

**STATE POLICY TO ENSURING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE REPUBLIC OF
UZBEKISTAN: ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS**

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Abstract : This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the state policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the area of gender equality. It examines the legal framework, institutional mechanisms, and practical measures implemented within the framework of gender policy. Particular attention is paid to the achievements of recent years, as well as the remaining challenges in realizing the principle of equal rights and opportunities for women and men.

Key words: gender equality, public policy, Uzbekistan, legislation, women, discrimination, equal opportunities, domestic violence, economic emancipation.

Gender equality is a key issue on the agenda of modern states striving for sustainable and inclusive development. For the Republic of Uzbekistan, which is undergoing a period of large-scale socioeconomic and political reforms, this issue is particularly pressing. Historically, patriarchal foundations in the Central Asian region have long defined traditional gender relations. However, since independence, and particularly in the last six years, Uzbekistan has demonstrated a growing commitment to the principles of equal rights and opportunities for women and men.

The history of the struggle for gender equality is more than just a chronology of women's attainment of certain rights. It is the story of a profound transformation of the social paradigm, a reconsideration of traditional roles, and an ongoing dialogue about the nature of justice. The history of gender equality represents a long and nonlinear process, in which periods of significant progress alternate with conservative setbacks. The evolution of this idea has evolved from demands for basic civil rights to a comprehensive rethinking of power relations in society.

Uzbekistan's state policy on gender equality demonstrates consistent development and institutionalization. The adoption of progressive legislation and the creation of effective institutions have led to significant results. However, achieving full gender equality requires further efforts to change public perception and overcome deeply rooted stereotypes.

Development prospects include improving the legislative framework, strengthening the role of civil society, developing a system of gender statistics, expanding international cooperation, and so on.

Achieving gender equality remains an important task for ensuring sustainable development and building a just society in Uzbekistan.

The starting point for Uzbekistan's modern gender policy was the adoption of the Law "On Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men" in 2019. This fundamental document not only enshrined the fundamental principles of non-discrimination but also introduced specific mechanisms for their implementation, including gender-based legislative review.

A crucial institutional step was the transformation of the Women's Committee of Uzbekistan in 2019 from a public organization into a government body with coordinating and oversight functions. This elevated the status of gender issues within the public administration system.

The key strategic documents defining the policy vector are: the National Strategy for Achieving Gender Equality in the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030; the Strategy for Achieving Gender Equality in the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030.

These documents are closely linked to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 5 "Gender equality".

The most notable success was the introduction of a gender quota, stipulating that at least 40% of political party candidates to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis must be women. Similar quotas are also applied in local elections. This has enabled Uzbekistan to take a leading position in Central Asia in terms of women's representation in the legislature.

The government is currently actively implementing a range of programs aimed at supporting women's entrepreneurship. These programs include providing women with preferential loans, organizing specialized training, seminars, and educational courses to help them develop business skills, enhance their management competencies, and master modern entrepreneurship techniques. These measures create a favorable environment for women seeking to start their own businesses, expand their opportunities in the labor market, and promote economic independence.

In addition, measures are being taken to encourage the hiring of women in various sectors of the economy. Specifically, employers are receiving certain preferences for hiring women, programs are being implemented to facilitate their return to the labor market after childbirth, and conditions are being created for combining professional work with family responsibilities. These measures are aimed at increasing women's participation in the country's economic life and creating equal opportunities for career advancement.

However, despite all the efforts being made, women's economic activity rates remain lower than men's. Women face limited access to key resources, including land and finance, significantly limiting their opportunities to develop their own businesses. Furthermore, the gender pay gap persists, posing a serious challenge to social justice and equal opportunity.

Thus, while government programs create certain opportunities for women, further improvements to support measures are necessary. A key step is expanding women's access to financial resources, loans, and land, as well as strengthening legislative protection of their labor rights and creating systemic conditions for women's full integration into the country's economic life. Only a comprehensive approach, including educational, financial, and social measures, will increase women's economic activity, reduce the wage gap, and create the conditions for their full economic and social fulfillment.

The adoption of the Law "On the Protection of Women from Harassment and Violence" in 2019 was an important step in the fight against domestic violence. The law defined various forms of violence (physical, psychological, economic, and sexual) and established mechanisms to protect victims, including the issuance of restraining orders. Crisis centers and helplines were established. However, the law's practical implementation faces challenges, including women's lack of awareness of their rights and the traditional attitude toward domestic violence as a "private matter."

Despite progress, deep-rooted sociocultural barriers persist. Traditional notions of women as primarily homemakers continue to dominate, limiting women's career aspirations and increasing

their burden of unpaid domestic labor. Women remain underrepresented in the private sector and in senior government positions. Although child marriage is formally prohibited, in practice it continues to occur, particularly in rural areas, leading to girls dropping out of education.

Uzbekistan's legislative system in the area of gender equality has undergone significant development, moving from general constitutional principles to specific legislative norms. The adoption of specialized laws has created a legal framework for ensuring equal rights and opportunities. However, to achieve true gender equality, further steps are needed to improve legislation and create effective mechanisms for its implementation.

, Uzbekistan's state policy on gender equality has become systemic, targeted, and proactive. Thanks to a series of bold legislative and institutional reforms, significant progress has been achieved, particularly in the area of women's political representation.

However, enshrining legal equality is only the first step. The main task for the future is to ensure De facto equality, which requires overcoming persistent sociocultural norms and stereotypes. Achieving gender equality is not only a matter of justice but also a key factor in Uzbekistan's sustainable development and prosperity.

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