Corruption in Russian Law Enforcement

ABSTRACT This study examines crime and corruption among Russian law enforcement agencies after 2009 Police Reforms (henceforth referred to as Reforms). These Reforms sought to curb corruption at all levels of the Russian civil service and among uniformed law enforcement personnel. Many law enforcement officers thought that the rebranding of the militsiya as “politsiya” would have a transformational effect within the organization as well as how others perceived it. Ultimately, the rebranding effort failed; the only concrete changes were the organization’s name and its personnel’s uniforms. In fact, the Reforms seem to have contributed to even more corruption and abuse of power, as well as an expansion of the Ministry of Interior’s ties to corrupt networks. KEYWORDS police reform, corruption, moonlighting, bribery

INTRODUCTION

This study examines crime and corruption among Russian law enforcement after the 2009 Police Reforms (henceforth referred to as Reforms). These Reforms sought to curb corruption at all levels of the Russian civil service and among uniformed law enforcement personnel. Many thought that the rebranding of the militsiya as “politsiya” would have a transformational effect within the organization as well as how others perceived it. Ultimately, the rebranding effort failed; the only actual changes were the organization’s name and its personnel’s uniforms. In fact, the Reforms (Cheloukhine & Haberfeld, 2011) seem to have contributed to even more corruption and abuse of power, as well as an expansion of the Ministry of Interior’s (MVD) ties to corrupt networks. The Law on the Police (7 February 2011) was the centerpiece of efforts to improve Russian law enforcement. It sought to enhance the MVD’s legitimacy and effectiveness. Some experts believed that the

1. The Law on the Police was approved by the Russian Federal Assembly and subsequently signed into law by then President of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev on 7 February 2011. This law replaced Soviet-era legislation as the foundation for law enforcement activities within the country.
Law on the Police was destined to fail, since its promoters lacked a clear vision for how to conduct reform and there was no significant pro-reform community within the MVD.

An independent expert for the *Russian Business Consulting* (RBK) magazine identified law enforcement (including the State Traffic Safety Inspectorate and Customs) activity as being among the most corrupt areas of governmental activity in Russia, followed by healthcare, education, communal services, and social security services.

A similar picture emerges from official estimates of the average size of bribes paid in Russia, which has substantially increased in recent years. According to data (*Gazeta Vzglyad*, 2016) provided by the MVD’s Department for Combating Economic Crimes, the average bribe amounted to 9,000 rubles in 2008; 23,000 rubles in 2009; 61,000 rubles in 2010; and 236,000 rubles in 2012 (as of February 2017, the 52-week range was 56–76 rubles to the US dollar; currently, it is 58 rubles to the dollar). In other words, the average bribe in 2012 was 26 times greater than the average bribe in 2008, many times the inflation rate for the same period.

Aggregated data can sometimes be misleading. For example, (*Gazeta Vzglyad*, 2016) in the Russian regions, the estimate of the average bribe amount paid declined from 2012 to 2015 by 150,000 rubles, whereas for the Moscow regions the average bribe jumped for this same period to 650,000 rubles, that is, about $11,000 using 2015–16 exchange rates.

During an address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation on 12 November 2009, then President Dmitry Medvedev identified the current state of corruption as one of the biggest challenges the Russian government faced. He indicated that during the first six months of 2009, more than 4,500 cases of corruption were prosecuted, 532 government officials and local self-government bodies were convicted, as were more than 700 law enforcement officers. Apparently, fewer than one in nine investigations of officials’ corruption leads to a prosecution according to data supplied by the interior minister. In all, for 2009, the Russian government estimated that more than the equivalent of $300 was paid (*Gazeta Vzglyad*, 2016).

