



REFORMS IN THE TRANSPORT SECTOR IN UZBEKISTAN

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Annotation. The study aims to identify the characteristics of the changes implemented in the transport sector following the independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan, particularly in relation to the coordination of the International Transport Corridor.

An examination was conducted to examine Uzbekistan's role in this retrospectively. Uzbekistan holds a unique position in Central Asia, as the growth of its transport industry is crucial for establishing international market connections. Evidence has demonstrated that the progress of the transport industry is regarded as a crucial catalyst for the advancement of diverse sectors within the economy. Simultaneously, the paper provides a thorough examination of the contemporary transport service system, with a particular emphasis on the people issue within the transportation industry. The outcome emphasizes that the socio-economic aspects of transformative changes in the transport system have been thoroughly examined.

Keywords: transport sphere, Gates of the East, road transport, transportation of goods and passengers, development and efficiency, personnel training, passenger terminals, air transport, transport and transit center, industry and infrastructure.

Introduction. Uzbekistan has historically served as a hub for trade, economic activities, and cultural exchanges, connecting many civilizations along the Great Silk Road. Prior to gaining independence, Uzbekistan was designated as the "Gateway to the East" during the Soviet era. However, the methods of entering and exiting through this gateway were deemed unsatisfactory.

Throughout the history of any society, there are recurring cycles that become essential requirements for achieving specific strategic objectives and prioritising principles that are characteristic of a particular stage of development on the route to progress. During this particular period, significant developments can occur, leading to the advancement of events and the achievement of contemporary progress. After achieving independence in the late 20th century, Uzbekistan discarded the obsolete administrative-command, planned-distributive system and opted for its own trajectory of progress. Today, we can make an impartial evaluation of the progress made, accomplishments, and outcomes. It is evident that by opting for a cautious approach to implementing reforms, our nation has been safeguarded from potentially severe economic and social upheavals.

Results. Throughout the period of independence, our society has experienced significant economic growth, along with the establishment of stability in the realms of politics and social affairs. Additionally, we have made substantial progress in strengthening our

spiritual and educational frameworks, and have initiated transformative changes in all aspects of life, including the transportation system. The significance of road transport, along with air transport and railroads, as the primary modes of transportation in international relations was not apparent. Therefore, from the early stages of its independence, Uzbekistan initiated the establishment of productive and mutually advantageous connections in the field of transportation, which is a key focus of its foreign policy.

A series of regulatory legal documents have been developed to enhance the organization of transport services, foster competition, create favorable conditions for road transport, air transport, and railroads, and increase the transport and transit potential of the Republic. The following laws and decrees are relevant: the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Road Transport" (August 29, 1998, № 674-I), the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures to radically improve the system of freight and passenger transportation" (June 3, 2019, № PP-4230), the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Transport" (August 9, 2021, № ZRU-706), and the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On approval of the general technical regulations on the safety of trains put into operation"

In order to achieve comprehensive development of our country, our administration prioritized the transport system and took immediate action to address the existing issues in this sector from the early days of independence.

Currently, the Uzbek National Highway includes the following operational routes: the highway "Binue-Kungirov-Bukhara-Navoi-Samarkand-Tashkent-Andijan" in the northern and northwestern direction. The overall distance measures 2047 km. The highway "Bukhara-Alat" runs in the western direction. The overall distance measures 98 km. The highway connecting Bukhara, Karshi, Guzor, and Termez runs in a southern direction. The overall distance measures 436 km.

Over the past few decades of autonomous growth, several new sectors have emerged in our economy, including oil, gas, chemical industry, machine building, domestic electrical engineering, pharmaceuticals, modern food, and light industry. Hence, the automobile sector holds a significant role in the advancement of contemporary road transport, serving as the first precursor to subsequent industries.

The following is a comprehensive overview of the national vehicle industry, including historical dates, factual information, and statistical data:

In June 1992, Islam Karimov made an official visit to South Korea.

On November 5, 1992, a decision was made to form a collaborative partnership called "UzDEWOO auto" with the participation of "Selkhoz mash" enterprise and "DEWOO Corporation". Virtual Machine Keyboard.

