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FORMATION OF THE ARCHIVAL SYSTEM AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE BASE IN UZBEKISTAN

Sarvinoz Khushmatova
Karshi State University, Lecturer

Abstract. This article systematically analyzes the stages of the historical formation of archival work in Uzbekistan and the development of the legislative framework of the sector during the years of independence. The work covers the emergence of the national archive fund, the processes of centralization during the former Soviet era, and the fundamental reforms after independence. In particular, special emphasis is placed on the importance of the Law "On Archival Work", which is considered the legal foundation of the sector, as well as the decrees and resolutions of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the modernization and digitization of the sector.

Key words: archival system, national archival fund, legal base, Law "On Archival Work", digitization, electronic archive, state documents.

After Uzbekistan gained independence, the formation of the organizational, legal and methodological foundations of archival work was directly related to the evolution of the legislative and regulatory framework at the republican level. In this regard, the republic adopted laws in the field of archives, presidential decrees and resolutions, resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers, and departmental regulatory documents.

Although archival work in Uzbekistan initially continued based on the centralized system established during the Soviet era, the status of the country as an independent state created a need to redefine the national archival fonds and its legal status. A key milestone of this period was the adoption of the Law "On Archives" (No. 768-I) on April 15, 1999, which serves as the foundational document for the subsequent stage of development.

Also, Law No. 768-I "On Archives" (15.04.1999) was the main initial codification of post-independence archival law, determining the state and non-state parts of the national archival fund, issues of ownership of archival documents, as well as the procedure for establishing regional state archives by decision of the relevant khokims (Article 6 of the Law). The law was implemented by Resolution No. 769-I of the Oliy Majlis (15.04.1999). At the end of the same year, Resolution No. 482 of the Cabinet of Ministers (30.10.1999) approved the Regulation on the National Archives Faund and a number of practical regulations, which created a mechanism for implementing the provisions of the law in practice, including the activities of regional state archives.

In 2004, the Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 49 strengthened the central institutional management model of the Uzarchiv Agency, approved its organizational structure and regulations. This determined the vertical subordination system of regional archival departments, including state archives in the southern regions.

In 2007, by order No. 1703 of the Uzarkhiv Agency, a procedure for creating archival copies of information resources and transferring them to state storage was introduced. This was one of the first special procedures for accepting electronic digital resources for state archival storage.

In 2008, a program for the development of archival operations through 2011 was approved by Resolution No. 194 of the Cabinet of Ministers. The program envisaged the implementation of a corporate information network, a unified archival database, and electronic storage equipment, as well as remote training for personnel. This document was one of the first comprehensive measures aimed at strengthening the material and technical infrastructure of regional archives.

The adoption of new regulatory legal acts served to improve the legislative sphere in the republic. In particular, the Law No. ZUR-252 “On Archival Work”, adopted on June 15, 2010, replaced the

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1999 law and established the current general legal framework. In order to bring this Law into line with it, amendments and additions were made to a number of previous government resolutions by Resolution No. 233 of the Cabinet of Ministers.

The year 2012 was marked by the adoption of several important regulatory documents. In particular, Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 101 comprehensively outlined the procedures for the acquisition, state registration, preservation, and use of archival documents, as well as the rules for maintaining the State Catalogue of the National Archival Fund. Additionally, Order No. 2347 of the "Uzarkhiv" Agency established the procedure for expert assessment of the value of documents, while Order No. 2360 defined the mechanism for compiling the list of organizations required to transfer their documents to state archives. These two documents proved practically significant in shaping the source base for regional state archives, including those in the southern regions.

In 2014, the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 100 approved the model norms of time and production for the main works in the archives and created the basis for the standardization of the archive work. In this year, the order of "Uzarkhiv No. 2615" regulated the nomenclature of paid services of archives.

In 2016, Order No. 2807 of the “Uzarkhiv” Agency approved the guidelines for handling documents submitted by state authorities and administrative bodies to archival institutions. This measure regulated the process of document exchange between regional archives and local government authorities.

Pursuant to the 2018 Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On introducing an improved remuneration system for employees of state cultural institutions and state archives and enhancing their material incentives,” the wages of employees were increased by an average of 45 percent.

While institutional reforms modernized the legal and organizational foundations of the archival system, digitalization ensured the system's efficiency, security, and transparency. On September 20, 2019, the adoption of Presidential Decree No. PF-5834 and Resolution No. PQ-4463 laid the groundwork for systemic modernization in the archival sector. Under this decree, the "Uzarchive" Agency was reorganized. These documents outlined measures to develop and improve archival operations, allocate premises, transfer personnel records to state archives, and establish specialized training centers to enhance the professional skills of archivists.

The National Archives of Uzbekistan and other national archives have been established, and the terms of electronic public services have been reduced. Appendix 4 to Resolution No. PP-4463 approved the program for the further development of archival work and administration for 2020–2025. This program also includes tasks for strengthening the material and technical base of regional state archives and digitization.

In 2020, the Cabinet of Ministers approved a number of practical regulations implementing the 2019 reforms, including the procedure for ensuring the execution of archive requests received from abroad, by Resolutions No. 174 and No. 706 of the Cabinet of Ministers.

In 2021, Resolution No. 597 of the Cabinet of Ministers adapted the administrative regulations of state services in the field of archives to the electronic services model.

Amendments were made to the 2007 guidelines on electronic resources in 2024. In 2025, a procedure for the certification of specialists involved in the organization of archival documents was introduced through Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 208.

At the end of this year, on November 24, 2025, Presidential Decree No. PF-228 was adopted. It set the task of bringing the level of digitization of documents of the National Archives Fund to 60 percent by 2030, and the share of electronic services to 100 percent. Resolution No. 352 of the Cabinet of Ministers of June 30, 2026 was aimed at further improving the system of storing archival

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documents in electronic form by state bodies. This marks the next stage on the path to creating a single national archival information system.

The current version of the Regulation on the State Catalog of the National Archives Fund establishes the obligation of ministries, departments, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, regional and Tashkent city, as well as enterprises, institutions and organizations to submit information about their archival funds to the State Catalog. This norm also serves as a general reporting and methodological basis for state archives of the southern regions.

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