

DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM IN UZBEKISTAN**Ametova Fotimajon Rozmatovna**

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In recent years, digital technologies and their integration have covered almost all areas of public administration systems. In foreign countries, as well as in our country, the digitalization of the social protection system and the process of digital transformation serve to improve the efficiency of social service delivery, reduce administrative costs, and ensure the targeting of social assistance.

In the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan, reforming the social protection system and improving it based on modern governance principles have been identified as priority areas. In the process of supporting vulnerable groups of the population, reducing poverty, improving the quality of social services, and strengthening their targeting, the role of digital technologies has been steadily increasing.

Main part

In recent years, institutional reforms have been implemented in the field of social protection. The process of exchanging information in the assignment of social benefits, material assistance, and subsidies has been transferred to an electronic format. In accordance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated August 4, 2020, the formation of digital mechanisms for social protection was identified as a priority task. In this regard, the implementation of the “Unified Register of Social Protection” was first launched in Tashkent city and later expanded to other regions.

Through this system, citizens’ income, property, and social status are automatically assessed, creating the possibility of assigning assistance without human intervention. According to the relevant legislation, the main objectives of introducing the “Unified Register of Social Protection” information system were defined as follows:

- to drastically reduce the number of certificates and supporting documents required for the provision of public social services and assistance by automating interagency electronic document exchange through electronic cooperation mechanisms;
- to objectively assess the level of need of low-income families according to established criteria, as well as to evaluate projects in entrepreneurship, architecture, handicrafts, and other areas submitted by citizens who have served prison sentences, and to eliminate subjective approaches in decision-making through the automation of social service and assistance provision processes;
- to conduct monitoring and analysis of changes in the composition of vulnerable population groups and to improve assessment criteria taking into account the socio-economic development of the republic and its regions;

- to form a unified and constantly updated database of recipients of public social services and assistance;
- to provide relevant ministries, agencies, and organizations with the necessary information to ensure the fulfillment of their assigned functions in delivering services on a free or preferential basis.

Thus, the experience of foreign countries demonstrates that the digitalization of social protection systems is an important factor in ensuring social justice, increasing the targeting of assistance, and optimizing public expenditures. This experience has practical significance for further improving the social protection system in New Uzbekistan.

International experience shows that under conditions of digital transformation, the effective functioning of social protection systems is directly linked to the level of integration. The introduction of unified social registries, integrated Social Protection Information Systems (SPIS and MIS), as well as government-to-person (G2P) digital payment mechanisms, represents a significant institutional shift in the implementation of social policy. Such integration ensures coherence among different components of the social protection system and significantly simplifies data exchange and decision-making processes. In the United States, the social protection system is managed through digital platforms at both federal and state levels. Citizens have the opportunity to submit applications online, track payments, and update their personal information. In addition, artificial intelligence-based systems have been introduced to detect cases of fraud. In Canada, social services are delivered through the “Service Canada” platform. Citizens can apply for pensions, employment insurance, and other social services through a single unified portal.

The analysis of foreign experience shows that the development of digital technologies in social protection systems is manifested in the following general directions:

- introduction of unified digital identification systems;
- integration of databases;
- transition to a proactive model of social service delivery;
- use of artificial intelligence and Big Data;
- provision of services through mobile applications;
- strengthening financial control and transparency.

At the same time, the process of digital transformation and integration in social protection is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon that goes beyond mere technological modernization. Practical experience demonstrates that the introduction of digital systems may fail to deliver the expected outcomes if inter institutional coordination is insufficient and if the legal-regulatory framework and governance mechanisms are not properly adapted. Furthermore, the digital divide - that is, limited access to digital services for certain segments of the population - increases the risk of negatively affecting the inclusiveness of the social protection system.

Conclusion

The analysis of global and national experience shows that digital development has become a central component of modern social protection systems. Around the world, digital technologies are

transforming the way governments deliver social services by improving efficiency, transparency, and targeting while reducing administrative costs and corruption risks.

Uzbekistan is actively following global trends by introducing integrated digital registries, automating benefit assignment processes, and expanding interagency data exchange. The implementation of digital mechanisms has already contributed to greater objectivity and fairness in social assistance delivery.

In the future, further development of artificial intelligence tools, proactive service models, and secure data management systems will be essential to strengthening the sustainability and inclusiveness of the social protection system. Digital transformation, therefore, serves not only as a technological reform but also as a strategic instrument for promoting social justice, reducing poverty, and enhancing overall societal well-being.

