

Uzbekistan

The Republic of Uzbekistan is located in the heart of Central Asia. Its geographical features are typical of a region of steppe, desert and semi-desert. It proclaimed independence from the former Soviet Union in the early 1990s and is undergoing a period of transition towards democratic governance. It is a culturally rich nation and one of the most ancient civilizations in the world. Historically the silk route passed through Uzbekistan ¹. Present day Uzbekistan is a synthesis of its rich cultural and historical experience and is founded on cultural diversity and the close cohabitation of members of various ethnic and religious groups which is typical of the entire Central Asian region ². It is comprised of the autonomous Republic of Karakalpakstan, 12 viloyats (municipalities) and Tashkent, capital city ³. In 2007 it had a population of 26,664,000 ⁴ of which a substantial 39% was comprised of children (between the ages of 0-17 years) ⁵. It has a majority Uzbek population (80%) followed by Tajiks, Kazakhs, Russians, Tatars and other groups. An estimated 37% of Uzbekistan population lives in urban areas, with about three million inhabitants in the capital Tashkent, the largest city. The country has a very young and rapidly growing population and is facing a serious employment generation challenge, especially in rural areas where two-thirds of Uzbekistan's populations live ⁶.

Uzbekistan is a landlocked country with a gross national income per capita (GNI, Atlas method) of USD 900 in 2008 ⁷. It had a GDP per capita PPP of USD 2,425 in 2007 ⁸. It is resource rich (gold, copper, natural gas, oil, uranium), with strong development potential, and strategically located in the heart of Central Asia. It has a well developed capital and social infrastructure, especially compared with neighbouring countries and accounts for one third of the region's population ⁹. Uzbekistan has experienced accelerated economic growth from around 4% in 1996-2003 to over 7% in 2004-06 and to over 9% in 2007-08, largely (but not exclusively) driven by external demand. This growth performance, coupled with an impressive decline in the population growth rate from 2% in the 1996-99 to 1.3% in 2000-08 according to official statistics, has led to a sharp increase of annual per capita GDP growth, from 2% in the late 1990s to 6% in 2004-06 and to over 7% in 2007-08.

Vulnerability factors

Poverty

Despite reported economic growth, employment generation and private consumption have lagged and there has not been a commensurate reduction in poverty in recent years as growth has been poverty-inelastic ¹⁰. National poverty level (defined as percentage of population consuming less than 2,100 kilo-calories per person per day) reduced from 27.5% of the population in 2001 to 23.6% in 2007, i.e. just by 3.9 percentage points. However, compared to other low income countries, Uzbekistan's non-monetary social indicators such as levels of literacy and school enrolment tend to be favourable, due to the legacy of Soviet investment in social infrastructure, but also post-independence efforts, particularly in basic education ¹¹. Significant increase of remittances and other transfers to Uzbekistan at 8-10% of the GDP in 2005-08 from labor migrants in Russia, Kazakhstan and other countries have contributed to support of the living standards of Uzbek population, particularly that of low income and poor families ¹².

Unemployment

Uzbekistan had an unemployment rate of about 0.2% in 2006 (Annual registered unemployment rate registered unemployed as per cent of labour force) ¹³. This very high at about 51% amongst those aged between 15-24 years (Registered unemployed aged 15-24 as per cent of total annual unemployed) in the same year ¹⁴

[1] OHCHR (2004) *Core Document forming part of the Reports of States Parties: Uzbekistan*, 10 March 2004, International Human Rights Instruments, HRI/CORE/1/Add.129

[2] OHCHR (2004) *Core Document forming part of the Reports of States Parties: Uzbekistan*, 10 March 2004, International Human Rights Instruments, HRI/CORE/1/Add.129

[3] Information provided by Country Office.

[4] TransMONEE 2009 : 1.1

[5] TransMONEE 2009 : 1.9



[6] World Bank (2009) *Uzbekistan*,

Overview,

<http://www.worldbank.org.uz/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/UZBEKISTANEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20152186~menuPK:294195~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:294188,00.html>

[7] World Bank (2009) *Uzbekistan*,

Overview

, <http://www.worldbank.org.uz/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/UZBEKISTANEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20152186~menuPK:294195~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:294188,00.html>

[8] TransMONEE 2009 : 10.2

[9] World Bank (2009) *Uzbekistan*,

Overview

, <http://www.worldbank.org.uz/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/UZBEKISTANEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20152186~menuPK:294195~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:294188,00.html>

[10] World Bank (2009) *Uzbekistan*,

Overview

, <http://www.worldbank.org.uz/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/UZBEKISTANEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20152186~menuPK:294195~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:294188,00.html>

