



**International Conference on Modern Science and Scientific Studies**

Hosted online from Madrid, Spain

Website: econfseries.com

20<sup>th</sup> November 2025

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## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE RELIGIOUS SPHERE IN SURKHONDARYO REGION IN 2016–2023**

Khalilov Akbar Khalilovich

Employee of the Department of Internal Affairs of the Surkhandarya Region

### **Abstract:**

This article analyzes the development of the religious sector in Surkhandarya region in 2016–2023, the opening of new mosques and temples, the system of training imams and preachers, and advanced training. Also, measures aimed at improving the religious and educational sector based on presidential decrees and government resolutions are scientifically covered.

**Keywords:** Surkhandarya, mosque, temple, imam-khatib, advanced training, Imam Termizi secondary specialized Islamic educational institution.

### **Аннотация:**

В статье анализируется развитие религиозной сферы Сурхандарьинской области в 2016–2023 годах, открытие новых мечетей и храмов, система подготовки имамов и проповедников, повышения квалификации. Также научно освещаются меры, направленные на совершенствование религиозно-образовательной сферы, основанные на указах Президента и постановлениях Правительства.

**Ключевые слова:** Сурхандарья, мечеть, храм, имам-хатыб, повышение квалификации, среднее специальное исламское учебное заведение «Имам Термизи».

### **Introduction**

In recent years, the modernization of the religious and educational sphere in the Republic of Uzbekistan, ensuring interethnic harmony and religious tolerance have become a priority area of state policy. In particular, in the Surkhandarya region, the



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activities of religious institutions have reached a new level, and infrastructure, personnel training and the religious education system are developing significantly. The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF–5416 dated April 16, 2018 and the Resolution No. 25 dated January 14, 2019 created an important legal basis for the systematic establishment of religious and educational activities, improving the qualifications of imams and preachers, and expanding the network of religious educational institutions.

### Methods

Historical-analytical, statistical and comparative methods were used in the study. The main sources of information on the number of religious institutions, the qualification level of imams and preachers, and the activities of religious educational institutions in Surkhondaryo region in 2016–2023 were the archival documents of the Office of Muslims of Uzbekistan, the Committee for Religious Affairs, and the regional khokimiyat.

Also, the territorial results of reforms in the religious sphere were analyzed based on presidential decrees, government resolutions, articles published in the "Yangi U'zbekiston" newspaper, and official reports.

### Results

During 2016–2023, 35 new mosques were opened in Surkhondaryo region, increasing their total number from 98 to 133. New mosques have been built in almost all districts and serve to activate religious life.

As of 2022, 129 mosques were operating in the region, of which 126 imams-khatibs were appointed, and 3 were vacant. Of the 126 imams-khatibs, 39 had higher education, 83 had secondary specialized education, and 4 worked on the basis of a certificate from the Islamic Educational Service.

Of the 86 deputy imams working in mosques, 14 had higher education, 70 had secondary specialized education, and 2 worked on the basis of a certificate from the Islamic Educational Service.

In addition, on November 8, 2022, the “Pokrova Bojiyy Mater” temple in the city of Denov was registered with the Department of Justice and began its activities.



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The qualifications of religious personnel are being regularly improved through the Surkhandarya Regional Training Center (regional branch of the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan). During 2019–2024, 1,568 religious workers, including 756 imams-khatibs and deputy imams, were trained in 144-hour courses in the field of "Islamic Studies".

The number of people who received advanced training in 2019–2024 is as follows: 2019 - 73 people, 2020 - 103 people, 2021 - 164 people, 2022 - 165 people, 2023 - 141 people, 2024 - 110 people.

Also, in 2019, on the instructions of the President, the "Imam Termiziy" secondary specialized Islamic educational institution was established in the city of Termez. This institution was registered with the state on June 8, 2020 and has been operating since the 2020/2021 academic year.

### Conclusion

During 2016–2023, the religious sphere in Surkhandarya region has developed radically. The construction of new mosques, the establishment of religious educational institutions, and the improvement of personnel qualifications serve to strengthen the spiritual environment in the region.

As a result of the conditions created by the state, the number of specialists working in the religious sphere has increased and their professional level is improving. This creates the basis for strengthening peace, tolerance, and religious harmony in the region.

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