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#### EU ADVISORY MISSION ON REFORMING THE MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF UKRAINE (MIA)

The mission will work with the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine to help reform Ukraine's police to meet the standards of the European Union. The EU reports that its experts have begun their work by doing a thorough analysis of the existing situation and the available resources — both financial and in the area of workforce expertise and professionalism. Although the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union contains provisions dealing with the rule of law, the document does not set specific requirements for police reform. It outlines only the general conditions for democracy, respect for the rule of law, human rights and freedoms, and the absence of discrimination. Under the agreement, the two sides are to strengthen their cooperation in combating international crime.

Victor Reuter, the spokesman for the EU mission, explains that public service is the key standard considered by the EU as the police and the courts need to be in the service of the people and the

basic requirements are: impartiality, fairness, openness, transparency, accountability, professionalism, and respect for the law.

The ultimate goal is to reform everything in such a way that people have trust in law enforcement.

The second goal is to fight corruption. Michael Schrage, advisor on traffic police issues in the EU mission, speaks of the need for decentralization and coordination of tasks at the various ministry departments, where there is currently much overlap and duplication.

Ryszard Kalisz, Poland's former Minister of Internal Affairs, welcomes the Ukrainian government's decision to seek the help of the EU mission. In his view, reform efforts should focus especially on creating an anti-corruption system and a clear separation of the competencies and powers between the various departments of the MIA.

The (Verkhovna Rada) coalition agreement anticipates the conversion of the militia into the national police, which would include the public safety police, criminal and court police, and special assignment units. In addition, the agreement foresees the addition of the border and immigration departments, the National Guard, and the service for extraordinary situations.

It should be mentioned that the creation of a single special purpose unit is one of the more important reforms under consideration. Recently, there were more than a dozen special service units in the MIA structure. Current plans call for merging the patrol-guard unit with the state inspection unit to create a single patrol service. The EU mission will oversee this pilot project.

Kalisz considers the structural reforms not as important at present. One of the key aspects of reform is the public control over police, which has a natural tendency to expand its powers and functions. The appropriate oversight significantly decreases the possibility of violations of human and civil rights..

A similar opinion is also held by Volodymyr Polishchuk, the former head of the MIA press service. Polishchuk welcomes the reforms and agrees that the structure should be the best one possible that does not divert significant resources.

The MIA and the EU mission agree that one of the main principles of reform is the demilitarization of the agency. The

coalition agreement also views the MIA as a civil authority but states that it should include the National Guard as a “military formation in the MIA system with law enforcement functions.” Michael Schrage points out that the practice (of military police) can be found in several countries in the EU. The National Guard was formed on the basis of internal troops after the victory of the Revolution of Dignity and included activists from Maidan. Now it is carrying out assignments within ATO (Anti-Terrorist Organization).

Polishchuk explains that the police do not have military rank but are civilians. This is why the key factor for demilitarization is a change in the organization of work: creation regular working hours, clear conditions of work under contract (up to 16 hours) as abroad.

Polishchuk concludes that reform will not be effective without parallel changes in other structures: the Security Service, the judiciary, the prosecutor’s office.

List of references:

1. On Police reform in Ukraine / [Електронний ресурс]. - Режим доступу: <https://improvingpolice.wordpress.com/2018/03/07/on-police-reform-in-ukraine/>
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