[11] World Bank (2009) *Uzbekistan*,

Overview

, <http://www.worldbank.org.uz/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/UZBEKISTANEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20152186~menuPK:294195~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:294188,00.html>

[12] World Bank (2009) *Uzbekistan*,

Overview

, <http://www.worldbank.org.uz/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/UZBEKISTANEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20152186~menuPK:294195~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:294188,00.html>

[13] TransMONEE 2009 : 10.4

[14] TransMONEE 2009 : 10.5

Formal Care

Formal care refers to all children in residential care or substitute family-based care and reflects a group of children who are in need of some kind of protection through an intervention of the State. A decrease in the rate, combined with a larger proportion of children in family based care is an indication that the child care systems are being reformed and prioritise prevention of family separation and substitute family based care for children in need of protection. An increase in the rate of formal care, on the contrary, may be an indication of increased family vulnerability as more children are being separated from their biological families. Large scale residential care, which is highly prevalent in CEE/CIS countries, has proven to have many negative effects on child development and well-being. This is particularly true for the youngest children (infants under 3 years of age).

Cultural traditions in Uzbekistan encourage the upbringing of children in a family environment: relatives generally take care of orphans, while a high number of other children left without parental care are either placed with guardians or adopted. However, there still remains a strong belief in the benefits of state institutional care for children. Recently a National Plan of Action on Securing Child Welfare was developed for comprehensive reforms on the legal protection of children, family support, health of mothers and children, education and support of children in special circumstances. Its aims to integrate children with their biological parents, develop alternative services, rehabilitate and integrate children with disabilities, improve conditions at institutions, and enhance capacity of the staff. Family support services are being developed as a part of reforms. Uzbekistan has 12 centres that provide rehabilitation and professional orientation for disabled people. However they need to be reformed due to the shortage of social and other specialist services. Women's resource centres have been transformed with the help of UNICEF into family resource centres with trained staff providing psychological and social support. This is chiefly meant to provide means to needy families to improve their economic wellbeing and reduce institutionalisation. The Government has also promoted alternative forms of child care, including family type homes for small groups, and foster care, and contributed to the simplification of the regulations for adoption and for patronage (a form of guardianship). Government data suggest that family based substitute care services are already far more common than residential care in Uzbekistan, with nearly 34,000 children adopted and some 26,500 under guardianship / trusteeship in 2005. However foster care still remains low. Foster care is a recent development and was introduced as a pilot activity. Legislation pertaining to foster care was updated to encourage foster family funding and support in 2007. As yet the number of children who are fostered does not exceed 200, and the number of foster families is under 100 ¹.

Children in formal care: The rate of children in formal care (the sum of children in residential care and children in family based substitute care) in Uzbekistan has remained more or less stable between 2000 and 2006. It was about 555 (per 100,000 population aged 0-17 years) ². In 2006 there were a total of 57,511 children in formal care of which 32,008 were in residential care and 25,503 were in family based care ³.

Children in residential care: The rates of children in residential care are high and stagnant in Uzbekistan. Rates slightly decreased from about 337 in 2000 to 309 in 2006. This data include children in boarding schools (under full state support) Uzbekistan as compared to other Central Asian countries has a smaller proportion of children residential care who are living in boarding schools (16%). ⁴

Children in family based substitute care: Data on children in family based care in Uzbekistan is limited to guardian care (TransMONEE 2009). The rate of children in family based substitute care has increased slightly from about 228 in 2000 to about 246 in 2006. Children in family based substitute care in Uzbekistan comprise a substantial percentage of those in formal care. In 2006 about children in family based substitute care consisted of about 44% of all children in formal care ⁵. Data for 2006 shows that 86% of children left without parental care during the year were placed in guardianship/foster care or were adopted. ⁶

Children with disability in residential institutions: In Uzbekistan more than half the children in residential care are classified as disabled. The percentage of disabled children amongst those in residential care has stably increased from about 46% 2000 to about 52% in 2006. This data include children in boarding schools (under full state support) ⁷.

Infants in residential care: The rate of infants in residential care has remained low and stable between 2000 and 2006. The rate of infants in residential care in 2006 was about 35 (per 10,000 population aged 0-3 years) ⁸. Infants comprised about 2% of all children in residential care between 2000 and 2006 ⁹.

