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**Uzbekistan** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en), [Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en)), officially the **Republic of Uzbekistan** ([Uzbek](/wiki/Uzbek_language): *Oʻzbekiston Respublikasi/Ўзбекистон Республикаси/ئوزبېكىستان رېسپۇبلىكەسى*), is a [doubly landlocked country](/wiki/Doubly_landlocked) in [Central Asia](/wiki/Central_Asia). It is a unitary, constitutional, presidential republic, comprising 12 provinces, 1 autonomous republic, and 1 capital city. Uzbekistan is bordered by five countries: [Kazakhstan](/wiki/Kazakhstan) to the north; [Tajikistan](/wiki/Tajikistan) to the southeast; [Kyrgyzstan](/wiki/Kyrgyzstan) to the northeast; [Afghanistan](/wiki/Afghanistan) to the south; and [Turkmenistan](/wiki/Turkmenistan) to the southwest.

Once part of the [Turkic Khaganate](/wiki/Göktürks) and later [Timurid Empires](/wiki/Timurid_Empire), the region that today includes the Republic of Uzbekistan was conquered in the early 16th century by [Eastern Turkic](/wiki/Eastern_Turkic)-speaking nomads. The area was gradually incorporated into the [Russian Empire](/wiki/Russian_Empire) during the 19th century, and in 1924 what is now Uzbekistan became a bordered constituent republic of the Soviet Union, known as the [Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic](/wiki/Uzbek_Soviet_Socialist_Republic) (Uzbek SSR). Following the [breakup of the Soviet Union](/wiki/Breakup_of_the_Soviet_Union), it declared independence as the Republic of Uzbekistan on 31 August 1991 (officially celebrated the following day).

Uzbekistan is officially a [democratic](/wiki/Democracy),[[1]](#cite_note-1) [secular](/wiki/Secular), [unitary](/wiki/Unitary_state), [constitutional republic](/wiki/Constitutional_republic) with a diverse cultural heritage. The country's official language is [Uzbek](/wiki/Uzbek_language), a Turkic language written in [latin alphabet](/wiki/Latin_alphabet) and spoken natively by approximately 85% of the population; however, [Russian](/wiki/Russian_language) remains in widespread use. [Uzbeks](/wiki/Uzbek_people) constitute 81% of the population, followed by Russians (5.4%), Tajiks (4.0%), Kazakhs (3.0%), and others (6.5%). A majority of Uzbeks are [non-denominational Muslims](/wiki/Non-denominational_Muslim).[[2]](#cite_note-2) Uzbekistan is a member of the [CIS](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Independent_States), [OSCE](/wiki/Organization_for_Security_and_Co-operation_in_Europe), [UN](/wiki/United_Nations), and the [SCO](/wiki/Shanghai_Cooperation_Organisation).

Uzbekistan's economy relies mainly on commodity production, including [cotton](/wiki/Cotton), [gold](/wiki/Gold), [uranium](/wiki/Uranium), and [natural gas](/wiki/Natural_gas). Despite the declared objective of [transition](/wiki/Transition_economy) to a [market economy](/wiki/Market_economy), its government continues to maintain economic controls which imports in favour of domestic "import substitution".

Uzbekistan is the happiest country in the [Commonwealth of Independent States](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Independent_States), according to *World Happiness Report*.[[3]](#cite_note-3)

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## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

[thumb|left|540px|Map of Uzbekistan.](/wiki/File:UN-Uzbekistan.svg) [thumb|left|Uzbekistan map of Köppen climate classification.](/wiki/File:Uzbekistan_map_of_Köppen_climate_classification.svg) Uzbekistan has an area of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). It is the 56th largest country in the world by area and the 42nd by population.[[4]](#cite_note-4) Among the [CIS](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Independent_States) countries, it is the 5th largest by area and the 3rd largest by population.<ref name=uzstat/>

Uzbekistan lies between latitudes [37°](/wiki/37th_parallel_north) and [46° N](/wiki/46th_parallel_north), and longitudes [56°](/wiki/56th_meridian_east) and [74° E](/wiki/74th_meridian_east). It stretches [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) from west to east and [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) from north to south. Bordering [Kazakhstan](/wiki/Kazakhstan) and the [Aral Sea](/wiki/Aral_Sea) to the north and northwest, [Turkmenistan](/wiki/Turkmenistan) to the southwest, [Tajikistan](/wiki/Tajikistan) to the southeast, and [Kyrgyzstan](/wiki/Kyrgyzstan) to the northeast, Uzbekistan is one of the largest [Central Asian](/wiki/Central_Asian) states and the only Central Asian state to border all the other four. Uzbekistan also shares a short border (less than [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)) with [Afghanistan](/wiki/Afghanistan) to the south.

Uzbekistan is a dry, [landlocked](/wiki/Landlocked) country. It is one of two [doubly landlocked](/wiki/Doubly_landlocked) countries in the world (that is, a country completely surrounded by landlocked countries), the other being [Liechtenstein](/wiki/Liechtenstein). In addition, due to its location within a series of [endorheic](/wiki/Endorheic) basins, none of its rivers lead to the sea. Less than 10% of its territory is intensively cultivated irrigated land in river valleys and oases. The rest is vast desert ([Kyzyl Kum](/wiki/Kyzyl_Kum)) and mountains.

The highest point in Uzbekistan is the [Khazret Sultan](/wiki/Khazret_Sultan), at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) above sea level, in the southern part of the [Gissar Range](/wiki/Gissar_Range) in [Surkhandarya Province](/wiki/Surkhandarya_Province), on the border with Tajikistan, just northwest of [Dushanbe](/wiki/Dushanbe) (formerly called Peak of the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party).<ref name=uzstat>[Uzbekistan will publish its own book of records – Ferghana.ru](http://enews.fergananews.com/article.php?id=2051). 18 July 2007. Retrieved 29 July 2009.</ref>

The climate in the Republic of Uzbekistan is continental, with little [precipitation](/wiki/Precipitation_(meteorology)) expected annually (100–200 millimetres, or 3.9–7.9 inches). The average summer high [temperature](/wiki/Temperature) tends to be 40 °C [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap), while the average winter low temperature is around −23 °C [Template:Nowrap](/wiki/Template:Nowrap).[[5]](#cite_note-5)

## Environment[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[thumb|left|Comparison of the](/wiki/File:AralSea1989_2014.jpg) [Aral Sea](/wiki/Aral_Sea) between 1989 and 2014.

Uzbekistan has rich and diverse natural environment. However, decades of questionable [Soviet](/wiki/Soviet_Union) policies in pursuit of greater [cotton](/wiki/Cotton) production have resulted in a catastrophic scenario with the agricultural industry being the main contributor to the pollution and devastation of both air and water in the country.[[6]](#cite_note-6) The [Aral Sea](/wiki/Aral_Sea) used to be the fourth-largest inland sea on Earth, acting as an influencing factor in the air moisture and arid land use.[[7]](#cite_note-7) Since the 1960s, the decade when the misuse of the Aral Sea water began, it has shrunk to less than 50% of its former area and decreased in volume threefold. Reliable, or even approximate data, have not been collected, stored or provided by any organization or official agency. Much of the water was and continues to be used for the irrigation of cotton fields, a crop requiring a large amount of water to grow.[[8]](#cite_note-8) Due to the Aral Sea problem, high salinity and contamination of the soil with [heavy elements](/wiki/Heavy_elements) are especially widespread in [Karakalpakstan](/wiki/Karakalpakstan), the region of Uzbekistan adjacent to the Aral Sea. The bulk of the nation's water resources is used for farming, which accounts for nearly 84% of the water usage and contributes to high soil salinity. Heavy use of [pesticides](/wiki/Pesticide) and [fertilizers](/wiki/Fertilizer) for cotton growing further aggravates [soil pollution](/wiki/Soil_pollution).[[5]](#cite_note-5) According to the UNDP (United Nations Development Program), Climate risk management in Uzbekistan needs to consider its ecological safety.[[9]](#cite_note-9)

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[Template:Refimprove section](/wiki/Template:Refimprove_section) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Female statuette wearing the](/wiki/File:Kaunakes_Bactria_Louvre_AO31917.jpg) [kaunakes](/wiki/Kaunakes). Chlorite and limestone, [Bactria](/wiki/Bactria), beginning of the 2nd millennium BC. [thumb|](/wiki/File:Napoli_BW_2013-05-16_16-24-01.jpg)[Alexander the Great](/wiki/Alexander_the_Great) at the [Battle of Issus](/wiki/Battle_of_Issus). The first people known to inhabit the Central Asian region of modern-day Uzbekistan were [Iranian](/wiki/Iranian_peoples) nomads who arrived from the northern grasslands of what is now Kazakhstan[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) sometime in the 1st millennium BC. These nomads, who spoke Iranian dialects, settled in Central Asia and began to build an extensive irrigation system along the rivers of the region.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) At this time, cities such as Bukhoro (Bukhara), Samarqand (Samarkand) and Chash (Tashkent) began to appear as centres of emerging government and high culture. By the 5th century BC, the [Bactrian](/wiki/Bactria), [Soghdian](/wiki/Sogdiana), and [Tokharian](/wiki/Yuezhi) states dominated and ruled over the region.