The enterprise "UzDEWOO auto" was officially registered in March 1993. The founders of the company are "Uzavtosanoat" and "DEWOO Corporation". The overall expenditure for this expansive establishment, which commenced building in Asaka, amounts to 658 million dollars. On July 19, 1996, the initial domestically produced automobiles, namely "Tiko," "Damas," and "Nexia," were manufactured and released from the factory assembly lines. Uzbekistan joined the ranks of 28 nations that manufacture automobiles.

The function of railroads in the transportation sector, sometimes referred to as "the lifeblood of the economy," is unquestionably unparalleled.



The state joint stock company "Uzbekistan Railways" was created on November 7, 1994 to effectively fulfil the transportation demands of the national economy and people in terms of products and passenger transit via rail. Its primary objective is to provide stable and secure railway operations. The current length of Uzbekistan's railway network exceeds 7100 km as of January 1, 2020, with 2500 km being electrified. The railway network in Uzbekistan has six regional hubs. The following institutions are: RTU "Tashkent"; 2. Railway Technical University "Kokand"; third. Riga Technical University "Bukhara"; 4. Riga Technical University "Karshi"; 5. The abbreviation "RTU" stands for "Termez". The number 6 is associated with it. Riga Technical University "Kungirov".

The inaugural railway in Central Asia was constructed between 1886 and 1888, with subsequent expansions to its network throughout time. In 1913, the combined length of railroads in Central Asia amounted to 2,740 kilometres. The Tashguzor-Kumkurgan (1995-2009), Yakkabog-Chirakchi (1997), Shavot-Jumurtov (1998-1999), Bukhara-Miskin (2017), and Urgench-Khiva (2017-2018) railway lines were constructed.

In 2011, high-speed Afrosiab trains were introduced to connect Tashkent and Samarkand, and in 2015, the service was extended to include Samarkand and Karshi.

Uzbekistan's railway network has recently established a comprehensive national system of railway transport, serving both passenger and freight transit demands while benefiting the national economy. Consequently, the present total length of the steel main line in our country is 7100 kilometres. It is crucial to highlight the significance of three roads constructed during the period of independence.

The first example is the Kamchik road, which commenced construction in 1999 and was swiftly completed. The road's strategic significance lies in its role of connecting the Fergana Valley to the central area and other parts of our country.

The second Navoi-Uchkuduk-Sultonovaystog-Nukus railway was inaugurated in late 2001 and spans a distance of 633 kilometres. Currently, this route has undergone a process of revitalization.

The third route is named "Miracle of the Century" and spans approximately 223 kilometres in length. The Tashguzor-Boysun-Kumkurgan railway is being referred to. These highways have effectively linked all areas of our country into a unified transportation network and facilitated the use of abundant mineral and natural resources in our region.

The building of the Angren-Pop electrified railway, which holds significant strategic value, commenced in 2013. This road played a crucial role in the development of the new international transit train corridor connecting China, Middle Asia, and Europe. The deal with Uzbekistan Temir Yo'llari JSC and China Railway Tunnel Group of the People's Republic of China had a total value of 455 million dollars. The distance measures 129 km. The inauguration of the Angren-Pop railway in 2016 resulted in significant time and cost savings, enabling the transportation of over 10 million tons of goods annually. Additionally, it facilitated the use of the vast industrial and infrastructural potential of the Fergana Valley.

Our collaboration with China in the transport sector extends beyond this. The proposition to expedite the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway project, expressed by the presidents of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan during the virtual summit commemorating the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations among the leaders of Central Asian nations, stood out as a significant undertaking. There is evidence of a project in this field emerging in the early

2000s. However, inexplicably, it failed to proceed. A trilateral working group was established in 2017 to oversee the development of the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway.

The matter of alignment has been a topic of extensive discussion for a period of twenty-five years. Eight choices were thoroughly evaluated, and reaching a solution proved to be challenging. China was the primary proponent of the concept, suggesting the construction of a "railway" via Kyrgyzstan to Uzbekistan. This would enable Beijing to engage in nearly direct trade with Uzbekistan and, more significantly, establish a shorter and more lucrative route connecting the East and West. The distance between China and Southern Europe will be shortened by 900 kilometres.

