

E-ISSN NO:-2349-0721



Impact factor : 6.549

DIRECTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ICT SECTOR IN UZBEKISTAN IN ORDER TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE RATES OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

Egamberdieva Malika Odil qizi

MA at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy
Egamberdiyeva.malikaa@gmail.com

ANNOTATION

ICT today is an integral infrastructure of the world global economy, not only ensuring the most efficient functioning of world markets, but also playing the role of a locomotive in the development of the world economy. The degree of implementation and use of ICT in various areas of society is becoming a decisive factor in the progressive economic and social development of states. Now the information revolution is moving towards the global integration of all computers into the worldwide network. Uzbekistan is an integral part of the world economy. And the faster measures are taken to develop ICT, the faster economic changes leading to growth will occur.

Key words: *ICT, international information networks, digitization, the Internet of things, cloud data*

INTRODUCTION

The role of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is gaining in importance. By reducing the cost of collecting, storing and processing data, as well as significantly increasing computing power, digitalization is transforming more and more economic activities around the world. However, the pace of development of the digital economy varies considerably.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study used methods such as collection, processing and systematization of data, comparative and statistical analysis of data, generalization of the conclusions and results of research on the digital economy in increasing the competitiveness of countries.

Some countries have quickly embraced digital technologies, but most are lagging behind in their willingness to participate in the digital economy. One of them is Uzbekistan (table 1.).

Table 1.
Ranking of countries with slow internet connections

Rank	Country	Speed mb / s
120	Honduras	6.1
121	Pakistan	6.1
122	Uzbekistan	6.1
123	Nicaragua	6.1

124	Bolivia	5.6
125	Egypt	5.4
126	Lebanon	4.9
127	Libya	3.9
128	Venezuela	3.7
129	Algeria	3.5

Source: Hootsuite Digitization Report 2018

In 2018, the total speed of using international information networks was (for providers) 26.3 Gb / s, in 2019 it reached 65.7 Gb / s, i.e. has more than doubled. But this is no longer enough given the rapidly growing needs of Internet users in Uzbekistan. With this in mind, projects are being implemented to achieve the speed of access to external channels up to 200 Gbps.

But, despite the modest indicators of Internet connection, there is an increase in social media users in Uzbekistan (Table 2.).

Table 2.
Ranking of countries with the largest percentage growth in social media users

Rank	Country	Growth in%	Users
1	Kiribati	191	21,000
2	Tajikistan	172	196,000
3	Iran	135	23,000,000
4	Kyrgyzstan	117	700,000
5	Kazakhstan	87	2,700,000
6	Uzbekistan	69	530,000
7	Vanuatu	57	25,000
8	Comoros	57	47,000
nine	Solomon islands	53	26,000
ten	Cambodia	43	2,100,000

Source: Hootsuite Digitization Report 2018

At the moment, the number of Internet users in Uzbekistan has reached 14.7 million. Compared to the same period last year, the growth amounted to 2.6 million subscribers. However, the lack of investment in communication infrastructure in Uzbekistan makes it difficult for the majority of the population to access the World Wide Web; there are only two operators with regional long-distance broadband networks in the Republic, which leads to high domestic transport costs for the Internet and makes it inaccessible to the majority of the population.

Despite the fact that in the regions of the country more than 20 thousand km. fiber optic lines, unfortunately, the average rate of broadband Internet users is 1.33 for every 100 respondents to the survey¹.

According to the experts of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), due to the fact that there is a significant demand for digital services in Uzbekistan, the first step in building the digital economy of Uzbekistan should be the creation of an infrastructure that is universal in terms of coverage and accessibility.