As China began to develop its silk trade with the West, Iranian cities took advantage of this commerce by becoming centres of trade. Using an extensive network of cities and rural settlements in the province of [Mouwaurannahr](/wiki/Transoxiana) (a name given the region after the Arab conquest) in Uzbekistan, and further east in what is today China's [Xinjiang](/wiki/Xinjiang) Uygur Autonomous Region, the Soghdian intermediaries became the wealthiest of these Iranian merchants. As a result of this trade on what became known as the [Silk Route](/wiki/Silk_Route), [Bukhoro](/wiki/Bukhoro) and [Samarqand](/wiki/Samarqand) eventually became extremely wealthy cities, and at the time [Transoxiana](/wiki/Transoxiana) (Mawarannahr) was one of the largest, most influential and powerful Persian provinces of antiquity.<ref name=eh>Lubin, Nancy. "Early history". In Curtis.</ref>[Template:Full citation needed](/wiki/Template:Full_citation_needed)

[thumb|right|Triumphant crowd at](/wiki/File:Торжествуют.jpg) [Registan](/wiki/Registan), Sher-Dor Madrasah [thumb|right|Russian troops taking](/wiki/File:KarazinNN_VstRusVoyskGRM.jpg) [Samarkand](/wiki/Samarkand) in 1868. Macedonian ruler [Alexander the Great](/wiki/Alexander_the_Great) conquered in 327 BC the [Persian Empire](/wiki/Achaemenid_Empire) provinces Sogdiana and Bactria, which contained the territories of modern Uzbekistan. A conquest was supposedly of little help to Alexander as popular resistance was fierce, causing Alexander's army to be bogged down in the region that became the northern part of the Hellenistic [Greco-Bactrian Kingdom](/wiki/Greco-Bactrian_Kingdom). The kingdom was replaced with the Yuezhi dominated [Kushan Empire](/wiki/Kushan_Empire) in the 1st century BC. For many centuries the region of Uzbekistan was ruled by the Persian empires, including the [Parthian](/wiki/Parthian_Empire) and [Sassanid](/wiki/Sassanid) Empires, as well as by other empires, for example those formed by the Iranian [Hephthalite](/wiki/Hephthalite) and Turkic [Gokturk](/wiki/Gokturk) peoples.

In the 8th century, Transoxiana, the territory between the [Amudarya](/wiki/Amu_Darya) and [Syrdarya](/wiki/Syr_Darya) rivers, was conquered by the Arabs (Ali ibn Sattor) who enriched the region with the Early Renaissance. Many notable scientists lived there and contributed to its development during the Islamic Golden Age. Among the achievements of the scholars during this period were the development of [trigonometry](/wiki/Trigonometry) into its modern form (simplifying its practical application to calculate the phases of the moon), advances in [optics](/wiki/Optics), in [astronomy](/wiki/Astronomy), as well as in poetry, philosophy, art, calligraphy and many others, which set the foundation for the Muslim Renaissance.

In the 9th and 10th centuries, Transoxiana was included into the [Samanid](/wiki/Samanid) State. Later, Transoxiana saw the incursion of the Turkic-ruled [Karakhanids](/wiki/Karakhanids), as well as the [Seljuks](/wiki/Seljuks) (Sultan Sanjar) and [Kara-Khitans](/wiki/Kara-Khitans).[[10]](#cite_note-10) The [Mongol](/wiki/Mongol_Empire) conquest under [Genghis Khan](/wiki/Genghis_Khan) during the 13th century would bring about a change to the region. The [Mongol invasion of Central Asia](/wiki/Mongol_invasion_of_Central_Asia) led to the displacement of some of the Iranian-speaking people of the region, their culture and heritage being superseded by that of the [Mongolian](/wiki/Mongols)-[Turkic peoples](/wiki/Turkic_peoples) who came thereafter. The invasions of Bukhara, Samarkand, [Urgench](/wiki/Köneürgenç) and others resulted in [mass murders](/wiki/Destruction_under_the_Mongol_Empire) and unprecedented destruction, such as portions of [Khwarezmia](/wiki/Khwarazmian_Empire) being completely razed.[[11]](#cite_note-11) Following the death of Genghis Khan in 1227, his empire was divided among his four sons and his family members. Despite the potential for serious fragmentation, the Mongol law of the Mongol Empire maintained orderly succession for several more generations, and control of most of Transoxiana stayed in the hands of the direct descendants of [Chagatai Khan](/wiki/Chagatai_Khan), the second son of Genghis Khan. Orderly succession, prosperity, and internal peace prevailed in the Chaghatai lands, and the Mongol Empire as a whole remained a strong and united kingdom (Ulus Batiy, Sattarkhan).<ref name=rt>Lubin, Nancy. "Rule of Timur". In Curtis.</ref>[Template:Full citation needed](/wiki/Template:Full_citation_needed)

[thumb|190px|left|Two](/wiki/File:Sartscrop.jpg) [Sart](/wiki/Sart) men and two Sart boys in [Samarkand](/wiki/Samarkand), c. 1910 During this period, most of present Uzbekistan was part of [Chagatai Khanate](/wiki/Chagatai_Khanate) except [Khwarezm](/wiki/Khwarezm) was part of [Golden Horde](/wiki/Golden_Horde). After decline of Golden Horde, Khwarezm was briefly ruled by [Sufi Dynasty](/wiki/Sufi_Dynasty) till Timur's conquest of it in 1388.[[12]](#cite_note-12) Sufids rules Khwarezm as vassals of alternatively [Timurids](/wiki/Timurids), Golden Horde and [Uzbek Khanate](/wiki/Khanate_of_Bukhara) till Persian occupation in 1510.

In the early 14th century, however, as the empire began to break up into its constituent parts. The Chaghatai territory was disrupted as the princes of various tribal groups competed for influence. One tribal chieftain, [Timur](/wiki/Timur) (Tamerlane),[[13]](#cite_note-13) emerged from these struggles in the 1380s as the dominant force in Transoxiana. Although he was not a descendant of Genghis Khan, Timur became the *de facto* ruler of Transoxiana and proceeded to conquer all of western Central Asia, [Iran](/wiki/Iran), the [Caucasus](/wiki/Caucasus), [Mesopotamia](/wiki/Mesopotamia), [Asia Minor](/wiki/Asia_Minor), and the southern steppe region north of the [Aral Sea](/wiki/Aral_Sea). He also invaded [Russia](/wiki/Russia) before dying during an invasion of [China](/wiki/Ming_dynasty) in 1405.<ref name=rt/>

Timur was known for his extreme brutality and his conquests were accompanied by [genocidal massacres](/wiki/Genocidal_massacre) in the cities he occupied.[[14]](#cite_note-14) Timur initiated the last flowering of Transoxiana by gathering together numerous artisans and scholars from the vast lands he had conquered into his capital, Samarqand. By supporting such people, he imbued his empire with a rich Perso-Islamic culture. During his reign and the reigns of his immediate descendants, a wide range of religious and palatial construction masterpieces were undertaken in Samarqand and other population centres.[[15]](#cite_note-15) Amir Timur initiated an exchange of medical discoveries and patronized physicians, scientists and artists from the neighbouring countries such as India;[[16]](#cite_note-16) His grandson [Ulugh Beg](/wiki/Ulugh_Beg) was one of the world's first great astronomers. It was during the Timurid dynasty that Turkic, in the form of the [Chaghatai](/wiki/Chagatai_language) dialect, became a literary language in its own right in Transoxiana, although the Timurids were Persianate in nature. The greatest Chaghataid writer, [Ali-Shir Nava'i](/wiki/Ali-Shir_Nava'i), was active in the city of Herat (now in northwestern Afghanistan) in the second half of the 15th century.[[17]](#cite_note-17) The Timurid state quickly split in half after the death of Timur. The chronic internal fighting of the Timurids attracted the attention of the Uzbek nomadic tribes living to the north of the Aral Sea. In 1501 the Uzbek forces began a wholesale invasion of Transoxiana.[[17]](#cite_note-17) The [slave trade](/wiki/Slave_trade) in the [Khanate of Bukhara](/wiki/Emirate_of_Bukhara) became prominent and was firmly established.[[18]](#cite_note-18) There were between 25,000 and 60,000 Tajik slaves in Bukhara alone in 1821.[[19]](#cite_note-19) Before the arrival of the Russians, present Uzbekistan was divided between [Emirate of Bukhara](/wiki/Emirate_of_Bukhara) and khanates of [Khiva](/wiki/Khanate_of_Khiva) and [Kokand](/wiki/Khanate_of_Kokand).

In the 19th century, the [Russian Empire](/wiki/Russian_Empire) began to expand and spread into [Central Asia](/wiki/Central_Asia). There were 210,306 Russians living in Uzbekistan in 1912.[[20]](#cite_note-20) The "[Great Game](/wiki/Great_Game)" period is generally regarded as running from approximately 1813 to the [Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907](/wiki/Anglo-Russian_Convention_of_1907). A second, less intensive phase followed the [Bolshevik Revolution](/wiki/October_Revolution) of 1917. At the start of the 19th century, there were some [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) separating [British India](/wiki/British_India) and the outlying regions of [Tsarist Russia](/wiki/Imperial_Russia). Much of the land in-between was unmapped.

By the beginning of 1920, Central Asia was firmly in the hands of Russia and, despite some early resistance to the [Bolsheviks](/wiki/Bolsheviks), Uzbekistan and the rest of the Central Asia became a part of the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union). On 27 October 1924 the [Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic](/wiki/Uzbek_Soviet_Socialist_Republic) was created. From 1941 to 1945, during [World War II](/wiki/World_War_II), 1,433,230 people from Uzbekistan fought in the [Red Army](/wiki/Red_Army) against [Nazi Germany](/wiki/Nazi_Germany). A number also [fought on the German side](/wiki/Ostlegionen). As many as 263,005 Uzbek soldiers died in the battlefields of the [Eastern Front](/wiki/Eastern_Front_(World_War_II)), and 32,670 went missing in action.[[21]](#cite_note-21) On 31 August 1991, with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan declared independence. 1 September was proclaimed the National Independence Day.

## Politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

[thumb|right|The](/wiki/File:Oliy_Majlis_(Parliament_of_Uzbekistan).jpg) [Legislative Chamber of the Supreme Assembly](/wiki/Legislative_Chamber_of_Uzbekistan) (Lower House). [thumb|](/wiki/File:Islam_karimov_cropped.jpg)[Islam Karimov](/wiki/Islam_Karimov), president of Uzbekistan, during a visit to the Pentagon in 2002.

After Uzbekistan declared independence from the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union) in 1991, an election was held, and [Islam Karimov](/wiki/Islam_Karimov) was elected as the [first President](/wiki/List_of_Presidents_of_Uzbekistan) of Uzbekistan.

The elections of the Oliy Majlis (Parliament or [Supreme Assembly](/wiki/Supreme_Assembly_(Uzbekistan))) were held under a resolution adopted by the 16th Supreme Soviet in 1994. In that year, the Supreme Soviet was replaced by the Oliy Majlis.

The third elections for the bicameral 150–member Oliy Majlis, the Legislative Chamber, and the 100–member Senate for five-year terms, were held on 27 December 2009. The second elections that were held in December 2004–05. The Oliy Majlis was unicameral up to 2004. Its size increased from 69 deputies (members) in 1994 to 120 in 2004–05, and currently stands at 150.

The referendum passed, and Islam Karimov's term was extended by an act of parliament to December 2007. Most international observers refused to participate in the process and did not recognize the results, dismissing them as not meeting basic standards. The 2002 referendum also included a plan for a bicameral parliament consisting of a lower house (the Oliy Majlis) and an upper house (Senate). Members of the lower house are to be "full-time" legislators. Elections for the new bicameral parliament took place on 26 December.

## Human rights[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan asserts that "democracy in the Republic of Uzbekistan shall be based upon common human principles, according to which the highest value shall be the human being, his life, freedom, honour, dignity and other inalienable rights."

The official position is summarised in a memorandum "The measures taken by the government of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the field of providing and encouraging human rights"[[22]](#cite_note-22) and amounts to the following: the government does everything that is in its power to protect and to guarantee the human rights of Uzbekistan's citizens. Uzbekistan continuously improves its laws and institutions in order to create a more humane society. Over 300 laws regulating the rights and basic freedoms of the people have been passed by the parliament. For instance, an office of [Ombudsman](/wiki/Ombudsman) was established in 1996.[[23]](#cite_note-23) On 2 August 2005, President Islam Karimov signed a decree that abolished capital punishment in Uzbekistan on 1 January 2008.[[24]](#cite_note-24) According to the new reports on violations on human rights in Uzbekistan prove that violations are still going on without any improvement.[[25]](#cite_note-25)[Old Uzbek man from central Uzbekistan.|thumb](/wiki/File:Uzbek_man_from_central_Uzbekistan.jpg) However, [non-governmental](/wiki/Non-governmental_organization) human rights [watchdogs](/wiki/Wikt:watchdog), such as [IHF](/wiki/International_Helsinki_Federation_for_Human_Rights), [Human Rights Watch](/wiki/Human_Rights_Watch), [Amnesty International](/wiki/Amnesty_International), as well as [United States Department of State](/wiki/United_States_Department_of_State) and [Council of the European Union](/wiki/Council_of_the_European_Union) define Uzbekistan as "an authoritarian state with limited civil rights"[[26]](#cite_note-26) and express profound concern about "wide-scale violation of virtually all basic human rights".[[27]](#cite_note-27)According to the reports, the most widespread violations are [torture](/wiki/Torture), [arbitrary arrests](/wiki/Arbitrary_arrest_and_detention), and various restrictions of freedoms: of religion, of speech and press, of free association and assembly. It has also been reported that forced sterilization of rural Uzbek women has been sanctioned by the government.[[28]](#cite_note-28)[[29]](#cite_note-29)The reports maintain that the violations are most often committed against members of religious organizations, independent journalists, human rights activists and political activists, including members of the banned opposition parties.

The [2005 civil unrest in Uzbekistan](/wiki/2005_civil_unrest_in_Uzbekistan), which resulted in several hundred people being killed, is viewed by many as a landmark event in the history of human rights abuse in Uzbekistan.[[30]](#cite_note-30)[[31]](#cite_note-31)[[32]](#cite_note-32)A concern has been expressed and a request for an independent investigation of the events has been made by the United States, European Union, the [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations), the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

The government of Uzbekistan is accused of unlawful termination of human life and of denying its citizens [freedom of assembly](/wiki/Freedom_of_assembly) and freedom of expression. The government vehemently rebuffs the accusations, maintaining that it merely conducted an anti-terrorist operation, exercising only necessary force.[[33]](#cite_note-33) In addition, some officials claim that "an information war on Uzbekistan has been declared" and the human rights violations in Andijan are invented by the enemies of Uzbekistan as a convenient pretext for intervention in the country's internal affairs.[[34]](#cite_note-34) Uzbekistan also maintains the world's second highest rate of human slavery with 3.97%[[35]](#cite_note-35) of the country's men, women and children living in bondage to slave masters in both domestic and industrial labour. In real terms, this means that there are currently 1.2 million slaves[[35]](#cite_note-35) in Uzbekistan.

## Administrative divisions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Uzbekistan is divided into twelve [provinces](/wiki/Province) (*viloyatlar*, singular [*viloyat*](/wiki/Viloyat), compound noun *viloyati* e.g., Toshkent *viloyati*, Samarqand *viloyati*, etc.), one [autonomous republic](/wiki/Autonomous_republic) (*respublika*, compound noun *respublikasi* e.g. Qoraqalpogʻiston Muxtor *Respublikasi*, Karakalpakstan *Autonomous Republic*, etc.), and one [independent city](/wiki/Independent_city) (*shahar*, compound noun *shahri*, e.g., Toshkent *shahri*). Names are given below in the [Uzbek language](/wiki/Uzbek_language), although numerous variations of the transliterations of each name exist.

[thumb|right|350px|Political Map of Uzbekistan](/wiki/File:Uzbekistan_provinces.png)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Division** | **Capital City** | **Area (km²)** | **Population (2008)**[**[36]**](#cite_note-36) | **Key** |
| [**Andijan Region**](/wiki/Andijan_Region) *Andijon Viloyati* | [Andijan](/wiki/Andijan) *Andijon* ||4,200 || 2,477,900 || 2 |  |  |  |
| [**Bukhara Region**](/wiki/Bukhara_Region) *Buxoro Viloyati* | [Bukhara](/wiki/Bukhara) *Buxoro* || 39,400 || 1,576,800 || 3 |  |  |  |
| [**Fergana Region**](/wiki/Fergana_Region) *Fargʻona Viloyati* | [Fergana](/wiki/Fergana) *Fargʻona* || 6,800 || 2,997,400 || 4 |  |  |  |
| [**Jizzakh Region**](/wiki/Jizzakh_Region) *Jizzax Viloyati* | [Jizzakh](/wiki/Jizzakh) *Jizzax* || 20,500 || 1,090,900 || 5 |  |  |  |
| [**Karakalpakstan Republic**](/wiki/Karakalpakstan) [Karakalpak](/wiki/Karakalpak_language): *Qaraqalpaqstan Respublikasiʻ* [Uzbek](/wiki/Uzbek_language): *Qoraqalpogʻiston Respublikasi* | [Nukus](/wiki/Nukus) *No‘kis* *Nukus* || 160,000 || 1,612,300 || 14 |  |  |  |
| [**Kashkadarya Region**](/wiki/Qashqadaryo_Region) *Qashqadaryo Viloyati* | [Karshi](/wiki/Qarshi) *Qarshi* || 28,400 || 2,537,600 || 8 |  |  |  |
| [**Khorezm Region**](/wiki/Xorazm_Region) *Xorazm Viloyati* | [Urgench](/wiki/Urgench) *Urganch* || 6,300　|| 1,517,600 || 13 |  |  |  |
| [**Namangan Region**](/wiki/Namangan_Region) *Namangan Viloyati* | [Namangan](/wiki/Namangan) *Namangan* ||7,900 || 2,196,200 || 6 |  |  |  |
| [**Navoiy Region**](/wiki/Navoiy_Region) *Navoiy Viloyati* | [Navoiy](/wiki/Navoiy) *Navoiy* || 110,800 || 834,100 || 7 |  |  |  |
| [**Samarkand Region**](/wiki/Samarqand_Region) *Samarqand Viloyati* | [Samarkand](/wiki/Samarkand) *Samarqand* || 16,400　|| 3,032,000 || 9 |  |  |  |
| [**Surkhandarya Region**](/wiki/Surxondaryo_Region) *Surxondaryo Viloyati* | [Termez](/wiki/Termez) *Termiz* || 20,800 || 2,012,600 || 11 |  |  |  |
| [**Syrdarya Region**](/wiki/Sirdaryo_Region) *Sirdaryo Viloyati* | [Gulistan](/wiki/Guliston) *Guliston* || 5,100 || 698,100 || 10 |  |  |  |
| [**Tashkent City**](/wiki/Tashkent) *Toshkent Shahri* | [Tashkent](/wiki/Tashkent) *Toshkent* || 335 || 2,352,900 || 1 |  |  |  |
| [**Tashkent Region**](/wiki/Tashkent_Region) *Toshkent Viloyati* | [Tashkent](/wiki/Tashkent) *Toshkent* || 15,300　|| 2,537,500 || 12 |  |  |  |

The statistics for Toshkent Viloyati also include the statistics for Toshkent Shahri.