The reforms envisioned (Russia Today, 28 February 2011) downsizing the *militsiya* cadres by 30% and firing those officers with proven connections to organized crime. Unfortunately, there is no comprehensive, publicly available data to examine whether these policy goals were achieved. According to Russian government–supplied data provided to the Fifth UN Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of the Criminal Justice Systems (Cheloukhine et al., p. 156), the number of police officers increased from 1.3 million in 1990 to 1.8 million in 1994. For the years after 2000, there is no systematic data available on the number of sworn police officers in the country. On occasion, a figure might appear in a research paper, such as there being approximately 1.4 million police officers in 2009, but there seemed to have been a decision not to release data on this topic. Kosals, for example (Cheloukhine et al., p. 156), observed that all police statistics and data gathered through sociological surveys did in-house or by external research centers are classified; only a few facts and figures were provided to the public after police approval.

The most obvious change resulting from the Reforms has been the MVD federal law enforcement service’s name from the Soviet-era term “*militsiya*” to a universal *politsiya* in 2011.
The Reforms also resulted in a more centralized control over the police as responsibility for the oversight of the police agencies was removed from regional and municipal authorities, and placed under the direct control of the MVD in Moscow.

At the same time, the MVD gave up its responsibilities for correctional institutions (to the Ministry of Justice) and firefighting (to a newly created Ministry for Emergency Situations). Currently, the MVD’s principal components are Central Administration, Federal Migration Service, Federal/Regional Administration, Internal Military Troops, and the Police Service. Also, the MVD has forensic, logistical, research, and educational units.

In 2003, then Interior Minister Mr. Gryzlov coined the term “werewolves in epaulets” to describe certain officers from the legendary Moscow Criminal Investigation Unit (MUR, Moskovskiy Ugolovnyi Rozysk) involved in racketeering from businessmen. A court convicted these “werewolves” under the Criminal Code’s organized crime statute and sentenced them to imprisonment up to 20 years. Ideally, in the future there would be an opportunity to purge the ranks of law enforcement officers of other “werewolves.”

Indeed, in 2009 the Federal Law “On the Police” contained a provision mandating that MVD militsiya members were to be recertified in 2011 to confirm that they had not engaged in unacceptable corrupt activities before being allowed to transfer to the newly established politsiya. The number of slots in the politsiya had been set at 22% below that of the militsiya. Thus, after allowing for retirement, this mechanism offered an opportunity to eliminate roughly one in five militsiya members without needing to bring criminal charges against them.

Initially, this study was focused entirely on Russian MVD police corruption and post-reform efforts to combat it. After beginning to collect data and conduct interviews, we recognized that the complexity of the topic demanded that we expand efforts to examine other organizations and relevant political actors. As part of the 2009 Police Reforms, certain responsibilities that belong to the militsiya rather than remaining with the politsiya were transferred to the Customs and State Civil Servants agencies. The former militsiya personnel, which were active in these areas, brought with them their old manner of working. In fact, these new units continued to protect their corrupt employees who continued financially benefiting from criminal work-related activity.

At the board meeting in March 2015, the minister of the interior, General Vladimir Kolokoltsev, released the following data: in 2014 more than 400 police officers were fired for corruption; 2,500 have been disciplinary penalized but without criminal charges; for taking bribes alone, 630 police officers were disciplined, 113 of whom were high-ranking senior officers, managers, and directors; and for the same period, police officers reported to their superiors and directors about being offered bribes almost twice as often (Boyarsky, 2015).

The Ministry of the Interior began using some tools in preventing corruption. Thus, for example, since 2014, police officers have been required to submit an annual income declaration, including properties belonging to their spouse and minor children. Police officers are forbidden from engaging in any paid activity, and the Ministry of the Interior has arranged a
federal hotline to report on police corruption in each region. In 2014, the Main Directorate for Internal Security of the Interior Ministry received 17,455 complaints on corruption, of which 13,373 came directly from the public. After internal investigations, 274 police officers were disciplined, 24 police officers were fired, and 8 cases were opened for possible criminal prosecution. Over the past three years, cleaning up the police force has become a primary campaign of the government.