Each of the Central Asian nations attempted to safeguard the route that is advantageous to their interests. Bishkek has recently advocated for the construction of a railway line from Kashgar station of the South Xinjiang Railway to Jalal-Abad, passing through Torugart, Arpa, Kosh-Dobo, and Makmal. This railway line would facilitate regional connectivity and address the issue of limited transit accessibility.

Tashkent initially suggested constructing a roadway connecting Kashgar to Andijan through Irkeshtam and Osh. For numerous years, this alternative was considered a top priority. However, Kyrgyzstan strongly opposed it, as it did not offer any notable advantages for the country in this particular situation. Bishkek successfully protected the northern route in the end.

The parties executed the initial memorandum of cooperation in relation to this project in 1997. However, as previously stated, there has been no tangible advancement since that time. An analogous agreement was executed in 2022, and it appears that progress has been made on the issue. On May 18, 2023, in Xi'an, China, a trilateral agreement was signed between the State Committee for Development and Reform of the People's Republic of China, the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Kyrgyz Republic, and the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Uzbekistan. This agreement outlines the upcoming actions for the construction project of the "China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan" railway.

The project aims to enhance inter-regional connections, fulfil the objectives of the Central Asian republics to broaden transportation routes, and enhance the region's competitiveness as a global transportation and transit hub. The combined length of the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway will amount to around 454 kilometres, with Kyrgyzstan's territory accounting for 280 km of the route.

The line consists of 18 stations, 81 bridges (both big and medium-sized) spanning a total length of 26.1 km, and 41 tunnels measuring 120.39 km in length. The combined length of the bridges and tunnels is 146.49 km, which accounts for 47.0% of the route's total length. Preliminary forecasts indicate that the route from East Asia to the countries of the Middle East and Southern Europe will be shortened by approximately 900 km. Additionally, the duration of the journey is expected to be reduced by 7-8 days. It is estimated that the volume of freight traffic on this route could reach 12-15 million tons per year.

During the 22nd SCO summit in Samarkand on 15-16 September 2022, the Ministry of Transport of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Kyrgyzstan, and the State Development and Reform Committee of China signed a trilateral cooperation agreement for the Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan-China railway project.

Furthermore, during the SCO summit in June 2018, our country's leader highlighted the importance of building the Uzbekistan-Mozori-Sharif-Herat, China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan,

Central Asia-Persian Gulf, North-South, and East-West Interregional Corridors railway lines. He explicitly expressed his support for development.

The role of air transport in the transport network of the republic is unparalleled. The first international passenger flights in our country commenced in 1926, operating along the Tashkent-Bishkek-Almaty air corridor. Presently, the national carrier "Uzbekistan Airways" (established on January 28, 1992) offers flights to numerous major cities worldwide, including London, Moscow, Kiev, Minsk, Istanbul, Seoul, Beijing, Jeddah, and others.

Modern air transport serves as more than just a means of passenger travel. It has evolved into a significant mechanism for development, designed to withstand intense competition and primarily focused on maintaining national safety. Uzbekistan Airways maintains a solid and steady presence in the worldwide market through the use of new terminals, luxurious airliners, state-of-the-art simulators, and advanced technical and technological advancements. Its operations are recognized and supported by important international organizations.

The airline's aircraft fleet is undergoing a progressive process of modernization. In the last three years, the fleet has expanded with the addition of 10 A320 aircraft and 4 Boeing-767-300 ER aircraft. The IL-114-100 airplanes, which are modern and comfortable, are also being used effectively. In 2016, two state-of-the-art Boeing 787-8 Dreamliners were introduced, marking the arrival of a new era in aviation.

The new passenger terminals at the airports "Tashkent", "Bukhara", "Navoi", "Samarkand", and "Fergana" are currently operational.

