

The Socio-Legal Significance and Necessity of Integrating Information Technologies into Judicial Practice

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Abstract: This article examines the socio-legal significance and necessity of introducing information technologies into judicial activities. It also reviews proposals and opinions presented in legal literature on this topic, and analyzes the legislative experience of foreign countries.

Keywords: Judicial activities, transparency, information technologies, legal foundations, improvement.

Introduction: In recent years, our country has implemented comprehensive reforms aimed at strengthening judicial independence and transforming the courts into truly independent institutions that serve to reliably protect the rights and freedoms of citizens. All these efforts are a practical reflection of citizens' constitutional rights to judicial protection, which are firmly enshrined in the newly revised Constitution and current legislation.

It is well known that economic courts in our country play a significant role in ensuring the stability and transparency of business relations and resolving economic disputes. Currently, the increasing complexity of economic relations and the growing volume of court cases demand the improvement of procedures for conducting economic litigation and the use of more effective tools for reviewing and resolving cases in court. From this perspective, the introduction of modern information technologies into judicial activities is seen as an effective solution and is recognized as an integral part of judicial and legal reforms.

At a meeting held on February 27, 2025, under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, measures to further improve the judiciary and increase the level of openness and digitalization were discussed. According to a presentation by the Chairperson of the Supreme Court, the concept of a "Digital Court" will be

implemented with the aim of completely abandoning paper-based procedures in legal proceedings. For this purpose, an Information Technology Center will be established under the Supreme Court. This center will be responsible for developing the necessary information systems and software products for courts, introducing artificial intelligence, and ensuring information security. Electronic data exchange between courts and business entities will be organized, resulting in faster case reviews.

As a result of the development of the integration of information technologies into judicial activities, Professor Z.N. Esanova notes that new scientific concepts are expected to emerge in the judicial system and the scientific basis of procedural law. These include terms such as "electronic appeal," "electronic justice," "electronic address," "electronic information exchange," and "unified portal of interactive government services." These terms will reveal new priority directions in the field and create a need for further scientific research.

When examining the issue of implementing modern information technologies into the judicial system more deeply, it becomes necessary to analyze terms such as "electronic justice" and "judicial informatization", and to determine the relationship between them.

It is worth noting that today the informatization of courts has become a stable concept, referring to a

comprehensive process that includes the design, implementation, and use of information systems within the judicial system to increase its efficiency. Practitioners also regard the informatization of judicial systems through the introduction of modern information technologies as one of the most effective tools in the world today for achieving fair justice and increasing its quality and transparency.

As noted by legal scholar Y.G. Prosvirin, "Judicial informatization constitutes a complex organizational, socio-economic, and scientific-technical process directed at establishing optimal conditions to fulfill the information requirements of judicial institutions."

Indeed, the process of informatisation includes equipping the courts with special technical and information resources, which contributes to the full performance of their duties.

In addition, informatization of the judicial system helps expand the practice of resolving disputes both before and outside the courtroom, helps prevent conflicts, and fills gaps in citizens' legal knowledge. In turn, this enables citizens to more effectively protect their rights.

The informatization of the judiciary involves the use of electronic data produced, processed, and stored through electronic devices, information systems, and digital technologies in judicial proceedings. This process also encompasses equipping courts with specialized technical tools and information resources, ultimately enabling them to fulfill their responsibilities more effectively.

Judicial informatization includes mechanisms such as participation in court sessions via digital platforms, automated case distribution among judges, publication of court decisions online, and the electronic transmission of enforcement documents using information technologies.

Given these developments, it is proposed that the Economic Procedural Code of Uzbekistan incorporate a legal definition of electronic data, alongside provisions that regulate its use. Under this proposal, electronic data would be defined as information created, processed, and stored through electronic devices, information systems, or digital technologies. Parties to a case, witnesses, and other involved persons would have the right to present such data by transferring copies between electronic media. Courts would be obliged to accept such electronic submissions with the participation of relevant specialists and, where necessary, inspect the original electronic source of the data.

The informatization of judicial activities significantly reduces bureaucratic barriers, allowing legal entities

and citizens to access the courts more efficiently. Today, individuals and organizations in Uzbekistan can submit claims, applications, and complaints electronically via the exsud.sud.uz platform. Moreover, the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan has launched the my.sud.uz portal, which offers interactive services such as electronic submission of claims, template forms for applications, a state duty calculator, electronic payment systems, and online access to court decisions.

