

Eureka Journal of Humanities and Social Research (EJHSR)

ISSN 2760-4934 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 4, April 2026



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<https://eurekaoa.com/index.php/4>

A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS

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Abstract

Today, the future image of any country is прежде всего reflected in how its younger generation is being raised, what kind of knowledge and professions they acquire, and to what extent they live with a sense of responsibility for the fate of their homeland. In this regard, the attention being paid to youth as one of the most important pillars of the development of New Uzbekistan is no coincidence. Indeed, young people are not only a large demographic group, but also a decisive force that determines the intellectual potential of the country, the pace of its renewal, and its socio-economic advancement. As of January 1, 2025, the number of young people aged 14–30 in Uzbekistan amounted to 9,630,556, which is 25.7% of the total population—this fact clearly confirms the above¹.

Introduction

In our country, state policy regarding youth has in recent years evolved from a separate social direction into a matter of strategic development. In this regard, legal, organizational, and practical mechanisms have been gradually strengthened, and protecting the rights and interests of young people, as well as creating broad opportunities for them in education, employment, entrepreneurship, innovation, culture, and sports, has become a priority task. In particular, the Law “On State Youth Policy” clearly defines the main directions

¹ <https://stat.uz/uz/matbuot-markazi/qo-mita-yangiliklar/63005-o-zbekistonda-yoshlar-soni-qancha?utm>

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of state policy, the principles of supporting young people, and their legal guarantees².

This approach is not accidental. In the context of modern development, investing in the growth and development of young people means investing in the future. The formation of youth as educated, инициативе, spiritually mature, and professionally competitive individuals determines the stability of society, economic growth, and the country's prestige in the international arena.

Therefore, youth policy in Uzbekistan is being shaped not as a single-sector initiative, but as a comprehensive system encompassing interrelated areas such as education, upbringing, employment, entrepreneurship, social protection, spirituality, patriotism, and civic engagement. This is also confirmed by the objectives outlined in the Concept for the Development of Youth Policy up to 2025³.

In meetings and dialogues with young people, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has consistently emphasized this issue as a top priority. In particular, during the dialogue with youth held on February 14, 2025, special attention was given to the need to further expand opportunities for young people, introduce new mechanisms to support their education, vocational training, employment, and engagement in entrepreneurship and innovative activities. This clearly demonstrates that youth issues remain under the постоянное внимание of the head of state and have become one of the key criteria for the country's development⁴.

Methods

In recent years, the approach to youth issues in Uzbekistan has acquired an entirely new meaning. Whereas previously this area was interpreted mainly within the framework of social support, today it is emerging as a comprehensive

² <https://lex.uz/docs/-3026246?ONDATE=26.01.2022&utm>

³ <https://lex.uz/docs/-5234746?utm>

⁴ <https://president.uz/oz/lists/view/7872?utm>

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state policy closely linked to the country's long-term development strategy. The legal foundation of this policy is primarily закреплено in the Law "On State Youth Policy," adopted on September 14, 2016. This law defines the protection of the rights and legitimate interests of young people, ensuring their active participation in the life of society and the state, and creating conditions for their intellectual, spiritual, physical, and social development as the main directions of state policy⁵.

Results

With the adoption of this law, young people came to the center of state attention as a distinct social group. Most importantly, this document did not limit youth-related efforts to educational or organizational activities alone; rather, it created a guaranteed legal framework for young people to receive education, engage in work, take initiative, pursue entrepreneurship, and find their place in cultural and social life.

According to the official commentary of the Youth Affairs Agency, the main objective of this law is to define state-guaranteed conditions for the intellectual, spiritual, economic, and social development of the younger generation⁶.

Today, the significant expansion of opportunities for young people to access education in our country is clearly reflected in official statistics. According to data from the National Statistics Committee, at the beginning of the 2024–2025 academic year, the higher education enrollment rate among the population aged 18–23 reached 47.7%. The same source notes that this figure has increased by 40.9 percentage points compared to 2014.

These figures demonstrate that higher education in our country is becoming more widespread and is turning into an increasingly open and accessible sphere for young people⁷.

⁵ <https://www.lex.uz/actinfo/respondents/-3026246?utm>

⁶ <https://gov.uz/yoshlar/news/view/66194?utm>

⁷ <https://stat.uz/uz/matbuot-markazi/qo-mita-yangiliklar/61148-oliy-ta-limga-qamrov-40-9-ga-oshgan?utm>

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However, education cannot be limited to higher education institutions alone. In the context of modern development, it is equally important for a segment of young people to acquire vocational skills, practical competencies, and the ability to quickly adapt to the labor market.

