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### **THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR INCREASING THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ACTIVITY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS WORKING IN POLITICAL PARTIES IN UZBEKISTAN IN THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE OF THE COUNTRY**

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#### **Abstract**

This article analyzes the role of the Women's Socio-Political Activity Department in the social and political life of the country, the increasing participation of women in elections, their share in parliament and state administration, the role of political parties in increasing the social and political activity of women, ensuring and protecting their rights and interests, and the principles of building a welfare state.

**Keywords:** Political activism, electoral system, political parties, women, local councils, Senate, Oliy Majlis, welfare state, gender equality, Political Council.

In our country, there is a solid legal framework aimed at supporting women, as well as enhancing and strengthening their role in society. Most importantly, all necessary conditions have been created for women to realize their noble aspirations. Today, Uzbek women play an invaluable role not only in family life and child upbringing but also in contributing to the development of our country. Significant efforts are being made to ensure women's rights and legitimate interests, to enable them to realize their abilities and potential, and, in general, to transform them into equal, active, and creative members of society.



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Special attention has been given to strengthening the social protection of women, including ensuring their employment, improving their health, protecting motherhood and childhood, and raising their living standards.

In all five political parties operating in our country, women's issues have become one of the key directions of state policy. As a result of the activities carried out by departments responsible for increasing women's political participation within these parties, the role, status, and position of women in public and state life have been further strengthened. In particular, the work carried out in ensuring women's rights, freedoms, and legitimate interests, increasing their socio-political activity, protecting motherhood and childhood, and ensuring gender equality in both society and family deserves special recognition.

Ensuring women's participation in political processes requires, first, clearly planned actions and, second, the need to increase women's own political activity. During the studied period, it is appropriate to highlight women who have been actively involved in socio-political processes and have established their place and status in society. Among women who have served in the Parliament of the Republic of Uzbekistan are D. Toshmuhamedova, M. Radjabova, S. Ortiqova, and K. Jumamuratova. Among those who served as Chairpersons of the Women's Committee of Uzbekistan and Deputy Prime Ministers are D. Gulomova, S. Inamova, F. Akbarova, and I. Basitkhanova. T. Norboeva served as Head of the Prime Minister's Secretariat from 1995 to 2010, led organizations such as "Family" and "Motherhood and Childhood," was Chairperson of the Federation of Trade Unions of Uzbekistan from 2010 to 2016, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairperson of the Women's Committee from 2016 to 2019, and since June 2019 has been the Chairperson of the Senate. S. Rashidova served as the Ombudsman for Human Rights from 1995 to 2015. G. Saidova was a member of the Cabinet



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of Ministers and served as Minister of Economy from 2011 to 2017. F. Abdurahimova served as Chairperson of the Tashkent City Women's Committee. It should also be noted that in the 2019 elections, 48 women were elected to the lower chamber of parliament, accounting for 32% of the total number of deputies, while women made up 25% of the Senate.

For the first time in the history of Uzbekistan, the number of women in the national parliament reached the level recommended by the United Nations. The parliament of our country ranked 37th among 190 parliaments worldwide in terms of women's representation.

After the declaration of independence of Uzbekistan, presidential elections were held in 1991, 2000, 2007, 2015, 2016, and 2021. The early presidential election held in 2023 became the seventh in the country's history. The nomination of female candidates in these presidential elections is also an indication of the high recognition and respect for women in the country.

In particular, in the presidential election held on December 23, 2007, Dilorom Gafurjonovna Toshmuhamedova was nominated by the Social Democratic Party "Adolat" of Uzbekistan. She received 434,111 votes (2.9%).

D. Toshmuhamedova served as a deputy of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan from 2001 to 2004 and was also a member of the Committee on International Affairs and Inter-Parliamentary Relations. From 2005 to 2008, she worked as the Chairperson of the Political Council of the "Adolat" Social Democratic Party and the head of the party's faction in the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis. In 2007, she was appointed Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Chamber, and in 2008, she was elected Speaker of the Legislative Chamber, leading the lower house of parliament until 2015. Since 2017, she has been serving as the Director of the "Family" Scientific and Practical Research Center under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In the 2019



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elections, she was elected as a deputy of the Tashkent City Council of People's Deputies and later became a member of the Senate. In January 2020, she was appointed Deputy Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Youth, Culture, and Sports.

In the presidential election held on October 24, 2021, Maksuda Azizovna Varisova was nominated by the People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan. Maksuda Varisova serves as the Deputy Chairperson of this party.