As noted by legal scholar D. Artikov, judicial informatization plays a crucial role in ensuring that the public receives timely and objective information about court activities, thereby enhancing legal awareness in society. The recently launched stat.sud.uz portal is a clear example, offering public access to judicial statistics and information in real time. In this regard, informatization also serves as a key mechanism for promoting public oversight of the judiciary and increasing public trust in judicial institutions. Therefore, it is essential that courts create the necessary infrastructure to ensure transparency in court proceedings and enable citizens to exercise their right to access judicial information.

It is important to distinguish between the terms "judicial informatization" and "electronic justice", as they are often used interchangeably but represent different concepts. Electronic justice has been studied independently by many scholars. For instance, L.V. Prikhodko defines it as a component of electronic government, which in turn is understood as "a method of organizing state power based on information and communication technologies." Other scholars describe electronic justice as a combination of automated information systems and services such as publishing court decisions, digital case management, and enabling parties to access digital case materials or more broadly as the application of ICTs in resolving legal disputes through the court system. As can be seen, there is currently no universally accepted definition of electronic justice in legal literature, and the concept remains a subject of ongoing academic debate. In our view, however, judicial informatization directly contributes to the implementation of electronic justice. Its introduction significantly accelerates judicial proceedings, reduces the workload of judges and staff, enhances transparency, and most importantly facilitates the participation of citizens and business representatives in legal processes while reducing litigation costs.

In our view, e-justice should be understood as a method of administration of justice that utilises information technology at all stages of the judicial process and makes it accessible to all participants.

Furthermore, the above analysis highlights the critical importance of fully digitizing judicial operations, implementing electronic justice, integrating artificial intelligence, improving inter-agency electronic data exchange, and expanding remote participation in court proceedings. In practice, the use of modern ICTs in the judicial system streamlines the circulation of electronic documents, ensures the efficient collection, processing, organization, and storage of judicial data. As Professor D.Yu. Khabibullaev rightly observes, electronic systems create significant convenience by allowing court participants to be notified electronically and receive judicial documents and other communications in digital form.

The implementation of information technologies in the judiciary is recognized as a crucial stage in the ongoing reforms of Uzbekistan's judicial and legal system. This initiative plays an essential role in ensuring government transparency before its citizens, strengthening public trust in the judiciary, and promoting legal awareness.

As access to information becomes more widespread, judicial processes have become increasingly open and transparent to the public. The official publication of information about courts, judges, and court personnel has fostered greater public trust and enabled civic oversight of government activities and accountability.

Most importantly, citizens now have easy access to information regarding where, when, and at what time their cases will be heard, court schedules, and the progress of submitted claims. This enhances communication between the public and the judiciary and contributes to increasing legal literacy and civic engagement in legal processes.

The introduction of electronic justice has undoubtedly become an effective tool in reducing legal nihilism, encouraging active public participation in legal proceedings, and reinforcing mutual trust between the state and society.

Recent developments in the judicial system have further highlighted the global importance of information technologies. In particular, economic courts tasked with resolving commercial disputes are now using digital tools to not only reduce judges' workloads but also to improve efficiency and transparency in delivering justice to businesses, institutions, organizations (hereinafter referred to as legal entities), and citizens. The integration of digital technologies into the judiciary contributes significantly to social stability, economic growth, and the development of the rule of law.

In today's era of globalization, economic relations are evolving rapidly both domestically and internationally. As emphasized in the legal literature, these processes,

while driving economic growth, have also led to a rise in the number and complexity of commercial disputes, often involving new types of conflicts. These dynamics can negatively impact the efficiency of judicial processes and the timely protection of legal rights and interests of legal entities and individuals. State institutions, accordingly, bear the responsibility particularly in economic courts of protecting violated or contested rights and legally protected interests, upholding the rule of law in the economic sector, preventing legal violations, and fostering respect for the law and judiciary (as outlined in Article 2 of Uzbekistan's Economic Procedural Code). The adoption of the Economic Procedural Code (EPC) introduced key provisions regarding the digitalization of judicial processes. These include the ability to submit claims and accompanying documents in electronic format, to form electronic case files, and for parties and other participants to submit documents using digital signatures. Electronic case files may be transferred to other courts or agencies via telecommunication networks.