The provinces are further divided into [districts](/wiki/Districts_of_Uzbekistan) (*tuman*).

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|left|Tashkent](/wiki/File:Tashkent_Downtown.jpg)

[thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Samarkand_view_from_the_top.jpg)[Samarkand](/wiki/Samarkand)

Uzbekistan has the fourth largest gold deposits in the world. The country mines 80 tons of gold annually, seventh in the world. Uzbekistan's copper deposits rank tenth in the world and its uranium deposits twelfth. The country's uranium production ranks seventh globally.[[37]](#cite_note-37)[[38]](#cite_note-38)[[39]](#cite_note-39) The Uzbek national gas company, [Uzbekneftegas](/wiki/Uzbekneftegas), ranks 11th in the world in natural gas production with an annual output of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). The country has significant untapped reserves of oil and gas: there are 194 deposits of hydrocarbons in Uzbekistan, including 98 condensate and natural gas deposits and 96 gas condensate deposits.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

The largest corporations involved in Uzbekistan's energy sector are the [China National Petroleum Corporation](/wiki/China_National_Petroleum_Corporation) (CNPC), [Petronas](/wiki/Petronas), the [Korea National Oil Corporation](/wiki/Korea_National_Oil_Corporation), [Gazprom](/wiki/Gazprom), [Lukoil](/wiki/Lukoil), and [Uzbekneftegas](/wiki/Uzbekneftegas).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Along with many [Commonwealth of Independent States](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Independent_States) or CIS economies, Uzbekistan's economy declined during the first years of transition and then recovered after 1995, as the cumulative effect of policy reforms began to be felt.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) It has shown robust growth, rising by 4% per year between 1998 and 2003 and accelerating thereafter to 7%–8% per year. According to IMF estimates,<ref name=imf>[IMF World Economic Outlook Database](http://www.imf.org/external/data.htm), October 2007</ref> the GDP in 2008 will be almost double its value in 1995 (in constant prices). Since 2003 annual inflation rates averaged less than 10%.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Uzbekistan has GNI per capita (US$1,900 in current dollars in 2013, giving a [PPP](/wiki/Purchasing_power_parity) equivalent of US$3,800).[[40]](#cite_note-40) Economic production is concentrated in commodities. In 2011, Uzbekistan was the world's seventh-largest producer and fifth-largest exporter of cotton[[41]](#cite_note-41) as well as the seventh largest world producer of gold. It is also a regionally significant producer of natural gas, coal, copper, oil, silver and uranium.[[42]](#cite_note-42) [Agriculture](/wiki/Agriculture_in_Uzbekistan) employs 26% of Uzbekistan's labour force and contributes 18% of its GDP (2012 data).<ref name=uzstat/> Cultivable land is 4.4 million hectares, or about 10% of Uzbekistan's total area. While official unemployment is very low, underemployment – especially in rural areas – is estimated to be at least 20%.<ref name=cia1/> At cotton-harvest time, all students and teachers are still mobilized as unpaid labour to help in the fields.[[43]](#cite_note-43) Uzbek cotton is even used to make banknotes in South Korea.[[44]](#cite_note-44) The use of child labour in Uzbekistan has led several companies, including Tesco,[[45]](#cite_note-45) C&A,[[46]](#cite_note-46) Marks & Spencer, Gap, and H&M, to boycott Uzbek cotton.[[47]](#cite_note-47) Facing a multitude of economic challenges upon acquiring independence, the government adopted an evolutionary reform strategy, with an emphasis on state control, reduction of imports and self-sufficiency in energy. Since 1994, the state-controlled media have repeatedly proclaimed the success of this "Uzbekistan Economic Model"[[48]](#cite_note-48) and suggested that it is a unique example of a smooth transition to the market economy while avoiding shock, pauperism and stagnation.

The gradualist reform strategy has involved postponing significant macroeconomic and structural reforms. The state in the hands of the [bureaucracy](/wiki/New_class) has remained a dominant influence in the economy. Corruption permeates the society and grows more rampant over time: Uzbekistan's 2005 [Corruption Perception Index](/wiki/Corruption_Perception_Index) was 137 out of 159 countries, whereas in 2007 Uzbekistan was 175th out of 179 countries. A February 2006 report on the country by the [International Crisis Group](/wiki/International_Crisis_Group) suggests that revenues earned from key exports, especially cotton, gold, corn and increasingly gas, are distributed among a very small circle of the ruling elite, with little or no benefit for the populace at large.[[49]](#cite_note-49) The recent high-profile corruption scandals involving government contracts and large international companies, notably TeliaSoneria, have shown that businesses are particularly vulnerable to corruption when operating in Uzbekistan.[[50]](#cite_note-50) According to the [Economist Intelligence Unit](/wiki/Economist_Intelligence_Unit), "the government is hostile to allowing the development of an independent private sector, over which it would have no control".[[51]](#cite_note-51) The economic policies have repelled foreign investment, which is the lowest per capita in the CIS.[[52]](#cite_note-52) For years, the largest barrier to foreign companies entering the Uzbekistan market has been the difficulty of converting currency. In 2003 the government accepted the obligations of Article VIII under the [International Monetary Fund](/wiki/International_Monetary_Fund) (IMF)[[53]](#cite_note-53) providing for full currency convertibility. However, strict currency controls and the tightening of borders have lessened the effect of this measure.

Uzbekistan experienced rampant [inflation](/wiki/Inflation) of around 1000% per year immediately after independence (1992–1994). Stabilisation efforts implemented with guidance from the IMF[[54]](#cite_note-54) paid off. The inflation rates were brought down to 50% in 1997 and then to 22% in 2002. Since 2003 annual inflation rates averaged less than 10%.<ref name=imf/> Tight economic policies in 2004 resulted in a drastic reduction of inflation to 3.8% (although alternative estimates based on the price of a true [market basket](/wiki/Market_basket), put it at 15%).[[55]](#cite_note-55) The inflation rates moved up to 6.9% in 2006 and 7.6% in 2007 but have remained in the single-digit range.[[56]](#cite_note-56) The government of Uzbekistan restricts foreign imports in many ways, including high import duties. Excise taxes are applied in a highly discriminatory manner to protect locally produced goods. Official tariffs are combined with unofficial, discriminatory charges resulting in total charges amounting to as much as 100 to 150% of the actual value of the product, making imported products virtually unaffordable.[[57]](#cite_note-57) [Import substitution](/wiki/Import_substitution) is an officially declared policy and the government proudly reports a reduction by a factor of two in the volume of consumer goods imported. A number of CIS countries are officially exempt from Uzbekistan import duties.

The [Republican Stock Exchange](/wiki/Tashkent_Stock_Exchange) (RSE) opened in 1994. The stocks of all Uzbek joint stock companies (around 1250) are traded on RSE. The number of listed companies as of January 2013 exceeds 110. Securities market volume reached 2 trillion in 2012, and the number is rapidly growing due to the rising interest by companies of attracting necessary resources through the capital market. According to Central Depository as of January 2013 par value of outstanding shares of Uzbek emitters exceeded 9 trillion.

Uzbekistan's external position has been strong since 2003.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Thanks in part to the recovery of world market prices of gold and cotton (the country's key export commodities), expanded natural gas and some manufacturing exports, and increasing labour migrant transfers, the current account turned into a large surplus (between 9% and 11% of GDP from 2003 to 2005) and foreign exchange reserves, including gold, more than doubled to around US$3 billion.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Foreign exchange reserves amounted in 2010 to 13 billion US$.[[58]](#cite_note-58) Uzbekistan is considered one of the fastest growing economies in the world (top 26) in the next decades according to a global bank HSBC survey[[59]](#cite_note-59)

## Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

[thumb|Newlywed couples visit](/wiki/File:Jeunes_Mariés_dans_le_parc_dAk_Saray_(Shahrisabz)_(6018352949).jpg) [Tamerlane's](/wiki/Tamerlane) statues to receive wedding blessings. [thumb|Uzbek children](/wiki/File:Uzbek_Kids.JPG) Uzbekistan is Central Asia's most populous country. Its 31,576,400[[60]](#cite_note-60) citizens comprise nearly half the region's total population. The population of Uzbekistan is very young: 34.1% of its people are younger than 14 (2008 estimate).<ref name=cia1/> According to official sources, [Uzbeks](/wiki/Uzbeks) comprise a majority (80%) of the total population. Other ethnic groups include [Russians](/wiki/Russians) 5.5%, [Tajiks](/wiki/Tājik_people) 5% (official estimate and disputed), [Kazakhs](/wiki/Kazakhs) 3%, [Karakalpaks](/wiki/Karakalpaks) 2.5% and [Tatars](/wiki/Tatars) 1.5% (1996 estimates).<ref name=cia1/>

