E-ISSN: 2997-9439

American Journal of Education and Evaluation Studies

https://semantjournals.org/index.php/ AJEES

| Research Article

Check for updates

Acting Professor of the Department of Constitutional Law at Tashkent State University of Law

Saxipjamal Djoldasova

Doctor of Law, Acting Professor of the Department of Constitutional Law at Tashkent State University of Law

Abstract: The article analyzes the prospects for the broader implementation of public oversight mechanisms over the activities of internal affairs bodies, with particular emphasis on public monitoring and the study of public opinion. In the context of the transformation of policing from a "punitive" model to a "service-oriented" model, the paper substantiates the growing importance of public trust and citizens' perceptions as key indicators of the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies.

The author examines the conceptual distinction between internal and external public oversight and highlights the insufficient institutionalization of these forms within national legislation and law enforcement practice. Based on the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, sectoral legislation, the "Uzbekistan–2030" Strategy, and relevant international legal instruments, the legal foundations for assessing the administrative activities of internal affairs bodies through public opinion are analyzed.

Special attention is paid to a comparative analysis of traditional sociological methods and innovative digital approaches to studying public opinion. The article argues that their combined application contributes to enhancing transparency, openness, and accountability of internal affairs bodies. The author concludes that the development of effective public oversight mechanisms is a crucial factor in strengthening public trust in law enforcement institutions and in fostering sustainable cooperation between the state and civil society.

Keywords: public oversight, public monitoring, public opinion, internal affairs bodies, policing, transparency, accountability, public trust.

This is an open-access article under the CC-BY 4.0 license

Prospects for the Broader Implementation of Public Oversight Mechanisms over the Activities of Internal Affairs Bodies

Beginning in the early 2000s, particularly in post-Soviet countries, scholarly and policy discourse increasingly emphasized the necessity of transforming policing from a predominantly "punitive" model to a "service-oriented" model. One of the most pressing issues arising from this

transformation has been the reassessment of how police activities should be evaluated within the framework of the new policing paradigm. In several states (the Russian Federation in 2011, Ukraine in 2015, Kazakhstan in 2016, and Uzbekistan in 2017), special laws on the police explicitly enshrined the principle that **public trust constitutes the central indicator of the effectiveness of police activities**.

Internal affairs bodies function not only as law enforcement institutions and organs of public authority, but also as social institutions oriented toward interaction and cooperation with the population. Accordingly, the nature of relations between the public and internal affairs bodies is a matter of no less importance than the professional competence of law enforcement personnel, which is traditionally placed at the forefront. This, in turn, underscores the significance of ensuring public access to information about police activities, fostering cooperation between law enforcement agencies and citizens, and systematically studying public opinion regarding internal affairs bodies.

In Uzbekistan, under the conditions of the revised Constitution, particular attention is paid to organizing the activities of internal affairs bodies on the basis of human rights and international standards. Specifically, normative legal acts define a range of objectives aimed at transforming internal affairs bodies into people-oriented professional institutions and strengthening their cooperation with the population, as well as educating personnel to be loyal to their duties, patriotic, and committed to public service in accordance with the principle of “Human Dignity above All.”[1]

Furthermore, at a meeting held on 3 December 2025 under the leadership of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, issues related to improving mechanisms of dialogue between state bodies and the population were discussed. It was emphasized that the use of modern, professional sociological and analytical methods is essential for accurately and comprehensively assessing public sentiment, needs, and aspirations. Such methods were identified as a key factor in obtaining objective information on the effectiveness of ongoing reforms and in developing forward-looking development programs. The President consistently emphasizes that enhancing the culture of dialogue with the people, listening to citizens, and adopting decisions that take their opinions into account must constitute the primary criterion of public administration.[2] This, in turn, necessitates the improvement of organizational and legal mechanisms of public oversight over the administrative activities of internal affairs bodies.

Russian scholar P.V. Desyatykh and Uzbek scholar A.A. Atazhanov, in their analysis of public oversight over internal affairs bodies, distinguish between **internal** and **external** public oversight. According to their approach, internal public oversight involves activities carried out by public councils and commissions established within the system, aimed at identifying abuses, shortcomings, errors, and decisions adopted on that basis. External public oversight, by contrast, refers to activities undertaken by citizens, self-governing bodies, and public associations to examine whether internal affairs bodies lawfully and adequately fulfill the tasks assigned to them. This includes submitting appeals and inquiries, participating in open collegial meetings, organizing public discussions of socially significant issues and draft normative legal acts, conducting public hearings, collecting, summarizing, and analyzing information affecting public interests through public monitoring, and hearing reports and information provided by officials of internal affairs bodies.[3]

[1] Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-10 dated January 20, 2023 "On Additional Measures to Transform Internal Affairs Bodies into a People-Oriented Professional Structure and Direct Them Towards Closer Cooperation with the Population" // https://www.lex.uz/uz/docs/6364837

[2] https://president.uz/uz/lists/view/8735.