The socio-legal significance of implementing information technologies in economic courts is also reflected in how digital tools such as electronic filing systems, online portals, and video conferencing platforms facilitate access to justice for a broad segment of the public. Regardless of geographic location or financial means, all economic actors are now afforded equal opportunities to participate in legal proceedings.

A unified information system now allows users to access court data and documents quickly and freely. Necessary information about the operations of the judiciary is published online on official government websites and is easily accessible to the public.

One of the most important advantages of this new digital infrastructure is the ability to obtain information quickly and easily. Citizens can now access video recordings of court hearings online, which significantly strengthens judicial transparency, enhances civic legal awareness, and improves public oversight of the justice system.

By adopting information technologies, the judiciary ensures greater transparency and accountability in court proceedings. As legal scholar and practitioner E.K. Sabirov notes, the effectiveness of electronic justice depends not only on the adoption of modern technologies in judicial administration, but also on the extent to which transparency and openness of judicial activities are ensured.

The use of information technologies in court operations enhances public confidence, promotes legal culture

and legal consciousness, and ensures both efficiency and openness in court processes.

Automated systems help reduce human error, limit opportunities for corruption, and ensure accurate records and reliable outcomes, thereby increasing trust in the judiciary. As rightly noted by legal scholar and practitioner A.Yu. Mavlonov, the state's anti-corruption legal policy must be grounded in scientific and technological progress. The implementation of e-government platforms and modern technologies is a key factor in the success of Uzbekistan's anti-corruption strategy.

The high caseload in economic courts remains one of the most pressing challenges within Uzbekistan's judicial system. The growing volume of cases resolved by courts each year has led to a steady increase in the average monthly workload of judges, making the integration of modern information and communication technologies into court operations both timely and necessary. For example, the number of cases heard in the first instance by economic courts (including court orders) rose from 104,327 in 2020 to 436,086 in 2024. In civil courts, first-instance cases increased from 291,132 in 2020 to 1,497,184 in 2024. In administrative courts, the number of public disputes heard in the first instance was 15,066 in 2020, compared to 15,369 in 2024. These figures illustrate the increasing burden on the judiciary and highlight the fact that the number of judges has not been proportionally adjusted to population growth across the regions. For example, in 2022, the average monthly caseload of a judge in interdistrict, district, or city economic courts was 163 cases, while for civil court judges at the same level, the figure stood at 269 cases.

Statistics on the number of judges per 100,000 people also reveal striking differences across countries and provide insights into the relative efficiency and capacity of different judicial systems. In Germany, there are 24 judges per 100,000 people, reflecting a well-functioning judicial structure supported by a strong legal framework and a high level of judicial training and professionalism.

While Russia and Kazakhstan also have relatively high numbers of judges, they still fall short of Germany's standard, which may impact judicial efficiency and quality. In contrast, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan show significantly lower ratios, indicating limitations in judicial capacity and a shortage of younger judges.

In Uzbekistan, the number of judges is significantly lower, which underlines the need for deep structural reforms to enhance the development of the judiciary and the broader legal system.

These numbers serve as an important indicator for

comparing judicial performance across countries. They also underscore the urgency of implementing modern information technologies, accelerating legal reforms, and optimizing the quality and efficiency of justice delivery.

Looking more closely at international experience, Germany maintains 24 judges per 100,000 populations, while this number is 18 in Russia, 16 in Kazakhstan, 7–8 in Kyrgyzstan, 5 in Tajikistan, and only 3–4 in Uzbekistan. In France, there are about 8,000 judges for 67.39 million people, while England has over 200 judges per million populations, Italy has 101, Sweden 100, and India 21–22 judges per 100,000.

These figures demonstrate that the current workload of judges with tightly scheduled hearings, limited time for case review, and pressure to deliver timely rulings can adversely affect the quality of justice. Moreover, the number of judicial positions has not been proportionally aligned with population growth or the caseload, and the number of court staff supporting judges is also insufficient.

In conclusion, the integration of information technologies into the judiciary in Uzbekistan will enable electronic document submission, real-time case tracking, digital access to court documents, and participation in hearings via videoconference. These developments will reduce litigation costs, ensure reliable protection of citizens' rights and lawful interests, and create greater convenience and accessibility for all parties involved.

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