Distorted Meaning of Police Officers’ Evaluation and Certification

The renaming of Russia’s politsiya took place about eight years ago, in March 2011, when the Federal Law “On Police” (Federalnyi Zakon o Politsii [Federal Law on Police], 2007) came into force, accompanied by evaluation of all the ministry employees. The evaluation itself was the final accord of the Ministry of the Interior reforms launched in 2009. The implication was that all the “werewolves in epaulets” would stay in the old militsiya, simply not being transferred to politsiya. The number of newly reformed police officers was reduced by 22%, compared with the number of militsiya prior to the change. However, it would be naive to expect that by firing each of the fifth officers the system will modernize. The reform was carried out by the same corrupt system and people in charge.

“It was very typical when a grievance investigation would be conducted by the same officer who was under the scrutiny,” said former district (Khabarov, 2017) security officer and now a head of the law firm “Security” Mr. Khabarov.

While transforming the militsiya into politsiya, the officer evaluations were problematic, evidenced, in part, by the speed it was accomplished—875,000 officers were evaluated and reassigned in one and a half months. In fact, Khabarov was not tenured for the reason that the evaluation committee focused exclusively on a recommendation letter from an immediate supervisor, who demanded a bribe from Khabarov for positive evaluation, and he refused to bribe his boss.

Police top brass used the evaluation process as an opportunity to get rid of both the real slackers and those who did not want to participate in generating illegal earnings and sharing them with bosses, moreover even for having an opinion. Sometimes the human resources and internal investigation personnel in charge, while conducting employees’ evaluation, demanded bribes for positive evaluation or recommendations. For example, one of our interviewees, who requested anonymity, was dismissed on grounds of the staff layoff in 2011. He explained that to be appointed for the position of senior investigator officer, the demand was 75,000 rubles in bribe (about $2,000 in 2011 currency exchange rate), which he refused to pay.

In another case, an officer we interviewed, who managed to stay in the Police Highway Patrol unit with an undisclosed bribe he paid, was, however, turned down for promotion to the chief of unit position because he refused to give an additional bribe of 2 million rubles (about $60,000). Below is an account from Officer M, in which he describes his failed promotion: in order for him to be promoted within the Police Highway Patrol unit, there should be a vacant senior position, but one was not available at the time. To make everyone happy, a department HR officer offered a deal when a senior officer “voluntarily” stepped
down (with a bribe) to a lower-rank position (in this case, simply to swap with Officer M). The bribe would be divided between the HR officer and the officer stepping down in rank. Officer M was asked a few questions:

- If you were seeking a promotion and you did have requested amount, why didn’t you give a bribe?
- Even though I had more than they asked, I am not giving a penny because they all are corrupt and greedy.
- Well, your monthly salary is about 18,000 rubles [about $530 in 2013 currency exchange rate]; where did the rest of your money come from?
- From drivers who do not want to be legally fined and pay on spot a portion in cash.
- So, is this a bribe?
- Yes. But do you really think everyone who became a highway patrol officer and is wearing a police uniform [is doing so] merely for idealistic and truly fighting crime reasons? Here is the fact [to prevent a charge of driving under the influence (DUI)—S.Ch.]: a driver is willing to pay 100,000 rubles [$3,000] cash and not being legally charged. The driver understands that [if convicted] their driver’s license can be taken away for life. So, we, the police officers, are helping this poor driver to keep his job and feed his family.
- Let’s go back to your promotion matters and assume you would bribe those officers and were promoted: how long would it take and from where would you get the money back?
- Six months, more or less, and of course it will come from drivers for speeding, DUI, and other violations.

Overall, Officer M asserted that he, or any officers that engaged in similar activity, were not corrupt.

Since 2012, the number of police officers prosecuted for corruption has increased by 10–15% annually, despite the evidence that the total number of police officers is decreasing each year. However, in reality, these numbers are about the decline in morals, the rule of law, and not strengthening the fight against corruption.