Adoption: Uzbekistan has not ratified the Hague Convention of 29 May 1993 on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Inter-country

Adoption ¹⁰. Overall adoption rates in Uzbekistan have slightly decreased from about 122 in 2000 to 116 in 2006 (per 100,000 population aged 0-3 years) ¹¹. Segregated data on domestic and inter country adoptions in Uzbekistan is available only for 2006. Domestic adoption rates are relatively high at about 116 in 2006 (per 100,000 population aged 0-3 years). The inter country adoption rate in 2006 was very low at about 0.4 (per 100,000 population aged 0-3 years) ¹².

[1] United Nations Children's Fund (2008) *Thematic Evaluation of UNICEF's contribution to the Child Care System Reform in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, Final report part II: Country reports*, Oxford Policy Management (OPM) & CASE-Kyrgyzstan, UNICEF CEECIS.

[2] TransMONEE 2009: 8.5 & 8.10

[3] TransMONEE 2009: 8.1

[4] TransMONEE 2009: 8.5

[5] TransMONEE 2009: 8.10

[6] United Nations Children's Fund (2008) *Trends in formal care and adoption*.

[7] TransMONEE 2009: 8.8

[8] TransMONEE 2009: 8.4 & 8.6

[9] TransMONEE 2009: 8.7

[10] The Hague Convention on Private International Law, for ratification status of countries, http://www.hcch.net/index_en.php?act=conventions.status&cid=69

[11] TransMONEE 2009: 8.12

[12] TransMONEE 2009: 8.14

Juvenile Justice

In recent years, more attention has been given to data collection on offending by juveniles and juvenile justice in CEE/CIS. Such data are collected for different purposes by the institutions and agencies involved (police, prosecutors, courts corrections facilities and others) and should be analyzed when developing and monitoring national policies and plans. In addition, a small number of indicators developed regionally and internationally assist States in meeting their basic reporting obligations and allow some degree of international comparison, but have limited meaning and relevance out of context. For example, an increase in juvenile crime rates can mean that indeed adolescents are increasingly offending, but it can also mean that the police is increasingly recording minor offending by juveniles due to a new "zero tolerance policy" or that the law has been changed to include more acts committed by juveniles as "offences" or "crimes". In particular, there are concerns that children can be criminalized – arrested, detained and considered to be 'in conflict with the law' – for acts that are classified as an offence only when committed by children (i.e. "status offences" such as begging, truancy, etc.). Another concern is the fact that there is little disaggregation of data and that some groups are "invisible" from statistics. This is usually the case of children in conflict with the law under the age of prosecution as a juvenile, who are usually covered by child care rather than by justice data - but may well be sanctioned and deprived of liberty through administrative procedures that are difficult to monitor. Therefore, indicators may reflect trends in juvenile delinquency, but also weaknesses of justice systems, potential violations of children's rights or, to the contrary, some positive policy changes. This is why cross-analysis between indicators is also key. For instance, high or stable offending rates coupled with decreasing pre-trial detention and custodial sentencing can indicate the development of diversion and alternatives sentences, in line with the CRC principle (art. 37b) that "*the arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child (...) shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time*".

Currently in Uzbekistan, there is no separate juvenile justice system for dealing with children in conflict with the law. A draft law on Juvenile Justice has been developed addressing the protection of child witnesses, child victims and children in conflict with the law and is awaiting enactment. Guidelines for professionals working with juveniles in conflict with the law have also been prepared. A child rights juvenile justice course for in-service training of professionals working with children in conflict with the law has been developed and introduced in the Law Institute. Despite these positive shifts, there is still a persistent punitive culture and censorship towards critical child protection issues, which hinders quick and efficient implementation of reforms.

Trends in juvenile crime rate: Juvenile crime rates have decreased slightly in Uzbekistan from 129 in 2000 to 102 in 2006 (per 100,000 population aged between 14–17 years) ¹.

Juvenile arrest: Arrest is the point in which children, suspected or accused of having committed a crime, enter into the justice system. Arrest can be done by police under their own authority in circumstances that law or regulations usually define clearly, for a limited period of time ². Data on juvenile arrest in Uzbekistan is presently not available in TransMONEE 2009.

Pre trial detention: Pre-trial detention implies that the person has been formally charged and a judge or prosecutor has authorized deprivation of liberty. The maximum duration of pre-trial detention is defined by national law ³. Data on pre trial detention in Uzbekistan is presently not available in TransMONEE 2009.

Juveniles sentenced for criminal activity: Data on juveniles sentenced for criminal activity in Uzbekistan is presently not available in TransMONEE 2009 ⁴.

Sentencing to correctional, educational or punitive institutions – Data on juveniles sentenced to correctional, educational or punitive institutions in Uzbekistan is presently not available in TransMONEE 2009 ⁵.