In the early presidential election held on July 9, 2023, Robakhon Anvarovna Mahmudova was nominated as a candidate. R. Mahmudova served as the First Deputy Chairperson of the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan and Chairperson of the Judicial Board for Administrative Cases. At the same time, her judicial powers were suspended, and she served as the Chairperson of the "Adolat" SDP faction in the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis and as the Chairperson of the Political Council of the "Adolat" Social Democratic Party.

In his speech delivered on June 21, 2019, at the twentieth plenary session of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, paid special attention to strengthening the role and authority of women in the socio-political life of the country. Based on this address, party members reviewed and critically analyzed their activities.

According to the results of the 2019 elections, 11 women (50%) from the People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan were elected to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis, while 439 women (27.5%) were elected to local councils.

In 2019, 16,254 women joined the ranks of the People's Democratic Party, bringing their total number to 233,479 (48.9%) [1].

In the 2019 elections, among newly nominated candidates for the Legislative Chamber, 440 were men (58.7%) and 310 were women (41.3%). This represents an increase of nearly 10% compared to the parliamentary elections held in



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December 2014 (31.8%). The highest proportion of female candidates was nominated by the People’s Democratic Party (48%), followed by the “Adolat” Social Democratic Party (43.3%), the Movement of Entrepreneurs and Businesspeople – the Liberal Democratic Party of Uzbekistan (42.7%), the National Revival Democratic Party (36.7%), and the Ecological Party (36%). As can be seen, women constituted more than 30% of the total number of candidates nominated by political parties [2].

Women make up nearly 280,000 members of the People’s Democratic Party of Uzbekistan, accounting for approximately 49% of its total membership. More than 400 of them are actively working in various positions within regional and local party organizations. In particular, women lead 3 regional party councils, nearly 100 district and city councils, and about 5,000 primary party organizations. It can be observed that the number of citizens joining the Social Democratic Party “Adolat” is steadily increasing. In 2015, the total number of party members was 7,265, of which 3,335 were women. By 2020, the total number of members had reached 17,717, including 9,762 women.

Furthermore, the issue of gender equality was included as a separate priority in the Action Strategy for the Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017–2021, which outlined five priority areas [3].

A Gender Equality Strategy for 2021–2030 has also been adopted, which emphasizes increasing women’s political participation and their representation in leadership positions [4].

As of January 1, 2021, the total number of members of the “Adolat” Social Democratic Party amounted to 471,613, of which 216,679 (46%) were women. In 2024, 13 women deputies (59%) are serving in the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis, and a total of 208 women deputies are active in regional councils.



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As of July 1, 2021, the total number of members of the People’s Democratic Party exceeded 520,000, with women constituting 49% of the party membership.

If women’s participation in political processes is analyzed on a global scale, in 2000 women accounted for 14% of those elected to parliaments worldwide [5]. According to 2018 data, only five women were serving as heads of state globally, representing 5% of the total. Worldwide, only 16% of ministerial positions are held by women. Studies show that women are often assigned roles related to social sectors, including addressing issues concerning women and children.

At an international conference on the role of women in society held on November 7–8, 2018, Helena Fraser, Head of the United Nations Office in Uzbekistan, noted: “On average, women constitute about 20% of members in ministries and parliaments worldwide. This is still below the 30% target set in the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995. If current trends continue, many countries may not achieve this target by 2025. Nevertheless, we are confident that expanding women’s roles in leadership positions can have a positive impact on the development of all countries” [6].

In the 2024 parliamentary elections, 76 out of 175 candidates (43.4%) nominated by the “Milliy Tiklanish” Democratic Party of Uzbekistan were women.

At the V Forum of the Ecological Party of Uzbekistan, 44.6% of the approved candidates for депутатлик were women.

From the People’s Democratic Party, 47.4% of the nominated candidates were women.

From the “Adolat” Social Democratic Party, 45% of the candidates for the Legislative Chamber were women.

Additionally, Goal 25 of the “Uzbekistan – 2030” Strategy outlines specific measures to elevate the system of supporting women to a new level and to increase their political and economic activity. As a result of the reforms implemented in this



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field, the share of women in public administration in Uzbekistan has reached 35%, 45% in entrepreneurship, and 49% within political parties.

According to the results of the elections held on October 27, 2024, women constituted 57 deputies, or 38% of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis, and 16 members, or 27% of the Senate. This indicates the growing trust in women within society.

If we consider the share of women holding ministerial and equivalent positions, this figure was only 3% in 2018, whereas by 2026 it has nearly tripled. This is another clear example that the principles of gender equality are being effectively implemented in Uzbekistan's кадровая (personnel) policy.

