Strengthening policies and regulatory frameworks of digital public services for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Uzbekistan

in support of the Asia Pacific Information Superhighway (APIS) Action Plan 2022-2026

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Mission & Goals

Our report on Uzbekistan's digital public services reflects a meticulous process of survey design and stakeholder engagement. Crafted in collaboration with experts, our survey gathered insights from government officials, SME representatives, and international organizations. Through interviews and consultations, we collected firsthand information, which, coupled with robust data analysis, forms the foundation of our comprehensive assessment. This report offers evidence-based recommendations to propel Uzbekistan's digital transformation and SME empowerment forward. (work in progress)
Population: **Over 37 million** (as of April 2024).

GDP: **91 billion USD** (as of January 2024), with **6%** growth

Internet Penetration: **76.6%** of the population (as of 2023)

Mobile Penetration: **91.2%** of the population (as of 2023)

**E-Government Development Index**: Ranked 69th in 2022 (**18 positions** up since 2020)

**GovTech Maturity Index**: Ranked 43rd in 2022 (**34 positions** up since 2020)

86% of registered businesses are SMEs* (as of 2023)

51% of the Uzbekistan's GDP is generated by SMEs (as of 2023)

*In Uzbekistan, the term 'SME' (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) is not yet used for statistical purposes. Instead, the terms 'small businesses and individual proprietorships' are utilized.*
### Classification of Businesses in Uzbekistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classified by</th>
<th>Old classification</th>
<th>New Classification since 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of employees</td>
<td>Annual turnover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro-firms</td>
<td>1-20 employees</td>
<td>Up to 1 bln. Soums (80k USD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small enterprises</td>
<td>21-100 employees</td>
<td>1-10 bln. Soums (80-800k USD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium size enterprises</td>
<td>Did not exist</td>
<td>10-100 bln. Soums (800k-8mln USD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large enterprises</td>
<td>More than 100 employees</td>
<td>More than 100 bln.sum (8mln USD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used by/for</td>
<td>All other organizations</td>
<td>Tax committee only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- covers 20 different areas
- offers 646 types of digital public services in total (700 by 2024 ends)
- 185 types of public services in mobile app
- offers 420 types of digital public services for businesses
- 7.8% of SMEs* registered in the portal (52,000)
Other digital public services outside of the portal

- new.birdarcha.uz - Business entities registration module
- b-advice.uz - интерактивный информационный портал “Бизнес-консультация”
- license.gov.uz - Electronic licensing system
- my.ima.uz - Portal of electronic public services for intellectual property
- my.soliq.uz - Portal of electronic public services of tax authorities
Other digital public services outside of the portal

- regulation.gov.uz - Portal for discussion of draft regulation acts
- xarid.uzex.uz - Electronic system of public procurement
- e-auksion.uz - Electronic trading platform "E-AUKSION"
- business.gov.uz - Entrepreneur's virtual office
- data.egov.uz - Open Data Portal
Needs assessment / areas for improvement

- Harmonization of SME classifications
- Separate bloc for SMEs in the Public Services portal
- Increasing Internet penetration in the regions
- Train SME’s how to use digital public services
- Providing benefits or preferences for using digital services
- Access to financing, especially grants
- Business trainings are not enough
- Very little content in Uzbek business trainings
- Digital public services are not free
- Approval process takes unreasonably long time
- Personnel document turnover
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