[3] Desyatix P.V. Organization and Legal Support of Public Control over the Activities of Internal Affairs Bodies. Abstract of the dissertation of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Law. - M.: 2009. - 8 p. Mamasiddikov M.M., Otajonov

Although this classification is theoretically comprehensive, it has not been fully reflected in national legislation, which has resulted in the absence of consistent law enforcement practice in this area.

Cooperation between internal affairs bodies and civil society institutions primarily determines the public image and reputation of these bodies and their personnel, as well as the level of public trust in them. Therefore, regardless of the form in which public oversight is exercised, ensuring openness and transparency of activities and supporting cooperation initiatives proposed by the public serve as key factors in increasing public trust in internal affairs bodies.

At the same time, despite the fact that public oversight over state bodies and organizations is formally supported by the state, such important forms as public monitoring and the systematic study of public opinion remain underdeveloped in practice. The official websites of state bodies and organizations provide a clear illustration of this shortcoming.

Moreover, legislation regulating the activities of internal affairs bodies does not establish specific mechanisms for implementing these two important forms of public oversight—public monitoring and public opinion research – which further indicates the lack of established practice in this area.

The essence of these two forms of public oversight lies in the fact that **public monitoring** serves as a tool for improving public administration by "observing it from within," whereas **public opinion research** functions as a means of understanding society's "feedback" on state activities. The former focuses on assessing the legality of state bodies' activities, their level of openness and transparency, compliance with human rights and lawful interests, and the practical effectiveness of adopted decisions. The latter is aimed at studying citizens' subjective attitudes, identifying levels of trust in state policy, and determining public problems and expectations.

There exists a legal basis for studying public opinion regarding the administrative activities of internal affairs bodies. In particular, Articles 2, 43, and 98 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan enshrine the principles of legality, protection of individual rights and freedoms, and the obligation of state bodies to serve society.[4] The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan *On Internal Affairs Bodies* regulates the tasks and functions of internal affairs bodies, including their responsibility to ensure citizens' rights.[5] The Law *On Appeals of Individuals and Legal Entities* provides a legal framework for analyzing citizens' appeals as a source of public opinion.[6] The Law *On the Openness of the Activities of State Authorities and Administration Bodies* establishes norms aimed at ensuring transparency in the activities of state bodies, including internal affairs bodies.[7]

In addition, Goal 81 of the *Uzbekistan–2030 Strategy* provides for the introduction of a practice of evaluating the performance of heads of state bodies and their deputies on the basis of public opinion as an indicator of effectiveness.[8]

For comparative purposes, reference may also be made to international legal instruments. Although the United Nations *Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials* (1979) does not directly address public opinion, its provisions emphasize that policing must be based on respect for human rights, legality, and transparency, which collectively contribute to shaping a positive

A.A. et al. Development and improvement of mechanisms for establishing effective public control over the activities of state bodies in our country / Monograph. Team of authors. Editor-in-Chief: Doctor of Law, Professor M.M.Mamasiddikov. -Tashkent. "Lesson Press." 2020. - P.135.

[4] Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan. National Database of Legislation, 01.05.2023, No 03/23/837/0241 // https://lex.uz/ru/docs/6445145.

[5] https://lex.uz/ru/docs/3027843#6270718.

[6] https://lex.uz/ru/docs/3336169.

[7] https://lex.uz/ru/docs/2381133.

