

Social policy with respect to juvenile offenders in the regions of Russia

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Abstract — One of the directions of state social policy in relation to minors is the organization of work to ensure social support for juvenile offenders. In the subjects of the Russian Federation, the institutional bodies have gained a certain amount of experience. The purpose of this article is to analyze the experience of social workers with juvenile offenders as part of the implementation of the concept of child-friendly justice. As a result of the generalization of the regional experience of socio-pedagogical and socio-psychological support of those adolescents in conflict with the law, the article reveals the main forms of work with juvenile offenders in the regions of Russia. The authors make proposals for the development of effective forms of social support for juvenile offenders.

Keywords — *regional social policy, juvenile offender, justice, social support.*

I. INTRODUCTION

An important part of state social policy is social policy in relation to children and young people. The main objectives of the social policy regarding children were formulated in the National Action Strategy for Children for 2012-2017 [2012]. The project of Decade of Childhood, announced by the Decree of the President of Russia for 2018-2027, is set to carry out further work on the implementation of state policy in the field of child protection. [2017].

An important direction of social policy within the scope of the Decade of Childhood is the implementation of measures under the Concept on the development of a system for the prevention of neglect and juvenile delinquency until 2020, including measures to counter the criminalization of the teenage environment [2017].

The lack of consistent conceptual approaches enshrined in legislation causes difficulties in the implementation of the main directions of said Concept. The lack of universal, clearly defined mechanisms and procedures generates significant variation in the organization of social support for juvenile offenders in various constituent entities of the Russian Federation. At the present stage, the regions have gained considerable experience in the work requiring analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

II. RESEARCH MATERIALS

The authors of the article summarized the experience of regional work in accompanying juvenile offenders in eight constituent entities of the Russian Federation: Bryansk, Kemerovo, Lipetsk, Oryol, Rostov regions, Perm Krai, the Republic of Buryatia, and the Republic of Khakassia. The authors analyzed the open data on the work of socio-psychological services, social protection, custody and guardianship, law enforcement and courts in the territory of these subjects. As a result, data was obtained on the following forms of social support for minors in conflict with the law.

1. The use of restorative justice technologies, the development of mediation practices.
2. Inclusion in the staff of the court administration of social workers, teachers and psychologists.
3. Delegation the power of social support for juvenile offenders to assistant judges.
4. Carrying out preventive measures to prevent the re-criminalization of adolescents.
5. Creation of a system of interdepartmental interaction of social services and law enforcement agencies.

III. DISCUSSION

The results obtained can be the basis for a constructive discussion on social policy in relation to juvenile offenders and the peculiarities of its implementation in different regions.

Social support for adolescents who come into conflict with the law is of great importance for their re-socialization, restoration of positive social ties. A social worker can provide law enforcement agencies and the court with important information about the personality of the minor, his family, and social environment [Markovicheva, 2013, p. 11]. Both foreign and Russian researchers recognize the restorative approach to juvenile justice as justified [Karnozova, 2012, p. 143].

The analysis of regional experience shows that social services, law enforcement agencies and courts are actively using positive foreign experience. The justice systems of many states allow the involvement of social workers in accompanying a juvenile offender [Jehle J.-M., 2008, p. 237]. However, borrowing foreign experience always comes with

certain risks and requires adjustment. The difficulties include the deficiencies of the legislative regulation of the peculiarities of resolving a criminal law conflict with the participation of minors in federal legislation [Markovicheva, 2016, p. 340].

In general, in various regions of Russia, there has been a steady trend in the development of child-friendly justice. However, the means to achieve this goal are often different. The effectiveness of the approaches used depends both on their theoretical development and on the willingness of the authorities of the subject to support such work. From this point of view, researchers positively evaluate the experience of the Kemerovo region, where the service of forensic psychologists, created on the initiative of the regional governor, provides social support for juvenile offenders [Ananyeva, 2015, p. 732]. A multilateral agreement on the creation of child-friendly justice and the organization of social support for juvenile offenders was signed in the Perm Krai.

More frequent is the situation when the courts are forced to solve the task of social support for juvenile offenders on their own. This practice has become widespread in regions where local budgets cannot finance the activities of social services accompanying work with juvenile offenders. For example, in the Bryansk, Lipetsk, Oryol, and Rostov regions, the staff of the court provides for the position of assistant judge with the functions of a social worker. In the Northern District Court of Oryol, the psychologist holds the position of chief specialist, and their duties include socio-psychological support of cases involving minor offenders in the courts of Oryol and the court of Oryol district, Oryol region. The implementation of such a model of supporting a teenager implies a certain judicial control over their behavior even after the resolution of the criminal law conflict. This is a complex task that requires interaction with other bodies and organizations. That is why, for example, in the Lipetsk region, public organizations and volunteers show active involvement in the work on monitoring minors. Within the scope of this work, the courts have gained valuable experience that requires generalization and reflection.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Summarizing the experience of various regions in ensuring social work with juvenile offenders leads to the following conclusions.

1. The regions conduct social support for juvenile offenders experimentally.
2. The choice of a model of social work with juvenile offenders depends on the fact that the regional authorities have a real opportunity to assist the courts and law enforcement agencies.
3. The task of social support for minors in conflict with the law requires active legislative activity. The result should be draft laws on probation and mediation of minors.

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