

LABOR MARKET AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

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Annotation. *The article deals with the actual problem of the modern economy - the problem of employment and the improvement of the labor market. And also, programs aimed at increasing the level of employment of the population.*

Key words: *labor market, labor resources, employment, demography, quality of employment, dynamics of labor resources.*

The labor market occupies a special place in the socio-economic development of the country, the development and implementation of priority areas of development, as well as medium-term programs. A comprehensive analysis of the labor market makes it possible to identify imbalances, problems and reserves for increasing the level of employment. In addition, based on the analysis of this area, it becomes possible to determine priority areas for the development of the labor market, training personnel and, most importantly, solving the tasks set in the Development Strategy of the new Uzbekistan for 2022-2026.

Seven priorities have been identified in the development strategy of Uzbekistan, one of which is the development of the social sphere, aimed at a gradual increase in wages, pensions and benefits, an effective solution to employment issues, providing citizens with affordable modern housing, modernizing housing and communal services and social infrastructure, improving systems of social protection of the population and healthcare, education and science, state youth policy .

Thanks to the implementation of a number of programs aimed at increasing the level of employment of the population, the number of employed people is growing steadily. Of course, this is an extremely positive trend, indicating a steady growth of the economy. However, even such an increase in employment of the population could not significantly improve the situation on the labor market, since over the past period, the growth rate of the labor force has outpaced the growth rate of employment. It is necessary to take additional measures to create high-quality and sustainable jobs through the development of economic sectors.

A steady growth in the labor force could lead to increased labor market imbalances if an adequate pace of growth in sustainable job creation is not ensured. As part of addressing this issue, the country annually implements the Program for Creating Jobs and Ensuring Employment of the Population, the purpose of which is to implement comprehensive and interrelated measures to create jobs and ensure employment of the population by tapping the potential of territories and sectors of the economy, promoting the development of effective forms of employment, taking into account demographic factors and labor market conditions.

One of the urgent problems that attracts the attention of scientists is improving the quality of employment, especially in a period of complex and rapid changes in the economic, socio-political and other spheres of activity.

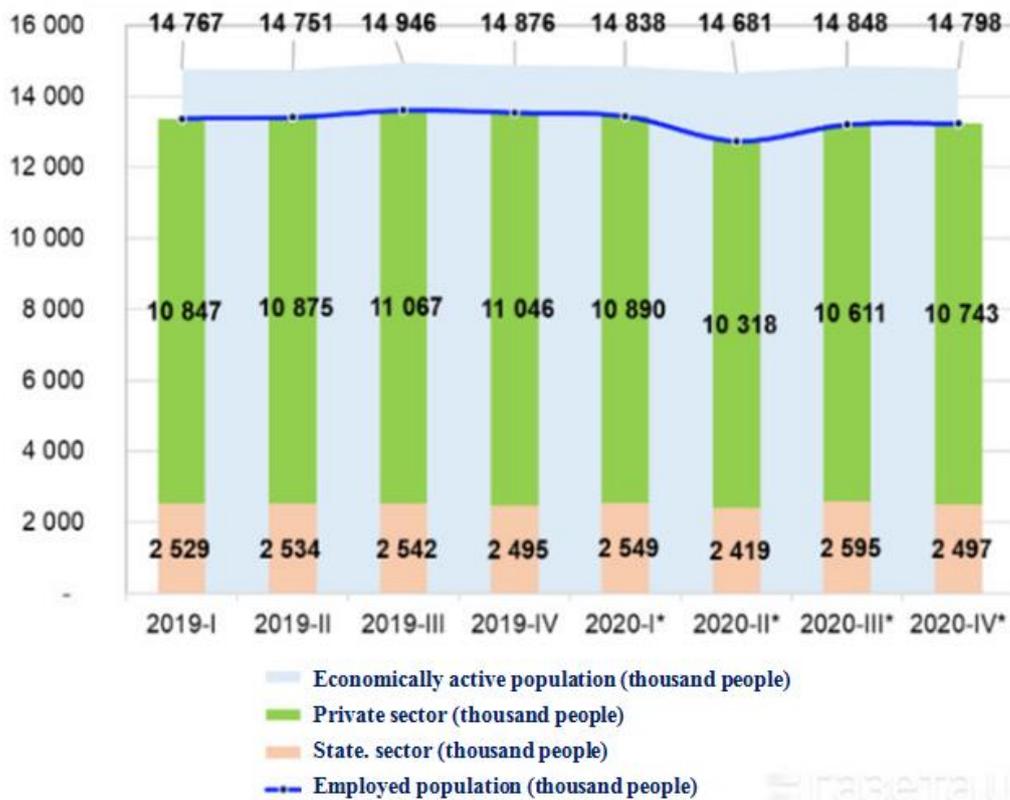
The concept of "quality of employment" is associated with the concept of "employment" in general and is quite debatable. Smirnova N.A. notes that the quality of employment is considered from the standpoint of employment conditions and human development. Another group of researchers considers the quality of employment as a process interrelated with the level and quality of life, which

is iterative, rather than one-time, mediated by property relations, manifested both in the standard of living of an individual or social group, and in the characteristics of employment .