Second Case

A federal judge, from one of the Caucasus republics, shared his personal experience encountering corruption in the judicial system. His caseload was huge and most of the time the decision was based not on the Criminal Code and legal procedure, but mainly on local and ethnic traditions. However, the most disturbing thing was that there is racketeering (his term) inside the judicial system of the Caucasus’s Southern Republic (we will call it X-republic) where the judge worked. He and all other judges (there are nearly 100 judges) must pay 25,000 rubles each month and 300,000 rubles at the end of year to a collector.2 Usually, this

2. In fact, they all are male; women are not allowed to be appointed in the Republic; they simply never will be approved by the republic’s president and chief-judge.
person (collector) is a well-known official from the Supreme Court of X-republic and if he refuses to pay, he will lose his job the next day. All money would go to the higher-ups, and there is no way to ask questions about where and how it will be spent.

According to the chairman of the Russian National Anti-Corruption Committee, Mr. Kabanov, there is widespread petty corruption at the ordinary citizens’ level. However, there are other types as well, ranging from providing protection to prostitutes and vehicle hijackers, to racketeering and extortion.

There is also a sophisticated type of providing protection (Russians call it “roof,” or “krysha”) to some major schemes related to money laundering, human and goods smuggling, and financial pyramid. However, there is a rule that entails alliance with other law enforcement agencies. Police officers by themselves cannot protect such schemes; such protection may potentially involve Customs, IRS, and even Banking Regulatory and Internal Security Service. And finally, racketeering within the police system: the Internal Investigation officers investigating protection, racketeering, and corruption are requesting their part of the payment too.

“Feeding” zones among law enforcement agencies are divided by sectoral and territorial land lines. Any attempts to “show police ID” on someone else’s territory is usually blocked by his own superiors. There, on the “territories” in the first place, are quite legitimate small businesses—street vendors, small farmer’s markets, shops, and services. That is, in most cases, the patrimony of the precinct police officers and their main “revenue” is, of course, the farmer’s markets, which police officers officially patrol. From a small farmer’s stand or vendor, and depending on the size and type of goods it is selling, a monthly bribe will be somewhere between 1,000 and 5,000 rubles to the police fund. Money is collected by a designated person, or it is already included in the rent by market administration.

Typically, the newly appointed Precinct Patrol Service (PPS) officer should not do anything special. Representatives of local businesses would come to arrange dealings, especially if they have already been established with the predecessor. The farmer’s market (Russians call it “bazaar”) is a place where conflicts are taking place all the time; therefore, one must be in good contact with the PPS officer.

The second source of the PPS officer’s “revenue” is small “favors” provided to citizens such as accelerated clearance of a weapons permit and registration (bribe somewhere between 1,000 and 5,000 rubles in a rural area). The third source of the PPS officer’s “revenue” is the racket from the illicit trade of alcoholic beverages, including moonshine. Money also comes from a kiosk’s fixed rate or one-time payment on the “caught–pay” principle. It all depends on the kiosk’s retail return, and a bribe varies from 2,500 to 20,000 rubles per month.

The patrimony of the Precinct Patrol Service (PPS) is so-called grandmothers street-trading without a permit, that is, all the illegal street trade, as well as beggars and drug dealers

---

3. The name of the judge and the republic cannot be disclosed for personal security reasons of both the judge and the author of this investigation. The judge has resigned from his position because of “personal health conditions that would not permit [him] to work in the region” and returned to his home-based region with a conditional pension at the age of 54.
in the area controlled by the PPS officer. One PPS senior officer admitted that, in his district, he collects 5,000 rubles per month from street vendors, and there are about 50 of them. Payoff per month is about 250,000 rubles, and this is just one such area of his borough. Obviously, it is not the PPS officer who collects “revenue”; instead, there is a person in charge, most of the time a former police officer, retired or fired from the police.

For petty public order violations, the PPS officer may arrest someone for being drunk in public, or shake them down for using offensive language in a public place. And of course, there are the undocumented immigrants. When a PPS officer sees a group of migrant workers, he will check all IDs and registrations at the local INS office and charge those without registration 1,000 to 3,000 rubles (about $40).