There is some controversy about the percentage of the Tajik population. While official state numbers from Uzbekistan put the number at 5%, the number is said to be an understatement and some Western scholars put the number up to 20%–30%.[[61]](#cite_note-61)[[62]](#cite_note-62)<ref name=Foltz2>[Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)</ref>[[63]](#cite_note-63) The Uzbeks intermixed with [Sarts](/wiki/Sart), a Turko-Persian population of Central Asia. Today, the majority of Uzbeks are admixed and can trace their ancestry to the [Mongols](/wiki/Mongols) and the [Iranian peoples](/wiki/Iranian_peoples).[[64]](#cite_note-64) Uzbekistan has an ethnic [Korean](/wiki/Koreans) population that was [forcibly relocated](/wiki/Deportation_of_Koreans_in_the_Soviet_Union) to the region by Stalin from the [Soviet Far East](/wiki/Russian_Far_East) in 1937–1938. There are also small groups of [Armenians in Uzbekistan](/wiki/Armenians_in_Uzbekistan), mostly in Tashkent and Samarkand. The nation is 88% Muslim (mostly [Sunni](/wiki/Sunnis), with a 5% [Shi'a](/wiki/Shi'a) minority), 9% [Eastern Orthodox](/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox) and 3% other faiths. The U.S. State Department's International Religious Freedom Report 2004 reports that 0.2% of the population are [Buddhist](/wiki/Buddhist) (these being ethnic Koreans). The [Bukharan Jews](/wiki/Bukharan_Jews) have lived in Central Asia, mostly in Uzbekistan, for thousands of years. There were 94,900 [Jews](/wiki/Jew) in Uzbekistan in 1989<ref name=Jews2001>[World Jewish Population 2001](http://www.ajcarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/2001_13_WJP.pdf), *American Jewish Yearbook*, vol. 101 (2001), p. 561.</ref> (about 0.5% of the population according to the [1989 census](/wiki/Ethnic_groups_in_Uzbekistan)), but now, since the [dissolution of the Soviet Union](/wiki/Dissolution_of_the_Soviet_Union), most Central Asian Jews left the region for the United States, Germany, or [Israel](/wiki/Israel). Fewer than 5,000 Jews remained in Uzbekistan in 2007.<ref name=Jews2007>[World Jewish Population 2007](http://www.ajcarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/AJYB727.CV.pdf), *American Jewish Yearbook*, vol. 107 (2007), p. 592.</ref>

[Russians in Uzbekistan](/wiki/Russians_in_Uzbekistan) represent 5.5% of the total population. During the Soviet period, Russians and [Ukrainians](/wiki/Ukrainians) constituted more than half the population of [Tashkent](/wiki/Tashkent).[[65]](#cite_note-65) The country counted nearly 1.5 million Russians, 12.5% of the population, in the 1970 census.[[66]](#cite_note-66) After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, significant emigration of ethnic Russians has taken place, mostly for economic reasons.[[67]](#cite_note-67) In the 1940s, the Crimean Tatars, along with the [Volga Germans](/wiki/Volga_Germans), Chechens, Pontic Greeks, Kumaks and many other nationalities were [deported](/wiki/Population_transfer_in_the_Soviet_Union) to Central Asia.[[68]](#cite_note-68) Approximately 100,000 [Crimean Tatars](/wiki/Crimean_Tatars) continue to live in Uzbekistan.[[69]](#cite_note-69) The number of [Greeks](/wiki/Greeks_in_Uzbekistan) in Tashkent has decreased from 35,000 in 1974 to about 12,000 in 2004.[[70]](#cite_note-70) The majority of [Meskhetian Turks](/wiki/Meskhetian_Turks) left the country after the [pogroms](/wiki/Pogrom) in the Fergana valley in June 1989.[[71]](#cite_note-71) At least 10% of Uzbekistan's labour force works abroad (mostly in Russia and [Kazakhstan](/wiki/Kazakhstan)).[[72]](#cite_note-72) Uzbekistan has a 99.3% literacy rate among adults older than 15 (2003 estimate),<ref name=cia1/> which is attributable to the free and universal education system of the Soviet Union.

### Largest cities[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:Largest cities of Uzbekistan](/wiki/Template:Largest_cities_of_Uzbekistan)

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Bar box](/wiki/Template:Bar_box) [thumb|left|Shakh-i Zindeh mosque, Samarkand.](/wiki/File:Gorskii_03978u.jpg) [thumb|right|Mosque of](/wiki/File:Bukhara_Mosque_(3914419545).jpg) [Bukhara](/wiki/Bukhara). Islam is by far the dominant religion in Uzbekistan, as [Muslims](/wiki/Muslims) constitute 90% of the population while 5% of the population follow [Russian Orthodox Christianity](/wiki/Russian_Orthodox), and 5% of the population follow other religions according to a 2009 [US State Department](/wiki/US_State_Department) release.[[73]](#cite_note-73) However, a 2009 [Pew Research Center](/wiki/Pew_Research_Center) report stated that Uzbekistan's population is 96.3% Muslim.[[74]](#cite_note-74) An estimated 93,000 [Jews](/wiki/Jews) were once present in the country.[[75]](#cite_note-75) Despite its predominance, the practice of [Islam](/wiki/Islam) is far from monolithic. Many versions of the faith have been practised in Uzbekistan. The conflict of Islamic tradition with various agendas of [reform](/wiki/Reform_movement) or [secularization](/wiki/Secularization) throughout the 20th century has left the outside world with a wide variety of Islamic practices in [Central Asia](/wiki/Central_Asia).[[75]](#cite_note-75) 54% of Muslims are [non-denominational Muslims](/wiki/Non-denominational_Muslims), 18% are [Sunnis](/wiki/Sunni) and 1% are [Shias](/wiki/Shia).[[76]](#cite_note-76) The end of Soviet power in Uzbekistan did not bring an upsurge of [fundamentalism](/wiki/Fundamentalism), as many had predicted, but rather a gradual re-acquaintance with the precepts of the faith.

#### Jewish community[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) According to local traditions Jews began to settle in the area 2,000 years ago after the exile from the kingdom of Israel by the Babylonians. Other traditions focus on Jewish merchants settling in the area of the [silk road](/wiki/Silk_road) and Jews that came to the area after Persian persecutions some 1,500 years ago.

The Jewish community flourished for centuries with occasional hardships during the reign of certain rulers. During the rule of [Tamerlane](/wiki/Tamerlane) in the 14th century Jews contributed greatly to his efforts to rebuild Samarkand and a great Jewish centre was established there. However, after Tamerlane's death Jews endured harsh treatment, strict Muslim authorities enacted humiliating and restrictive rules forbidding Jews from living outside the Jewish quarter. Jewish gates and shops had to be built lower than those of the Muslims. Jews had to wear a black cap and a cord belt, and accounts by Jewish witnesses in court were not valid for Muslims.[[77]](#cite_note-77) After the area came under Russian rule in 1868, Jews were granted equal rights with the local population. In that period some 50,000 Jews lived in [Samarkand](/wiki/Samarkand) and 20,000 in [Bukhara](/wiki/Bukhara). After the Russian revolution in 1917 and the establishment of the Soviet regime Jewish religious life was restricted. By 1935 only one synagogue out of 35 was left in Samarkand; nevertheless, underground community life continued during the Soviet era.

During WWII tens of thousands of Jews from the European parts of the Soviet Union arrived in Uzbekistan as refugees or were exiled by Stalin. By 1970 there were 103,000 Jews registered in the republic.[[77]](#cite_note-77) At the late 1980s with the rise of nationalistic riots as a result of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, damaging, among others, the Jewish quarter in [Andijan](/wiki/Andijan), most of the Jews of Uzbekistan emigrated to Israel and to the US. A small community of several thousands remains today in the country: some 7,000 live in Tashkent, 3,000 in Bukhara and 700 in Samarkand.[[78]](#cite_note-78)

### Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|upright|A page in](/wiki/File:Adib-i_sani.jpg) [Uzbek language](/wiki/Uzbek_language) written in [Nastaʿlīq](/wiki/Nastaʿlīq) script printed in Tashkent 1911 The Uzbek language is one of the [Turkic languages](/wiki/Turkic_languages) close to [Uyghur language](/wiki/Uyghur_language) and both of them belong to the [Karluk languages](/wiki/Karluk_languages) branch of the Turkic language family. Uzbek language is the only official state language,[[79]](#cite_note-79) and since 1992 is officially written in the [Latin alphabet](/wiki/Latin_alphabet). The [Tajik language](/wiki/Tajik_language) is widespread in the cities of [Bukhara](/wiki/Bukhara) and [Samarkand](/wiki/Samarkand) because of their relatively large population of ethnic [Tajiks](/wiki/Tajik_people).[[80]](#cite_note-80) It is also found in large pockets in Kasan, Chust and Rishton in [Fergana](/wiki/Fergana) valley, as well as in Ahangaran, Baghistan in the middle [Syr Darya](/wiki/Syr_Darya) district, and finally in, [Shahrisabz](/wiki/Shahrisabz), Kitab and the river valleys of Kafiringan and Chaganian, forming altogether, approximately 10–15% of the population of Uzbekistan.[[61]](#cite_note-61)[[62]](#cite_note-62)[[80]](#cite_note-80) [Karakalpak language](/wiki/Karakalpak_language), is also a Turkic language closer to [Kazakh](/wiki/Kazakh_language), is spoken in the [Republic of Karakalpakstan](/wiki/Karakalpakstan) and has an official status there.