The market model of employment is characterized by a change in subjects, objects, goals and objectives, as well as the principles of interaction of employment relations, which is also reflected in the quality of employment. The economic goal of employment is realized through the use of the entire spectrum of human abilities, which also includes the formation of a decent level of material security of the individual. The ultimate public goal of ensuring the quality of employment is the development and realization of the individual as a social phenomenon, which made it possible to put forward the socialization of the quality of employment - a trend inherent in a democratic civil society with its subjective system of regulation and management .

Indicators of labor resources and employment are important indicators for assessing the level of socio-economic development of the country.

At the end of 2020, the economically active population of Uzbekistan amounted to 14.8 million people, of which 13.2 million (89.5%) are employed, 1.55 million are unemployed. That is, the unemployment rate rose to 10.5%, follows from the preliminary data of the State Committee on Statistics.



The coronavirus hit in all directions, but already this year there has been an increase, which is unevenly distributed between industries and areas.

Profound and structural changes due to the pandemic have not bypassed the labor market. So long forgotten old is gaining momentum, and last year's trends are slowly losing relevance.

Now employers often have to adapt to the requirements of the staff - flexible hours, comfort in the workplace, increased wages.

The usual work routine has acquired a “new reality” - for refusing to be vaccinated, they can be suspended from work.

Despite these difficulties, the upward trend in wages is encouraging - in the third quarter, the average wage in the market amounted to 5,406,832 soums, which is 6% more than in the second.

According to experts, the leading positions remain in the areas of information technology, marketing and sales. Forecasts assume the emergence of supply and demand in the energy and agricultural sectors.

What is still happening with the labor market, why trends are changing and what to be prepared for in the coming year.

This year, every industry has also been recovering from the effects of the pandemic. Many have managed to return to the state they were in before the crisis.

Positive changes began in the spring of this year - many business areas began to gain momentum, regaining their positions, and the level of wages began to grow again.

This is directly related to the development of business, the entry of new players into the market and the economic growth of the country as a whole.

Of course, pent-up demand has not been fully met, but we are counting on it in the coming year.

Some employees chose to work from home. In many ways, companies reacted positively to this, focusing not on formalities, but still on the final result .

Therefore, today you can encounter a “hybrid” work schedule, where an employee works from time to time either in the office or from home.

In fact, thanks to quarantine, we have received a new alternative type of employment. Such dynamics allowed companies to attract more staff and save on them - reducing the square footage of the rented premises and all the resulting costs saved the budget.

All this together not only had a positive impact on the quality of work and the return of employees, but also presented new challenges for managers who had to hone their skills in managing remote teams.

The difficulties this year were not the same as during the pandemic. For example, in 2020, stagnation was observed, due to which a large number of qualified personnel were released and wages decreased.

From the end of 2021, the picture is fundamentally different - there is a shortage of specialists, and the level of salaries is growing.

The new reality of remote work is as follows: an employee, having worked remotely for even a few months, may not know his manager by sight.

If we consider who was in demand this year, we can see that the leading positions were taken by the IT sector and the banking sector. In IT, the demand for Java, NET, Python, PHP developers has increased many times, and, of course, the demand for mobile IOS and Android developers has remained .

There was also a need for development stacks quite new to the market - React, Golang.

The second, for example, is in full swing the transformation of the entire industry. At the same time, we see here an increase in demand for business analysts, loan officers, marketers and risk management specialists.

As for the energy sector, according to our data, there was a certain slowdown during the pandemic - a significant number of personnel were released and the level of wages decreased.

