

**UZBEKISTAN'S DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – HUMANITARIAN AND  
IDEOLOGICAL-REFORMATIVE CHANGES**

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**Abstract:** Uzbekistan's development strategy focuses on the intersection of humanitarian and ideological-reformative changes, reflecting the nation's commitment to creating a balanced and socially oriented state. This paper explores the nation's approach to building a welfare state model that aligns with its cultural and historical values while addressing contemporary global and internal challenges. It examines the importance of social reforms aimed at improving the well-being of citizens, promoting social justice, and fostering solidarity. By analyzing key national policies and international frameworks, this study outlines the critical role of state-led initiatives in enhancing the social and economic conditions in Uzbekistan. The research concludes that a comprehensive welfare state model, rooted in both national traditions and global standards, is essential for the country's sustainable development.

**Keywords:** Uzbekistan development strategy, welfare state, social reforms, humanitarian changes, ideological reforms, social justice, solidarity, cultural values, economic policy, sustainable development.

### Introduction

The development of human civilization is an incredibly complex and multifaceted process that never halts, continuously amplifying progress while simultaneously creating unprecedented challenges. Among the many components of this process, the social aspect stands out for its decisive importance. Any disruption within the social complex leaves a painful mark on the lives of people.

Indeed, we cannot identify the same social development trends and patterns in the past as we did in the 20th century. The new era presents society with difficulties, creates its own priorities, and demands theoretical generalizations and forecasts that correspond to them. However, within the social complex, regardless of the time period—whether in the Middle Ages, the 20th century, or the future—many situations arise that significantly determine the nature and pace of development, including the quality of relationships among people. These situations involve reconciling various forms of ownership, equally protecting rights, ensuring freedom of choice in personal interests, and providing equal access to state welfare, among others. Therefore, to overlook these social conditions when analyzing development would render any economic analysis meaningless, constructing abstract concepts that are detached from time and space.

Uzbekistan's economy is currently at a new stage of reform, oriented towards the market. However, these reforms are not an end in themselves for the country's development. Their main task is to improve the welfare of the citizens. Consequently, the situation in the country urgently calls for redirecting the reform sector toward social orientation. While maintaining the course of democratization in the economy and the development of market principles, Uzbekistan's progress toward sustainable development depends critically on the implementation of a social strategy that unites society and guides the country along a stable development trajectory.

In the early years of the country's independence, there were virtually no elements of active social policy in the government's actions, and the social consequences of the economic measures being taken were not considered. As a result, the people of the republic were deprived of many key parameters of the previously attained standard of living and were forced to focus on survival.

Only after the first president, Islam Karimov, came to power did the country gradually leave this period of struggle for survival and move toward a strategy of stable development. From 1996 onward, the country's economy showed steady growth. The favorable trends observed in the economy positively influenced the macroeconomic indicators of the population's welfare and revived the business activity of the country's population.

#### Literature Review

Citizens of Uzbekistan are gradually ceasing to be passive economic subjects of state policy. The illusions of protectionism and paternalism, characteristic of a closed economy, are now things of the past. However, despite the positive dynamics in macroeconomic indicators, the coefficient of beneficial social effectiveness in economic development has been lower than expected. Many social issues remain pressing, including significant income inequality, low wages in several sectors of the economy, high levels of poverty, and the weak effectiveness of social infrastructure institutions, which result in lower quality and volume of services provided.

To realize the national idea, it is essential to build a strong state that can predict new threats arising from global and internal contradictions, implement measures to ensure national security, and, most importantly, "listen to the voice of the people." Scientific research in this area has been conducted by scholars such as S.B. Tokareva, A. Bagautdinov, M. Bakhtin, E.V. Dineikina, and N.N. Ravochkin, who have explored the intersections of national security, social development, and state responsiveness. Their works provide insights into the challenges of building a socially and economically sustainable society in the face of modern global pressures.

#### Research Methodology

In this research, we aim to address several crucial social issues that are essential for the future development of Uzbekistan:

Ensuring an increase in the population's monetary income by raising wages and reducing income inequality.

Significantly reducing socio-economic poverty, particularly minimizing extreme poverty in regions where it is most concentrated, and strengthening the social security of citizens.

Creating economic conditions that allow working-age citizens to maintain a high standard of consumption and a decent quality of life during their old age, supported by their own income.

Establishing conditions for effective employment of the population, ensuring a balance between supply and demand in the labor market across the republic.

A successful continuation of the reforms requires a clear and unbiased definition of the role and position of social policy. The key components of social policy include developing and implementing the state's social strategy, determining the state's priority directions in social policy, and aligning the entire process of social policy with strategic and priority goals.

Over the past decade, Uzbekistan has progressed to a new stage of historical development, which calls for the formulation of a modern social strategy based on the contemporary market model of social policy. The promotion of such a social strategy is driven by the need to understand and address emerging social demands.

In this context, we used a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods to analyze the socio-economic conditions in Uzbekistan, including:

**Document Analysis:** Reviewing key state policies, laws, and reforms aimed at addressing social issues, with a focus on those related to employment, poverty alleviation, and social security.

**Comparative Analysis:** Evaluating social policy frameworks from various countries with similar socio-economic conditions to draw lessons for Uzbekistan's ongoing reforms.

**Surveys and Interviews:** Conducting surveys among the population and interviews with key policymakers to understand the real-life impact of current reforms and the population's response to new policies.

Economic and Social Data Analysis: Analyzing national statistical data to assess the effects of economic reforms on income distribution, poverty rates, employment, and overall living standards. The methodology is designed to address the complexity of social policy in the context of market reforms while aligning with the government's strategic priorities. It also emphasizes the need for practical, evidence-based approaches in designing policies that directly impact citizens' well-being.

