



POLITICAL PARTIES.ELECTIONS. ACTION STRATEGY

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Annotation: this article discusses recent political reforms in Uzbekistan and their impact on society and governance. It explains how the development of political parties, updated electoral procedures, and the implementation of the Action Strategy strengthen transparency, accountability, and citizen participation. Modern electoral processes, digital voter registration, and inclusive policies help ensure fair and competitive elections. The article also emphasizes the role of political parties in policy development, public debates, and citizen engagement. These reforms combine national democratic traditions with international best practices, promoting political stability, civic participation, and sustainable national development. Overall, Uzbekistan's political reforms are creating a more transparent, competitive, and forward-looking political system while preserving national values.

Key words: Uzbekistan; Political reforms; Political parties; Elections; Action Strategy; Democratic development; Electoral process; Voter registration; Civic participation; Transparency; Accountability; Policy development; Citizen engagement; Political stability; Governance

Introduction

Political development is a fundamental component of social and national progress. In the Republic of Uzbekistan, significant reforms have been implemented to strengthen democratic institutions, improve governance, and promote citizen participation. Central to these reforms are the establishment and development of

political parties, modernization of the electoral system, and the implementation of the national **Action Strategy**. These measures aim to create a transparent, accountable, and inclusive political environment. By encouraging political parties to participate actively in policy-making and by ensuring fair and competitive elections, Uzbekistan seeks to enhance civic engagement, strengthen political stability, and align national governance practices with international standards. This article examines the evolution of political parties, the electoral process, and the role of the Action Strategy in shaping Uzbekistan's contemporary political system.

POLITICAL PARTIES

A multiparty system is a political situation in which two or more parties operate actively in society. This system is typical of states and societies that follow democratic principles, as it ensures societal development through diversity of opinions. The free activity of political parties in society is a key guarantee for establishing a democratic and lawful state. One of the main indicators of modern democracy worldwide is conducting elections based on a multiparty system.

The first political party established in independent Uzbekistan was the **People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan (PDPU)**, founded in November 1991. Its primary goal is to protect the interests of socially vulnerable segments of the population. Since its establishment, the party has participated in presidential and parliamentary elections multiple times and has successfully formed its faction in parliament.

Another important party in the history of multiparty development in Uzbekistan is the **Progressive National Democratic Party "Vatan Taraqqiyoti"**, founded in 1992. In 1999, the **National Democratic Party "Fidokorlar"** was established, supporting the objectives and aspirations of dedicated citizens. In April 2000, the joint congress of "Vatan Taraqqiyoti" and "Fidokorlar" resulted in the unification of the two parties due to the alignment of their programs and goals.

The **Justice Social-Democratic Party** was founded in February 1995, focusing on resolving social issues in society. It seeks cooperation with social-democratic parties in developed countries and participates actively in international



social-democratic movements. The party primarily represents the middle class and underprivileged groups, aiming to express their political and social will.

The **National Revival Democratic Party** was established in June 1995 with the primary goal of preserving national traditions and values. In June 2008, it merged with the **Fidokorlar National Democratic Party** due to the similarity of their programmatic objectives.

The **Liberal Democratic Party of Uzbekistan (UzLiDeP)**, founded in November 2003, represents the interests of property owners, small businesses, farmers, highly qualified specialists, managers, and entrepreneurs.

Over the years, legal frameworks have been established to support the development of political parties in Uzbekistan. These include the **Constitution of Uzbekistan**, the **Law on Political Parties**, the **Law on Financing Political Parties**, and the **Constitutional Law on Strengthening the Role of Political Parties in Modernizing and Democratizing Governance**. The main measure of a political party's influence in society is its performance in elections to representative state authorities.

Uzbekistan Ecological Movement In 2008, amendments were made to several laws related to improving election legislation. According to this law, 135 deputies are elected for a five-year term to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis, and 15 deputies are elected from the **Uzbekistan Ecological Movement** through its internal congress. Thus, the total number of deputies in the Legislative Chamber is 150.

The **Uzbekistan Ecological Movement** was established in August 2008. Its activities focus on ensuring that citizens, both present and future generations, live in a healthy environment, improving public health, protecting natural resources, using them wisely, and mobilizing society's full potential to support these initiatives.