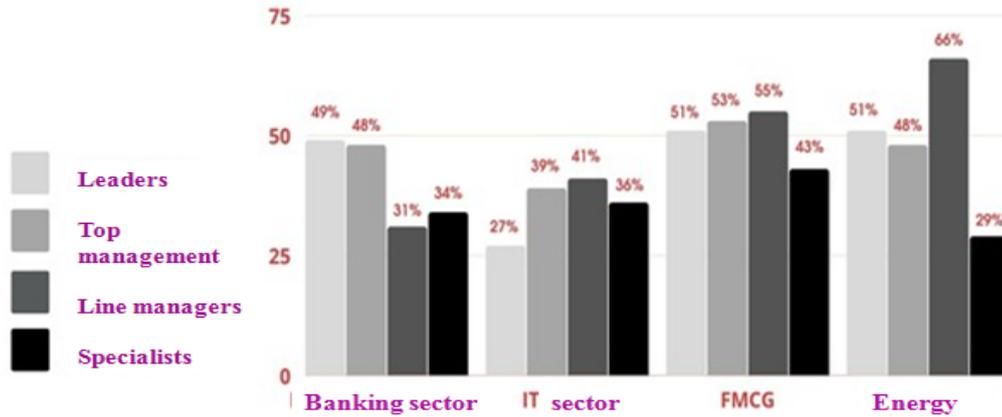
But since the beginning of 2021, we have seen an increase in the number of vacancies and an increase in wages.

Fortunately, this year the balance was restored. The impetus was due to new market players.

Compared to others, retail and pharmaceuticals were practically not affected, so now they are showing stable growth.

In the hotel and restaurant business, the picture this year is much better than last year. Their full restoration will soon take place next year, if the quarantine regime does not again take them by surprise.

Change in salaries by sector depending on the level of positions in % for 2019-2021



Surprisingly, the need for applied professions has increased - electromechanics, welders with a certain specialization, for example, arc welding. They receive up to 10-15 million soums.

Over the past 25 years, we have lost a large number of qualified technical specialists and in the coming years we will have to restore this loss by attracting more and more personnel from neighboring countries.

There have also been changes in Gen Z behavior regarding job hunting. Young people continue to strive for new knowledge and work in the office. Generation Z was divided into two categories: the first faced the problem of finding themselves and their purpose. These guys need to be interested before they decide to work in your company.

But the latter, in their 20-25 years, are clearly aware of what they want from life and understand how to get there.

These are punchy and rather ambitious young people who devote almost all their time to work and self-development.

Based on the above considerations, we can make the following forecasts for the next year. IT-direction and banking will continue to grow. In pharmaceuticals, the emergence of new players is predicted, which will positively affect their entire market.

An increase in activity in the agro-industrial sector is expected. As it turned out, the market here is completely “bare”, so today it breaks into the top.

There are a lot of projects here that are being promoted by both the state itself and a considerable number of foreign investors from Russia and the UAE.

Over the past three years, we have been receiving more and more requests to attract expats from different countries.

Basically, personnel are required for the positions of top managers or highly specialized technical specialists.

This need is explained by the fact that companies are at the stage of rapid development and transformation. And attracting these personnel will ensure accelerated business growth.

This trend will continue, according to our forecasts, for the next five years, until the entire internal resource is replenished.

At the same time, there are many applications from candidates from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine and Russia. In these countries, the market is saturated and is at the stage of stagnation.

In our country, everything is just gaining momentum, so companies are ready to overpay for certain specialists from the outside, just to move the business off the ground and give a new impetus.

In general, the salary fund for expats, depending on the field, scope of work and position held, is on average in the region of 30-60 million soums.

Every year it becomes more and more difficult to find staff on the platforms familiar to many. Therefore, employers are doing their best to keep the employee in place - they offer additional "goodies", provide comfortable working conditions, and implement programs for the development and motivation of employees.

There are more and more requests and projects for the development of the employer brand - this is the trend that we will observe in the coming years.

The requirements for candidates remain the same - higher education, strategic thinking, communication skills and the ability to take responsibility.

I am glad that every year there are more and more guys who are fluent in English. But at the same time, a new difficulty should be noted - there are fewer and fewer people who would speak Russian.

This is frustrating, because many companies from the CIS countries still appear in the country. But at the same time, a large flow of labor migrants goes precisely to the Commonwealth states.

The average wage growth this year compared to the previous year is 41-45%. For example, wages in the engineering sector grew by 66%, in the energy sector by 48.5%, and in pharmaceuticals by 53.3%.

There was a slight growth in the banking sector and, taking into account inflation, we see not so strong changes. The most stable direction is FMCG — 50.5%. Next year, a jump is expected in IT, banking and energy .

In the future, trends in the behavior of the population in the labor market and changes in the structure of employment will depend on the functioning of various forms of ownership, sources and levels of income of the population, wages, income from capital and entrepreneurial activity. It is necessary to pay attention to the expansion of modern spheres of application of labor, increase of its productivity, anticipatory vocational training and retraining of personnel. Only in conditions of economic growth of the economy, the population can afford to improve the living environment, as well as increase the purchasing power of wages and incomes.

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