[1] TransMONEE 2009: 9.4

[2] United Nations Children's Fund (2008) Lost in Justice, *Children in conflict with the law in Eastern Europe and Central Asia*, Helen Moestue in



collaboration with the UNICEF CEECIS & UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

[3] United Nations Children's Fund (2008) *Lost in Justice, Children in conflict with the law in Eastern Europe and Central Asia*, Helen Moestue in *collaboration* with the UNICEF CEECIS & UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

[4] TransMONEE 2009: 9.10

[5] TransMONEE 2009: 9.11

Violence

Violence against children takes many different forms such as physical and psychological punishment, sexual exploitation and worst forms of child labour (including trafficking). Children may be exposed to violence in all spheres of their lives: from the 'private' domain of home, to the 'public' space of school, care and detention facilities, in their communities or in workplaces. The primary responsibility for the protection of children lies with parents, family members and professionals working with children such as teachers, doctors and health workers. Prohibition of the use of corporal punishment of children sets a useful minimum legal standard that can foster societies that are more respectful of the physical integrity of children. It is a basic indicator for child protection.

In Uzbekistan, the child protection system does not have any particular provisions for prevention and early identification of violence against children. Furthermore, legal definitions may not facilitate the identification of victims. The government refuses to employ the term 'child' victims of exploitation and trafficking for which no cases have been reported. Instead, the definition of trafficking define victims under 18 years of age rather as "juvenile cases" which shifts the responsibility to victims of trafficking instead of protecting them. For example in 2006 the government specified that authorities had undertaken 'preventive measures' against 40 girls under 18 years of age (27 for prostitution and 13 for immoral behaviour), classifying them as 'juvenile' cases. Thus while child protection professionals speak of suspected child trafficking cases, there are no official reports due to a national and legal vacuum ¹.

Corporal punishment: Corporal punishment is prohibited in Uzbekistan in schools and in the penal system (both as a punishment to a crime and as a disciplinary measure). However it is not prohibited in alternative care settings and in the home ².

Child labor: The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey in Uzbekistan (2006) provides data on the prevalence of child labour. Under this survey, a child is said to be involved in labour activities if during the week preceding the survey he/she was engaged in at least one hour of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week (for children between the ages of 5–11 years); or at least 14 hours of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week (for children between the ages of 12–14 years). However it must be noted that, the estimate provided here represents the minimum prevalence of child labour since some children may be involved in hazardous labour activities for fewer hours than as specified under these categories. Further, percentages do not add up to the total extent of child labour as children may be involved in more than one type of work. The survey may also miss out on any seasonal aspects of child labour depending on when during the year the survey was carried out. This survey revealed that about 2% of children aged 5–14 are involved in child labour activities and most which is unpaid. Of these children, the majority attend school (93%). While there is no differentiation in child labour by sex but there are significant variations by region. It is much higher in certain regions, for example in Tashkent city where 11% of children aged 5–14 are involved in child labour. While, trends show a sharp decline of child labour from 23% in 2000 (MICS2000) to 2% in 2006 (MICS2006), this can be explained by seasonality of child labour. While the 2000 survey was carried out in summer during school holidays, the 2006 survey was conducted between March and May during school ³.

Child trafficking: Uzbekistan is reported to be a country of origin and destination of cross-border human trafficking. A study on child trafficking in Central Asia revealed that cross-border trafficking routes lead from Central Asian countries to Western Europe, the Middle East and Russia as well as South and East Asia. However there are no reports about 'symmetric' routes, i.e. trafficking routes leading back and forth between two countries. External trafficking for sexual exploitation is said to lead to Russia, the UAE, Israel, Turkey, China, Iran, Thailand and Western Europe. Domestic child trafficking for sexual exploitation is believed by professionals to have increased in recent years, based on the growing number of girls below the age of 18 visible in the domestic sex industry ⁴. In Uzbekistan, between 2003 and 2005, as per official statistics, 10 minors were identified as victims of 'recruitment for the purpose of exploitation' out of a total of 509 registered cases of trafficking.

[1] United Nations Children's Fund (2009) *Risks and Realities of Child Trafficking and Exploitation in Central Asia*.

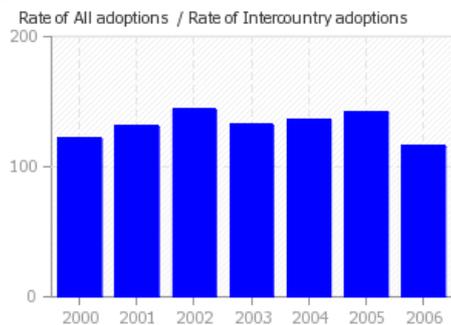
[2] Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (2008) *Europe and Central Asia: progress towards prohibiting all corporal punishment*, (www.endcorporalpunishment.org).