[Russian](/wiki/Russian_language) is an important language for interethnic communication, especially in the cities, including much day-to-day technical, scientific, governmental and business use. Russian is the main language of over 14% of the population and is spoken as a second language by many more. The use of Russian in remote rural areas has always been limited, and today most school children have no proficiency in Russian even in urban centres. However, it was reported in 2003 that over half of the population could speak and understand Russian, and a renewed close political relationship between Russia and Uzbekistan has meant that official discouragement of Russian has dropped off sharply.[[81]](#cite_note-81) Before the 1920s, the written language of Uzbeks was called Turki (known to Western scholars as Chagatay) and used the [Nastaʿlīq](/wiki/Nastaʿlīq) script. In 1926 the Latin alphabet was introduced and went through several revisions throughout the 1930s. Finally, in 1940, the Cyrillic alphabet was introduced by Soviet authorities and was used until the fall of Soviet Union. In 1993 Uzbekistan shifted back to the Latin script, which was modified in 1996 and is being taught in schools since 2005.[[82]](#cite_note-82) Nevertheless, many signs and notices (including official government boards in the streets) are still written in Uzbek Cyrillic script[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed).

## Communications[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) According to the official source report, as of 10 March 2008, the number of cellular phone users in Uzbekistan reached 7 million, up from 3.7 million on 1 July 2007.[[83]](#cite_note-83) The largest mobile operator in terms of number of subscribers is MTS-Uzbekistan (former [Uzdunrobita](/wiki/Uzdunrobita) and part of Russian Mobile TeleSystems) and it is followed by Beeline (part of Russia's Beeline) and UCell (ex Coscom) (originally part of the U.S. MCT Corp., now a subsidiary of the Nordic/Baltic telecommunication company [TeliaSonera](/wiki/TeliaSonera) AB).[[84]](#cite_note-84) As of 1 July 2007, the estimated number of internet users was 1.8 million, according to UzACI.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

[Internet Censorship](/wiki/Internet_Censorship) exists in Uzbekistan and in October 2012 the government toughened internet censorship by blocking access to proxy servers.[[85]](#cite_note-85) [Reporters Without Borders](/wiki/Reporters_Without_Borders) has named Uzbekistan's government an "Enemy of the Internet" and government control over the internet has increased dramatically since the start of the [Arab Spring](/wiki/Arab_Spring).[[86]](#cite_note-86) The press in Uzbekistan practices [self-censorship](/wiki/Self-censorship) and foreign journalists have been gradually expelled from the country since the [Andijan massacre](/wiki/Andijan_massacre) of 2005 when government troops fired into crowds of protesters killing 187 according to official reports and estimates of several hundred by unofficial and witness accounts.[[86]](#cite_note-86)

## Transportation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [right|thumb|Central Station of Tashkent](/wiki/File:Tashkent_Station.JPG) [thumb|right|Afrosiyob high-speed train built by Spanish company Talgo](/wiki/File:Hi-speed_trains_Afrosiyab_(Uzbekistan).JPG) [Tashkent](/wiki/Tashkent), the nation's capital and largest city, has a three-line [rapid transit system](/wiki/Rapid_transit) built in 1977, and expanded in 2001 after ten years' independence from the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union). Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are currently the only two countries in Central Asia with a subway system. It is promoted as one of the cleanest systems in the former Soviet Union.[[87]](#cite_note-87) The stations are exceedingly ornate. For example, the station *Metro Kosmonavtov* built in 1984 is decorated using a [space travel](/wiki/Human_spaceflight) theme to recognise the achievements of mankind in space exploration and to commemorate the role of [Vladimir Dzhanibekov](/wiki/Vladimir_Dzhanibekov), the Soviet [cosmonaut](/wiki/Cosmonaut) of Uzbek origin. A statue of Vladimir Dzhanibekov stands near a station entrance.

There are government-operated trams and buses running across the city. There are also many taxis, registered and unregistered. Uzbekistan has plants that produce modern cars. The car production is supported by the government and the Korean auto company [Daewoo](/wiki/Daewoo). The Uzbek government acquired a 50% stake in Daewoo in 2005[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) for an undisclosed sum. In May 2007 [UzDaewooAuto](/wiki/UzDaewooAuto), the car maker, signed a strategic agreement with General Motors-Daewoo Auto and Technology ([GMDAT](/wiki/GM_Daewoo), see [GM Uzbekistan](/wiki/En:GM_Uzbekistan) also).[[88]](#cite_note-88) The government bought a stake in Turkey's Koc in [SamKochAvto](/wiki/SamKochAvto), a producer of small buses and lorries. Afterward, it signed an agreement with [Isuzu Motors](/wiki/Isuzu) of Japan to produce Isuzu buses and lorries.[[89]](#cite_note-89) Train links connect many towns in Uzbekistan, as well as neighboring former republics of the Soviet Union. Moreover, after independence two fast-running train systems were established. Uzbekistan has launched the first [high-speed railway in Central Asia](/wiki/Tashkent–Samarkand_high-speed_rail_line) in September 2011 between [Tashkent](/wiki/Tashkent) and [Samarqand](/wiki/Samarqand). The new high-speed electric train [Talgo 250](/wiki/Talgo_250), called *Afrosiyob*, was manufactured by [Patentes Talgo S.L.](/wiki/Talgo) (Spain) and took its first trip from Tashkent to Samarkand on 26 August 2011.[[90]](#cite_note-90) There is a large airplane plant that was built during the Soviet era – [Tashkent Chkalov Aviation Manufacturing Plant](/wiki/Tashkent_Aviation_Production_Association) or ТАПОиЧ in Russian. The plant originated during World War II, when production facilities were evacuated south and east to avoid capture by advancing Nazi forces. Until the late 1980s, the plant was one of the leading airplane production centers in the USSR. With dissolution of the Soviet Union its manufacturing equipment became outdated; most of the workers were laid off. Now it produces only a few planes a year, but with interest from Russian companies growing, there are rumours of production-enhancement plans.

## Military[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

[thumb|right|Uzbek troops during a cooperative operation exercise.](/wiki/File:Ukbekistani_troops.jpg) With close to 65,000 servicemen, Uzbekistan possesses the largest armed forces in Central Asia. The military structure is largely inherited from the [Turkestan Military District](/wiki/Turkestan_Military_District) of the [Soviet Army](/wiki/Soviet_Army), although it is going through a reform to be based mainly on motorized infantry with some light and special forces[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed). The Uzbek Armed Forces' equipment is not modern, and training, while improving, is neither uniform nor adequate for its new mission of territorial security[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed).

The government has accepted the arms control obligations of the former Soviet Union, acceded to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (as a non-nuclear state), and supported an active program by the U.S. [Defense Threat Reduction Agency](/wiki/Defense_Threat_Reduction_Agency) (DTRA) in western Uzbekistan ([Nukus](/wiki/Nukus) and [Vozrozhdeniye Island](/wiki/Vozrozhdeniye_Island)). The Government of Uzbekistan spends about 3.7% of GDP on the military but has received a growing infusion of Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and other security assistance funds since 1998.

Following 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the U.S., Uzbekistan approved the [U.S. Central Command's](/wiki/U.S._Central_Command) request for access to an air base, the [Karshi-Khanabad](/wiki/Karshi-Khanabad) airfield, in southern Uzbekistan. However, Uzbekistan demanded that the U.S. withdraw from the airbases after the [Andijan massacre](/wiki/Andijan_massacre) and the U.S. reaction to this massacre. The last US troops left Uzbekistan in November 2005.

On 23 June 2006, Uzbekistan became a full participant in the [Collective Security Treaty Organization](/wiki/Collective_Security_Treaty_Organization) (CSTO), but informed the CSTO to suspend its membership in June 2012.[[91]](#cite_note-91)

## Foreign relations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Clarence_Moore_House.JPG)[Embassy of Uzbekistan](/wiki/Embassy_of_Uzbekistan_in_Washington,_D.C.) in [Washington, D.C.](/wiki/Washington,_D.C.). Uzbekistan joined the [Commonwealth of Independent States](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Independent_States) in December 1991. However, it is opposed to reintegration and withdrew from the CIS collective security arrangement in 1999. Since that time, Uzbekistan has participated in the CIS peacekeeping force in Tajikistan and in UN-organized groups to help resolve the Tajikistan and Afghanistan conflicts, both of which it sees as posing threats to its own stability.

Previously close to Washington (which gave Uzbekistan half a billion dollars in aid in 2004, about a quarter of its military budget), the government of Uzbekistan has recently restricted American military use of the airbase at [Karshi-Khanabad](/wiki/Karshi-Khanabad) for air operations in neighboring Afghanistan.[[92]](#cite_note-92) Uzbekistan was an active supporter of U.S. efforts against worldwide terrorism and joined the coalitions that have dealt with both Afghanistan and Iraq.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

The relationship between Uzbekistan and the United States began to deteriorate after the so-called "[colour revolutions](/wiki/Colour_revolutions)" in [Georgia](/wiki/Georgia_(country)) and [Ukraine](/wiki/Ukraine) (and to a lesser extent [Kyrgyzstan](/wiki/Kyrgyzstan)). When the U.S. joined in a call for an independent international investigation of the bloody events at [Andijan](/wiki/Andijan_massacre), the relationship further declined, and President Islam Karimov changed the political alignment of the country to bring it closer to Russia and China.

In late July 2005, the government of Uzbekistan ordered the United States to vacate an air base in Karshi-Kanabad (near Uzbekistan's border with Afghanistan) within 180 days. Karimov had offered use of the base to the U.S. shortly after [9/11](/wiki/9/11). It is also believed by some Uzbeks that the protests in Andijan were brought about by the U.K. and U.S. influences in the area of Andijan. This is another reason for the hostility between Uzbekistan and the West.