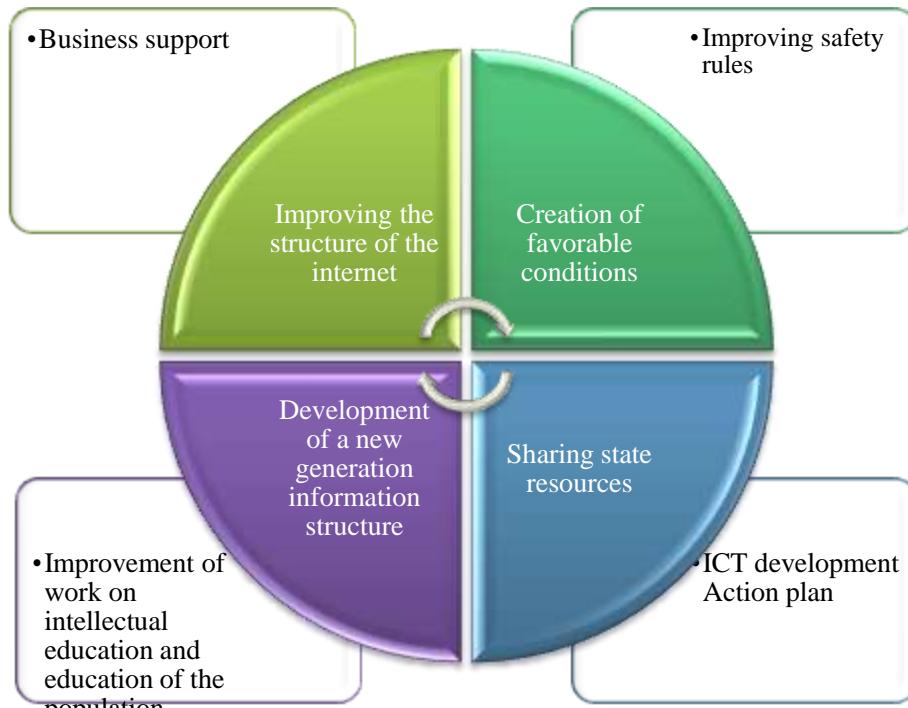


Figure 1. Proposed action plan for ICT development, based on the experience of China

Source: compiled by the author Revenko N.S. "China's digital economy: a new stage of the country's economic development" 2017

Experts emphasize that "to meet the insatiable demand for data, constant investments are required in the communication infrastructure of Uzbekistan, with about 17.2 million, approximately 53 percent of the population of Uzbekistan experiencing constant problems with coverage and use of communication."

In particular, taking into account the aforementioned problems, it is planned to organize coverage of more than 277 thousand kilometers with fiber-optic communication lines by 2021.

At the same time, the high population density of Uzbekistan allows the republic to more efficiently introduce fiber optics than its neighbors in Central Asia.²

Reforms are underway in Uzbekistan that will certainly contribute to economic growth through the introduction of ICT.

As the experience of China has shown, it is never too late to start developing the ICT sector. The proposed action plan for the development of the ICT sector (Fig. 1.):

- Strategy "Broadband Uzbekistan", in order to improve the structure of the Internet.

RESULTS

¹ <http://review.uz/ru/news/policy/newss11246>

² <https://regnum.ru/news/2609448.html>

The government needs to take measures to ensure by 2022 broadband access to the Internet using terrestrial networks at 50% and mobile 3G / 4G - 55%, to bring the average speed of Internet connections in cities to 30 Mbps, in rural areas to 8 Mbps;

- Encouraging entrepreneurship (contribution to start-up projects), promoting the introduction of innovations, that is, business support;
- Development of a new generation of information infrastructure in cooperation with leading companies in the ICT sector of China (implementation of the Internet of things, cloud data);
- Sharing public resources, that is, the introduction of an "e-government" system that helps to improve the quality of public services provided;
- Improving security rules, improving the level of information security;
- Measures to increase the level of digital literacy will help to improve work on intellectual education and education of the population.

The active use of ICT is currently one of the main factors determining economic growth in modern developed countries and some developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The modern requirements of globalization are the development, implementation and use of information and communication technologies in various spheres of economic and social life, which is the priority of our country's leadership for the development of the national economy. In recent years, Uzbekistan has made significant strides towards an information society. For the development of communications on the legislative, regulatory basis, independent communication channels with international operators have been developed, created, the modernization of telecommunication networks based on digital technologies has begun, which is associated with significant investments for reforms in the ICT field.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the development of information technology should help improve resource management, planning and control schemes and enterprise development projects with a key focus can help increase productivity. Low levels of human capital can become an obstacle to the development of the ICT sector. Therefore, a strategy aimed at developing human capital leads to more efficient use of ICT in other areas. As in the case of infrastructure, increased user skills can lead to increased efficiency of existing facilities. Today, we can speak with complete confidence about the widespread introduction of computer and information technologies in various spheres of life, management, business, science and education.

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