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TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIAL RELATIONS AT THE NEW STAGE OF UZBEKISTAN'S DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This article analyzes the transformation of social relations at the new stage of the development of New Uzbekistan through institutional, political-philosophical, and social approaches. It also examines the impact of government transparency, the development of civil society, digitalization, and the priority of human dignity on the renewal of social relations. The study is substantiated by scientific sources and relevant theoretical approaches.

Keywords: New Uzbekistan, social relations, transformation, institutional reforms, civil society, social trust, social capital, digital transformation.

In recent years, the implementation of comprehensive political, legal, economic, and social reforms in Uzbekistan has laid the foundation for a new stage in the country's development. A distinctive feature of these reforms is that they are aimed not only at improving the system of public administration but also at fundamentally transforming the content and structure of social relations within society. Today, enhancing human dignity, ensuring the rule of law, strengthening civil society institutions, and reinforcing mutual trust between the state and society constitute the key priorities of the **New Uzbekistan** development model. It should be emphasized that, in contemporary social sciences, the transformation of social relations is interpreted as a process closely associated with institutional change. As **Douglas North** argues, institutions constitute a system of rules that



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regulate interactions among individuals, and their development directly influences the quality and sustainability of social cooperation. From this perspective, the institutional reforms being implemented in Uzbekistan are designed not only to improve the effectiveness of public administration but also to expand citizens' social participation and strengthen social trust[1].

Furthermore, according to **Robert Putnam's** concept of social capital, trust, cooperation, and civic engagement are among the fundamental drivers of economic growth and democratic development. This concept is reflected in the increasing role of mahalla institutions, non-governmental non-profit organizations, mass media, and digital platforms in New Uzbekistan. In particular, the processes of globalization and digitalization are transforming traditional forms of social interaction and creating new mechanisms of cooperation among the state, society, and individuals.

In recent years, Uzbekistan has established an entirely new system of direct communication between public authorities and citizens, aimed at addressing people's concerns and resolving their problems effectively. Principles such as engaging directly with local communities, listening to citizens' concerns, sharing responsibility for addressing their challenges, and solving problems on the ground have become essential standards in the activities of state institutions. At the same time, a governance system based on openness, justice, and public interest has been developed. The long-standing principle of "**state–society–individual**" has gradually evolved into a **human-centered development model**, where the interests of the individual take precedence, followed by those of society and the state. The concept of "**The State for the People**" has increasingly become a guiding principle of governance. Moreover, the expansion of electronic public services, open data policies, public consultations, and digital communication platforms has significantly increased citizens' participation in governance,



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thereby contributing to the development of a more transparent, accountable, and participatory system of social relations[2].

Today, one of the major priorities of Uzbekistan's reforms is to ensure the comprehensive development of the country through the fundamental renewal of state and public life. The scale, intensity, and comprehensive nature of these reforms have significantly enhanced Uzbekistan's international standing. At the same time, extensive reforms aimed at strengthening the protection of human rights continue to advance. The **Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan** recognizes human beings, their life, freedom, honor, dignity, and other fundamental rights as the highest values. Accordingly, New Uzbekistan is developing as a democratic state founded upon the rule of law, an effective system of legislative, executive, and judicial authorities, and active civil society institutions, where the principle "**The interests of the people are above all else**" is being translated into practical policy.

Under the leadership of **President Shavkat Mirziyoyev**, the ongoing reforms are primarily guided by the objective of upholding human dignity and prioritizing the interests of the people. As President Mirziyoyev has stated, *"New Uzbekistan is an era in which the noble idea that 'the interests of the people are above all else' is being confirmed through practical achievements."* Indeed, the large-scale reforms and modernization processes taking place throughout the country continue to evolve on the basis of this human-centered principle. In this regard, improving the theoretical and methodological foundations of the transformation of social relations at the new stage of New Uzbekistan's development serves as an essential prerequisite for ensuring the country's sustainable development[5]. Institutional reforms are among the principal factors ensuring the political, legal, and social development of any state. According to contemporary institutionalist theory, institutions are not merely a collection of state organizations but rather a



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system of formal and informal rules that regulate economic, political, and social relations within society. From this perspective, the institutional reforms being implemented in **New Uzbekistan** are transforming not only the system of public administration but also the content of social relations, the forms of cooperation among social actors, and the overall level of social trust.

In this regard, the **Uzbekistan–2030 Strategy** identifies the promotion of human dignity, support for civil society institutions, enhancement of transparency in public administration, and improvement of mechanisms for communication between state authorities and citizens as strategic priorities. These directions contribute to the development of social relations based not on an administrative-command model but on the principles of partnership, shared responsibility, and cooperation. One of the most significant characteristics of institutional transformation is the transition of state–society relations to a qualitatively new stage. While citizens in the previous centralized governance system primarily acted as executors of government decisions, they have increasingly become active participants in the formulation and implementation of public policy. Electronic public consultations, open budget mechanisms, greater governmental accountability, and digital petition platforms have significantly expanded citizens' participation in decision-making processes. Consequently, these developments have strengthened mutual trust and social responsibility within society[3].

Douglas North characterizes institutions as the "rules of the game," emphasizing that their primary function is to reduce uncertainty in social interactions. According to North's institutional approach, institutions coordinate the behavior of social actors, minimize uncertainty in economic and social relations, and establish a stable environment conducive to cooperation. In contemporary Uzbekistan, the simplification of administrative procedures, the digitalization of



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public services, and the expansion of legal guarantees have enhanced the stability and predictability of social relations. As a result, public confidence in state institutions has increased, creating a favorable institutional environment for sustainable social cooperation.

The role of civil society institutions in the transformation of social relations has also become increasingly significant. Non-governmental non-profit organizations, the **mahalla** institution, independent mass media, and the expert community have emerged as important intermediaries facilitating dialogue between the state and society. This development demonstrates that addressing social challenges is no longer solely the responsibility of the government but increasingly depends on a collaborative model involving broad public participation. Such an approach is fully consistent with the fundamental principles of the contemporary **good governance** concept[7].

At the same time, digital transformation has become an integral component of institutional reform. The digitalization of public services, the introduction of digital identification systems, and the development of e-Parliament and e-Government platforms have enabled faster, more transparent, and more efficient communication between citizens and public authorities. As **Anthony Giddens** argues, institutional trust in modern society is closely linked to the reliability of information systems and organizational structures. In this sense, digitalization should be understood not merely as a technological innovation but as a transition toward a new institutional model of social relations.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of institutional reforms should not be assessed solely by the adoption of legal and regulatory acts but also by their practical impact on social relations. When institutions operate in accordance with the needs and expectations of citizens, they strengthen social trust, enhance legal culture, and promote a stable environment for social cooperation. Therefore, the



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effectiveness, transparency, accountability of public institutions, and the level of public trust in them should be regarded as the principal indicators of institutional development[6].

In conclusion, the institutional reforms implemented in **New Uzbekistan** are fundamentally transforming both the content and the structure of social relations. The strengthening of partnership between the state, society, and individuals, together with the expansion of digital governance mechanisms and the growing role of civil society institutions, is shaping a new institutional model of social relations. These developments provide a solid foundation for the country's sustainable socio-political development.

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