Uzbekistan is a member of the [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations) (UN) (since 2 March 1992), the [Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council](/wiki/Euro-Atlantic_Partnership_Council) (EAPC), [Partnership for Peace](/wiki/Partnership_for_Peace) (PfP), and the [Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe](/wiki/Organisation_for_Security_and_Cooperation_in_Europe) (OSCE). It belongs to the [Organisation of Islamic Cooperation](/wiki/Organisation_of_Islamic_Cooperation) (OIC) and the [Economic Cooperation Organisation](/wiki/Economic_Cooperation_Organisation) (ECO) (comprising the five Central Asian countries, [Azerbaijan](/wiki/Azerbaijan), [Iran](/wiki/Iran), [Turkey](/wiki/Turkey), [Afghanistan](/wiki/Afghanistan), and [Pakistan](/wiki/Pakistan)). In 1999, Uzbekistan joined the [GUAM](/wiki/GUAM) alliance (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and [Moldova](/wiki/Moldova)), which was formed in 1997 (making it GUUAM), but pulled out of the organization in 2005.

Uzbekistan is also a member of the [Shanghai Cooperation Organisation](/wiki/Shanghai_Cooperation_Organisation) (SCO) and hosts the SCO’s Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent. Uzbekistan joined the new [Central Asian Cooperation Organisation](/wiki/Central_Asian_Cooperation_Organisation) (CACO) in 2002. The CACO consists of Uzbekistan, [Tajikistan](/wiki/Tajikistan), [Kazakhstan](/wiki/Kazakhstan) and Kyrgyzstan. It is a founding member of, and remains involved in, the [Central Asian Union](/wiki/Central_Asian_Union), formed with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and joined in March 1998 by Tajikistan.

In September 2006, [UNESCO](/wiki/UNESCO) presented Islam Karimov an award for Uzbekistan's preservation of its rich culture and traditions. Despite criticism, this seems to be a sign of improving relationships between Uzbekistan and the West.

The month of October 2006 also saw a decrease in the isolation of Uzbekistan from the West. The [EU](/wiki/European_Union) announced that it was planning to send a delegation to Uzbekistan to talk about human rights and liberties, after a long period of hostile relations between the two. Although it is equivocal about whether the official or unofficial version of the [Andijan Massacre](/wiki/Andijan_Massacre) is true, the EU is evidently willing to ease its economic sanctions against Uzbekistan. Nevertheless, it is generally assumed among Uzbekistan's population that the government will stand firm in maintaining its close ties with the [Russian Federation](/wiki/Russian_Federation) and in its theory that the 2004–2005 protests in Uzbekistan were promoted by the USA and UK.

In January 2008, [Lola Karimova-Tillyaeva](/wiki/Lola_Karimova-Tillyaeva) was appointed to her current role as Uzbekistan’s ambassador to [UNESCO](/wiki/UNESCO). Karimova-Tillyaeva and her team have been instrumental in promoting inter-cultural dialogue by increasing European society’s awareness of Uzbekistan’s cultural and historical heritage.

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|left|Traditional Uzbek](/wiki/File:Taschkent-42.JPG) [pottery](/wiki/Pottery). [thumb|||Embroidery from Uzbekistan](/wiki/File:Suzani_(Boukhara,_Ouzbékistan)_(5657423581).jpg)

[thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Theatre_Alisher_Navoi.JPG)[Navoi Opera Theater](/wiki/Navoi_Theater) in [Tashkent](/wiki/Tashkent) Uzbekistan has a wide mix of ethnic groups and cultures, with the [Uzbek](/wiki/Uzbeks) being the majority group. In 1995 about 71% of Uzbekistan's population was Uzbek. The chief minority groups were Russians (8%), [Tajiks](/wiki/Tājik_people) (5–30%),[[61]](#cite_note-61)[[62]](#cite_note-62)[[80]](#cite_note-80)[[63]](#cite_note-63) [Kazaks](/wiki/Kazakhs) (4%), [Tatars](/wiki/Tatar) (2.5%) and [Karakalpaks](/wiki/Karakalpaks) (2%). It is said, however, that the number of non-Uzbek people living in Uzbekistan is decreasing as Russians and other minority groups slowly leave and Uzbeks return from other parts of the former [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union).

When Uzbekistan gained independence in 1991, there was concern that [Muslim fundamentalism](/wiki/Muslim_fundamentalism) would spread across the region. The expectation was that a country long denied freedom of religious practice would undergo a very rapid increase in the expression of its dominant faith. As of 1994, over half of Uzbekistan's population was said to be Muslim, though in an official survey few of that number had any real knowledge of the religion or knew how to practice it. However, Islamic observance is increasing in the region.

### Music[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Sevara_Nazarkhan_Realworld_Party_2006.jpg)[Sevara Nazarkhan](/wiki/Sevara_Nazarkhan) [thumb|Dance of a *Bacha* in](/wiki/File:Samarkand_A_group_of_musicians_playing_for_a_bacha_dancing_boy.jpg) [Samarkand](/wiki/Samarkand) between 1905 and 1915 [thumb|right|](/wiki/File:University_of_Westminster_15-39.JPG)[Westminster International University](/wiki/Westminster_International_University_in_Tashkent) main building in Summer [thumb|Silk and Spice Festival in](/wiki/File:Boukhara_4696a.jpg) [Bukhara](/wiki/Bukhara) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:POV section](/wiki/Template:POV_section) Central Asian classical music is called [Shashmaqam](/wiki/Shashmaqam), which arose in [Bukhara](/wiki/Bukhara) in the late 16th century when that city was a regional capital. Shashmaqam is closely related to [Azerbaijani](/wiki/Azerbaijan) [Mugam](/wiki/Mugam) and [Uyghur muqam](/wiki/Uyghur_muqam). The name, which translates as *six maqams* refers to the structure of the music, which contains six sections in six different [Musical modes](/wiki/Musical_mode), similar to classical [Persian traditional music](/wiki/Persian_traditional_music). Interludes of spoken [Sufi poetry](/wiki/Sufi_poetry) interrupt the music, typically beginning at a lower register and gradually ascending to a climax before calming back down to the beginning tone.

Endurance of listening and continual audiences that attend events, such as bazms or weddings, is what makes the folk-pop style of music so popular. The classical music in Uzbekistan is very different to pop music. Mostly men listen to solo or duo shows during a morning or evening meeting amongst men. Shash maqam is the main component of the classical genre of music. The large support of the musicians from high class families, which meant the patronage was to be paid to the Shash maqam above all things. Poetry is where some of the music is drawn from. In some instances of the music, the two languages are even mixed in the same song. In the 1950s, folk music became less popular, and the genre was barred from the radio stations. They did not completely dispel the music altogether, although the name changed to *feudal music*. Although banned, the folk musical groups continued to play their music in their own ways and spread it individually as well. Many say that it was the most liberated musical experience in their lives.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

### Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

Uzbekistan has a high [literacy rate](/wiki/Literacy_rate), with about 99.3% of adults above the age of 15 being able to read and write. However, with only 76% of the under-15 population currently enrolled in education (and only 20% of the 3–6 year olds attending pre-school), this figure may drop in the future. Students attend school Monday through Saturday during the school year,with official education concluding at the end of the 9th grade. Post secondary school, students routinely attend trade or technical colleges. There are two international schools operating in Uzbekistan, both in Tashkent: The British School catering for elementary students only, and Tashkent International School, a K-12 international curriculum school.

Uzbekistan has encountered severe budget shortfalls in its education program. The education law of 1992 began the process of theoretical reform, but the physical base has deteriorated and curriculum revision has been slow. A large contributor to this decline is the low level of wages received by teachers and the lack of spending on infrastructure, buildings and resources on behalf of the government. Corruption within the education system is also rampant, with students from wealthier families routinely bribing teachers and school executives to achieve high grades without attending school, or undertaking official examinations.[[93]](#cite_note-93) Uzbekistan's universities create almost 600,000 graduates annually, though the general standard of university graduates, and the overall level of education within the tertiary system is low. Westminster University and [Inha University Tashkent](/wiki/Inha_University_Tashkent) maintains a campus in Tashkent offering English language courses across several disciplines.

### Holidays[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

[Template:Div col](/wiki/Template:Div_col)

* 1 January: New Year, "Yangi Yil Bayrami"
* 14 January: Day of Defenders of the Motherland, "Vatan Himoyachilari kuni"
* 8 March: International Women's Day, "Xalqaro Xotin-Qizlar kuni"
* 21 March: Nowruz, "Navroʻz Bayrami"
* 9 May: Remembrance Day, "Xotira va Qadirlash kuni"
* 1 September: Independence Day, "Mustaqillik kuni"
* 1 October: Teacher's Day, "Oʻqituvchi va Murabbiylar"
* 8 December: Constitution Day, "Konstitutsiya kuni"

[Template:Div col end](/wiki/Template:Div_col_end)

*Variable date*

* End of Ramazon Ramazon Hayit Eid al-Fitr
* 70 days later Qurbon Hayit Eid al-Adha

### Cuisine[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[thumb||right|](/wiki/File:Plov.jpg)[Palov](/wiki/Palov) [thumb||right|Uzbek](/wiki/File:Uzbek_Manti_(bright).jpg) [manti](/wiki/Manti_(dumpling))

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) Uzbek cuisine is influenced by local [agriculture](/wiki/Agriculture), as in most nations. There is a great deal of grain farming in Uzbekistan, so breads and noodles are of importance and Uzbek cuisine has been characterized as "noodle-rich". [Mutton](/wiki/Mutton) is a popular variety of meat due to the abundance of sheep in the country and it is part of various Uzbek dishes.

