



Enhancing legislative processes in Uzbekistan: strategies, reforms, and future directions

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received January 2025

Received in revised form

15 January 2025

Accepted 25 February 2025

Available online

25 March 2025

Keywords:

legislative reforms,
lawmaking process,
regulatory impact
assessment,
public participation,
digital transformation,
legal framework,
governance,
anti-corruption policies,
Uzbekistan – 2030 Strategy.

ABSTRACT

The article examines the legislative reforms in Uzbekistan aimed at modernizing the lawmaking process and aligning it with international standards. It identifies key priorities of the Oliy Majlis (Parliament), including the adoption of directly applicable laws, the reduction of bureaucratic barriers, the strengthening of public participation, and the integration of digital solutions into legislative procedures. The impact of enhanced parliamentary oversight, regulatory impact assessments, and anti-corruption mechanisms is assessed. The role of the "Uzbekistan-2030" Development Strategy in shaping long-term legislative improvements is analyzed. Identified challenges include fragmented legal frameworks, excessive reliance on reference norms, and incomplete digitalization. The effectiveness of evidence-based policymaking, public engagement, and compliance with international standards in establishing a modern and transparent legislative system is considered. The article characterizes the key patterns of legislative development in Uzbekistan and evaluates the practical implications of recent reforms.

2181-1415/© 2025 in Science LLC.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47689/2181-1415-vol6-iss2/S-pp135-140>

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О‘zbekistonda qonun ijodkorligi jarayonlarini takomillashtirish: strategiyalar, islohotlar va kelajakdagi yo‘nalishlari

Kalit so‘zlar:

Qonunchilik islohotlari, qonun ijodkorligi jarayoni, tartibga solish ta‘sirini baholash, jamoatchilik ishtiroki, raqamli transformatsiya, huquqiy tizim, boshqaruv, korrupsiyaga qarshi siyosat, O‘zbekiston – 2030 strategiyasi.

ANNOTATSIYA

Maqolada O‘zbekistonda qonun ijodkorligi jarayonini modernizatsiya qilish va uni xalqaro standartlarga moslashtirish bo‘yicha amalga oshirilayotgan islohotlar tahlil qilingan. Oliy Majlisning asosiy ustuvor yo‘nalishlari aniqlangan, jumladan, to‘g‘ridan-to‘g‘ri amal qiluvchi qonunlarni qabul qilish, byurokratik to‘siqlarni kamaytirish, jamoatchilik ishtirokini kuchaytirish va qonun ijodkorligi jarayoniga raqamli texnologiyalarni joriy etish, kengaytirilgan parlament nazorati, tartibga solish ta‘sirini baholash va korrupsiyaga qarshi mexanizmlarning samaradorligi baholangan. “O‘zbekiston – 2030” rivojlanish strategiyasi uzoq muddatli qonunchilik takomillashtirish jarayonidagi roli tahlil qilingan. Aniqlangan muammolar orasida tarqoq huquqiy normalar, havolaki me‘yorlarga ortiqcha tayanish va qonunchilik jarayonining to‘liq raqamlashtirilmaganligi ko‘rsatib o‘tilgan. Ilmiy asoslangan siyosat yuritish, jamoatchilik ishtirokini ta‘minlash hamda xalqaro me‘yorlarga muvofiqlikning qonunchilik tizimini zamonaviy va shaffof qilishdagi ahamiyati ko‘rib chiqilgan. Maqolada qonunchilik rivojlanishining asosiy qonuniyatlari tavsiflangan va amalga oshirilgan islohotlarning amaliy natijalari baholangan.

Совершенствование законодательных процессов в Узбекистане: стратегии, реформы и направления будущего развития

Ключевые слова:

Законодательные реформы, процесс законотворчества, оценка регулирующего воздействия, участие общественности, цифровая трансформация, правовая система, государственное управление, антикоррупционная политика, Стратегия «Узбекистан – 2030».

