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Legal guarantees for educators and employees in the context of labor market reforms in Uzbekistan

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Abstract: This thesis analyzes the legal status, labor guarantees, and socio-legal protection mechanisms of educators and employees within the framework of labor market reforms being implemented in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Furthermore, based on the norms of the new edition of the Labor Code and the Law "On the Status of a Pedagogical Worker", priority tasks and practical proposals within the system are put forward.

Keywords: labor market, status of an educator, legal guarantees, Labor Code, social protection, professional immunity, combating forced labor.

INTRODUCTION:

In recent years, fundamental reforms have been carried out in Uzbekistan to liberalize labor relations, develop human capital, and protect employees' labor rights at the level of international standards. In particular, enhancing the prestige in society of education sector representatives-pedagogical workers, who serve as the main pillar of societal development-and bringing their rights, honor, and dignity under state protection have become a priority direction of state policy.

Main Body. Reforms in Uzbekistan’s labor legislation have strengthened the legal guarantees of educators and employees in several key areas:

Improvement of constitutional and legislative foundations. Article 52 of the new

edition of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan enshrines that a teacher’s labor is the foundation for the development of society and the state, as well as for the formation and upbringing of a healthy, harmoniously developed generation. Additionally, the new Labor Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Articles 500-504), which entered into force on April 30, 2023, clearly defined the specific features of the legal regulation of pedagogical workers' labor.

Adoption of the Law "On the Status of a Pedagogical Worker". Law No. ZRU-901, adopted on February 1, 2024, consolidated the legal status of educators into a unified system. According to the Law, interfering in an educator’s professional activities, conducting groundless inspections of their work, and influencing the assessment of students' knowledge are strictly prohibited.

Elimination of forced labor and excessive reporting. As a result of the reforms, administrative and criminal liability has been strengthened for involving educators in work unrelated to their professional duties (landscaping, agricultural work) as well as demanding excessive reports that do not fall within their job responsibilities.

Working conditions and socio-economic guarantees. Important benefits have been guaranteed for pedagogical workers, including a reduced working time not exceeding 36 hours per week, an extended annual paid labor leave lasting up to 56 calendar days, free mandatory medical examinations at state healthcare institutions, and exemption from state duty when applying to court to protect their professional activities. Furthermore, initial financial assistance and housing rent compensations have been introduced for specialists recruited to remote areas.

Socio-economic and financial incentive guarantees. Within the framework of social protection for educators and employees, a system has been established providing free mandatory medical examinations once a year at state healthcare institutions, free preventive vaccinations against infectious diseases, as well as a one-time initial allowance equal to 50 times the Basic Calculation Value (BCV) and monthly monetary compensation for housing rent for educators coming from other regions to work in remote and hard-to-reach areas. In

higher education institutions, the practice of paying bonuses of up to 100 percent and higher on monthly salaries based on academic degrees and titles, publications in international rankings, and KPI indicators has been expanded.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, it should be noted that the reforms in Uzbekistan’s labor market have not only legally protected educators and education sector employees, but also elevated their social status in society to a new level. However, in order to ensure the uniform and full implementation of these legislative guarantees in practice, we consider it advisable to implement the following proposals:

Equalizing labor guarantees in the non-state (private) education sector: strengthening the oversight of the State Labor Inspectorate to ensure that educators working in private schools, kindergartens, and non-state higher education institutions receive the 56-day extended labor leave, 36-hour workweek, and social protection through trade unions.

Integrating a digital monitoring and appeal system: introducing anonymous and rapid legal appeal modules for educators within the "Unified National Labor System" (my.mehnat.uz) database to prevent excessive paperwork and unlawful assignments in educational institutions.

Enhancing legal literacy: introducing a mandatory practical module titled "Labor Law and Legal Guarantees of an Educator" into the curricula of professional development courses for pedagogical personnel.

Optimizing academic and pedagogical workload: creating greater legal and time opportunities for professors and teachers of higher education institutions to engage in scientific research and innovative activities by optimizing their teaching workload based on international experience.

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maqomi to‘g‘risida”gi Qonuni.

