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DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN THE ACTIVITIES OF LOCAL COUNCILS: CAPABILITIES AND DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS OF THE "E-KENGASH" PLATFORM

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ABSTRACT

The rapid digital transformation of public administration has become a key priority in Uzbekistan in recent years. This article examines the digitalization of local Councils with a particular focus on the "E-Kengash" information system as an integrated electronic platform. The study analyzes institutional and technological reforms aimed at automating document management, enhancing transparency, and strengthening interaction between deputies, executive bodies, and citizens. Special attention is paid to the functional capabilities of the system, its integration with national state information systems, and future development prospects, including the use of artificial intelligence, biometric identification, and blockchain technologies. The findings indicate that the implementation of the "E-Kengash" platform significantly contributes to the efficiency, openness, and accountability of local representative bodies.

KEYWORDS: *Local Councils, Digitalization, E-Kengash, Information System, E-Government, Document Management, Transparency, Integration, Public Administration.*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, extensive efforts have been undertaken in the Republic of Uzbekistan to implement electronic forms of activity across all sectors. Special attention has also been paid to the digitalization of local Councils, and significant measures have been introduced in this regard (Karimov, 2020). Accordingly, Resolution No. 407 of the Senate Council of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan was adopted on the implementation of the "Digital Council of People's Deputies" integrated information system.

In the following, there are several key tasks involved in digitizing Local Councils:

- Document management: The system allows automating the process of document circulation, speeding up the review of applications and reducing paperwork;
- Access to information: Citizens can access information about the activities of local councils, including meetings and decisions made;
- Monitoring and reporting: The system provides tools for monitoring the performance of tasks and obligations by local government bodies, as well as for generating reports on their activities;
- Increased transparency: The system helps to increase trust in public authorities due to the openness of information and the possibility of citizens to monitor the activities of local councils.

To increase the efficiency of local councils of People's Deputies by digitizing their activities, certain work is being carried out to introduce the "Digital People's Deputies Kengash" complex information system (hereinafter referred to as the "E-Kengash" information system) (Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2023).

In order to transform the "E-Kengash" information system into a comprehensive electronic portal, the following software and technical measures were implemented during the past period of this year:

1) A system for forming, adopting and formalizing Council decisions through the "E-Council" information system has been established;
2) In order to introduce the practice of creating a deputy request by deputies of the Local Council and sending it to the relevant official via the electronic system, the "edo.ijro.uz" interdepartmental electronic system of executive discipline was integrated (Figure 1);

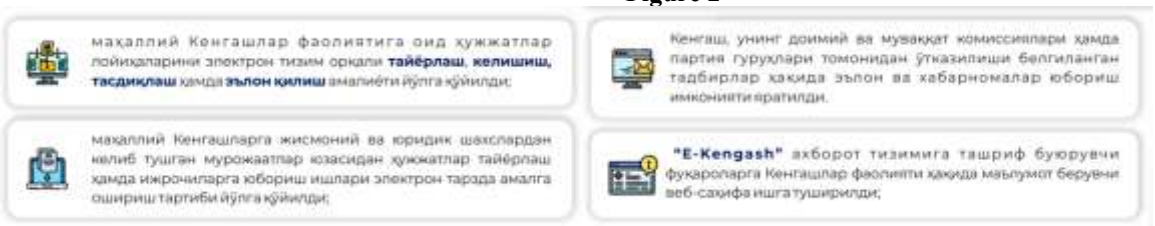
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Figure 1



3) The practice of preparing, agreeing, approving and announcing the drafts of documents related to the activities of the councils through the electronic system has been launched (Fig. 2);

Figure 2



4) An electronic procedure has been established for working with incoming and outgoing letters, preparing documents on applications from individuals and legal entities, and sending them to executors (Figure 2);

5) The Council, its permanent and temporary commissions, and party groups have created the opportunity to send announcements and newsletters about events scheduled to be held;

6) The register of powers of the local Councils of People's Deputies was developed and placed in the electronic system;

7) A web page has been launched that provides citizens visiting the "E-Kengash" information system with information about the activities of the Councils.

It provides citizens with the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the following information on the activities of the Councils:

- The powers and legal basis of local Councils in different sectors;
- General information on the activities of local Councils;
- Information about the composition of the local Councils, deputies and senators;
- Decisions adopted by local Councils and documents related to them;
- News about the activities of local Councils.

8) A series of online training seminars was held for the deputies and secretaries of local councils to form practical skills on the changes made to the electronic system.

II. Measures taken to further improve the "E-Kengash" information system. Currently, a number of works are being carried out to further improve the "E-Kengash" information system and further activate the digitalization of the activities of local Kengashes using the system (Ministry of Digital Technologies, 2022).

In particular, in order to create a number of advantages for citizens in the system, work is underway to launch the functions of sending an "electronic appeal" to deputies and sending an "electronic request" for signing up for a deputy's appointment. In addition, the information system is planned to optimize the activity of local council chairmen, chairmen of permanent commissions, and secretarial heads.

To this end, the Center has launched a module that allows local Councils to send recommendations on specific tasks, familiarize themselves with them, and monitor the stages of their implementation (Center for Electronic Government Projects, 2024).

III. In order to ensure openness and transparency through the information system and expand the capabilities and convenience of the system in this direction, it is planned to implement the following:

1. Development and implementation of an online voting module based on the "E-Kengash" information system;
2. Establishment of a system for online broadcasting of Council sessions through the "E-Kengash" information system;
3. Creating the possibility of using biometric identification technologies (Face ID) for document approval and signing, as well as authorization;
4. Ensuring the ability to store council decisions on a blockchain platform;
5. Creating the ability to conduct electronic stenography and automatically generate minutes during sessions and meetings based on artificial intelligence (through integration with the "Mukhlisa AI" platform).

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IV. Integration of the system with information systems of state bodies.

The "E-Kengash" information system has been integrated with the following information systems today (Figure 3). In particular:

-One ID – a single identification system;
- E-imzo – an electronic digital signature system;
- edo.ijro.uz – an electronic system of executive documents;
-e-qaror.gov.uz – an electronic decision-making system;
-hrm.argos.gov.uz – a personnel management system;
-regulation.gov.uz – a platform for discussing draft regulatory legal documents.

Figure 3



These integrations further accelerate the digital exchange of local government bodies and simplify decision-making processes (Yusupov, 2021)

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the digitalization of local Council activities through the E-Kengash platform plays a significant role in improving administrative efficiency, transparency, and accountability. The continued development of the system, particularly through advanced digital technologies, is expected to further strengthen public trust and enhance the quality of local governance.

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