By focusing on a thorough analysis of the current social situation, identifying the central issues of the reforms' social aspects, and establishing principles for transitional social policy, we propose a comprehensive framework for tackling Uzbekistan's pressing social challenges. This framework includes theoretical and methodological grounding for the state's social programs and offers specific methods for addressing the tasks of social development in the republic.

The rules included in this document must be based on separate legislative acts of Uzbekistan, as well as long-term State programs aimed at solving deep social issues facing the republic and its citizens from various social strata. The social doctrine should clearly and logically outline the social problems of the republic and the ways to solve them. These problems include external, economic, and environmental issues. This document should correspond to similar doctrinal documents on policy and help complete the development strategy announced in the State Program for the Socio-Economic Development of the Regions of Uzbekistan.

Social policy is closely linked to economic reform strategy. On one hand, reforms must improve people's lives and create a broader field for social policy, while on the other, it is difficult to expect profound changes in the economy without significant advances in social policy and human capital development.

In the context of globalization and an understanding of each country's cultural and historical uniqueness, the theory of the welfare state serves as a conceptual space that considers both the general laws of human civilization's development and the characteristics of each country. Despite the nearly half-century history of this concept and numerous scientific studies, publications, and academic schools, the essence and real meaning of the welfare state remain unclear in global science. This ambiguity is associated with the synonymous use of terms such as "social state," "welfare state," "legal state," "society of general welfare," and others. Furthermore, this concept lacks widely accepted ideas about the functions of the welfare state, the mechanisms for implementing these functions, the specialized institutions of the welfare state, and the dynamics of its formation.

Different models of the welfare state have emerged in various countries. Apart from general laws, each welfare state has its own unique features, allowing for the identification of several distinct types (models) of welfare states. Since each researcher selects different classification criteria based on their own position, various typologies of welfare states—economic, political, legal, historical, etc.—are presented in scientific literature.

The theory of the welfare state holds a significant advantage over other state theories, such as the elite theory of statehood, pluralistic democracy theory, and the historical-materialist conception of statehood. This advantage lies in the fact that it does not force national-historical features of institutions into a universal theoretical template. Instead, this theory allows for the revelation of each national institution's specific characteristics within the general nature of the welfare state, making room for the existence of national models. This theoretical potential of the welfare state theory not only increases its heuristic possibilities but also defines its practical significance.

A welfare state is a legal democratic state that declares human beings as the highest value and creates conditions for ensuring a decent life for individuals, allowing for the free development and expression of their creative (labor) potential. A decent life includes the material well-being of an individual according to developed societal standards, access to cultural values, guarantees of

personal security rights, and the free development of the individual, which refers to their physical, intellectual, and spiritual evolution.

The welfare state is the best way to harmonize freedom and power for the benefit of human well-being and societal prosperity, ensuring social justice and solidarity in the distribution of wealth and labor. In practice, social justice and solidarity involve the following principles: joint responsibility of generations and kinship—healthy individuals pay for the sick; the rich pay for the poor; the able-bodied pay for the disabled; and equal rights and opportunities must be guaranteed for men and women.

It is necessary to develop a system of social partnership, which includes the participation of citizens in managing the state and society, as well as the participation of workers in managing production.

#### Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, global experience shows that it is impossible to effectively develop the social complex without the direct involvement of the state in financing and organizing the social reproduction process. It is also well known that Uzbekistan's cultural traditions are closely tied to the development of a social complex under state sponsorship. Therefore, we believe that the social reforms in the country should be based on a welfare state model. The arguments we present confirm this proposition.

As previously noted, the last decade of reforms has been a challenging period of construction for the Uzbek state, marked by significant social losses. Now, as the country moves towards consolidating its national economy, conditions are being created for the targeted implementation of social aspects of the reforms.

Uzbekistan should adopt a welfare state model that aligns with the mentality and cultural characteristics of its population, making it understandable and acceptable to the majority of citizens. The following points are crucial in this regard:

First, the long-standing experience of social and economic structures in the republic, based on the principles of socialization, i.e., the state and society's care for citizens.

Second, the mentality, culture, and collectivist tendencies of the Uzbek people, including family life and respect for authorities and governance institutions.

Third, the experience of foreign countries that have advanced along this path and achieved high living standards for their citizens.

Fourth, the need to improve organizational, legal, and human resources potential in managing the country and its economy, particularly in relation to the adoption of key programmatic documents.

Finally, this requirement stems from the objective necessity to shape the standard of living and quality of life in Uzbekistan in accordance with international conventions and recommendations, such as those of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the European Social Charter, the European Code of Social Security, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other documents. It is also important to emphasize that a welfare state is the most effective means of ensuring social justice and solidarity in the distribution of produced goods, while balancing freedom and power for the well-being of both individuals and society.

Social justice and solidarity entail the following principles: joint responsibility between generations and groups, with the wealthy supporting the poor, the healthy supporting the sick, and the able-bodied supporting the disabled. Equal rights and opportunities must be guaranteed for both men and women.

In general, constitutions of developed countries reflect a more serious commitment to the priority of social values in state ideology. In the context of a welfare state, the guarantee of minimum consumption must be ensured. This applies equally to minimum living standards, minimum wages, minimum pensions, the minimum provision of healthcare services, basic housing needs, and



general and vocational education. It is evident that our state is not yet fully able to meet its social obligations on the scale and level of modern Western states.

The essence of a welfare state's activity, its primary mechanism, is its economic policy, which ensures the fulfillment of the state's social obligations to its citizens. The level of development of a social market economy is the foundation of the welfare state's social responsibilities.

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