Local and regional drug trafficking is usually investigated by the Federal Drug Control Service. “With drug dealers in my patrol area, I had an agreement that always allowed me to pick out any street drug dealer,” recalls a former PPS officer. “But if I’m pressing on them in order to investigate drug-related crime in my precinct, immediately the Drug Control Service Criminal Investigation people would call my superiors, screaming to back off from their turf, and not to create ‘damage to a strategy’ in combating drug smuggling” (Khabarov, 2017). Underground casinos, gambling, and sports betting kiosks, too, are feeding others as it was, for example, with Moscow’s region prosecutors (Pashkin, 2017).

As noticed by the anonymous police officer from the Ministry of the Interior, police protection of illegal businesses does not protect them against the other police agencies. If the “roof” provided is not the OSB (Internal Investigation Department, or otdel sobstvennoi besopasnosti), they do not care who comes to interfere. What is interesting is that brothels have the most reliable “roof” from the OSB. District Departments of Internal Investigation control prostitutes, pimps, and brothels, which is their “bread and butter,” and everyone knows it, says one of the visitors to the police forum. “Need some merchandise? [which meant prostitutes] We can do it easily! Choose any online brothel, come, make the purchase [in this case you need to show the Internal Investigation Police officer ID] and wait! After 10–15 minutes, the prostitutes will arrive to any place, in luxury vehicles and all would be free of charge.”

As for the criminal investigators, they have their own way to make money by beating the system. As the anonymous former detective admitted, the most stable income brings the cooperation with a public attorney, which would be assigned by the state to a suspect in accordance with Criminal Code Article 51. The state pays the public attorney by the visits to participate in the pre-investigative interrogations. The number of such visits is recorded in the minutes signed by the detective, but detective and public attorney sign all the papers in one day, and then put different dates on them. The suspect, in the meantime, will spend days in custody without the case moving to court.

The public attorney would visit a suspect perhaps twice, but in the papers it will be reported as many as ten. The public attorney immediately splits the money with the criminal investigator, or is enforced to share it later, because otherwise he/she would not be called up again. The state’s pay rate for the public attorney is usually based on experience and cases handled, and it is anywhere from 550 to 2,400 rubles per visit.

Furthermore, the investigator often takes money from the jailed person’s relatives for permission to visit—maybe even arrange a “sex date” in the investigative detention center’s
office under the pretext of witness testimony. However, the most thoughtful bribes are for
the termination of criminal prosecution or diversion into some lighter charges. For example,
in the Yekaterinburg region the chief of precinct’s patrol service was arrested. According to
investigators (Ne prosto tymogatel’stvo [Not just a simple extortion], 29 May 2015), a 29-year-
old police major demanded 2.5 million rubles for termination of an investigation in cashing
money from the stolen banking cards from two unemployed suspects. In another case, in the
Main Investigation Directorate of the Interior Ministry in Moscow, a senior investigator of
the Directorate was arrested for extorting (in foreign currency) bribes of $500,000. Neither
transforming militsiya into politsiya, nor laying off every fifth law enforcement officer, facil-
itated combating corruption in Russia.

Grateful Victims
Here’s another example: A colleague worked in law enforcement for more than ten years
and recently resigned. A family man in his 40s paid off the two-bedroom coop mortgage in
a residential area and a car loan. If he lived only on a police officer’s salary (today it is about
40,000 to 50,000 rubles, between $600 and $700 per month), he would not be able to
have this at all. He does not see anything shameful in the fact that he had criminal income.
He claimed to be an honest police officer, and that it is not bribes but gratitude he got for
the good work. Well, for some reason he just could not understand the distinction between
a bribe and gratitude.

