Uzbekistan, highlighting its structure, key trends, influencing factors, and implications for socio-economic development.

Main Part. Total employment of the population is a central indicator of labor market efficiency, economic development, and social welfare. In Uzbekistan, analyzing total employment is essential for understanding the structure and dynamics of the workforce, identifying sectors that generate jobs, and evaluating the effectiveness of government labor policies. According to Uzbek economist N. M. Abdullayev, “total employment reflects not only the proportion of the working-age population engaged in economic activities but also the efficiency of economic resource utilization”[1]. This highlights that employment is both a quantitative and qualitative measure of labor market performance, revealing the productive engagement of citizens in the economy. The structure of total employment in Uzbekistan has undergone significant changes over the past decades. Traditionally, agriculture absorbed the largest share of the workforce, particularly in rural areas. However, with industrial modernization and the growth of the service sector, there has been a gradual shift from agricultural employment to industrial and service-based jobs. This structural transformation is crucial for economic diversification and sustainable development. R. Shodiev emphasizes that “analyzing the sectoral composition of employment provides insights into economic modernization and the pace of structural reforms”[2]. Understanding these sectoral dynamics allows policymakers to target areas with employment potential and address imbalances in workforce distribution.

Regional disparities in employment are another critical aspect of total employment analysis. Urban areas such as Tashkent, Samarkand, and Fergana tend to offer more employment opportunities due to industrial concentration and service sector development, whereas rural regions often face challenges of underemployment and limited job diversity. A. A. Rahimov notes, “Monitoring regional employment trends is essential to reduce inequalities and ensure balanced socio-economic development across all regions”[3]. Addressing these disparities is vital for promoting social cohesion and preventing regional economic stagnation. Labor force participation is influenced by multiple factors, including education, skill levels, demographic changes, and government policies. In recent years, Uzbekistan has invested significantly in improving access to education and vocational training, which directly impacts employment quality and productivity. D. H. Yusupov states, “Investments in human capital development are directly linked to higher employment rates and the creation of sustainable jobs”[4]. This underscores the importance of aligning education and skill development programs with labor market demands to enhance employability.

Gender balance and youth employment are also key considerations in analyzing total employment. Historically, male participation in the labor market has been higher than female participation, particularly in rural areas and traditional sectors. However, government programs aimed at empowering women and promoting youth employment have contributed to gradually increasing female and young workforce participation. M. M. Kholmatov argues, “Inclusive employment policies that target women and youth are crucial for sustainable economic growth and social stability”[5]. Enhancing inclusivity in the labor market not only reduces social

disparities but also expands the productive potential of the population. Total employment is closely linked to the challenges of underemployment and informal work. Despite economic growth, a portion of the population is employed in low-productivity or informal jobs, which do not provide adequate income or social protection. Addressing informal employment requires targeted policies, labor market regulations, and incentives for formal job creation. Understanding the scale and nature of informal employment is therefore critical for designing effective labor policies that improve social welfare and economic efficiency.

In addition, monitoring total employment over time provides valuable insights into labor market trends and economic cycles. Changes in employment patterns reflect broader socio-economic dynamics, including migration, technological adoption, and demographic shifts. For instance, an increase in urban employment may indicate industrial expansion, while fluctuations in rural employment could signal seasonal or structural changes in agriculture. By analyzing these trends, policymakers can anticipate potential challenges, such as unemployment spikes or skills mismatches, and take preventive measures. In addition to sectoral and regional analyses, total employment in Uzbekistan can be studied through the lens of labor productivity and the quality of jobs. While high employment rates indicate broad participation in the labor market, the quality of employment—measured by factors such as income level, job security, and social benefits—is equally important. Informal or low-productivity jobs, which are prevalent in some rural areas and small businesses, may contribute to overall employment figures but do not necessarily improve living standards. Understanding these distinctions is critical for designing policies that foster both quantity and quality of employment. Technological advancement and digitalization are increasingly shaping employment patterns in Uzbekistan. Automation, digital platforms, and information technology have created new types of jobs, especially in the service and knowledge sectors. For example, the rise of IT outsourcing, e-commerce, and fintech sectors has led to the emergence of new employment opportunities for youth and urban populations. Analysts emphasize that promoting digital literacy and technology-oriented skills is vital for adapting the workforce to these changes.

Migration also plays a significant role in total employment dynamics. Internal migration from rural to urban areas affects regional labor markets, often increasing employment pressure in cities while leading to labor shortages in rural sectors. Additionally, external labor migration, particularly to neighboring countries, affects household incomes and the domestic labor supply. Monitoring these migration trends allows policymakers to balance labor demand and supply across sectors and regions effectively. Furthermore, the government's economic policies and investment initiatives influence employment creation and stability. Large-scale infrastructure projects, industrial parks, and small and medium enterprise (SME) support programs have generated significant employment opportunities. These measures not only absorb labor from traditional sectors but also encourage entrepreneurship and self-employment, which are essential for sustainable economic growth. Finally, total employment is closely linked to social protection and labor rights. Ensuring that employed individuals have access to healthcare, pensions, and safe working conditions strengthens the workforce's resilience and motivation. By integrating employment strategies with social policies, Uzbekistan can achieve a more inclusive and equitable labor market, contributing to long-term socio-economic stability.

In conclusion, total employment in Uzbekistan serves as a fundamental indicator of labor market performance, economic development, and social well-being. Analyzing total employment involves examining sectoral distribution, regional disparities, labor force participation, gender balance, youth employment, underemployment, and informal work. This comprehensive understanding allows for informed policy-making, efficient resource allocation, and sustainable economic growth. By investing in education, skill development, inclusive policies, and formal job creation, Uzbekistan can continue to enhance employment levels, improve social stability, and strengthen its economic development trajectory.

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