

# Constitutional reform - legal basis of state youth policy

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**Abstract:** This article, from the point of view of constitutional doctrine, provides an analysis of constitutional reforms in New Uzbekistan as an important legal basis for state policy towards youth. Existing scientific and practical problems are also analyzed, and constitutional and legal mechanisms for their elimination are explored.

**Keywords:** Youth, youth state policy, Constitution, constitutional reform, constitutional and legal mechanism, legal consciousness and legal culture, legal education.

**Introduction:** The Constitutional Foundations of the State Youth Policy in New Uzbekistan: Problems and Solutions

New Uzbekistan, recognizing its high responsibility towards the present and future generations, has set the goal of building a sovereign, democratic, legal, social, and secular state where human dignity is upheld. Naturally, paying attention to the organizational and legal foundations of the state youth policy is undeniable. Since youth policy, which is considered a priority direction of state policy, has been constitutionally enshrined, it is deemed promising. If we analyze the issue from the perspective of the mentality of the Uzbek people and the principle that the Constitution is the highest legal force of the state, its essence becomes even clearer.

The adoption of the new edition of the Constitution through a referendum on April 30, 2023, became a significant historical event for our country. The constitutional reform in our republic, first of all, ensures and guarantees human rights and freedoms; secondly, increases the responsibility of state bodies and officials; thirdly, expands opportunities for civil society institutions. The reform of our Basic Law is also connected with the development of the political and legal system, as well as the economic, social, and cultural spheres of our country.

Considering that half of Uzbekistan's population consists of youth and that young people play a crucial role in building New Uzbekistan as a new force, bringing new ideas, modern knowledge, and innovative

technologies, the constitutional reforms being implemented have a strong focus on them. From this perspective, the rights, freedoms, and legitimate interests of young people have been constitutionally enshrined. The fact that the state has set the conceptual goal of ensuring public satisfaction is directly linked to youth, an important social stratum. In this regard, it is important to highlight the significance of the Presidential Decree No. PF-67 of May 8, 2023, "On Priority Measures for the Implementation of the New Edition of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan."

As our President Shavkat Mirziyoyev emphasized in his congratulatory address on the 32nd anniversary of our Constitution: "Continuing reforms rapidly and implementing the updated norms of our Constitution into life, we will continue to focus on developing entrepreneurship, increasing the population's income, strengthening the atmosphere of mutual respect and harmony in families and neighborhoods, and providing comprehensive support for the elderly, women, and youth."

From a scientific and theoretical perspective, if we examine the existing problems related to the state's youth policy, it becomes clear that there are several issues facing society and the state. These problems negatively impact the state's "active citizen formation" concept.

First, there are practical challenges in correctly understanding the content and significance of our Constitution. This is evident in the way constitutional

law is taught at various levels of the education system, including preschools, general education schools, academic lyceums, colleges, and technical schools. Unfortunately, constitutional law as a subject is not adequately taught in all educational institutions by specialists in the field. Often, the subject is approached superficially, focusing only on covering the curriculum rather than ensuring deep comprehension. As a result, students do not develop an adequate and accurate understanding of the Constitution. Young people fail to properly grasp fundamental concepts such as human rights and duties, the formation and authority of state power bodies, civil society institutions, and the harmony of individual, societal, and state interests. This, unfortunately, has long-term negative consequences in their lives. In such a scenario, the state's primary goal of fostering legally conscious and culturally aware individuals is not achieved, and the expected effectiveness of youth policy is not realized.

Second, in our country, the effective foreign experiences in teaching youth, especially adolescents, practical legal knowledge are not fully utilized. Those that exist are very limited and do not comprehensively cover all young people. Here, it is necessary to define the term "adolescent." According to the Pedagogical Encyclopedia, "an adolescent is a person between approximately 15 and 18 years old; in pedagogy, this period is also called 'late school age.'" By the end of adolescence, young people usually reach physical and psychological maturity." Adolescence is a crucial life stage when a person is full of energy, driven by limitless ambitions, immersed in romantic dreams, eager to demonstrate heroism, and strives for justice according to their understanding.

In developed countries, projects such as "Street Law" (practical legal education) are widely used for this category of youth, producing significant results. Consequently, many young people abroad grow up understanding both their rights and responsibilities equally, forming politically and legally active citizens. In practical legal education, aspects such as obtaining a passport, receiving a diploma, entering the labor market, and applying theoretical knowledge in real-life situations are emphasized. Unfortunately, our young people often only become aware of such legal processes when they face a personal legal issue.

Third, another negative issue among our youth is that while many of them understand their rights, they are unaware of their constitutional duties. Human rights not only grant individuals specific entitlements but also impose certain obligations. Only when rights and duties are equally recognized can the legal framework be complete. Raising awareness among youth about their responsibilities not only contributes to their legal

awareness but also helps them understand the essence of jurisprudence. Developing a sense of duty among young people fosters their responsibility towards their families, communities, villages or cities, regions, and ultimately, the nation.

We must instill in our children the ability to make the right decisions in complex situations. "We should be able to say to our youth: 'You must know the norms of our Constitution as well as you know the multiplication table.'" This idea compels every teacher and mentor to critically reassess their work. Why? To understand the importance of this statement, consider this legal scenario: If you ask seventh-grade students, "What are your duties to the homeland?" or "What obligations do you have towards your parents?" you will receive various responses. However, if you ask, "What is 7 plus 7?" they will confidently and unanimously respond, "Fourteen!" Why? Because in  $7+7=14$ , clarity is ensured. But there is no such clarity when it comes to the question, "What are the duties of Uzbek youth to their homeland?" Why? Because the legal education system has not yet prioritized clarity and guarantees in this area. Therefore, we must urgently rid our legal education of ambiguity and strive for precision, so that our children learn at least three of their constitutional duties in one year, then five the next, and so on—until they know them with the same confidence as multiplication facts. This precise knowledge will help them make the right decisions in real-life situations without hesitation. An increase in youth who equally understand their constitutional rights and duties will prevent the formation of indifferent and selfish individuals in our society.

Fourth, legal education is not regarded as an inseparable and significant component of social upbringing. Although numerous legal documents have been adopted at the state and societal levels to promote legal education, the individual and familial aspects of this issue remain unsatisfactory. The failure of legal education initiatives to reach specific individuals effectively is evident. Every young person must understand that legal education yields results only when it aligns with their personal interests, as well as those of society and the state.

Moreover, it is high time we abandon the misconception that legal education is solely the responsibility of law enforcement agencies and government officials. Today's youth are not just passive members of this social group; they are the active successors of state and societal governance. One day, they will transition from being mere citizens to active participants in governance, meaning the legitimacy and fairness of state and social governance will largely depend on them.

Fifth, the lack of a systematic approach to enhancing legal awareness and culture among youth remains a significant issue. The legal culture of young people is shaped by elements of general culture, such as justice, responsibility, activism, honor, dignity, and values. It is the result of their legal-political socialization and reflects their attitude toward laws, level of legal literacy, and intolerance of legal violations.

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the constitutional foundations of youth policy in New Uzbekistan lie in the direct inclusion of youth-related norms in the revised Constitution, emphasizing the creation of a legally educated and socially responsible generation.

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