Such positive changes are also improving Uzbekistan's position in international rankings and indices. For instance, in 2025, according to the international ranking of national parliaments (IPU Parline), Uzbekistan moved up 15 positions to rank 37th among 183 countries in terms of women's representation in parliament.

According to the Gender Equality and Governance Index (GEGI), Uzbekistan rose from 103rd to 52nd place in 2025, becoming a leader in the Central Asian region.

In the "Open Gender Data Index" by the Open Data Watch organization, Uzbekistan was ranked among the top 20 countries in the world.

Between 2020 and 2025, nearly 9,000 socially vulnerable women were admitted to higher education institutions based on additional state grants.

During the years of independence, 17 women have been awarded the title of "Hero of Uzbekistan" (7 of them representing science, education, and art), 11 women have received the academic title of academician, and thousands of women have been awarded honorary titles, orders, and medals.

Over the past seven years, about 5,200 women in the country have obtained Doctor of Science (DSc) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees in their



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respective fields. Women in need of social protection have also not been left without attention. Of the 1,265,000 women included in the “Women’s Register,” nearly 1 million have received practical assistance. Housing was provided to 432 women in need, and rental compensation was paid to 5,400 women.

Within the framework of the “Uzbekistan – 2030” Strategy, political parties play an important role in implementing large-scale measures aimed at increasing women’s political, social, and economic activity, protecting motherhood and childhood, ensuring gender equality, and safeguarding women’s rights and interests. In particular, departments responsible for enhancing women’s political participation within political parties are actively involved in this process.

To achieve these goals, national legislation has been improved, creating broader opportunities for women. A clear example of this is the provision in the Election Code requiring that at least 40% of candidates for deputy positions, or 2 out of every 5 candidates, must be women.

Currently, the share of women in public administration has increased from 27% in 2017 to 35%, which is particularly noteworthy. At the same time, it is encouraging that hundreds of dedicated and capable women are actively contributing across all spheres of life.

In the Action Strategy for the Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017–2021, gender equality was included as a separate priority direction [7].

Departments within political parties aimed at increasing women’s political activity regularly organize projects, competitions, seminars, trainings, and roundtable discussions. These include initiatives such as the “Most Active Woman of the People’s Democratic Party of Uzbekistan” competition, the “Most Active Justice Woman of the Year” and “Fair Mother-in-Law” competitions organized by the Women’s Wing of the “Adolat” Social Democratic Party, the “Rule of Law is the Guarantee of Development” project, the “One Justice



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Member – Protector of One Hundred Women” initiative, the “One Deputy – Supporter of One Hundred Women!” project by the Movement of Entrepreneurs and Businesspeople – the Liberal Democratic Party of Uzbekistan, the “Women of UzLiDeP – Builders of New Uzbekistan!” project, the “Prosperous Family” initiative, the “UzLiDeP Press Club,” the “Woman of the 21st Century” competition by UzMTDP, and the “Ecology and Health” women’s clubs.

As a result of the elections held in 2024, the share of women reached approximately 27% in the Senate, 38% in the Legislative Chamber, and 32.5% in local councils.

Political parties organized various initiatives aimed at increasing women’s political participation, including competitions and programs such as “Woman Politician,” “Businesswoman,” and events under themes like “Deputies and Youth,” “Welcome to Politics,” “Online School of Leaders,” “I Am a Successful Woman,” “I Am a Leader Woman,” and “I Will Become a Deputy.”

The number of women among deputies increased by 11, rising from 48 to 57, and their share grew from 32% to 38%. The average age of female deputies increased by 2.7 years, reaching 52.1 years, while the average age of male deputies increased by 2.8 years, reaching 47.9 years.

The number of male and female representatives in each political party is as follows:

- UzLiDeP: 40 men and 24 women;
- “Milliy Tiklanish”: 21 men and 8 women;
- People’s Democratic Party: 12 men and 8 women;
- Ecological Party: 10 men and 6 women;
- “Adolat”: 10 men and 11 women.

At the 63rd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, held on March 11–17, 2024, in which the delegation of our country also



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participated, UN Secretary-General António Guterres stated: “Where women actively participate in political and social life, economies grow, stability is strengthened, and citizens’ well-being improves” [8].

From these observations, it can be concluded that the state policy aimed at protecting women’s rights and interests, ensuring their full participation in the socio-political life of the country, and achieving gender equality in Uzbekistan is both justified and effective.

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