[3] United Nations Children's Fund (2006) *Multi Indicator Cluster Survey: Uzbekistan*.

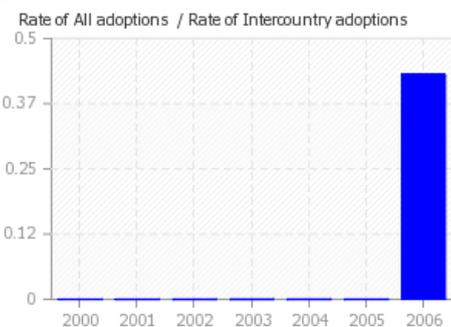


[4] United Nations Children's Fund (2009) *Risks and Realities of Child Trafficking and Exploitation in Central Asia*.

Rate of All adoptions / Rate of Intercountry adoptions

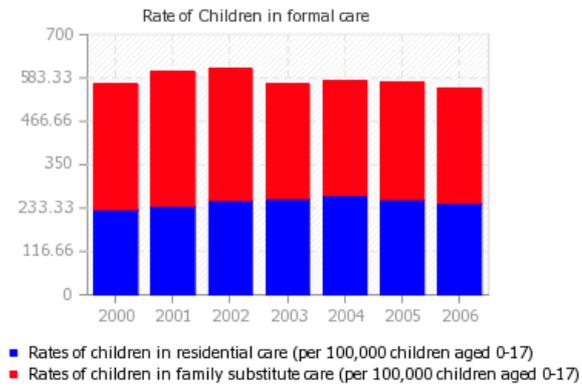


■ Rate of All adoptions (per 100,000 children aged 0-3)

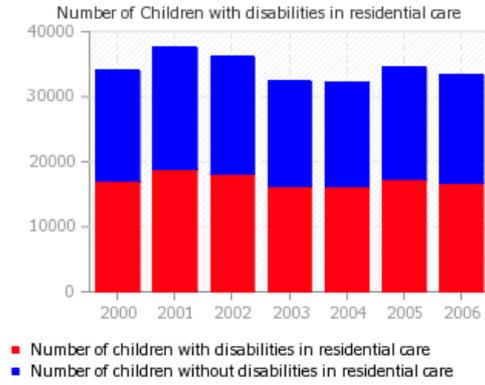


■ Rate of intercountry adoptions (per 100,000 children aged 0-3)

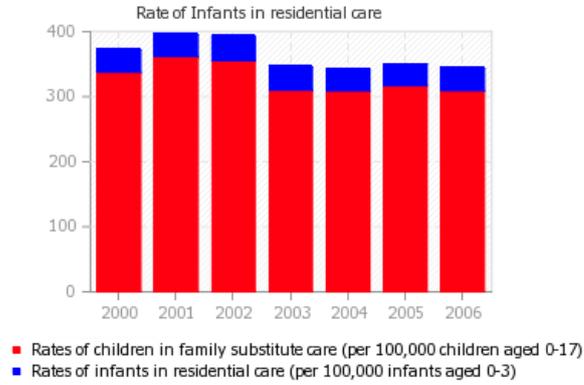
Rate of Children in formal care



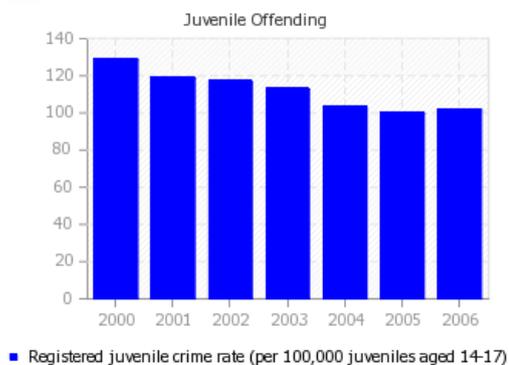
Number of Children with disabilities in residential care



Rate of Infants in residential care



Juvenile Offending





UNICEF in action

UNICEF has a country programme of cooperation in Uzbekistan covering the period 2005-2009 and will be initiating a new country programme for 2010-2014. UNICEF's main partners in its child protection programme in Uzbekistan include the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Public Education, the Uzbek Children's Fund, Republican Public Children's Fund "Sen Yolg'iz Emassan", Soglom Avlod Uchun and Kamalot.

For more information on UNICEF's work in Uzbekistan:

<http://www.unicef.org/uzbekistan/>