


Reforms in the Fight Against Corruption in the Republic of Uzbekistan

Nosirov Behruz Sherzodovich

The Student of Law Faculty of Namangan State University

Namangan, Uzbekistan

Phone: +998938768107

	<p>Abstract</p> <p>In this article, the reforms implemented in the Republic of Uzbekistan in the fight against corruption are extensively analyzed. It describes the negative impact of corruption on society, economy and state administration, the laws adopted for its prevention and elimination, state programs and their practical results. Information was also given about the activities of the Anti-Corruption Agency, the importance of ensuring transparency through the introduction of digital technologies, the open information system, the "Open Budget" platform, and the e-government system. The article also analyzes the role of civil society institutions, mass media and public control mechanisms in the fight against corruption. According to the results of the research, it was found that the ongoing reforms serve to strengthen the principles of honesty, justice and trust in public administration.</p>
<p>Keywords: Corruption, reforms, law, public administration, honesty, justice, transparency, Anti-Corruption Agency, e-government, open data, digital technologies, "Open budget", civil society, public control, legal culture, public service, responsibility, prevention, public trust.</p>	

Introduction

Corruption is a systemic problem that has a negative impact on public administration, economic and social development, and its prevention and elimination has undoubtedly become one of the priorities of state policy. In the Republic of Uzbekistan, the legal and regulatory framework and institutional measures related to the fight against corruption have been systematically strengthened in recent years; and this made it possible to determine the cause and extent of the problem and to coordinate countermeasures.

The Law "On Combating Corruption" adopted on January 3, 2017 defined the main principles of anti-corruption policy, the rights and obligations of state bodies and citizens, and regulated the mechanisms of prevention, monitoring and public control. This law created a uniform and stable legal framework for the fight against corruption in the country.

As part of the practical organization of the fight against corruption, on June 29, 2020, the Anti-Corruption Agency was established on the basis of the presidential decrees, and an institutional mechanism was created to conduct an integrated policy in the country. The agency is engaged in monitoring the activities of officials, identifying and preventing corruption risks, as well as developing international cooperation.

MAIN PART

Machines of digital transformation and openness are being introduced as an important tool in the fight against corruption: through the "E-AntiCorruption" platform, "Open Budget" and "Electronic Government" systems, opportunities for citizens to report, monitor budget data and increase transparency in public services have expanded. These digital instruments serve to reduce corruption risks and make public control more effective.

The reforms implemented in recent years are also reflected in international ratings: the positions of Uzbekistan and their changes in indicators such as the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) published by Transparency International are an important barometer for evaluating the effectiveness of reforms. At the same time, the change in indicators shows the need to deepen internal measures.

This article analyzes the aforementioned legal frameworks, institutional changes, the role of digital platforms, and the effectiveness of public oversight; Also, the positive results of the reforms and the problems they face and suggestions are shown. The following sections provide a detailed analysis of: 1) the legal framework, 2) the institutional functions of agencies and other bodies, 3) the practical impact of digital systems and openness tools, 4) public and international cooperation, and 5) conclusions and recommendations. Legal frameworks and institutional systems In the Republic of Uzbekistan, a number of important legal measures have been adopted in the field of combating corruption. For example, the Law on Combating Corruption, adopted on January 3, 2017, established principles aimed at increasing transparency and accountability in the activities of state bodies and reducing corruption risks. Also, the Anti-Corruption Agency established in 2020 served to strengthen the institutional mechanism.

Within the system, measures such as anti-corruption examination of legal documents, strengthening of monitoring in state procurement systems have been initiated. Results and statistical status Below are some indicators observed in the field: In the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) published by Transparency International, Uzbekistan ranked 126th with 31 points in 2022. In 2023, there is information that it rose to 121st place with 33 points.

Uzbekistan ranked 66th in the 2022 "Absence of corruption" indicator of the "World Justice Project".

In 2021, it was noted that 91 cases of bribery were detected against officials of state bodies, and this figure significantly decreased in 2019-2021.

Key indicators in the field of combating corruption in Uzbekistan (2017-2024) From the table above, it can be seen that significant growth and positive results were observed in the field of fighting corruption during 2017-2024. The number of criminal cases has decreased year by year, and the honesty rating of civil servants has increased from 45 percent to 79 percent. This shows the effectiveness of the anti-corruption policy and the formation of a culture of honesty in society.