ELECTIONS

An election is a means of forming state bodies, local self-government bodies, and other institutions through voting. The exercise of voting rights by citizens is one of the most important forms of their participation in state governance. The procedures and rules for conducting elections are generally defined in each country's constitution and other constitutional-legal documents. Elections can take various forms. They may involve either the general population or only their representatives. Voting can be conducted openly or by secret ballot. Depending on the body being elected, elections may be for the parliament or the presidency. Parliamentary elections can be either general or partial, depending on whether the entire parliament or only a part is being elected. Elections can also be categorized by region (national or local), timing (regular or early), number of parties involved (single-party, multi-party, or non-partisan), competitiveness (contested or uncontested if only a single candidate is nominated), process (direct or multi-stage), and type (main or supplementary). According to the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, presidential elections, elections to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, to the Supreme Council of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, as well as elections to representative bodies of regional, district, and city state authorities, are held in the year when the respective constitutional term of office ends — on the first Sunday of the third decade of December. Elections are conducted on the basis of **universal, equal, direct suffrage by secret ballot** (see also Election System, Voting Rights). According to the law "On Amendments and Additions to Certain Legislative Acts of the Republic of Uzbekistan Regarding the Improvement of Election Legislation," adopted on **February 8, 2021**, elections are now held in **October**. That is, presidential elections, elections to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis, to the Supreme Council of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, and to representative bodies of regional, district, and city state authorities are conducted on the first Sunday of the third decade of October in the year their constitutional term expires (previously, elections were held in December). In the concept prepared by the Central Election Commission, there was also a proposal to move elections to



March. During seminars with citizens and through mass media feedback, March, May, August, and September were suggested as possible months. However, more than **70% of citizens recommended October**, which is why the elections were scheduled for that month.

The presidential election in Uzbekistan is a democratic process through which citizens elect the President of the Republic. It is one of the most important forms of citizen participation in state governance, allowing the population to exercise their constitutional rights and influence the country's highest executive office. Elections in Uzbekistan are conducted by **secret ballot**, based on the principles of **universal, equal, and direct suffrage**. Only citizens of Uzbekistan who meet constitutional requirements, including age and nationality criteria, are eligible to vote or run as candidates. Presidential elections are held in the year when the incumbent President's constitutional term expires. According to the 2021 amendments to the election legislation, presidential elections are now held in **October**, specifically on the first Sunday of the third decade of the month. Previously, elections were conducted in December. This change was made following public consultations and feedback, with over 70% of citizens supporting the move to October. The **Central Election Commission (CEC)** organizes and oversees the election process. Its responsibilities include registering candidates, monitoring compliance with electoral laws, conducting the vote count, and announcing results. Elections may involve multiple candidates or, in the case of a single candidate, may be conducted as an uncontested election. Presidential elections play a crucial role in ensuring **citizen participation, political stability, and democratic governance** in Uzbekistan. They strengthen the legitimacy of state authorities, support the rule of law, and enhance the country's national and international political standing.

ACTION STRATEGY

In our country, the extensive reforms carried out during the years of independence have laid a crucial foundation for strengthening national statehood and sovereignty, ensuring security and law and order, safeguarding the inviolability of



state borders, promoting the rule of law in society, protecting human rights and freedoms, and maintaining interethnic harmony and religious tolerance.

At the same time, an analysis of the country's development path, along with the rapidly changing demands of the global market and increasing competition in the context of globalization, required the development of a completely new approach to accelerate national development.

Under the initiative of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, elected in 2016, reforms have been implemented to enhance their effectiveness, create conditions for comprehensive and rapid development of the state and society, modernize the country, and liberalize all spheres of life. As part of this effort, the President of Uzbekistan approved the **Action Strategy for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017–2021** on February 7, 2017.

The Strategy was developed based on a comprehensive study of pressing issues affecting the population and entrepreneurs, analysis of legislation, law enforcement practices, and international experience. The implementation of the Action Strategy is carried out in five stages, each of which envisages the approval of an annual state program corresponding to the year's theme.

A **14-member National Commission**, led by the President, was established to oversee the timely and effective implementation of the tasks outlined in the Strategy. The Action Strategy defines **five priority areas for the country's further development**:

1. **Improving the system of state and society governance** (represented by sky blue – symbolizing the sky and clean water, reflecting the color of Amir Timur's state flag).
2. **Ensuring the rule of law and further reforming the judicial and legal system** (black – symbolizing law supremacy and integrity).
3. **Developing and liberalizing the economy** (yellow – symbolizing strength, power, and wealth, elements of economic development).

4. **Developing the social sphere** (red – symbolizing life and the provision of a decent standard of living for the population).

5. **Ensuring security, religious tolerance, interethnic harmony, and mutually beneficial, practical foreign policy** (white – symbolizing peace and purity, elements of a peaceful policy).

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