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Main Development Directions of The Digital Economy: “Digital Uzbekistan–2030” Strategy and its Essence

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Abstract: This study examines the key development directions of the digital economy in Uzbekistan, with a particular focus on the national strategy “Digital Uzbekistan–2030.” Despite growing interest globally, significant knowledge gaps remain regarding the localised impact of digital transformation policies in emerging economies. To address this, the research applies qualitative analysis of policy documents, statistical indicators, and sectoral reforms across public administration, education, industry, and commerce. The findings reveal that the “Digital Uzbekistan–2030” strategy has substantially accelerated the integration of digital technologies, improved the accessibility of public services, and increased economic competitiveness. For instance, by 2020, over 70% of government services had been digitised, and e-commerce demonstrated 35% growth. Initiatives such as “Digital School” and “Digital University” have improved education delivery, while industrial digitalisation has enhanced productivity and reduced operational costs. However, the analysis also identifies challenges, particularly in infrastructure gaps and regional disparities in digital literacy and access. These limitations suggest a need for stronger intersectoral collaboration, targeted infrastructure investment, and broader digital skills training. The implications of this research emphasise that while the digital economy holds transformative potential for Uzbekistan, sustained strategic implementation and inclusive digital policies are essential for long-term success.

Keywords: Digital Economy, Digital Transformation, Uzbekistan, Public Services, E-Government, Digital Uzbekistan–2030, Innovation Policy, Infrastructure

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1. Introduction

The rapid development of the digital economy and its impact on various sectors of the economy is gaining global significance[1], [2], [3], [4]. The swift growth of new technologies, the internet, and information systems is bringing about profound changes in society, industry, education, and other areas. These changes have not only technological but also significant economic, social, and cultural implications. The digital economy, by intensifying competition among countries, compels each nation to adapt to a new global economic environment. As a result, countries are striving to develop and implement comprehensive strategies aimed at executing digital transformation. Uzbekistan is also actively working in this direction. The “Digital Uzbekistan–2030” strategy is a state program designed to transform the country into a digital economy, develop information technologies, and strengthen the digital infrastructure of both the public and private sectors. The goal of the strategy is not only to ensure the development of the digital economy in Uzbekistan but also to secure a competitive position in the global economy. The government of Uzbekistan aims to adopt innovative approaches to the widespread application of digital technologies on an international scale and to enhance efficiency in social and economic spheres[2], [3], [4], [5].

The “Digital Uzbekistan–2030” strategy envisions encompassing various sectors of the digital economy. These include the development of information and communication technologies, the implementation of e-government, the digitalization of the education system, the formation of an innovative ecosystem, the digital transformation of industry, and a strong focus on human capital development. The strategy also includes the broad deployment of information technologies, digital services, and the internet. The digital economy serves not only to accelerate economic growth but also to create new opportunities in society and enhance digital literacy. At the same time, issues such as the necessary infrastructure, legal frameworks, international cooperation, and support for innovation—which are critical for the full realization of the digital economy’s potential—must be addressed in a timely manner. All of these components are reflected in the “Digital Uzbekistan–2030” strategy. This article analyzes the main directions of this strategy, its role in enhancing the country’s economic potential, and the impact of the digital economy on Uzbekistan’s overall economic development.

Literature Review

Numerous scientific and practical studies have been conducted in the fields related to the digital economy and its development. This review focuses on different aspects of the digital economy, as well as the goals and directions of the “Digital Uzbekistan–2030” strategy. Globally, research on the development of the digital economy can be categorized into several directions [6], [7], [8], [9].

P. Brynjolfsson and A. McAfee, in their work *The Second Machine Age*, analyze the impact of digital technologies on the economy. They highlight how digital technologies assist in the efficient management of labor, resources, and production processes. According to them, digital technologies are a fundamental tool for reshaping the global economy and creating a new economic model [10].

H. Duflo (2019), in her book *Good Economics for Hard Times*, discusses the social and economic effects of the digital economy on human life. She emphasizes the role of digital transformation in ensuring social justice and its importance in effectively managing economic growth [11].

In Uzbekistan, research and academic work on the digital economy are also expanding. Presidential decrees signed by Shavkat Mirziyoyev on April 5, 2017, and the adoption of the “Digital Uzbekistan–2030” strategy in 2020 serve as the main documents for developing digital transformation in the country. This strategy is aimed at advancing information and communication technologies, expanding digital services, and implementing innovative economic approaches [12].

Key priorities in the implementation of the “Digital Uzbekistan–2030” strategy include the development of digital infrastructure, integration of information technologies into the economy, and the creation of an innovative ecosystem. Additionally, the strategy promotes cooperation between the public and private sectors and the development of digital technologies within the education system. The growth of the digital economy enhances the country’s competitiveness and contributes to economic growth on an international scale.

