Development of Youth Reforms in the Republic of Uzbekistan

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Abstract: This article analyzes the development system of the state youth reform in the Republic of Uzbekistan, aimed at the harmonious upbringing of the younger generation, attention and care for young people, creating all the necessary conditions for them to take an independent step in life.

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The Republic of Uzbekistan has created a solid legal framework for the protection of the rights and interests of young people, creating the necessary conditions and opportunities for them, and the state is implementing comprehensive reforms. In turn, state reforms are being systematically improved in line with modern requirements. In particular, to date, the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan has adopted more than 40 laws on youth and ratified more than 30 international legal instruments. Today, the priority of state policy is to pay attention and care to young people, to create the necessary conditions and opportunities for them to fully demonstrate their talents and potential in all areas, which is the main basis for achieving such a great goal as building a “New Uzbekistan” in our country.

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev said: “Our youth is becoming a decisive force in the process of renewal in our society. We will definitely build a new Uzbekistan, the foundation of the “Third Renaissance” together with the youth! ” [1] Today, as a noble principle, our young people are showing initiative, courage and activity in all spheres. Indeed, strengthening the foundations of the “New Uzbekistan” and contributing to its development as a patriotic person is one of the hopes of all our young people, the noble dream of our hardworking, peace-loving people. In this regard, the role of all of us, especially our educated intellectuals, in educating young people in the spirit of patriotism is urgent. This is a topical issue that will never lose its relevance. This topical issue is a continuous process, which consists of a set of interrelated political-legal, socio-economic, ideological-ideological, cultural-educational activities.

The first law signed by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev is the Law "On State Youth Policy" of September 14, 2016. It should be noted that an important factor is to bring up as individuals with intellectual potential, strong position, indifferent to reforms, ready to intervene in the future of the country, goal-oriented, patriotic. The Action Strategy for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017-2021 also reflects the issue of youth and identifies priorities for the protection of youth rights.

In 2018, in accordance with the Presidential Decree, the State Program “Youth - Our Future” was approved, through which the promotion and support of youth entrepreneurship, startups, ideas and projects has reached a new level. In 2020, another important step was taken in the direction of youth, and the Presidential Decree established the State Agency for Youth Affairs, which implements youth policy in the country. In order to motivate young people at a high level, the state award “Mard Oglon” and the medal “Kelajak Bunyodkori” were established. In this
regard, the promotion of 5 important initiatives by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev on a systematic basis in the social, spiritual and educational spheres has launched a new stage in the history of youth education in Uzbekistan. Within the framework of five important initiatives, the wide involvement of the younger generation in culture, arts, physical education and sports, the formation of their skills in the proper use of information technology. Important reforms have been launched to promote reading among young people and ensure women's employment.

Radical reforms are also being developed in the education system of Uzbekistan, which is the basis of youth reforms. On September 23, 2020, the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Education” No. ZRU-637 was adopted. According to this law, the types of education are:

- preschool education and upbringing;
- general secondary and secondary special education;
- professional education;
- higher education;
- postgraduate education;
- retraining and advanced training;
- extracurricular education.

At present, the amount of expenditures for education, including the social sphere, is more than half of the total cost of the state budget. Of course, no state can afford such a huge expense, but no matter how difficult it is, the necessary funds and resources are being sought.

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan considers these costs not the cost, but the most effective investment for the future, emphasizing that the level and quality of education is an important factor determining the prospects of any state. In today’s globalization, one of the main goals is to strengthen the ideological immunity of young people, to protect them from various alien ideas and ideological threats, to bring them up as independent-minded, strong-willed, selfless, patriotic people. Based on the principle of “from national revival to national progress”, it is important to carefully develop the national idea and its ideological foundations, to educate the younger generation in the spirit of national pride and patriotism.

The resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev “On measures to further improve the system of preschool education in 2017-2021” was adopted. According to the resolution, further improvement of the preschool education system, strengthening the material and technical base, expanding the network of preschool educational institutions, providing qualified teachers, radically improving the level of preparation of children for school education, introduction of modern educational programs and technologies in the educational process creating conditions for intellectual, moral, aesthetic and physical development. The Ministry of Preschool Education has been established in the country. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev also noted that “education and upbringing are inseparable. and nurtures patriotic youth with modern professions. If we look at the history of developed countries in the world, we see that the reforms aimed at changing the life of society in them began primarily with the education system, kindergartens, schools, upbringing. Because it is impossible to change a person, a society without changing the school. The basis of education and upbringing is the school. The driving force behind the school is the teachers.”[2]

Indeed, in our country, special attention is paid to the training of modern personnel with innovative and creative thinking, educating young people in the spirit of patriotism, high spirituality, and for this purpose, improving the education system. The school education system was radically reformed and 11-year general secondary education was reintroduced. In recent years, great work has been done in our country to effectively address these problems and radically improve the system of personnel training. The President has adopted 6 decrees and
resolutions on the public education system, 21 resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers, which have strengthened the legal and regulatory framework for reforms in this area.

