

THE PROMO-LEX OPINION in the context of the Police Reform and the Community Police Activity on the rationality and the opportunity to restore the work of the district police officer in every locality

Summary

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova, Ion Chicu, came up with the initiative to restore the institute of district police officers in every locality, but the “2011–2012 police reform eliminated this institute”. Also, the Prime Minister came up with the proposal to substantially increase the salary of district police officers as well as to provide them with the necessary equipment.

Moreover, this issue was also included on the agenda of the Supreme Security Council, after which Igor Dodon, the President of the Republic of Moldova, underlined the fact that the Government of the Republic of Moldova looks into the possibility to increase the number of district police officers for the purposes of prevention of crimes and offences.

The Promo-LEX Association, as institution for monitoring the Police Reform thereof, considered it necessary to react to these initiatives with a view to preventing any possible activities, which it regards as contrary to the police modernization vector, rolled out in a consistent fashion by

the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) throughout the past years. In this context, Promo-LEX notes that during the period from 2016 to 2019 (the Police Development Strategy implementation period) the number of police precincts was reduced from 205 to 173, their infrastructure being outdated. Of the total number, 45% required major repairs or even physical relocation, whilst 41% required cosmetic repairs.

In addition to the strategic documents approved in 2016, which are expected to be finalised at the end of this year, during the period from 2016 to 2019 both the GPI and the MIA, as well as the Government of the Republic of Moldova have approved legal acts by which the authorities implicitly validated the optimization of the work of police precincts under the single management of a head of the police precinct according to the principle of specialization, "the activity of employees in the serviced administrative territories by attaching them to a certain locality (police post), this being an obsolete practice, which no longer corresponds to the present evolution of the society".

The Promo-LEX Association states that all subsequent actions targeting both the community police and the work of district police officers, such as modernisation and renovation of police precincts, providing both the police precincts and district police officers with official vehicles as well as other equipment necessary for the conduct of their service activity, approval of the legal framework on the work of district police officers have been carried out in accordance with the aforementioned principle as well as on the basis of strategic documents adopted by public authorities.

Given that financial, human, material resources have been invested therein by state institutions as well as by donors, the Promo-LEX Association finds that the initiative of restoring both the police precincts and the work of the district police officer in every locality is capable of changing and diverting the course of the implementation of the

Community Police Activity, leading to the non-capitalization and waste of the financial resources allocated in the last years as well as wiping out the efforts already made for the police reform. A collateral effect of the failure to implement the Police Reform could also be the decrease of the credibility of citizens as well as external development partners towards the central public authorities of the Republic of Moldova.

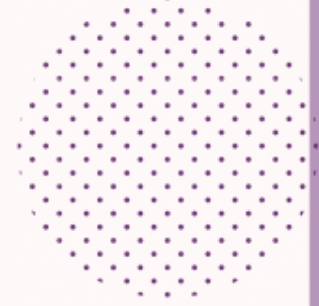
Furthermore, we reveal that during the last four years, 8%-15% of the posts in the GPI remained vacant, while for the period from 2019 to 2020 moratoriums have been instituted or extended on 15% of the maximum number of employees in the MIA. In this context, we believe that both the Executive, and the Supreme Security Council should have also considered the impact of failure to fill the vacancies for a continuous period of at least two years and take responsibility for the effects thereof on the good administration of the areas in management. Moreover, we consider it irresponsible for the government to set up and extend the moratorium when it intends to carry out reforms, with commitments to development partners.

On the same lines, we welcome the initiative to substantially increase the salary of the district police officers as well as to provide them with the necessary equipment, but the same financial and material benefits must be offered to all police employees, not just to a certain specialization. However, as long as moratoriums are being established by the State Policy on vacant positions and no efforts are made to fill them, the efforts to increase the salary and provide the district police officers with the necessary equipment will not have the effect of providing quality services and prompt response to citizens' referrals.

Promo-LEX concludes that restoring the work of the district police officer in every locality can only be achieved following the fulfillment of the commitments made in good faith under the strategic documents adopted by the central

public authorities. Only afterwards, after a thorough analysis of the existing state, of the efforts made in view of the reform, of the investments already made and the costs that will be incurred, it may be decided to consolidate the community police institution or, as the case may be, to restore the institute of the district police officer in every locality or develop any other police services. However, drawing on the powers of the MIA and the GPI to periodically adjust the police structures in relation to the trends of the criminal phenomenon, we tend to believe that the generic statements of the country leadership on appointing one district police officer in every locality, mean, in fact, the recognition of the error when adopting the moratorium for the recruitment of about 2684 persons within the apparatus of the MIA and all its subordinate institutions as well as the urgent need to fill, especially the number of district officers.

The full opinion can be accessed [here](#).



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Promovarea democrației și a dreptății omului