Therefore, in Uzbekistan, government resolutions have been adopted to regulate a continuous system of primary, secondary, and specialized secondary vocational education. In particular, Resolution No. 466 of August 7, 2020, along with subsequent regulatory documents, has defined the functioning of professional educational institutions, as well as the forms and procedures of education.

Later, in 2023, further amendments were introduced to clarify the procedures for organizing dual education. This indicates that the approach aimed at integrating education with real production processes and practical experience is being increasingly strengthened⁸.

Thus, the strongest foundation for the development of young people lies precisely in the harmony between education and upbringing. Knowledge provides opportunities, while upbringing gives the right direction. One shapes a person into a competent specialist, while the other nurtures them into a socially responsible and beneficial individual. In the context of New Uzbekistan, it is exactly this combination of these two factors that serves as a solid foundation for youth development⁹.

In particular, the approach aimed at targeted youth employment has been significantly strengthened in recent years. Mechanisms such as studying youth issues at the neighborhood level, placing them in jobs or guiding them toward professions, and supporting vulnerable groups through the “Youth Register” serve this purpose.

Under the current regulations for maintaining the “Youth Register,” in addition to providing social support, procedures are clearly defined for training young

⁸ <https://lex.uz/docs/-4945840?utm>

⁹ <https://lex.uz/docs/-5013007?utm>

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people in vocational skills, involving them in entrepreneurship, and covering the costs of relevant courses. This indicates that employment is viewed not merely as providing a job, but as a comprehensive process of preparing young people for the labor market¹⁰.

Teaching young people vocational skills and foreign languages plays a particularly important role in preparing them for employment. Resolution No. 213, adopted on April 17, 2024, set out measures to organize training courses in vocational skills and foreign languages for youth within professional educational institutions. Later, on April 22, 2025, amendments were made to this document to further clarify the mechanisms. In addition, as part of the implementation measures of the “Uzbekistan–2030” strategy in 2024, starting from March 1, 2024, the practice of directing funds from the “Youth Register” fund toward training young people in foreign languages and vocational skills was introduced. These decisions indicate that youth employment is approached not as a short-term task, but as a sustainable solution aimed at improving skills and competitiveness¹¹.

Official data also show that tangible results are being achieved in this area. According to information provided by the Youth Affairs Agency for the end of 2025, the “Youth Employment Program,” aimed at supporting 384,400 young people who were unemployed or interested in starting a business, was implemented, and 354,100 of them—equivalent to 92%—were successfully employed. The report also notes that 115,800 unemployed youth were assigned mentors, and 114,900 of them were provided with jobs. These figures indicate that the practice of targeted work on youth employment is yielding significant results¹².

The new initiatives announced during the President’s dialogue with youth have taken reforms in this area to an even higher level. According to official

¹⁰ <https://lex.uz/docs/-6051791?ONDATE=27.04.2024&utm>

¹¹ <https://lex.uz/docs/-6887882?utm>

¹² <https://gov.uz/oz/yoshlar/news/view/114933?utm>

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information from the Youth Affairs Agency, 32 important initiatives were proposed during a single meeting, with financial support for youth entrepreneurship and startups taking a prominent place among them.

In particular, an additional \$200 million was allocated for youth entrepreneurship. Furthermore, it was announced that the loan amount for self-employed young people would be increased from 100 million to 300 million soums, and loans of up to 10 billion soums could be provided for youth entrepreneurial projects. These figures indicate that the state's approach to youth business has moved into a stage of significant encouragement and support¹³.

Most importantly, support is not limited to providing loans. The same official report notes that investments of up to \$100,000 may be made in innovative startup projects, "Youth Business Incubators" providing business services for young people will be established in every region, banks plan to prepare business plans free of charge for 50,000 young people, and 20,000 youth will be trained in entrepreneurship. This approach demonstrates that today's strategy views young people not merely as borrowers, but as full-fledged entrepreneurs whose ideas are guided, planned, managed, and brought to market at every stage of development¹⁴.

There are also budgetary mechanisms for financially supporting youth entrepreneurship. The Law "On the State Budget of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2025" sets out specific indicators for the State Targeted Fund for the Development of Youth Entrepreneurship. In particular, within the fund's expenditures, 240.3 billion soums are allocated as loans and credit funds to finance business projects aimed at youth entrepreneurship and employment; 50 billion soums are earmarked for training specialists in information technology and computer programming as well as financing their startup projects; and 128.8

¹³ <https://gov.uz/oz/yoshlar/news/view/139394>

¹⁴ <https://gov.uz/oz/yoshlar/news/view/139394>

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billion soums are allocated to a venture fund to finance promising youth startup projects.