Ensuring the implementation of the tasks set out in the “Concept of development of the higher education system of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030” [3], approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated October 8, 2019 PF-5847, as well as expanding the independence of higher education institutions the formation of public higher education institutions that train highly qualified personnel capable of meeting the demands of a changing labor market has become important. The first reforms in the field of higher education were aimed primarily at increasing admission quotas and coverage, improving the financial situation of institutes and universities, and providing financial support to professors and teachers. Today, full-time, part-time and evening, distance forms of higher education are being developed. In recent years, branches of a number of prestigious universities of developed countries have been established in our country. At the same time, 2021 was declared the Year of Youth Support and Public Health, and a State Program for the development of this sector was adopted, and a 5-year strategy for the development of youth policy was developed. The goals of supporting young people, improving the system of protection of students in need of social protection, ensuring the principle of social justice have been set.

Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 11, 2021 No 132 “On additional measures for social support of youth”. On the basis of this decision, the order of use of permanent financial resources and their use was determined to bring the system of work with young people to a new level, their effective organization of socio-legal and psychological support, vocational training and employment. In 2021 alone, 300 billion soums have been allocated to solve the life problems of 430,000 young men and women on the basis of the Youth Book and Youth Programs, which are a completely new system of working with young people.[4]

At the video conference of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev on June 16, 2021, dedicated to the priorities of the higher education system, 4 priorities in the field of higher education were identified:

- Increasing the role of boards of higher education institutions and expanding the powers of departments.
- adapting the educational process to market requirements, ensuring its integration with production and creating an environment for students to work on themselves.
- Increasing the scientific potential of higher education institutions, the development of science and innovation.
- Reduction of paperwork for professors and students, a sharp reduction of bureaucracy and corruption through the digitization of the industry[5]

It was noted that in order to effectively fulfill these tasks, higher education institutions will be empowered to make independent decisions on academic and organizational management.

Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PP-60 of December 24, 2021 “On additional measures to ensure the academic and organizational-managerial independence of public higher education institutions”, as well as PP “On measures to provide financial independence to public higher education institutions” As of January 1, 2022, 35 leading state higher education institutions have been granted academic and financial independence in accordance with Resolution No. 61. As a result, starting from the 2022/2023 academic year, the following additional powers will be granted to state higher education institutions that have been granted financial independence:

1) In the field of academic independence:

- approval of curricula, study programs, qualification requirements on the basis of professional
standards, determination of the form of education, taking into account the language of education and the characteristics of educational directions and specialties;

- Determining the duration of study for undergraduate and graduate specialties;
- Determining the cost of doctoral studies on a fee-for-service basis, in addition to the quota on a competitive basis for doctoral studies through the allocation of grants from extra-budgetary funds;
- Approval of the procedure for supervising doctoral students and independent researchers;
- Introduction of part-time, distance and evening forms of education at the master's level, the introduction of a system of dual skills, including practical skills in areas of study and specialties;
- Implementation of academic mobility with higher education institutions on the basis of mutual agreements;
- Creation and publication of textbooks and other educational and scientific literature for the higher education institution and its educational institutions on the basis of its own signature;
- Establishment and implementation of internal quality control mechanisms;

2) In the field of organizational and managerial independence:

- Establishment of structural units, commercial and non-profit organizations, the main activities of which are related to education, science, the introduction and commercialization of its results, not financed from the state budget;
- Approval of the structure of the institution and the number of staff units, regardless of the standards established for higher education institutions;
- Opening of new educational directions and specialties based on the needs of the labor market, termination of existing educational directions and specialties;
- Establishing procedures for the recruitment, dismissal and internal rotation of teachers and other staff;
- The organization of admission of foreign citizens on a fee-for-service basis and distance learning.

From January 1, 2022, the state higher education institutions that have been granted financial independence will be authorized to make independent decisions on the following issues:

- Determining the cost of training on a fee-for-service basis, taking into account the demand in the market of educational services;
- Setting and prolonging the terms of payment of student tuition fees;
- Involvement in the educational process of local and foreign professors and specialists who can apply modern pedagogical technologies and conduct research on a contractual basis;
- Making decisions on determining the amount of remuneration of highly qualified foreign specialists involved in the educational and scientific process based on market conditions;
- Development of standards for the inclusion of faculty members;
- Allocation of scholarships and grants for students at their own expense;
- Direct purchase of educational and scientific literature, textbooks and manuals from foreign countries from copyrighted manufacturers;
- Establishing the procedure for providing paid services in vacant buildings and structures;
- Setting the annual limit of traffic and maintenance requirements for vehicles.

The essence of these reforms is to increase the coverage of young people in higher education.
Institutions, to create conditions for their training, to increase the scientific potential of higher education institutions, the quality of training, to increase the competitiveness of higher education institutions. The current conditions, the ongoing reforms in the field of education will allow to improve the quality of education, increase the competitiveness of higher education institutions, to take their place in the international educational arena.

