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THE ESSENCE AND CONTENT OF THE RECENT AMENDMENTS INTRODUCED TO CRIMINAL LEGISLATION AND THE REFORMS IMPLEMENTED IN RECENT YEARS

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ANNOTATION

This article analyzes the essence and content of the amendments introduced to criminal legislation and the reforms implemented in recent years. It highlights measures aimed at the liberalization of criminal policy, the protection of human rights and freedoms, and the improvement of law enforcement practice. In particular, the expansion of elements of crimes, the criminalization of new types of offenses, and the modernization of certain legal norms are examined. The article also explores new forms of crime emerging in connection with the development of digital technologies, as well as issues related to their legal regulation. Furthermore, it analyzes key aspects of improving criminal legislation based on the experience of foreign countries. In addition, approaches aimed at the individualization of punishment, strengthening the principles of humanism, and the social rehabilitation of convicted persons are evaluated.

Keywords: Criminal legislation, Domestic (family) violence, Crypto-asset, Mining, Criminal record, Amendments, Information of court proceedings.



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In recent years, the acceleration of societal development, the increasing complexity of socio-economic relations, and the intensification of globalization processes have made the improvement of criminal legislation an increasingly urgent issue. In the course of building a modern rule-of-law state, the liberalization of criminal policy, the reliable protection of human rights and freedoms, and the introduction of effective and fair mechanisms to combat crime are emerging as priority directions.

In particular, the amendments and additions introduced to criminal legislation in recent years, as well as the systemic reforms implemented, are significant not only for improving law enforcement practice, but also for strengthening criminal procedural guarantees, ensuring the humanization of punishments, and preventing offenses.

In 2023, the **Criminal Code** was supplemented with Article 126¹, which establishes liability for domestic (family) violence. This offense is characterized by administrative prejudice, and its relevance is reflected in the following statistical data. According to statistics, in January–August 2025, 298 individuals were convicted under Article 126¹ of the Criminal Code, of whom 81 were sentenced to imprisonment. In 2024, this figure amounted to 472 individuals, including 150 sentenced to imprisonment. In addition, under Article 59² of the Code of Administrative Responsibility (domestic violence), administrative measures were applied to 7,624 individuals during the first eight months of 2025. Although this represents a decrease compared to 2024 (16,524 cases), the number of incidents remains high. Of these, 6,585 individuals were subjected to administrative detention.

At the same time, this year the Criminal Code was supplemented with Article 122¹, which establishes liability for leaving a child unsupervised in a foreign country. The necessity of this provision is evidenced by the following statistics.



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At a regular meeting of the Committee of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis, the report of the Children’s Ombudsman on the observance of child rights legislation by state bodies, including law enforcement agencies, in 2025 was heard, noting that 45 children left without parental care abroad were returned to Uzbekistan.

In 2022, 43 children who had been left without parental care abroad were also returned to Uzbekistan. In particular, they were brought back from Russia, Kazakhstan, and Turkey.

Turning to the reforms and amendments introduced in 2024, it should be noted that in this year, Part One of Article 165 of the Criminal Code (extortion) was supplemented with the phrase: “by means of destroying, altering, acquiring, or blocking the victim’s information resources.”

In practice, extortion had traditionally been understood as a crime committed through violence, threats, or economic coercion. However, in recent years, new forms of extortion—particularly digital (cyber) extortion—have become increasingly widespread. These include, inter alia:

- threatening to delete the data of an individual or organization;
- demanding money by blocking information systems (ransomware);
- exerting pressure through the alteration or unlawful acquisition of electronic data.

As a matter of comparative perspective, it may be noted that Article 208 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Belarus establishes criminal liability for extortion, defining it as the unlawful seizure of property through threats of violence against the victim or their relatives, destruction or damage to their property, or threats of destroying computer information.

Furthermore, in 2024, the terms “crypto-asset” and “mining” were incorporated into Chapter Eight of the Criminal Code. Accordingly, a crypto-asset is defined



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as a set of digital records in a distributed ledger, representing property rights that possess value and ownership. Mining, in turn, is defined as the activity of maintaining a distributed ledger, creating blocks, and verifying their integrity through computational operations.

In this regard, the Criminal Code was supplemented with Article 278⁸, entitled “Violation of legislation in the sphere of crypto-asset circulation.” In addition, Article 278⁹, entitled “Illegal conduct of mining activities,” was also introduced into the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Turning to the amendments introduced in 2025, the disposition of Article 239 of the Criminal Code (disclosure of information from inquiry, preliminary investigation, or closed court proceedings) was revised in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. ORQ-1084 dated September 26, 2025.

The new wording of this provision is as follows: “Article 239. Disclosure of information from inquiry, preliminary investigation, or closed court proceedings, namely: Disclosure of information from an inquiry or preliminary investigation without the permission of the inquirer, investigator, or prosecutor, as well as disclosure of information and details of closed court proceedings without the permission of the court, by a person who has been entrusted with the obligation not to disclose such information—shall be punishable by a fine of up to fifty times the base calculation amount, or corrective labor for up to three years, or restriction of liberty for a term of one to three years, or deprivation of liberty for up to three years”.

At the same time, Article 77 of the General Part of the Criminal Code (Legal significance of a criminal record) was supplemented with a sixth part in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. ORQ-1092 dated October 23, 2025. Specifically, the following provision was introduced: “A person who has served a sentence imposed for a crime committed before reaching



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the age of eighteen shall be considered as not having a criminal record, except in cases of especially serious crimes or where, before reaching the age of eighteen, the person commits a new intentional crime after serving the sentence for a previously committed offense.”

One of the most significant amendments to the Criminal Code in the current year, **2026**, is the introduction of Article 74¹ into the General Part. This provision establishes legal norms allowing for the reduction of a sentence for convicted persons who engage in reading activities. Accordingly, pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. ORQ-1114 dated January 15, 2026, the General Part of the Criminal Code was supplemented with Article 74¹.

Under this provision, “**Article 74¹**. Reduction of the term of serving a sentence in connection with the offender’s rehabilitation, namely: a person specified in part four of Article 73 of this Code (except those sentenced to life imprisonment), who, during the term of serving a sentence of deprivation of liberty, has demonstrably read books included in the officially approved list of literature aimed at fostering proper moral and ethical values among convicts, may have their sentence reduced. In such cases, the term of the sentence may be reduced by three days for each book read, but not exceeding thirty days within one year.”

This practice has also been reflected in foreign legal systems. In particular, the criminal legislation of Brazil, Norway, Bolivia, and Italy contains provisions allowing for the reduction or mitigation of sentences for inmates who engage in reading activities.

In addition, pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. ORQ-1114 dated January 15, 2026, the Criminal Procedure Code was supplemented with Article 536². According to this provision, “in cases предусмотренных Article 74¹ of the Criminal Code, the reduction of the term of serving a sentence of deprivation of liberty shall be carried out by a judge upon submission by the



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administration of the penal institution or upon a motion filed by the convicted person or their defense counsel in accordance with the procedure established by law.”

In this context, further improvement of the system of moral rehabilitation of convicts and individuals who have previously committed offenses, as well as the prevention of recidivism, remains of critical importance in line with modern requirements.

Based on the above, it should be emphasized in conclusion that the process of reforming criminal legislation must be continuous and systematic. In the context of globalization, the emergence of new social risks and forms of crime necessitates the constant improvement of legislation. From this perspective, further humanization of criminal law, its harmonization with international standards, and the establishment of a unified approach in law enforcement practice will remain among the key priorities.