These figures demonstrate that state support is not just a slogan, but is backed by concrete financial resources¹⁵.

Discuss

In recent years, the measures implemented within the framework of state youth policy have shown tangible results, as reflected in official data. According to the National Statistics Committee, as of January 1, 2025, the number of young people aged 14–30 amounted to 9,630,556. This once again highlights the significant demographic, social, and economic importance of youth issues in the development of the country¹⁶.

Significant changes are also being observed in the field of education. In particular, by the beginning of the 2024–2025 academic year, the higher education enrollment rate among the population aged 18–23 reached 47.7%. This represents an increase of 40.9 percentage points compared to 2014. This indicates that in recent years, access to higher education has expanded considerably, becoming an important factor in enhancing the intellectual potential of young people¹⁷.

Practical results have also been observed in the field of employment. According to the Youth Affairs Agency’s report for the end of 2025, within the framework of the “Youth Employment Program,” which aimed to support 384,400 young people who were unemployed or interested in starting a business, 354,100—equivalent to 92%—were successfully employed. Additionally, it was noted that through assigned mentors, 115,800 unemployed youth received guidance, and

¹⁵ <https://www.lex.uz/uz/docs/-7277618>

¹⁶ <https://stat.uz/uz/matbuot-markazi/qo-mita-yangiliklar/63005-o-zbekistonda-yoshlar-soni-qancha?utm>

¹⁷ <https://stat.uz/uz/matbuot-markazi/qo-mita-yangiliklar/61148-oliy-ta-limga-qamrov-40-9-ga-oshgan?utm>

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114,900 of them were provided with jobs. These figures indicate that the targeted system of support is yielding tangible results¹⁸.

At the same time, the results achieved do not mean that all tasks have been completed. In a country with a large youth population, issues such as education quality, professions aligned with the labor market, digital skills, innovative thinking, regional disparities in opportunities, and social protection require continuous attention. In particular, the “Uzbekistan — 2030” strategy sets clear goals for increasing youth employment, creating broad opportunities in the IT sector, and reducing unemployment among young people, showing that significant challenges remain.

Thus, the ongoing reforms have laid an important foundation. The main task now is to transform these achievements into a sustainable system, ensure equal opportunities for every young person, and turn the conditions provided by the state into concrete results—namely, the development of a knowledgeable, initiative-taking, competitive, and patriotic generation. Only in this way will youth policy become not only a pillar of today’s progress but also a reliable foundation for tomorrow’s development.

Today, youth issues have become one of the most priority areas of New Uzbekistan’s development, visible across all sectors. The laws, concepts, state programs, and presidential initiatives currently being adopted confirm that supporting the younger generation is considered not just a social duty, but a strategic matter shaping the country’s future. The Law “On State Youth Policy” and the Concept for the Development of Youth Policy up to 2025 have strengthened the legal and organizational foundations of this direction. Today, broad opportunities are being created for young people in education, employment, entrepreneurship, innovation, social protection, moral upbringing, and civic engagement. The importance of these opportunities is further emphasized by the large share of youth in Uzbekistan’s population: according to

¹⁸ <https://gov.uz/oz/yoshlar/news/view/114933?utm>

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the National Statistics Committee, as of January 1, 2025, the number of young people aged 14–30 reached 9,630,556¹⁹.

Conclusion

The initiatives announced during the President’s open dialogues with youth have further strengthened the practical impact of this policy. New decisions and mechanisms supporting young people are creating broader opportunities for them to pursue education, find employment, start businesses, develop startups, and actively participate in social life. This demonstrates that youth policy is not merely a paper concept, but a practical program being implemented in real life. Most importantly, the attitude toward youth in our country has changed: they are now seen not merely as a group in need of support, but as a powerful force driving progress. By nurturing a knowledgeable, initiative-taking, patriotic, and competitive younger generation, Uzbekistan is laying a solid foundation for its future. In this sense, the conditions and opportunities being created for youth development and growth are among the most important factors shaping the future face of New Uzbekistan.

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¹⁹ <https://stat.uz/uz/matbuot-markazi/qo-mita-yangiliklar/63005-o-zbekistonda-yoshlar-soni-qancha>

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