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НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫЕ МЕТОДЫ ЗАЩИТЫ ГЕНДЕРНОГО РАВЕНСТВА В РЕСПУБЛИКЕ УЗБЕКИСТАН: ПРАВОВЫЕ И ИНСТИТУЦИОНАЛЬНЫЕ АСПЕКТЫ

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Аннотация. Исследуется система национальных методов защиты гендерного равенства в Узбекистане, сформированная реформами 2019–2026 годов. Проанализированы конституционно-правовые основы, институциональные механизмы, меры экономической и политической поддержки женщин, а также эволюция законодательства о противодействии домашнему насилию. Особо выделены внедрение гендерно-ориентированного бюджетирования и гендерного аудита, международное признание модели. Показано, что комплексный подход обеспечил значимые результаты в обеспечении равных прав и возможностей мужчин и женщин.

Ключевые слова: гендерное равенство, правовая защита, национальное законодательство, институциональные механизмы, охранный ордер, домашнее насилие, Стратегия «Узбекистан–2030», гендерно-ориентированное бюджетирование.

Abstract. The article examines the system of national methods for protecting gender equality in Uzbekistan, formed by the reforms of 2019–2026. It analyzes the constitutional and legal foundations, institutional mechanisms, measures for the economic and political support of women, and the evolution of legislation on combating domestic violence. Particular attention is paid to the introduction of gender-responsive budgeting and gender audit, as well as the international recognition of the model. It is shown that the comprehensive approach has yielded significant results in ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women.

Keywords: gender equality, legal protection, national legislation, institutional mechanisms, protection order, domestic violence, Uzbekistan–2030 Strategy, gender-sensitive budgeting.

Introduction. The concept of gender equality in modern legal science is interpreted not only as formal legal equality of men and women but also as a comprehensive principle ensuring equal opportunities for self-realization in all spheres of public life, equal access to resources, and equal social value of





individuals regardless of their sex. In the Republic of Uzbekistan, this concept received normative codification in the Law "On Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men" dated September 2, 2019, No. LRU-562, where gender equality is understood as state-guaranteed equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all spheres of societal life [1].

Since 2017, when ensuring gender equality was declared a national priority, the country has implemented a set of interrelated legal and institutional reforms aimed at creating an effective system of protection against gender discrimination. The purpose of this article is to systematize and analyze the national methods of protecting gender equality that have taken shape in Uzbekistan by 2026, assess their effectiveness, and identify directions for further development.

The foundation of the legal protection of gender equality consists of the updated constitutional provisions. In the current edition of the Constitution, Article 58 has been revised to ensure equal rights of women and men in matters of labor and family, and Article 26 has been strengthened to guarantee state protection from all forms of violence. These constitutional novelties set the vector for the development of all sectoral legislation [2].

A key stage in the formation of the national legislative framework was the adoption on September 2, 2019, of two landmark laws: "On Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men" and "On the Protection of Women from Harassment and Violence" [1; 3]. These laws regulate the protection of women from harassment and violence in the household, workplace, and educational institutions, guarantee the protection of survivors of violence, and aim to create an atmosphere of zero tolerance for any forms of violence.

The national legislative framework is reinforced by universally recognized norms of international law. Uzbekistan acceded to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1995, and the Gender Equality Strategy adopted in 2021 is implemented in accordance with its provisions, including the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [4; 5].

For the effective implementation of gender equality policy, a multi-level institutional system has been established in Uzbekistan:

1. The Republican Commission on Increasing the Role of Women in Society, Gender Equality, and Family, headed by the Chairperson of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis Tanzila Narbaeva, carries out overall coordination and monitoring of the implementation of gender policy [5].
2. The Committee on Family and Women is the central body responsible for implementing measures to ensure women's rights, enhance their social, economic, and political activity [6].





3. Throughout the country, more than 4,000 advisory councils on ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men have been established in ministries, agencies, and organizations [5].
4. The Office of the Authorized Person of the Oliy Majlis for Human Rights (Ombudsman) monitors the observance of constitutional rights, including gender equality [5].