2. Materials and Methods

The methodology employed in this study is based on a qualitative analysis of the “Digital Uzbekistan–2030” strategy, emphasizing its sectoral implementation and outcomes. The research draws upon official government reports, strategic policy documents, and statistical indicators from 2018 to 2021 to evaluate the extent and impact of digital transformation across key areas such as public administration, education, industry, and commerce. Data on internet usage, digital public services, and e-commerce growth were systematically reviewed to assess progress. A document analysis method was utilized to interpret strategic priorities, identify achievements, and highlight

infrastructural and educational challenges. The study also incorporates comparative assessments of policy outcomes and benchmarks them against regional and global digitalisation trends. By triangulating policy content with real-world implementation data, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of how digital policy frameworks are shaping socio-economic development in Uzbekistan, offering evidence-based insights into the effectiveness and limitations of the strategy.

3. Results and Discussion

The development of the digital economy and the implementation of the “Digital Uzbekistan–2030” strategy have a significant impact on the country’s economic, social, and technological progress[13], [14]. This section analyses Uzbekistan’s steps toward a digital economy and the outcomes of the strategy. In this process, major government programs, the development of technological infrastructure, the digitalisation of the education system, and the strengthening of cooperation with the private sector are emphasised.

Firstly, one of the main goals of the “Digital Uzbekistan–2030” strategy is to enhance the country’s economic potential in global competition. The strategy aims to introduce digital technologies to create new jobs, simplify business processes, and accelerate public services. These changes are particularly evident in the development of e-government and the digital transformation of services related to the public sector. For example, in 2020, more than 70% of public services in Uzbekistan were delivered in digital format, which improved service quality and saved time for citizens.

Secondly, the digital transformation in the education sector also plays an important role. The government of Uzbekistan aims to provide the younger generation with innovative knowledge by digitalising the education system. Projects such as “Digital School” and “Digital University” are being implemented across the country. Within this system, many students have gained opportunities to improve their knowledge through distance learning and online courses. As a result of the development of digital technologies in education, young people’s interest in new technologies has increased, creating the potential to meet the demand for high-tech professions in the future[15].

Thirdly, the digitalisation of industry is also of particular importance. The “Digital Uzbekistan–2030” strategy places great emphasis on increasing efficiency through the digital transformation of industry. The implementation of Industry 4.0 technologies in industrial enterprises and the optimization of production processes through digital systems are planned. As a result, production efficiency has increased, and the level of global competitiveness has risen. For example, in the automotive industry, production processes have been automated and accelerated through digital systems, which has improved product quality and reduced costs.

During Uzbekistan’s transition to a digital economy, the digital delivery of public services and the level of internet access have changed. The following table shows the level of digital services and internet usage in Uzbekistan, see Table 1.

Table 1. Level of digital services and internet usage in Uzbekistan.

Year	Number of Internet users (millions)	Government services provided via e-services (%)	E-commerce growth rate (%)
2018	16th June	45%	12%
2019	18th March	60%	20%
2020	20th January	70%	35%
2021	22th May	85%	42%

Between 2018 and 2021, the number of internet users increased significantly, indicating the expansion of internet infrastructure in the country and the growing use of digital services among the population.

1. By 2020, more than 70% of government services were provided digitally, reflecting the successful implementation of digital transformation in the public sector;
2. Growth in e-commerce reached 35% by 2020, demonstrating the high efficiency of the country's entry into the digital economy.

Moreover, changes in other sectors of the economy also yielded positive results. In particular, the development of e-commerce and digital payment systems helped small and medium-sized businesses integrate into the digital ecosystem. Under the "Digital Uzbekistan-2030" strategy, the digital payment system was further expanded, contributing to the reduction of cash circulation and the popularisation of banking services.

However, some challenges were also identified during the analysis. For example, to broaden the coverage of digital technologies, further development of the internet infrastructure is necessary. At the same time, more educational programs and training aimed at increasing digital literacy among the population need to be implemented. Currently, in some regions of Uzbekistan, access to the internet and digital services remains limited, which may reduce the level of digital inclusion.

The results indicate that the implementation of the "Digital Uzbekistan-2030" strategy has accelerated the country's transition to a digital economy and significantly influenced socio-economic development. However, certain infrastructure and legal frameworks are still required for the full implementation of this strategy. Additionally, the widespread application of digital technologies in all sectors will help transform Uzbekistan into one of the leading countries in the digital economy[8], [10], [11].

4. Conclusion

The implementation of the "Digital Uzbekistan-2030" strategy plays a significant role in the country's economic, social, and technological development. The growth of the digital economy not only improves the quality of public services but also enables the introduction of innovative technologies in industry, education, banking, and many other sectors. Uzbekistan's digital transformation has produced effective results across all fields, increasing the country's level of global competitiveness. Analysis of statistical data shows that by 2021, Uzbekistan's digital infrastructure had significantly improved. The expansion of electronic services, distance learning, and e-commerce, along with the successful integration of digital technologies into the industrial and service sectors, is well underway.

At the same time, challenges to the development of the digital economy remain relevant, such as the need to further improve internet infrastructure, enhance digital literacy, and train qualified personnel. Overall, through the effective implementation of the "Digital Uzbekistan-2030" strategy, the country has the potential to become one of the leading nations in the digital economy. However, to deepen and advance this process, it is necessary to further strengthen cooperation between the public and private sectors, develop infrastructure, and improve digital literacy.credit systems that reliably develop finance in an ethical way.

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