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SUBMITTED 20 August 2025
ACCEPTED 15 September 2025
PUBLISHED 31 October 2025
VOLUME Vol.07 Issue10 2025

CITATION

Meliyev No'monxon Ibodulla o'g'li. (2025). Initiatives Of Uzbekistan In The Policy For The Development Of The Transport System Of Central Asia - As An Important Basis For The Development Of "New Uzbekistan". The American Journal of Political Science Law and Criminology, 7(10), 47-49. <https://doi.org/10.37547/tajpslc/Volume07Issue10-08>

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Initiatives Of Uzbekistan In The Policy For The Development Of The Transport System Of Central Asia - As An Important Basis For The Development Of "New Uzbekistan"

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Abstract: This article analyzes Uzbekistan's role and initiatives in Central Asia's transport system development policy. The article examines in detail the strategic directions for increasing Uzbekistan's transport and logistics potential, taking into account its national and regional interests, including the modernization of transport infrastructure, the diversification of transit corridors, international cooperation projects, and digitalization initiatives. Uzbekistan's cooperation and relations with neighboring countries - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan - in the field of transport were also analyzed, and information was provided on how they were formed in the political and economic context. The article also highlights the differences and development trends of transport policy in two periods - under the leadership of Islam Karimov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev. As a result, the strategic importance of Uzbekistan in strengthening its integration into global transport systems in the region was shown.

Keywords: Uzbekistan, Central Asia, transport system, transport and logistics, transit corridors, infrastructure, transport policy, international cooperation, transport projects, digitization, economic integration, transport corridors, strategic development.

Introduction

Today, the development of the transport sector has become an important factor in the economic and political stability of countries. In particular, for the

Central Asian region, which has a unique geographical location, the improvement of transport infrastructure is of decisive importance in increasing regional integration, trade relations, and transit potential. From this point of view, Uzbekistan, effectively using its strategic position, occupies a leading role in the development of the transport system of Central Asia. The initiatives put forward by the country are aimed at modernizing transport and logistics infrastructure, expanding international cooperation, and diversifying transit corridors, which will serve to strengthen the region's integration into global transport systems. This article analyzes the main directions of Uzbekistan's transport policy, ongoing projects, and current trends in regional cooperation.

Main Part

The role and initiatives of Uzbekistan in the development of the transport system in the Central Asian region are divided into two main periods: the first period is the period from independence to 2016 under the leadership of Islam Karimov, and the second period is the period under the leadership of Shavkat Mirziyoyev. In both periods, the country pursued policies aimed at strengthening transport and logistics infrastructure and increasing regional integration, but the scale and effectiveness of approaches and initiatives were different.

1991-2016: Early years of independence and founding

After gaining independence, Uzbekistan faced the task of becoming independent from the unified transport system of the USSR period and forming a national infrastructure. During this period, a number of strategic projects were implemented. In particular, the construction of a tunnel on the Tashkent-Andijan-Osh highway, passing through the Kamchik Pass, played a key role in connecting the Fergana Valley with other regions of the country. Also, the commissioning of the Navoi-Uchkuduk-Sultan Uvaystag railway line contributed to the development of the western regions of the country and the expansion of international transit opportunities. Uzbekistan joined the "Europe-Caucasus-Asia" (TRASECA) transport corridor program in 1996, aiming to connect Central Asia to world markets through Iran and Turkey. This project became one of the main initiatives that served to strengthen regional transport links.

However, during this period, regional cooperation was limited due to numerous political and geopolitical obstacles and border disputes. Therefore, Uzbekistan's integration into external transport corridors is limited, and the state pays more attention to the development of internal infrastructure.

2016-present: Open politics and the era of integration

With the arrival of Shavkat Mirziyoyev's government, Uzbekistan placed great emphasis on open cooperation and regional integration in the transport sector. In 2017, the Presidential Decree "On Measures for the Further Development of the Transport and Logistics System of the Republic of Uzbekistan" was adopted, and the Development Concept and Roadmap until 2030 were approved. On the basis of these documents, new transport projects were implemented, and the existing infrastructure was modernized.

The Angren-Pap railway line and the Kamchik tunnel project were completed in 2016, which became an important link on the China - Central Asia - Europe transit route. The main directions of this period are the electrification of railways, the introduction of high-speed trains, as well as initiatives aimed at expanding cooperation in the field of transport with neighboring countries, especially strengthening ties with Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Afghanistan.

The initiative "Integrated Central Asian Transportation Management System," put forward by Uzbekistan, is aimed at harmonizing transport tariffs, simplifying customs procedures, and increasing the safety of cargo transportation. This will reduce transport and logistics costs in the region and increase transit efficiency.

Uzbekistan's transport system initiatives are perceived differently by the countries of the region. Cooperation with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan is expanding, which consider it beneficial for them to enter world markets through Uzbekistan. Relations with Tajikistan are warming up, but some geopolitical disputes remain. Pragmatic cooperation with Turkmenistan continues, especially in terms of transit and diversification of oil and gas exports.

Uzbekistan pays special attention to the digitalization of the transport system. This will not only increase the efficiency of domestic services, but also help reduce transit costs for entrepreneurs in the region. Large infrastructure projects are also being financed in cooperation with the UN, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank. Investments made within the framework of the CAREC program have a great influence on the modernization of the transport network of Central Asia.

Conclusion

Uzbekistan's active role and strategic initiatives in the development of the transport system in Central Asia are taking the process of regional integration to a new level. Since gaining independence, the country, effectively using its geostrategic location, has attached great importance to the modernization of transport infrastructure, the creation of new transit corridors, and integration into international transport and logistics

systems. Especially under Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the openness of transport policy and new approaches to regional cooperation serve to transform Uzbekistan into a transit hub of Central Asia.

Large infrastructure projects implemented in recent years, including the Angren-Pap railway line, the Kamchik tunnel, the Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan-China and Termez-Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul railway corridors, have significantly increased the transport and logistics potential of the region. These projects will facilitate access to world markets not only for Uzbekistan, but also for the entire Central Asian region, and will reduce transportation costs. At the same time, the efficiency of cargo transportation is increasing due to the simplification of customs procedures, digitalization, and improvement of service quality.

Uzbekistan's contribution to regional transport projects serves to expand economic cooperation between states, strengthen trade and economic ties, and ensure the integration of transport corridors into global systems. However, in this process, political factors, border disputes, and regional security issues also remain important factors limiting cooperation in the transport sector. Therefore, strengthening regional political trust and cooperation is crucial for the further development of the transport system and achieving sustainable results.

In conclusion, Uzbekistan's initiatives in the field of transport contribute not only to the sustainable growth of the country's economy, but also to the successful entry of the Central Asian region into the global network of transport corridors. These processes are of strategic importance in ensuring the country's economic security and regional stability. In the future, an important task will remain the further development of Uzbekistan's transport policy, bringing cooperation with the countries of Central Asia to a new level through digitalization and strengthening regional integration.

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