The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Transport" ZRU-706, dated August 9, 2021, states that the road, air, rail, water, electric transport, metro, and transport infrastructure facilities together constitute a single transport system of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The primary objectives of the state's transport policy include: fostering the growth and implementation of state and other transport-related programmes; advancing the transport system as a vital sector of the national economy; enhancing the competitiveness, usability, efficiency, quality, safety, and environmental sustainability of transport services; improving transport management and ensuring seamless interconnectivity between different modes of transport; implementing an effective tariff policy

The progressive evolution of the transport and road infrastructure in our nation exemplifies the significance of the Action Strategy formulated under the guidance of the President, as well as the prioritized principles of the forthcoming Development Strategy of Uzbekistan for 2022-2026. The policy of Uzbekistan in establishing alternative transport corridors "TRACECA" can be observed.

Throughout the period of independence, the Central Asian nations have enacted various steps to foster collaboration within the area. Specifically, the Brussels Declaration was ratified in 1993 in the Belgian capital, with the involvement of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The text outlines the strategies for executing the EU-funded interregional TRACECA program, which aims to establish a transportation route from Europe, via the Black Sea, the Caucasus, and the Caspian Sea, to the Central Asian republics.

In 1996, the Tadjen-Serahs-Meshkhed highway, part of the Trans-Asian corridor, was inaugurated. This route offers secure passage across Iran and Turkey, connecting Central Asia to the global market. It is commonly referred to as the "East-West" project.

Uzbekistan is keen on constructing multiple global transportation corridors. Currently, we are contemplating the "East-West" initiative, which seeks to construct a transportation connection between China and Europe. The Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway is widely recognized as a crucial component of this transportation corridor.

This project aims to enhance the Iranian ports of Bandar Abbas and Chobakhor by connecting them to the port of Mumbai in India. This transport route holds significant importance for Uzbekistan as well. During the SCO summit in Qingdao in June 2018, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev declared the initiation of the building of railway lines connecting Uzbekistan-Mozori-Sharif-Khirat, China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan, and Central Asia-Persian Gulf, North-South.

The "One Belt, One Road" program, proposed by President Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China during the 2017 International Economic Forum, holds significant importance for Uzbekistan as well. During his speech at the forum, the President put forward the following suggestions: "There is a need to formulate a comprehensive action plan to facilitate collaboration in establishing transport and logistics routes that connect Central Asia with the nations of South, Southeast Asia, and Europe, utilizing the territories of China and Russia."

The China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan-Afghanistan railway, which connects to the ports of Pakistan and Iran on the Indian Ocean, has the potential to be incorporated into the extensive network of the "One Belt, One Road" transit corridor.

Lately, there has been frequent discussion about the Trans Afghan Railway project, which is anticipated to become the ninth international transportation corridor. It is often referred to as the project of the century. The President of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, announces that the initial measures have been implemented to establish the Trans-Afghan transport corridor, which will link Central Asia with the Indian Ocean. The successful execution of this initiative will contribute to regional stability and foster economic development.

The Decree № PP-4703 dated 04.05.2020 was enacted to significantly enhance the training of skilled personnel in the transport sector. This involves implementing the best foreign practices and international standards, integrating innovative teaching methods and information technologies into the educational process, and further developing the scientific capabilities of the sector.

The Decree stipulates the consolidation of the Tashkent Institute of Railway Transport Engineers, the Tashkent Institute of Design, Construction and Operation of Highways, and the Faculty of Aerospace Technologies of the Tashkent State Technical University into the Tashkent State Transport University.

This review examines the extensive reforms that have been implemented in the higher education system in recent years, with the aim of significantly enhancing the training of highly skilled personnel for the transport sector. Efforts have been made to enhance the social standing of teachers and provide incentives for their work. Furthermore, urgent attention has been given to improving the professional competencies of teachers in the higher education system. These competencies are developed by drawing upon expert opinions, foreign experiences, theoretical approaches, and recent research conducted in our country on the topic of professional performance.



Conclusion

The organization of international transport corridors and Uzbekistan's involvement in them are crucial for ensuring stability in Central Asia, transforming it into an economically advanced region, and most importantly, enhancing the competitiveness of our region in the global market for transport services as an international transport and transit hub. The most crucial challenge ahead of us is to devise a novel strategy and set of priorities for incorporating our region into the global network of transportation routes, while harnessing the unexplored potential of Central Asia for the mutual benefit of our nations and populations.

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