



THE NECESSITY OF ENHANCING PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF LAWYERS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

Tuychieva Malika Botir qizi

Tashkent State University of Law 3rd-Year PhD Researcher,
Lecturer at the Sector of Judiciary, Advocacy and Law Enforcement Agencies
malikatuychiyeva97@gmail.com

Abstract

This article examines the anti-corruption policy in our country and highlights the role and significance of the professional training and continuing professional development of lawyers within this framework. It also engages in scholarly debate by citing the views of a number of national and foreign scholars, while reflecting the author's own perspectives and critical assessment of these views. The article analyzes the necessity of professional training for lawyers in combating corruption and presents opinions and reflections on the key aspects that should be emphasized in such training. Furthermore, the normative legal acts regulating this sphere in the Republic as well as in foreign countries are analyzed, and theoretical and practical proposals aimed at eliminating existing shortcomings are put forward.

Keywords: Lawyer, professional training of a lawyer, continuing professional development of lawyers, corruption, combating corruption.

Introduction

The formation of an uncompromising attitude toward corruption in our country is becoming more relevant than ever. In his Address to the Oliy Majlis and the people of Uzbekistan on 26 December 2025, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, emphasized the following:



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“I repeat again and again: corruption is the most serious threat that hinders state development, undermines justice and the rule of law, and weakens the climate of trust in society.

Tolerating corruption is a betrayal of our reforms. Therefore, in 2026, we will declare a ‘state of emergency’ in the fight against this scourge”[1].

At this point, turning to the concept of corruption and its impact on society, the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Combating Corruption” defines corruption as follows:

“Corruption is the unlawful use by a person of their official or service position for the purpose of obtaining material or non-material benefits in their own interests or in the interests of other persons, as well as the unlawful provision of such benefits”[2].

It should be noted that combating corruption must be a priority for every individual living in our country, and they should adhere to this principle unwaveringly in their professional activities. In our view, the role of legal awareness and legal culture in eradicating corruption is invaluable. Without enhancing the legal knowledge of the population and explaining the harmful consequences that corruption causes to society and the state, anti-corruption efforts will remain one-sided, making it difficult to achieve the intended results. In improving the legal awareness and legal culture of society, not only educational institutions but also legal professionals, including lawyers, play an important role. According to Article 141 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, “the advocacy operates to provide qualified legal assistance to individuals and legal entities.” This means that society’s need for qualified legal assistance is met by lawyers. Therefore, in fostering an uncompromising stance against corruption, particular attention should be paid to the professional training and continuing professional development of lawyers. This is because it is precisely at these stages of education that lawyers acquire the most essential and necessary knowledge.

All fields related to human activity require continuous development, as well as the constant enhancement of knowledge and skills. Emphasizing the importance and relevance of this approach, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan,



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Shavkat Mirziyoyev, stated in one of his addresses: “Salvation lies in education, salvation lies in care, and salvation lies in knowledge.”[3].

Moreover, the first President of the Republic of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, also emphasized the following: “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”[4]

According to S. Kuzmenko, continuous professional development enables lawyers to meet the demands of the state and society in the context of globalization and to ensure the provision of legal services of the highest quality to persons who place their trust in them. Continuous professional development is not only a means of enhancing legal knowledge and skills, but also an important component of maintaining ethical standards and upholding the high professional reputation of the legal profession[5].

In many countries, it is common practice for lawyers to attend continuing professional development courses in order to obtain more comprehensive knowledge of professional ethics, including anti-corruption policy, as well as to enhance their professional qualifications. For example, in all law schools in England and Wales, one of the mandatory modules is the professional standards module, which explains how relevant legal rules and ethical requirements are applied in practice.

In shaping high ethical standards in lawyers’ professional activities and establishing an uncompromising attitude toward corruption, the role of public authorities is of particular importance. In particular, the introduction of specialized anti-bribery training sessions within the framework of lawyers’ professional training and continuing education is recognized as an effective means of raising awareness of national and international corruption-related offenses. While this practice has already been implemented in United Kingdom and several other countries, in some states insufficient attention is still being paid to this area.

States that are capable of objectively and comprehensively assessing corruption risks should, through an in-depth analysis of the role and potential of lawyers in this process, develop and adopt specific legislative acts defining lawyers’ obligations in anti-corruption activities, similar to those established in the field of combating the financing of terrorism. In certain countries, lawyers are exempt



from the obligation to report suspicious financial transactions of their clients, whereas for notaries or other professional service providers such obligations are established by law.

With the aim of creating, developing, and promoting anti-corruption initiatives in legal practice, the International Bar Association adopted the “Anti-Corruption Guidance for Bar Associations” on 25 May 2013. The purpose of this document is to encourage bar associations to approach the issue of corruption from two perspectives.

First, it seeks to inform lawyers, as legal professionals, about corruption risks and threats. This objective comprises three key elements:

assisting lawyers in becoming familiar with international anti-corruption instruments and national anti-corruption legislation, including laws with extraterritorial application;

providing information on situations in which lawyers may be exposed to corruption risks;

informing legal professionals about ways to avoid corruption and about its various manifestations.

Article 5 of the Guidance establishes that the central objective of education should be to enhance the knowledge of current and future legal professionals regarding corruption risks, the fundamentals of anti-corruption policy and legislation, as well as preventive measures they may implement in practice.

As emphasized in Article 6 of the Guidance, the main directions of education are outlined, allowing bar associations to structure their training programs around the following areas: conducting specialized anti-corruption training for newly admitted legal professionals and equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary to ensure compliance in their professional activities; incorporating certain anti-corruption training courses into lawyers’ continuing professional development programs; and organizing training sessions for legal professionals whose conduct may negatively affect the reputation of the professional organization.[6]

Although many countries have established mandatory continuing professional development systems for lawyers, anti-corruption-specific modules are not sufficiently covered within these systems. Existing training programs are often



focused on strengthening general legal knowledge, while limited attention is paid to issues such as identifying corruption risks, managing conflicts of interest, and dealing with suspicious financial transactions. As a result, lawyers' ability to participate actively and responsibly in anti-corruption mechanisms is constrained.

In conclusion, lawyers play a direct role in ensuring the rule of law, protecting the rights and freedoms of individuals, and administering justice. Therefore, it is essential that they possess a high level of professional competence, strictly adhere to ethical standards, and have the skills necessary to identify corruption-related risks. International experience demonstrates that the effectiveness of lawyers in combating corruption is closely linked, above all, to their specialized training and continuous professional development.

Based on the foregoing, it can be concluded that improving the system of professional training and continuing education of lawyers in the fight against corruption constitutes an important prerequisite for strengthening the rule-of-law state. By enhancing lawyers' knowledge and professional skills and fostering an uncompromising attitude toward corruption, it is possible to ensure the realization of the principles of the rule of law and justice within society.

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