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Sociological analysis of the efficiency of social interaction between law enforcement agencies, civil society and population at the regional level



Sergei Vasil'evich
EGORYSHEV

Doctor of Sociology, Professor, Prorector for Research, Non-Governmental Educational Institution of Higher Professional Education "Eastern Academy of the Humanities, Economics and Law" (215/4, Mendeleev Street, Ufa, Republic of Bashkortostan, 450071, Russian Federation, nauka@vegu.ru)

Abstract. The article describes the capabilities of sociological analysis of condition and results of social interaction between law enforcement bodies, population, and civil society institutions; it also sets out the tasks to be solved in the course of such analysis at the regional level (case study of the Republic of Bashkortostan).

Key words: law enforcement agencies, civil society, social interaction, social efficiency, region.

The reform of law enforcement of the Russian state as a whole and its individual structures (the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Russian Federal Service of Punishment Fullfillment) and the adoption of the new legislation regulating public relations in the field of law enforcement (the Federal

Law "On police", which came into force January 1, 2011) aim to improve social efficiency of law enforcement agencies. This efficiency means a socially approved level of public safety and law enforcement, high satisfaction with the performance of law enforcement bodies and trust in them,

willingness, commitment and real assistance to law enforcement agencies by the citizens and civic society institutions.

The national historical and foreign contemporary experience indicates that social efficiency of law enforcement agencies can be achieved only on the basis of close cooperation between state law enforcement agencies and civic society.

Such interaction can not only contribute to a more successful solution of law enforcement agencies' professional tasks (disclosure, prevention of crimes, detection of persons who have committed criminal acts or have been witnesses, victims, etc.), but expectedly affect the changes in the structure, dynamics and scale of crime. Criminality will be restrained, its most dangerous forms minimized and its scale significantly reduced.

In addition, close cooperation between law enforcement bodies and civic society contributes to the development of the civic society itself through the self-organization of the population by means of associations of law enforcement orientation and pursuit of public law enforcement activities.

However, this potential forming at the level of legislation as a necessary condition to form and develop the rule of law is still not realized. In most cases, such social interaction is just declared, but not actively and widely implemented. It causes distrust in law enforcement among the population.

According to our research¹ conducted in 2010–2013 in the Republic of Bashkortostan (the sample was 1200 units annually), 48.8% of the respondents trusted judicial bodies in 2012; 49.2% – prosecutors, 40.8% – internal affairs bodies and 52.6 – the Federal Security Service. The low level of trust is based on dissatisfaction with the state of law and order in the republic (29.0% of the respondents in 2012 and 31.4% in 2013). In 2012 51.8% of the respondents felt safe due to the work of law enforcement agencies against 32.2% of the respondents who did not; in 2013 – 55.0 and 27.9%, respectively.

At this level of trust and satisfaction with the work of law enforcement agencies it is difficult to create an effective mechanism of social interaction between them and civic society. In 2010–2011 the respondents assessed the level of interaction of the population with law enforcement agencies as average – 44.4 and 33.4%, respectively and as low – 35.9 and 43.4%. In 2013 24.0% of the respondents estimated the level of interaction as average and 43.7% of the respondents as low.

Unrealized potential of interaction with civic society is caused by the incomplete character of the state judicial system reform and, above all, the reform of the internal

¹ The survey was conducted in the Republic of Bashkortostan by the Laboratory at Eastern Humanities Academy of Economics and Law annually in 2010–2013 by means of the questionnaire method. The sample volume was 1200 units. The sample included five characteristics: gender, age, place of residence, occupation, education of the respondents. The given percentages were calculated of the total number of respondents.

affairs bodies. Thus, 52.2% of the respondents in 2012 and 37.8% in 2013 do not witness major changes in the work of internal affairs bodies after the adoption and implementation of the federal law "On police". Only 12.6% and 15.8% of the respondents mentioned significant positive changes in 2012 and 2013, respectively.

The problem of interaction of law enforcement bodies with civic society is different in regions.

Depending on the region it is possible to speak about the presence and maturity of the socio-economic, legal and organizational conditions for the development of such interaction.

The society's participation in ensuring public safety and order, as well as crime, its characteristics and dynamics have regional features.

This naturally assumes the special, including sociological, research in the crime rate characteristics in the region, the analysis of the factors determining this situation in the region, the study of the features of regional law enforcement bodies' performance, including the practice of social interaction with civic society in the law enforcement sphere and the results of this interaction.

At the regional level it is necessary to analyze the measures of the conditions maturity (social, legal and other), determining the mechanism of interaction.

The key conditions are the following: maturity of civic society; the level of legal culture and social activity of the population,

including activity in the sphere of law enforcement; development of social interaction between civic society institutions and law enforcement agencies; potential willingness of society and law enforcement employees to cooperate.

It is also important to consider the overall features of interaction of law enforcement bodies and society and the specificity of the interaction of each of these bodies.

It is possible to solve the following problems in the course of the sociological analysis:

- to analyze the state and characteristics of the crime situation in the region and the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies in its stabilization;
- to consider domestic and foreign practice of interaction between law enforcement bodies and civic society institutions aimed at combating crime and enforcing the law;
- to describe the contents and results of the reform of state law enforcement bodies in the context of interaction with civic society;
- to analyze the current and forming legal framework and social conditions for the formation of a new mechanism of interaction between law enforcement bodies and civic society institutions in combating crime and enforcing the law;
- to review the current forms and directions of social interaction between law enforcement bodies and civic society in the republic and to assess their performance using the developed indicators system; at the same time, this

system should include not only legal and administrative, but also social performance indicators;

- to reveal the contents of public law enforcement through the ratio of its public and professional principles;

- to justify the ways of increasing the efficiency of social interaction between law enforcement bodies and civic society in the republic.

However, it is impossible for sociology to fully study the issue of effective interaction between law enforcement bodies and civic society, as the problem is complex.

Therefore, it is important to consider and use methodological approaches and methods of legal science, political science, social psychology, ethics and pedagogy.