Uzbekistan's signature dish is [palov](/wiki/Palov) (*plov* or *osh*), a main course typically made with [rice](/wiki/Rice), pieces of [meat](/wiki/Meat), and grated [carrots](/wiki/Carrot) and [onions](/wiki/Onion). *Oshi nahor*, or morning *plov*, is served in the early morning (between 6 am and 9 am) to large gatherings of guests, typically as part of an ongoing wedding celebration. Other notable national dishes include [shurpa](/wiki/Shurpa) (*shurva* or *shorva*), a soup made of large pieces of fatty meat (usually [mutton](/wiki/Mutton)), and fresh vegetables; [norin](/wiki/Naryn_(soup)) and [langman](/wiki/Laghman_(soup)), noodle-based dishes that may be served as a soup or a main course; [manti](/wiki/Manti_(dumpling)), [chuchvara](/wiki/Chuchvara), and [somsa](/wiki/Somsa), stuffed pockets of [dough](/wiki/Dough) served as an appetizer or a main course; [dimlama](/wiki/Dimlama), a meat and vegetable stew; and various [kebabs](/wiki/Kebabs), usually served as a main course.

[Green tea](/wiki/Green_tea) is the national hot beverage taken throughout the day; [teahouses](/wiki/Teahouses) (*chaikhanas*) are of cultural importance. [Black tea](/wiki/Black_tea) is preferred in [Tashkent](/wiki/Tashkent), but both green and black teas are taken daily, without milk or sugar. Tea always accompanies a meal, but it is also a drink of hospitality that is automatically offered: green or black to every guest. [Ayran](/wiki/Ayran), a chilled yogurt drink, is popular in summer, but does not replace hot tea.

The use of alcohol is less widespread than in the West, but wine is comparatively popular for a Muslim nation as Uzbekistan is largely secular. Uzbekistan has 14 wineries, the oldest and most famous being the Khovrenko Winery in [Samarkand](/wiki/Samarkand) (established in 1927). The Samarkand Winery produces a range of dessert wines from local grape varieties: Gulyakandoz, Shirin, Aleatiko, and Kabernet likernoe (literally [Cabernet](/wiki/Cabernet_Sauvignon) dessert wine in Russian). Uzbek wines have received international awards and are exported to Russia and other countries.

### Sport[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

Uzbekistan is home to former racing cyclist [Djamolidine Abdoujaparov](/wiki/Djamolidine_Abdoujaparov). Abdoujaparov has won the [green jersey](/wiki/Green_jersey) points contest in the [Tour de France](/wiki/Tour_de_France) three times.[[94]](#cite_note-94) Abdoujaparov was a specialist at winning stages in tours or one-day races when the bunch or [peloton](/wiki/Peloton) would finish together. He would often 'sprint' in the final kilometre and had a reputation as being dangerous in these bunch sprints as he would weave from side to side. This reputation earned him the nickname 'The Terror of Tashkent'.

[Artur Taymazov](/wiki/Artur_Taymazov) won Uzbekistan's first wrestling medal at the [2000 Summer Olympic Games](/wiki/2000_Summer_Olympic_Games), as well as three gold medals at the [2004](/wiki/2004_Summer_Olympic_Games), [2008 Summer Olympic Games](/wiki/2008_Summer_Olympic_Games) and [2012 Summer Olympic Games](/wiki/2012_Summer_Olympic_Games) in Men's 120 kg.

[Ruslan Chagaev](/wiki/Ruslan_Chagaev) is a professional boxer representing Uzbekistan in the WBA. He won the WBA champion title in 2007 after defeating Nikolai Valuev. Chagaev defended his title twice before losing it to Vladimir Klitschko in 2009.

[Michael Kolganov](/wiki/Michael_Kolganov), sprint canoer, was world champion and won an Olympic bronze in K-1 500-meter. Gymnast [Alexander Shatilov](/wiki/Alexander_Shatilov) won a world bronze as an [artistic gymnast](/wiki/Artistic_gymnast) in floor exercise, and gymnast [Oksana Chusovitina](/wiki/Oksana_Chusovitina) has amassed over 70 medals for the country.

Uzbekistan is the home of the International Kurash Association. Kurash is an internationalized and modernized form of the traditional Uzbek fighting art of [Kurash](/wiki/Kurash).

[Football](/wiki/Association_football) is the most popular sport in Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan's premier football league is the [Uzbek League](/wiki/Uzbek_League), which features again 16 teams since 2015. The current champions (2014) are [Pakhtakor](/wiki/FC_Pakhtakor). [Pakhtakor](/wiki/FC_Pakhtakor) hold the record for most Uzbekistan champion title with 10. The current [Player of the Year](/wiki/Uzbekistan_Footballer_of_the_Year) (2014) is [Odil Akhmedov](/wiki/Odil_Akhmedov). Uzbekistan's football clubs regularly participates in the [AFC Champions League](/wiki/AFC_Champions_League) and the [AFC Cup](/wiki/AFC_Cup). Nasaf won [AFC Cup](/wiki/2011_AFC_Cup) in 2011, which is the first international club cup for Uzbek football.

Before Uzbekistan's independence in 1991, the country used to be part of the Soviet Union [football](/wiki/Soviet_Union_national_football_team), [rugby union](/wiki/Soviet_Union_national_rugby_union_team), [ice hockey](/wiki/Soviet_Union_national_ice_hockey_team), [basketball](/wiki/Soviet_Union_national_basketball_team), and handball national teams. After Uzbekistan got split up from the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union), Uzbekistan created its own [football](/wiki/Uzbekistan_national_football_team), [rugby union](/wiki/Uzbekistan_national_rugby_union_team), and [futsal](/wiki/Uzbekistan_national_futsal_team) national teams.

[Tennis](/wiki/Tennis) is also a very popular sport in Uzbekistan, especially after Uzbekistan's independence in 1991. Uzbekistan also has its own Tennis Federation called the "UTF" (Uzbekistan Tennis Federation) that was created in 2002. Uzbekistan also hosts an International WTA tennis tournament called the "Tashkent Open", which is held in Uzbekistan's capital city. This tournament has been held since 1999, and is played on outdoor hard courts. The most notable active players from Uzbekistan are [Denis Istomin](/wiki/Denis_Istomin) and [Akgul Amanmuradova](/wiki/Akgul_Amanmuradova).

[Chess](/wiki/Chess) is quite popular in Uzbekistan. [Rustam Kasimdzhanov](/wiki/Rustam_Kasimdzhanov) was the FIDE World Chess Champion in 2004.

Other popular sports in Uzbekistan include [judo](/wiki/Judo), [team handball](/wiki/Team_handball), [baseball](/wiki/Baseball), [taekwondo](/wiki/Taekwondo), [basketball](/wiki/Basketball), and [futsal](/wiki/Futsal).

<gallery widths="180px" heights="180px"> File:Bundesarchiv Bild 183-1987-0515-035, Dshamolidin Abdushaparow.jpg|[Djamolidine Abdoujaparov](/wiki/Djamolidine_Abdoujaparov) is the most famous cyclist in Uzbekistan, winning three [Tour de France](/wiki/Tour_de_France) point contests. File:RuslanChagaev.jpg|[Ruslan Chagaev](/wiki/Ruslan_Chagaev) File:Istomin 2009 US Open 02.jpg|[Denis Istomin](/wiki/Denis_Istomin) at the [2009 US Open](/wiki/2009_US_Open_(tennis)) File:Vitaliy\_Denisov\_2013.jpg|[Vitaliy Denisov](/wiki/Vitaliy_Denisov) </gallery>

## Gallery[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

<gallery> Tashkent street, Rashidov.jpg International\_Business Center. Tashkent city.jpg Winter in Tashkent.JPG University of Westminster 15-39.JPG Hotel Le Grand Plaza.JPG Tashkent city.jpg Hi-speed trains Afrosiyab (Uzbekistan).JPG Tashkent city 5.JPG Registan square2014.JPG Uzbekistan 2007 042 Kalta minor Khiva.jpg Registan Tillya-Kari madrasah2014.JPG Bukhara - Panorama.jpg Sacred Heart Cathedral, Tashkent 14-03.JPG </gallery>

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[Template:Wikipedia books](/wiki/Template:Wikipedia_books) [Template:Columns-list](/wiki/Template:Columns-list) [Template:Portal bar](/wiki/Template:Portal_bar)

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## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

[Template:Commons category](/wiki/Template:Commons_category) [Template:Wikivoyage](/wiki/Template:Wikivoyage)

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* [Tashkent directory](http://www.tcity.uz/en/)
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* [Chief of State and Cabinet Members](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/world-leaders-u/uzbekistan.html)

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* [Uzbekistan](http://www.state.gov/p/sca/ci/uz/) from the U.S. [Library of Congress](/wiki/Library_of_Congress) includes Background Notes, Country Study and major reports
* [Uzbek Publishing and National Bibliography](http://www.library.illinois.edu/spx/webct/nationalbib/natbibuzbek.htm) from the University of Illinois Slavic and East European Library
* [Uzbekistan](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/uzbekistan.htm) at UCB Libraries GovPubs
* [List of cities and populations](http://world-gazetteer.com/wg.php?x=&men=gcis&lng=en&des=wg&srt=npan&col=abcdefghinoq&msz=1500&geo=-225)
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