In addition, for the further development of youth reforms, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh.M. Mirziyoyev adopted a resolution on January 19, 2022 “On measures to radically improve the system of work with youth in the neighborhoods”[6]

On the basis of this decision, it is planned to introduce new management mechanisms for working with youth, create a vertical system of work with them, solve youth problems directly in the community, further increase the effectiveness of spiritual and educational work in educational institutions. As a result, the post of youth leader will be introduced in every town, village and aul, as well as in every mahalla in cities, towns, villages and auls. The main tasks of the youth leader in the neighborhood are:

- Formation of the “Youth Balance”, entering the necessary information about young people in the electronic platforms “Youth Book” and “Youth Portal”, the organization of effective work with them;
- Meaningful organization of leisure time of youth in mahallas, popularization of national folk games and sports among youth, implementation of five important initiative projects, youth festivals and other cultural and educational events;
- Increase the social activity of young people, stimulate their talents, abilities and initiatives, and help them find their place in life;
- Educating young people in the spirit of patriotism and ensuring their intellectual maturity and spiritual development;
- Systematic work with young people prone to delinquency, assistance in socio-pedagogical rehabilitation and adaptation of young people released from penitentiary institutions, returning from specialized educational institutions.

The mahalla leader carries out his activity in the attached mahallas in the following main directions:

- On the promotion of culture and art - organizes the contest “San'at Gunchalari”, competitions on maqom, baxshi and variety, “Voice of Youth”, “Young Artists” and children’s festival “Rainbow Stars”, as well as youth and children’s theater groups reaches;
- Promotes a healthy lifestyle and sports - organizes competitions in mini-football, volleyball, basketball, table tennis, cycling, running, chess, checkers, badminton, archery, conducts a marathon of 5,000 steps for health and the campaign “Young Ecologist”;
- On the organization of effective use of information technology - implements the projects “One million programmers”, “The first step in programming”, conducts cyber sports championship and competition “Information Technology Scholar”;
- On the promotion of spirituality and reading - competitions “Intelligence”, competitions “Cheerful and clever”, “Smart reader”, “Young reader”, “Young reader family”, “Foreign language scholar” and “Young polyglot” and “Discussion” organizes intellectual and national folk games;
- On patriotic education and legal literacy – “Young Border Guard”, “Young Rescuer”, “Cheerful Starts”, “Temurbeks”, “Princesses of Tomaris”, “Shunkorlar”, “Young Lawyer”, “Young Voter”, “Young” organizes “deputy” contests and “I will be a soldier” campaign and trips to military units;
- In support of entrepreneurial ideas - organizes competitions “100 ideas for Uzbekistan” and
“Neighborhood Entrepreneur”, the grant project “First Step to Business” and meetings with successful entrepreneurs.

This means that a large-scale systematic work is being carried out in our country to bring up the younger generation in a harmonious way, to create all the necessary conditions for them to take an independent step in life. At the same time, a number of problems remain in ensuring the employment of young people through the formation of modern entrepreneurial skills and the creation of new jobs, effective prevention of juvenile delinquency and crime, prevention of family divorces, the formation of a strong civic position in the younger generation.

Based on the above, it is advisable to make the following suggestions:

- Continuous improvement of normative and legal acts aimed at supporting young people in our country, protecting their legitimate rights and interests;
- Educating young people in the spirit of devotion to the Fatherland, respect for national and universal values, the definition of measures aimed at the broad involvement of the younger generation in science and innovation;
- Carrying out comprehensive preventive work to protect the rights and freedoms, legitimate interests of young people, the prevention of delinquency and crime among young people;
- effective cooperation with non-governmental organizations and other civil society institutions in the implementation of state youth policy;
- Distribution of state grants and subsidies in the form of social orders to finance youth programs, projects and research, ensuring their targeted and effective use;
- organization of social and legal protection and employment of orphans and young people deprived of parental care who have graduated from educational institutions;
- sending talented young people to study in leading foreign universities, ensuring their participation in international competitions, wide involvement of the younger generation in culture, arts, physical culture and sports, increasing their literacy in information technology, promoting reading among young people, women's employment coordination of work aimed at the broad implementation of the five important initiatives, covering the tasks of ensuring, the development of their intellectual potential and talent;
- Wide involvement of young people in small business and private entrepreneurship, the creation of additional conditions for the thorough acquisition of modern skills, skills of the digital economy, assistance in their employment;

Development of international cooperation in the field of youth policy, taking the necessary measures to enhance the position of our country in international rankings in the field of youth, systematic work with young people studying abroad.

In conclusion, youth reforms in the Republic of Uzbekistan are being consistently developed on the basis of step-by-step, comprehensive measures with clear goals. Also, the state youth policy in Uzbekistan today is showing its practical expression. Practical work is being done in many areas, including youth employment, higher education, vocational training, assistance in entrepreneurship, creative ideas, encouraging the implementation of startup projects, bringing up children in a healthy way.

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