

STEPS OF IMPROVING THE LABOR LEGISLATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN AND INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES

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Abstract. *This article provides a brief overview of the stages of improvement of labor legislation in the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as the influence of international experiences on the activity of the labor legislation of Uzbekistan and their interactions.*

Keywords: *labor, labor code, ILO (International Labor Organization), international experience.*

The improvement of labor legislation in the Republic of Uzbekistan and the further development of its implementation are essential for ensuring the rule of law in labor relations. Various regulatory documents have been adopted to this end, including:

Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 258 (July 6, 1995) “On the Introduction of a New Labor Register in the Republic of Uzbekistan”

The Labor Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan (1996)

Law “On Labor Protection”

Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 349 (May 10, 2018) “On Additional Measures to Eliminate Forced Labor in the Republic of Uzbekistan”

Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations Resolution No. 1066 (December 31, 2018), which outlines measures to improve labor practices

All these legal documents aim to strengthen legal safeguards in labor activities and provide comprehensive protection of the rights and interests of workers. Labor legislation primarily serves to protect the workforce and ensure their rights are upheld.

The Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis, through its Committee on Labor and Social Affairs, in cooperation with the Parliamentary Commission on Ensuring Citizens' Guaranteed Labor Rights and the Council of the Federation of Trade Unions of Uzbekistan, has organized a roundtable titled “Labor Protection in Agriculture, Industry, and Trade: National and International Experience, and Future Prospects.”

Additionally, conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO) ratified by Uzbekistan play a significant role in shaping national labor standards. In this regard, the Decent Work Country Programme for 2017–2019, jointly signed by the Government of Uzbekistan and the ILO, and the Cabinet of Ministers Resolution on May 31, 2018, approving additional measures to implement ILO conventions for 2018–2020, are of considerable importance.

The main strategy for improving the system of labor protection lies in strengthening legal compliance with labor safety and hygiene across all economic sectors, including industry, trade, agriculture, and construction. Key challenges remain, such as the need to move beyond traditional approaches and adopt effective mechanisms that offer consultative and methodological support to employers. These mechanisms must aim to identify, analyze, and prevent factors leading to violations of labor laws.

Uzbekistan's experience in labor reform is being recognized internationally. For instance, on July 2, 2020, the ILO Regional Session on Europe and Central Asia included Uzbekistan's labor reforms on its agenda.

The new Labor Code, which came into force on April 30, 2023, is especially important, as it seeks to eliminate legal gaps, ambiguities, and outdated regulations in labor relations, while also introducing new legal institutions.

For over 25 years, the previous Labor Code had regulated the relationship between employers and employees, serving as the key legal document in the field. However, its provisions sometimes disproportionately favored employees, limiting employers' rights and creating challenges for business development.

Moreover, in practice, certain regulations categorized as "not allowed" or "impossible" under the old code were often circumvented, leading to inconsistent protection of both employers' and employees' rights.

NEW LABOR CODE... So, can the new Labor Code address the abovementioned issues?

In our view, there are sufficient grounds for optimism. First, the government, as the primary driver of reforms, is introducing updated legal mechanisms to ensure a fair balance between all parties in labor relations, irrespective of the form of ownership.

Furthermore, recognizing the broad scope of labor issues, sector-specific reforms have been introduced. These include legal measures regulating education, healthcare, specialized production sectors, and the protection of socially vulnerable groups.

In conclusion, the labor legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan has undergone significant reforms in recent years, aiming to ensure legal transparency, fair labor practices, and alignment with international standards. The adoption of the new Labor Code in 2023 demonstrates the country's commitment to improving the balance between the interests of employers and employees while also addressing previous legal gaps and inconsistencies.

Uzbekistan's cooperation with the International Labor Organization, as well as the ratification of key ILO conventions, reflects its openness to global standards and best practices in labor regulation. National measures, such as the elimination of forced labor and efforts to modernize workplace safety and employee rights, indicate a progressive approach to labor policy.

The effectiveness of labor legislation depends not only on laws but also on the responsible implementation and enforcement by relevant institutions. Moving forward, sustained dialogue between lawmakers, employers, trade unions, and international organizations will be vital to ensuring that the legal framework continues to adapt to the changing dynamics of the labor market and the rights of all participants are fully protected.

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