Implementation of crime prevention policies

The feeling of personal security is the basic condition of the quality of life and may be most affected by crime. Thus, crime prevention has become one of the basic imperatives of MIA activity.

Ministry of Internal Affairs in collaboration with the Moldovan-Lithuanian Foundation “European Integration Studies Center” and the EU High Level Policy Advice Mission, financially supported by the European Union and UNDP Moldova, held on 3 November 2010, a roundtable on “Implementation of crime prevention policies”.

The event brought together experts from the EU, namely Lithuania, representatives of the MIA, the State Chancellery, General Prosecutor’s Office, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Institute for Public Policies etc.

The topics discussed at the meeting focused on crime trends and examination of various types of crime prevention programs, actors involved, methods of collecting information, monitoring and evaluation of prevention programs, etc.

In this context, the European Union expert, Mr. Gintaras Svedas (ex-deputy minister of justice of Lithuania during the years 1993-2006) has made a presentation on Lithuania's experience in crime prevention, stages of elaboration and development of the national crime prevention program, as well as the development of sector programs for the prevention of various criminal phenomena (drugs and human trafficking, economic crimes, corruption, domestic violence, etc.), legislative and normative acts regulating this activity.

The Lithuanian experience in the field has raised a particular interest, shared by the guest of the meeting, which provides for involvement in developing the national crime prevention Program. Scientists, having factual and statistical support from ministries, a fundamental analysis of the causes and factors that condition committing crimes has been made and therefore, the main directions of the program, which included a system approach and objectives from the social policy, economic , education, family and health fields, etc. have been identified and did not belong to proper prevention. As a result, this Program serves for many years as basis for developing sectoral documents for the prevention of juvenile crime, human trafficking, and corruption, and

the effective result was obtained in those fields of prevention activity, where a number of functions, have been delegated from the very beginning to NGOs and civil organizations.

The participants to the meeting, together with the European Union expert, have developed a set of conclusions and recommendations:

1. To ensure the involvement of authorities responsible in the crime prevention process, there may be developed a Program, a Strategy or Law, but the Law is less flexible to changes intervened in the dynamics and structure of criminality.

2. At the moment, because of some obsolete provisions in the content of the Law on Police, which contains some unfit duties for contemporary police and which, in fact are the skills of other central public authorities, some ambiguities and difficulties are created in the clear delimitationof the obligations of each body in part in the process of prevention.

Thus, the development of a new law on police is primary, the clear award of some political functions to MIA being secured, the clear establishment of the way of appointment of the police chief. In Lithuania, he is appointed by the President, at the proposal of the Minister of Internal Affairs, for a term of five years, which helps maintain a professional and competent leadership, regardless of changes at the political level in the country.

3. When drafting the laws and prevention programs it is necessary to involve scientists, who, based on a deep analysis of the situation should come up with fundamental and systematic approaches regarding the role and duties of various public authorities in crime prevention in general, or of a certain phenomenon, in part. These specialists can be including from the MIA Academy “Stefan cel Mare”.

4. A more advanced and detailed study of the practices of the new EU member states, particularly the Baltic ones is necessary.

5. The Lithuanian experience shows that the national experts involved in drafting legislation and policy documents, outside the ministry, must be paid from funds specially created in every central government authority.

Information and Public Relations Department