

**STRENGTHENING EARLY CRIME PREVENTION AND SAFE
ENVIRONMENTS IN UZBEKISTAN'S COMMUNITIES: A STUDY OF
THE 2025 PRESIDENTIAL DECISION**

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***Abstract:** the 2025 Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan emphasizes the creation of a safe social environment and improved early crime prevention through an integrated community-based system. This policy, centered around the role of mahallas - local community institutions - marks a critical shift toward preventive policing, digital transformation in law enforcement, and civic engagement. This article presents a scientific and policy - based analysis of the decree, including international comparisons, statistical evaluations, and practical implementation frameworks. Drawing on criminological theory, public administration research, and international experience, the paper outlines how Uzbekistan's reforms aim to build sustainable public safety models and foster community-driven law enforcement mechanisms.*

***Keywords:** crime prevention, Uzbekistan, public safety, community policing, smart surveillance, social cohesion, rule of law, civic engagement, comparative policy.*

Introduction

The modern challenges facing public security systems are increasingly complex, particularly in nations undergoing economic and social transition. Uzbekistan, with its rapidly evolving urbanization and youthful demographic profile, faces the task of reforming its internal security framework while preserving the values of community-based governance.

The 2025 Presidential Decree titled “On Measures to Create a Safe Environment and Improve the Effectiveness of the System for the Early Prevention of Offenses in the Republic's Mahallas” provides a structured and forward-looking approach to address these challenges. The initiative transforms mahallas—traditional self-governing neighborhoods—into pivotal units for early crime detection and civic safety.

With over 9,800 mahallas and nearly 60% of the population residing in these neighborhoods, leveraging this social structure for public safety is both logical and potentially transformative. This article explores the scientific rationale, policy instruments, and real-world implementation strategies of the decree, offering an in-depth analysis supported by empirical data and global best practices.

Main Body

2. Detailed Policy Analysis of the 2025 Presidential Decree

2.1 Strategic Objectives

The key goals of the decree include:

- Strengthening localized crime prevention capacity;
- Enhancing coordination between mahalla committees and internal affairs bodies;
- Digitizing law enforcement tools for better data management;
- Promoting civic responsibility and resident engagement;
- Reducing crime rates, particularly minor and repeat offenses.

2.2 Structural Reforms

The following new structures and roles have been introduced:

- **Public Safety Inspectors:** Assigned to each mahalla, responsible for monitoring and reporting risk indicators.

- **Integrated Safety Centers:** Regional hubs equipped with digital tools, surveillance integration, and dispatch systems.
- **E-Mahalla Platform:** A citizen portal for crime reporting, tracking, and communication with law enforcement.

These reforms decentralize policing and increase accountability at the grassroots level, a key departure from the historically centralized approach.

3. International Comparisons and Best Practices

Uzbekistan's 2025 reform agenda reflects international trends in community-based crime prevention. Some relevant global comparisons include:

3.1 Japan's Koban System

Japan utilizes Koban—small neighborhood police stations—emphasizing close interaction between officers and citizens. Studies (Yokohama Public Safety Review, 2021) show this approach reduced petty crime by over 40% in five years.

3.2 UK's Neighbourhood Policing Model

In the UK, community safety partnerships involve local councils, police, health agencies, and schools. According to the UK Home Office (2020), regions implementing these partnerships saw a 20% drop in anti-social behavior.

3.3 South Korea's Smart Safety Zones

South Korea has implemented AI-enabled "Safe Zones" with facial recognition and predictive analytics. In Seoul, these systems helped reduce emergency response times by 29% (OECD Urban Security Report, 2022).

Uzbekistan's model aligns closely with these systems, blending traditional structures (mahallas) with modern surveillance and citizen feedback tools.

4. Expanded Statistical Analysis and Forecasts

4.1 Crime Rate Trends in Uzbekistan

According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (2024), key crime trends include:

- **Overall crime rate:** 1,730 per 100,000 people in 2023 (down 8% from 2021).
- **Repeat offenses:** Declined by 12.4% from 2021 to 2024.
- **Youth crime:** Still high, with over 23% of offenses committed by individuals aged 18–25.

Pilot implementations in the Tashkent, Bukhara, and Fergana regions under the 2023 “Safe Mahalla” program revealed:

- **Crime clearance improvement:** 10–15% increase.
- **Civic trust in law enforcement:** Increased from 58% (2020) to 74% (2024) according to Gallup Uzbekistan.

4.2 Forecast Models

Predictive modeling by the Uzbekistan Institute of Law and Society (2025) estimates:

- A potential **reduction of 20–25%** in overall crime by 2027.
- **Urban safety index** improvement by 30% if AI-driven monitoring systems are fully deployed.

5. Mahalla-Based Community Engagement Strategies

5.1 Training of Mahalla Activists

Over 30,000 activists have been trained in:

- Conflict mediation;
- Youth mentorship;
- Domestic violence detection and response;

- Civic engagement protocols.

These efforts are supported by the Civil Society Development Center and UNDP programs in Uzbekistan.

5.2 Youth Engagement Programs

In 2024, over 150 youth centers were opened in high-crime neighborhoods, offering:

- After-school education and sports;
- Vocational training;
- Social work support for at-risk teens.

Pilot programs in Samarkand and Karakalpakstan showed a 31% decrease in youth offenses within 12 months (UNICEF-Uzbekistan, 2024).

5.3 Public Awareness and Social Media Monitoring

Campaigns under the slogan “Mahallam – Mening Uyim” (My Mahalla – My Home) are being broadcast to promote community vigilance.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs has also initiated social media monitoring programs, identifying harmful trends and initiating outreach to vulnerable youth.

6. Challenges and Recommendations

6.1 Current Challenges

- Lack of infrastructure in some rural mahallas;
- Digital literacy gaps among older populations;
- Overload of public safety inspectors in high-density areas;
- Limited cross-sector coordination among social services and law enforcement.

6.2 Policy Recommendations

- Increase budget allocations for mahalla modernization and digital infrastructure;
- Develop a national database for tracking localized risk factors;
- Expand joint training programs for law enforcement and community leaders;
- Introduce monitoring and evaluation metrics to track policy outcomes.

7. Conclusion

Uzbekistan's 2025 Presidential Decree marks a significant turning point in how the nation approaches crime prevention and public safety. By focusing on the mahalla as the foundational unit of security, the state empowers communities to be proactive agents of change. Integrating smart technologies, localized governance, and citizen participation, this model holds promise for long-term crime reduction, improved governance, and greater trust in law enforcement.

If successfully implemented, Uzbekistan's "Safe Mahalla" framework could serve as a best-practice case study for post-Soviet and developing nations seeking to modernize their security systems while preserving community values.

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