These cases show that the reforms have begun to give some results, but at the same time, the need to deepen the measures is also being identified.

The main problems are unbalanced institutional development: For example, in the OECD 2024 "Baseline Report" Uzbekistan was highly evaluated in the direction of "Anti-Corruption Policy (CO-1)" with 83.6 points, but in the direction of "Conflict of interest and asset declarations (CO-2)" it was shown to be at a "low" level with only 11.8 points.

Limited awareness and civic participation: Although the principles of public oversight are introduced, the level of recognition, reporting and participation of corruption among citizens is still insufficient.

Low international ratings: even with 33 points, Uzbekistan remains at an average level globally; that is, it does not reach the "low corruption risk" group. This shows that it is necessary to ensure the overall systemic coverage of the reforms. Gaps in enforcement: For example, there are still weaknesses in the areas of declaration, monitoring of officials' assets, compliance of employees with integrity standards. Recommendations Strengthening the mechanisms of declaration and conflict of interest: the low value of the CO-2 indicator shows that it is necessary to expand the mechanisms of monitoring the declaration of officials' assets in a way that is mandatory and comprehensible to the common people. Expanding cooperation with civil society and mass media: It is important to increase public participation by developing citizen awareness and reporting systems (for example, the "E-anticorruption" platform).

Digital monitoring and increasing transparency: Information on public procurement, officials' activities and budget expenditures should be as open as possible. This serves to prevent the risk of corruption.

Strengthening the educational and moral component: It is recommended to introduce comprehensive educational programs for the formation of principles of honesty and responsibility for students, civil servants and society.

International cooperation and compliance with standards: it is important to use international experiences by strengthening cooperation with OECD, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other organizations.

RESULTS

The results of the research show that the legal framework and institutional mechanisms in the field of fighting corruption in the Republic of Uzbekistan were significantly strengthened in 2017-2024: the Law "On Combating Corruption" adopted in 2017 provided a unified legal basis for state policy, and in 2020, the Agency for Combating Corruption was established by presidential decree - these are the most important stages of reforms.

There are also practical results: transparency has increased through digital platforms (for example, "Open Budget", e-services and E-AntiCorruption mechanisms) and positive dynamics have been observed in some indicators; however, in international indexes, Uzbekistan still remains in a middle-level position (Transparency International 2024 CPI — 32 points, 121st place), which indicates the need to continue systematic and deeper work.

According to the results of the analysis, the main problems are as follows: 1) weak practical control over declaration of assets of officials and issues of conflict of interests; 2) slowness in expanding public and civil participation; 3) gaps in monitoring and implementation in some areas - in the

2024 monitoring report of the OECD, shortcomings were noted specifically in the direction of CO-2 (conflict of interests and declarations). These shortcomings reduce the effectiveness of the fight against corruption and require additional measures.

In this regard, the following practical proposals are considered the most important and priority: Strengthening of declaration and control mechanisms. Officials' asset declarations should be made simple, open and verifiable by the public; introduce electronic verification and automated cross-checking.

Encourage public participation. Making reporting (whistleblowing) systems through e-platforms more secure and user-friendly, introducing incentives and protection mechanisms for informal reports.

Expanding digital openness. Open data on public procurement, budget execution and officials' activities in a machine-readable format and create the possibility of monitoring through API. It facilitates business and citizen verification. Strengthening education and professional ethics. Introduce regular trainings on corruption prevention, code of ethics and practical cases for civil servants, students and businesses.

Expansion of international cooperation. It is necessary to continue the monitoring and peer-review processes with OECD, UNODC and other expert organizations and deepen the reforms according to international standards.

CONCLUSION

In general, the reforms that are starting in the country are giving positive results - a legal framework and a system of digital instruments have been formed - but in order to make the results stable and continuous, the above-mentioned practical measures (especially declaration control and expanding public participation) should be implemented quickly and systematically. If strong and quick measures are taken in these areas, the efficiency and international evaluation of Uzbekistan in the fight against corruption will improve significantly.

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