[8] https://lex.uz/ru/docs/6600413.

public perception of law enforcement activities. In particular, Article 1 requires law enforcement officials to fulfill their duties under the law, serve the community, and protect all persons from illegal acts. Article 2 obliges officials to respect and protect human dignity and uphold human rights in the performance of their duties, thereby laying the foundation for positive public opinion. Article 8 emphasizes strict observance of the law and full transparency of lawful actions, reinforcing the principle of transparency closely linked to public evaluation.[9]

The European Code of Police Ethics (Council of Europe, 2001) represents one of the key international instruments governing police standards and, unlike the 1979 UN Code, explicitly and repeatedly emphasizes public opinion and citizens' trust. It highlights the obligation of the police to operate transparently in order to secure public confidence, establishes police accountability not only to state authorities but also to society as a whole, and underscores the importance of informing the public about police activities, except where this would hinder investigations or violate individual rights.[10]

The particular importance of public opinion in assessing the administrative activities of internal affairs bodies is further confirmed by the methodology of the World Justice Project's *Rule of Law Index*®. This index, one of the most authoritative tools for the comparative assessment of the rule of law worldwide, is based on two primary sources: the General Population Poll, reflecting citizens' perceptions of the rule of law, access to justice, trust in the police, and effectiveness of rights protection; and the Qualified Respondents' Questionnaire, comprising expert assessments by practitioners and specialists in law, academia, and public administration.[11]

The inclusion of public opinion in an international rule of law index confirms that the legality and effectiveness of internal affairs bodies should be assessed not only through formal legal mechanisms, but also from the perspective of how citizens perceive justice, transparency, and access to law enforcement services.

Methods for studying public opinion regarding the activities of internal affairs bodies are closely linked to sociology. Contemporary academic literature and practice have developed a wide range of methodological approaches, conventionally divided into **traditional** (classical sociological methods) and **innovative** (methods based on digital technologies and big data analysis).

Traditional methods include mass surveys, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, observation, and case studies. Their main advantages lie in representativeness (when properly designed) and the ability to identify causal relationships between police actions and the formation of public evaluations. However, these methods are resource-intensive, time-consuming, and often dependent on subjective factors.

Innovative methods, by contrast, rely on digital technologies, including online surveys, web panels, social media analysis, media monitoring, big data technologies, and electronic feedback platforms such as government portals, chatbots, and mobile applications of internal affairs bodies. Their advantages include speed, low cost, and the ability to analyze large volumes of unstructured data in real time. At the same time, such methods suffer from limited representativeness and vulnerability to information manipulation, which reduces their scientific reliability.

[9] Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials : adopted by General Assembly resolution 34/169 of 17 December 1979 // United Nations [Electronic resource]. – Available at: https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/code-conduct-law-enforcement-official.

[10] European Code of Police Ethics : Recommendation Rec(2001)10 adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 19 September 2001 and explanatory memorandum. – Strasbourg : Council of Europe, 2001. - Б. - 7-11.

[11] World Justice Project. Rule of Law Index 2023. – Washington, DC: World Justice Project, 2023. – Available at: https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index.

While traditional methods remain crucial for ensuring scientific validity and comparability of data, digital technologies enable the rapid identification of public sentiment, the detection of latent trends, and the establishment of two-way communication between the state and citizens. The integration of traditional and innovative methods represents the most effective approach, allowing for a balance between analytical depth and data collection efficiency and providing an objective understanding of public perceptions of the activities of internal affairs bodies.

LIST OF USED LITERATURE:

1. Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-10 dated January 20, 2023 "On Additional Measures to Transform Internal Affairs Bodies into a People-Oriented Professional Structure and Direct Them Towards Closer Cooperation with the Population" // https://www.lex.uz/uz/docs/6364837
2. https://president.uz/uz/lists/view/8735.
3. Desyatix P.V. Organization and Legal Support of Public Control over the Activities of Internal Affairs Bodies. Abstract of the dissertation of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Law. - M.: 2009. - 8 p. Mamasiddikov M.M., Otajonov A.A. et al. Development and improvement of mechanisms for establishing effective public control over the activities of state bodies in our country / Monograph. Team of authors. Editor-in-Chief: Doctor of Law, Professor M.M.Mamasiddikov. -Tashkent. "Lesson Press." 2020. - P.135.
4. Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan. National Database of Legislation, 01.05.2023, No 03/23/837/0241 // https://lex.uz/ru/docs/6445145.
5. https://lex.uz/ru/docs/3027843#6270718.
6. https://lex.uz/ru/docs/3336169.
7. https://lex.uz/ru/docs/2381133.
8. https://lex.uz/ru/docs/6600413.
9. Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials : adopted by General Assembly resolution 34/169 of 17 December 1979 // United Nations [Electronic resource]. – Available at: https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/code-conduct-law-enforcement-official.
10. European Code of Police Ethics : Recommendation Rec(2001)10 adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 19 September 2001 and explanatory memorandum. – Strasbourg : Council of Europe, 2001. - Б. - 7-11.
11. World Justice Project. Rule of Law Index 2023. – Washington, DC: World Justice Project, 2023. – Available at: https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index.