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DIGITAL ECONOMY: THE BASIS OF MODERN DEVELOPMENT

In accordance with the “Concept for the Development of the Digital Economy in Turkmenistan for 2019–2025,” the adoption of the new Program envisages defining the tasks to be carried out for the establishment of an “Electronic Government” system, improving digital education and digital healthcare, training specialists in these fields, and gradually introducing digital services into the state services portal.

The action plan for implementing this Program identifies the specific areas of work to be carried out, the responsible executors, and the deadlines. This document serves as a unique “road map” for the technological transformation of sectors and public administration, as well as for developing the economy on the basis of the country’s resources and production capacity. It consists of several sections describing the goals and objectives of the Concept, the directions and methods for its implementation, and the expected results. Digitalization represents a qualitatively new stage for our national economy. The transition to it has become possible on the basis of the precise, well-considered, and scientifically grounded strategy of the Head of State in the field of socio-economic development. It not only ensures a stable and positive pace of development, but also enables adaptation to changing conditions and reduces risks caused by external factors. Under the leadership of President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, systematic program-based work is being carried out in this area, including measures to create the necessary infrastructure [5].

The foundation has been laid for the development of high-technology, science-intensive, and innovative sectors, particularly the electronics industry. The financial sector plays an important role in this area. Ensuring the flexible and efficient distribution of financial resources among different sectors of the economy will contribute to solving social problems, increasing the effectiveness of investment activities, maintaining sustainable economic growth, and enabling all sectors to transition to advanced technologies. As the experience of technologically advanced countries demonstrates, digitalization itself has enabled them to move forward at a rapid pace and join the ranks of the world’s leading countries.

In this regard, President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov directs the Government and the heads of ministries and sectoral administrative bodies toward global trends and the expansion of international cooperation at all levels. The future development of Turkmenistan is directly connected with strengthening external conditions: integration into the global economic system, intensification of mutually beneficial trade, economic and investment cooperation, the emergence of new areas of interaction in scientific and technological development, and the development of agreed solutions to common problems facing humanity.

Before this document was adopted, the necessary work had already been carried out in Turkmenistan to create the appropriate infrastructure and conditions for developing the

digital economy. Thus, in accordance with the instructions of national leader Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, a digital system was introduced into government communications in 2010. Video communication and electronic document management were established. Today, the websites of government bodies and enterprises provide a clear indication of the level of transition of each ministry and sectoral institution to the digital economy.

Communication services (mobile, telephone, IP-TV¹, and Internet) make it possible to conduct activities through automobile and online channels. It was considered appropriate to examine the factors that have conditioned the emergence of an economy based on digital information, the conveniences it creates for the population, and its beneficial aspects for the socio-economic development of the country [2]. Clarifying these issues will help our fellow citizens understand the importance of the digital transformations currently being implemented in the country, correctly determine their role in the development of the information society, and, within their capabilities, make a worthy contribution to this noble work.

The experience accumulated in a number of economically developed countries in the development of the digital economy shows that the creation of a digital environment brings several advantages to national development. In particular, it is noted that the introduction of information and communication technologies increases the indicator characterizing the development capacity of a country's economic system, namely gross domestic product. The experience of foreign countries confirms that the greater the volume of investment directed toward the development of such technologies, the higher the gross domestic product per capita. This means that digital information plays a significant role in the production of new products.

The creation of new value, in turn, contributes to strengthening our economic potential. In this regard, the growing attention paid by many countries to the development of the digital economy in their economic policies in recent years can be explained precisely by these factors.

When discussing the positive aspects of developing the digital economy, it is essential to consider its impact on raising the educational level of the population. Today, in developed countries, the annual increase in investment directed toward the development of information and communication technologies has become a regular practice. This is primarily because science and education are effective means of increasing a person's intellectual capacity. In developed countries, directing a large proportion of investment toward improving digital technologies used in education, that is, using them to introduce advanced teaching methods, demonstrates how important achieving high-quality education is for the country's economic security [3]. This is because innovative thinking and proposing approaches that differ from conventional solutions are possible only for people with a high level of creativity. Taking into account that the foundations of these abilities and skills are formed during childhood, it is clear that countries wishing to further strengthen their economies seek to improve children's educational level from an early age, particularly during their school years, and that governments make every effort to achieve this. As a result, it can be seen that the digital economy emerged as a result of the development of science and education, while today increasing attention is being paid to digital technologies intended for education in order to ensure its further advancement and improvement.

Our transition to the digital economy within a short historical period will ensure that our country finds its rightful place in the world, that the standard of living of our people continues to improve, and that our long-term development is safe and reliable [3]. In connection with these fundamental transformations, as throughout the world, new sectors, markets, and models of management will emerge in our country as well. Our national leader emphasizes that our happy young people are well acquainted with advanced information technologies and are capable of managing complex production technologies, noting that they can confidently be entrusted with the management of large economic systems at the international level.

When necessary, entrepreneurs who have the right to operate in this field may be involved in carrying out work on creating websites and introducing electronic document management. The measures being implemented are aimed at establishing and supporting a national school of IT specialists and software developers.

It should be noted that the participation of IT² companies engaged in developing digital technologies and providing services for their implementation at the exhibition organized to mark the 12th anniversary of the establishment of the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Turkmenistan demonstrated that the tasks set by the national leader are being actively addressed through the participation of the non-state sector of the economy.

In order to teach digital systems to managers at all levels, intensify the training of teachers at higher and secondary vocational educational institutions of the country, increase the range of electronic services in sectors, and ensure their cybersecurity, the Türkmenaragatnaşyk Agency developed a program of short-term specialized courses in computer technology, network technologies, and cybersecurity [2].

According to the prepared program, it was planned to conduct short-term specialized courses in computer technology, network technologies, and cybersecurity jointly, with the participation of specialists from the agency and relevant institutions.

The creation of websites for publications of the mass media has political and economic significance. The broad presence of the country's mass media in the Internet space will make it possible to combat inaccurate information about our country more effectively. A website can provide not only written information, but also audio recordings, videos in real time, and other information. The digitalization of newspapers and magazines will reduce the financial costs of publishing [2]. It will save paper and ink and make it possible to operate idle printing equipment profitably on the basis of special orders.

The current international standing of our country, the economic and social well-being of our people, and the need to integrate into the global education system require us to undertake modern reforms aimed at transitioning to digital economic and management systems [5]. Therefore, making our worthy contribution to this work, which serves the interests of the people, is the patriotic and civic duty of each of us. Every economic sector, institution and enterprise, manager, and specialist in our country should be prepared for reforms aimed at transitioning their activities to digital systems and should spare no effort or talent in successfully implementing them.

In explaining to the population the meaning and significance of the measures being taken in our country to transition to the digital economy and to digitalize management

and service systems, the heads of institutions and enterprises, representatives of public organizations, and employees of the cultural, education, and mass media sectors should make their contribution [4].

As the saying goes, “A people who read advance; a people who do not read decline” [1, p. 264]. In our flourishing state, innovative technologies and systems are also being introduced into the fields of science and education. This greatly contributes to enabling our country to transition more rapidly to the digital system together with countries that are advancing at the global level.

¹ IP-TV – Internet Protocol Television.

² IT – Information Technology.

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