Strategic planning is based on two key documents. The "Uzbekistan–2030" Strategy [7] includes priorities of legal policy for ensuring gender equality and strengthening the family institution (Goal 25) [8]. The Gender Equality Strategy until 2030, adopted in 2021, is the main long-term document defining goals for eliminating discrimination, ensuring equal opportunities for leadership, and full participation of women in political, economic, and social life [5]. Within its implementation, more than 200 comprehensive measures have been carried out. Annual Programs of Comprehensive Measures for its implementation are approved, covering issues of improving the legislative framework, developing women's skills for scientific and startup ideas, and engaging them in innovation activities [9].

An innovative tool has been the introduction of gender-responsive budgeting, which involves taking into account the interests of women and men in the planning and execution of the state budget, as well as incorporating gender analysis into budget processes [6]. A methodology for conducting gender audit in state bodies has been developed and applied [6].

The state takes active measures to increase women's economic activity and political participation. Amendments have been made to the Electoral Code, increasing the minimum quota for women candidates from political parties from 30% to 40% [9]. The share of women in political parties has grown from 30% to 41%, and in parliament — from 16.4% to 34%. As of 2026, women hold 38% of seats in the lower house of parliament, 27% in the Senate, and 32.5% in local councils [10].

In the economic sphere, norms have been established guaranteeing women equal pay with men for work of equal value, and restrictions on the use of women's labor in certain sectors have been abolished [1]. Under the Family Entrepreneurship Development Program, 262,200 women received loans totaling 4.5 trillion soums, and 27,000 unemployed women received subsidies of 118.5 billion soums to start entrepreneurial activities. The number of women among individual entrepreneurs increased from 69,000 to 262,000 [9]. Starting from 2024, the state covers up to 70% of expenses for vocational training for women starting home-based work and handicrafts [6].

In higher education, the share of women in bachelor's programs grew from 38% to 53%, in master's programs — from 34% to 66%, and the number of women in doctoral studies increased from 584 to 4,129 [9]. At the Academy of Public





Administration, 319 female managers completed 60-hour professional development courses, and the "School of Women Leaders" program covered 244 women, 60 of whom were appointed to managerial positions [9].

Protection of women from violence is one of the key priorities of state policy. Since 2019, the institution of the protection order has been introduced — a document providing state protection to women who have suffered from harassment and violence. The protection order is issued by a prevention inspector within 24 hours from the moment a situation of violence or the risk of its occurrence is identified. The validity of the order may be extended by the criminal court for up to one year; petitions for extension are considered within 24 hours in a closed court session [3; 4]. In the first half of 2025, protection orders were issued to 55,000 women, and more than 9,000 violators of the order's conditions were held accountable [11].

A crucial stage was the introduction of criminal liability for domestic violence. On April 11, 2023, Article 126-1 was added to the Criminal Code, establishing criminal liability for family (domestic) violence [12]. Subsequently, the legislation was toughened: liability for sexual violence against minors was strengthened, and the possibility of parole or reconciliation of the parties for this category of crimes was excluded [11].

The adopted legislation is implemented with the support of international organizations. UNDP, jointly with the Ministry of Justice and the Ombudsman's Office, monitors law enforcement practice; analytical studies help identify gaps in legal protection mechanisms and improve legislation [11; 12].

The effectiveness of national methods of protecting gender equality is confirmed by international rankings. In the Inter-Parliamentary Union ranking "Women in Parliament," Uzbekistan rose from 130th to 38th place among 193 countries [10]. According to the World Bank's assessment, the country is among the top five states that have achieved the greatest progress in expanding women's economic and political rights [10]. In the Gender Equality and Governance Index, the country rose from 103rd to 52nd place [10].

Conclusion. The conducted analysis allows us to assert that a comprehensive system of national methods for protecting gender equality has been formed in the Republic of Uzbekistan, including constitutional guarantees, developed legislation, multi-level institutional mechanisms, instruments of economic support, and legal means to counter domestic violence. The evolution of this system — from harmonizing legislation with international standards to introducing innovative financial instruments (gender-responsive budgeting) — is confirmed by concrete measurable results and recognition by the world community [5; 6; 10]. Further improvement of law enforcement mechanisms and changing deeply rooted social





norms remain the key tasks on the path to the full realization of the principle of gender equality.

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