АННОТАЦИЯ

В статье рассматриваются законодательные реформы в Узбекистане, направленные на модернизацию процесса законотворчества и его приведение в соответствие с международными стандартами. Определены ключевые приоритеты Олий Мажлиса (Парламента), включая принятие законов прямого действия, сокращение бюрократических барьеров, усиление общественного участия и внедрение цифровых технологий в законодательные процедуры. Оценена эффективность расширенного парламентского контроля, анализа регулирующего воздействия и антикоррупционных механизмов. Проанализирована роль Стратегии развития «Узбекистан – 2030» в долгосрочном совершенствовании законодательства. Среди выявленных проблем выделены фрагментированность правовых норм, чрезмерная зависимость от отсылочных норм и незавершённая

цифровизация законодательного процесса. Рассмотрена значимость научно обоснованного подхода к политике, вовлечения граждан и соответствия международным стандартам для создания современной и прозрачной законодательной системы. В статье охарактеризованы основные закономерности развития законодательства и оценены практические результаты проведенных реформ.

Lawmaking is a fundamental pillar of Uzbekistan's governance framework, playing a crucial role in regulating social, economic, and political relations. Over the past years, Uzbekistan has undertaken significant reforms to modernize its legislative processes, align its legal system with international standards, and ensure greater transparency, efficiency, and public participation in lawmaking. Recognizing the importance of improving legislative quality, the **Oliy Majlis** (Parliament) has prioritized strengthening the effectiveness of lawmaking. Special emphasis has been placed on **directly applicable laws**, reducing bureaucratic barriers, and integrating digital transformation into the legislative process. Additionally, the Uzbek government has aimed to enhance parliamentary oversight, promote inclusive policymaking, and ensure compliance with **international legal commitments**.

The adoption of the "**Uzbekistan-2030**" **Development Strategy** further highlights the country's commitment to aligning its legislative reforms with long-term national objectives. This strategy outlines key goals, including streamlining **legal frameworks**, improving **regulatory impact assessments**, and fostering a **transparent and citizen-centric governance model**.

This document provides a comprehensive overview of **Uzbekistan's lawmaking reforms**, key achievements, ongoing challenges, and future directions. It explores the modernization of legislative processes, public engagement mechanisms, and the digital transformation of lawmaking to ensure a robust, inclusive, and efficient legal system.

The responsibility of entities holding legislative initiative rights has been enhanced within the lawmaking process. Several important legislative acts have been adopted, including the Law on Anti-Corruption Expertise of Normative-Legal Acts and Their Drafts and the updated Law on Normative-Legal Acts. The procedure for exercising the right to legislative initiative has been clearly defined. When a bill is considered in the first reading, as a rule, the subject of legislative initiative or their representative must present and defend it.

The introduction of this practice has led to increased responsibility of the initiating body for drafting bills, improving their quality, and enhancing the involvement of stakeholders in the lawmaking process. Additionally, the format and procedures for drafting legislative proposals that introduce amendments and additions to existing laws have been improved. A requirement has been established for the inclusion of a preface explaining the content and significance of such amendments in a clear and accessible language for the public.

On August 8, 2018, the Presidential Decree No. PF-5505 on the Approval of the Concept for Improving Normative Creativity Activities introduced a modern approach and a new conceptual basis for lawmaking activities. Key initiatives include the introduction of new democratic forms for developing normative-legal acts, the adoption of directly applicable laws, and ensuring broader public and expert discussions of legislative drafts. Additionally, priority has been given to examining the compliance of draft laws with international treaties and global rankings.

As a result, in the past six years, Uzbekistan has significantly improved its standing in global governance indices:

- Rule of Law Index – an increase of 5 positions
- World Governance Indicators (WGI) – an increase of 24 positions in "Regulatory Quality"

Over the past period, several key measures have been implemented in the lawmaking sector:

1. *Alignment with International Standards.* A systematic approach has been adopted to assess whether new legislative proposals comply with international treaties and recommendations aimed at improving Uzbekistan's position in global rankings. This measure has facilitated full compliance with Uzbekistan's international obligations, increased the country's investment attractiveness, and strengthened its international reputation.

