

*Любич М.С., курсантка ННІ №
1 Національної академії
внутрішніх справ Консультант
з мови: Скриник Л.М.*

POLICE REFORM IN UKRAINE: SOCIETY REQUIREMENTS

The police reform process began in March 2014. Since then there have been the following results: A police development strategy was created and discussed in different circles, with the participation of the public, national and international experts. This strategy was adopted on Oct 22, 2014. A national platform entitled ‘Reforming the Police: Transparency and Accountability’ was created to draw up an Action Plan on the basis of the Strategy, and carry out its various components. 9 working groups, each of which was made up of police officers, civic and foreign experts, drew up and carried out various parts of the Action Plan. The national platform’s work was supported by the International Renaissance

The suggested Strategy is focused on meeting the following requirements of the society for the police:

1. Serving needs of both specific individuals and community groups must be a priority for the police.

The police are meant to efficiently respond to requests of specific individuals, maintain ongoing communication with them and inform them about the progress of their cases. No complaint or statement filed would remain non-registered or not considered on time regardless of the applicant’s being eligible for any preferences or, vice versa, restricted in exercising some rights. At the same time, the police are expected to demonstrate high tolerance toward vulnerable population groups, which are in need to strengthened attention and additional protection of their rights by the police. Vulnerable groups usually include ethnic minorities, migrants, refugee-seekers, physically or mentally handicapped people, individuals with non-conventional sexual orientation, elderly people and children.

2. Police must be accountable to law, not to the government.

All police decisions must be motivated by law and supported by court, rather than dictated by the government and desires of political parties. Of course, advice, notes of support or protest, declarations and political statements can be considered by police managers while making management decisions, but only as additional arguments (counter-arguments) to requirements of the law underlying the police actions.

3. Police must protect human rights, especially the rights needed for the free political activity in a democratic society.

Police must implement procedures and regulations making it impossible to carry out arbitrary arrests and apprehensions, and protecting persons in custody against torture and inhuman treatment. The development of the action logic at the time of the protection of peaceful gatherings for the assurance of the freedom of speech and expression by citizens will be yet another line of activity. Police units must implement special training of the personnel in order to protect human rights in activities of law enforcement agencies. Situations of the use of force and physical compulsion must be regulated in detail; most of them must be sanctioned and thoroughly reviewed by the police management together with other instances that control police activities.

4. Decentralization

The territorial units of the MIA have the right to independently address the issue of current activity planning, staffing policy, and distribution of the budget received, with full liability for the decisions made to the local community and the MIA management. The planning of the current activity of territorial units shall be performed based on recommendations sent by the central MIA office, considering the specific aspects of the regional situation and the needs of the local communities. A part of the public order protection functions be transferred to the jurisdiction of the local police to be established by the resolutions of local self-governance bodies and funded at their expense. The activity of the local police shall be supervised by the MIA Police Department and the local self-governance bodies

5. Accountability and Transparency of Operations

The MIA have an information policy that ensures wide multichannel feedback from various groups of citizens

(correspondence, personal meetings, social networks, e-mailing, telephone consultations), and allows making sure that the decisions and actions of the law enforcement officers are as transparent and open to the public as possible. MIA use the new information technologies, developed, among other purposes, for automated registration of any citizen applications and guaranteed response of the personnel to such applications; for analysis of the citizens' reports of offenses and forecasting the crime situation; for visualization of such activity and notification of citizens within the Crime Mapping informational platform;

6. Close Cooperation with the Public and Local Communities

The performance of law enforcement tasks by the personnel and its technical equipment alone without active support from the public be recognized as impossible at the level of the MIA. The effectiveness of the MIA operations shall be measured using a system of new criteria, the most important of which be: quality of response to the reports from the public, quality of the relations between the citizens and the MIA officers, activity of the police personnel in the resolution of current problems of the neighborhood residents, variety of actions for improvement of the law and order, intensity of working connections with the self-governance bodies, government agencies, and mass media.

7. Staffing Policy, Personnel Professional Development

The MIA performs gradual personnel layoffs by redistributing a part of the officers among other ministries and agencies, as well as by dismissing them with preliminary provision of services for additional professional training. The MIA has the new criteria and procedures for personnel selection. In particular, in addition to the physical qualities of a job candidate, it assesses their mental abilities, communicative skills, and motivation. All testing stages shall be recorded on video in the presence of community representatives. The service candidates be selected based on a rating system.

List of references:

1. Police reform / [Электронный ресурс]. - Режим доступа: <http://khpg.org/en/index.php?id=1473854562>

2. Support to Police Reform in Ukraine / [Электронный ресурс].

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Режим

доступу:

https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/factsheet_spru_eng.pdf