2. *Strengthening the Role of Parliament in Lawmaking.* The Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis has prioritized committee-level and faction-level discussions of draft laws before their adoption. Inter-faction debates on draft laws have been institutionalized, ensuring a more pluralistic and multi-party approach to legislative decision-making. The principle of preliminary discussion within political factions before inclusion in the plenary agenda of the Legislative Chamber has been strictly followed.

3. *Expanding Public Participation in Lawmaking.* The principles of "The people are the sole source and author of laws" and "All key decisions are made through direct dialogue with the public, considering public opinion" have been embedded in lawmaking practices. Broad public participation has been institutionalized through public discussions, online consultations, and town-hall meetings on legislative proposals. The updated "regulation.gov.uz" portal has been introduced, providing a more user-friendly and accessible platform for public engagement in lawmaking.

4. *Adoption of Directly Applicable Laws.* Legislative efforts have increasingly focused on adopting laws that do not require subordinate regulatory acts for enforcement. Public discussions with local Councils (Kengashes) and on-site reviews have been expanded to enhance the practicality and effectiveness of proposed laws. These measures have led to greater legal certainty and enhanced the effectiveness of law enforcement.

Additionally, the Uzbekistan – 2030 Strategy prioritizes aligning lawmaking with ongoing reforms and developing the institutional foundations of state legal policy.

Key efficiency indicators have been identified for 2030, including to achieve this goal:

- Expanding the adoption of directly applicable laws
- Enhancing monitoring and regulatory impact assessment of legislative measures
- Creating a simplified, accessible, and systematic legal framework

To implement these objectives, it is necessary to review and enhance the effectiveness of existing law-making mechanisms and parliamentary oversight, while ensuring greater public participation in governance.

Despite progress, several challenges remain:

1. *Fragmented Legal Frameworks* – the dispersed regulation of social relations across multiple laws has led to legal inconsistencies, ambiguities in law enforcement, and interpretation challenges.

2. Inadequate Regulatory Impact Assessment – there is a lack of systematic evaluation of the economic, financial, and administrative burdens imposed by new regulations, particularly on entrepreneurs and citizens.

3. Overuse of Reference Norms – many laws rely on indirect references to sub-regulatory acts, creating opportunities for misinterpretation and potential abuse of power by officials.

4. Ineffective Anti-Corruption Reviews – the effectiveness of mandatory corruption risk assessments remains limited, and other required expert reviews (economic, financial, linguistic, gender-based, etc.) are inconsistently applied.

5. Incomplete Digitalization of Lawmaking – the process of digital transformation in lawmaking is not fully implemented, and there is still a reliance on paper-based document circulation.

In line with the Uzbekistan – 2030 Strategy, the following key directions are being prioritized:

- ❖ Enhancing the Role of Laws in Regulating Social Relations – Establishing clear requirements for the structure, content, and enforceability of directly applicable laws.

- ❖ Reducing Bureaucratic Barriers – Systematic codification of legal norms and elimination of outdated regulations to simplify law enforcement practices.

- ❖ Expanding Public and Expert Participation – Enhancing collaboration with civil society institutions, academic experts, and political parties to strengthen public oversight.

- ❖ Improving Public Consultation Mechanisms – Ensuring that all major legislative decisions are made through direct dialogue with citizens and public consultations.

- ❖ Implementing Smart Regulation Principles – Introducing evidence-based policymaking, strengthening regulatory impact assessments, and ensuring compliance with international standards.

- ❖ Enhancing Digitalization – Automating all stages of the lawmaking process, ensuring full electronic circulation of legislative documents, and eliminating paper-based workflows.

- ❖ Aligning Legislation with the Updated Constitution – Reviewing all existing laws to ensure alignment with the new Constitution, strengthening parliamentary oversight, and enhancing public participation in governance.

- ❖ Developing Sector-Specific Legal Frameworks – Strengthening legal provisions in key areas such as economic regulation, environmental protection, judicial reforms, and human rights.

By implementing these measures, Uzbekistan aims to establish a modern, transparent, and efficient legal system that fully supports the country's long-term development goals and ensures the rule of law and public trust in governance.

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