According to some estimates, unofficial or illegal income brings the police on average
from 50% up to 250% of their salary. Gratitude, indeed, has its place in the structure of cops’
illegal income—although, today, any gift exceeding 3,000 rubles (about $50) received by a
police employee is considered a bribe. For example, one businessman’s relative was kid-
napped and the kidnappers demanded a ransom of more than 1 million US dollars. The
businessman appealed to the local precinct detectives, and a relative was returned safe and
sound; the kidnappers were arrested and charged. The happy businessman gave the detec-
tives the ransom that had been prepared for the kidnappers. So, this is gratitude. And an-
other example: a detective solved a theft case at a large enterprise. In return, the senior
executive director called the detective’s department personnel and appealed for his promo-
tion. However, he was told that since the detective previously had administrative charges, he
would not be promoted. Then the enterprising executive director sent a check to the detec-
tive in the amount of his semi-annual salary, as compensation. Police officers establish good
relations with their districts’ local business especially with those who were helped. That al-
 lows them to obtain an indirect substantial support in buying goods at purchasers’ price, free
haircuts, dining with deep discounts in the restaurants, and free washing and repairing of
cars. From the police morality standpoint, this is not a bribe at all; this is a necessary grati-
tude for keeping the business community safe, as they think. Many police officers, of course,
have never heard anything about the “grass-eaters” and “meat-eaters.”4

4. Meat-eaters are officers who “aggressively misuse their police powers for personal gain,” whereas grass-eaters
“simply accept the payoffs that the happenstances of police work “throw” in their way.
However, in many cases, grounds for gratitude are created by the police officers themselves. For example, somebody caught a thief who had broken into his car and stolen a radio; he turned the thief over to the police. Then it appears that during the fight with the car owner, at the parking lot, a thief was injured. The police officer thanked the victim for being vigilant and opened the case against the thief. At the same time, the officer entailed the thief to write a statement about physical injuries received from the car owner. The statement was given to the victim and promised to “solve the problem” for a small gratitude. In police mentality, this is also quite ordinary—the victim framed himself in a physical altercation. Police officers were asked what thoughts were coming to their mind when they saw a potential violation or crime: did they enforce the law to prevent crime or turn it into their personal benefit? The majority, while on duty, admitted having second thoughts in the back of their mind—“what is my gain or how do I turn it into?” Therefore, there is an unwritten law: if one was caught taking a bribe, the same amount should be paid, at least for not being imprisoned.

Two years ago, three members of the PPS were caught taking a bribe from street vendors. According to our information, they bribed a detective of the Investigative Committee with 1 million rubles (about $30,000). All three were fired but remained free. Here is the principle of conformity: if a police general took a $2 million bribe, then he must give about the same amount to be free.

The authors got the image of an honest police officer according to the Russian way after talking to one of the police officers in charge of overseeing fraud and corruption in the construction industry. This officer claimed he is honestly fighting with those who would be allowed to arrest, and did not even realize he is a typical case of conflict of interest. The officer claims he is not taking bribes small or large, has excellent job performance, is totally independent, and cannot be intimidated and has a chance to rise to the rank of a chief of police. As of now, he has everything one needs for a wealthy lifestyle and earned it all from a transparent business aside where he has a share. This business is out of scope of his direct police work, and he is not participating in company decision making. But as long as he is nearby, business partners are insured against any raids, and that is his share in future profit.

**Police Officers’ Off-Duty Enterprise**

This study is based on the survey of about 50 police officers in Russia’s eight regions. In addition, we analyzed statistics on crime, policing, and the socioeconomic situation in other Russian regions. Congruently, some data on the police officers’ off-duty activities were collected from Internet sites.

The core technique was a questionnaire to police officers that was tested in a series of informal interviews. The questionnaire contained 44 questions and included the following sections: (1) assessment of the crime situation in the city/region; (2) police officers’ work-related problems; (3) the content and parameters of their off-duty employment activities; (4) the relationship between police and public; (5) evaluation of police work; and (6) information about the respondent. This police survey has been implemented in Moscow, Krasnodar, Karachaevo-Cherkessia, Rostov, Stavropol, and North Caucasus regions.
Presently, the police officers’ off-duty activity is well organized and has a large-scale character. According to our data, more than half of surveyed police officers have additional income outside their full-time job at the Interior Ministry of the Russian Federation (MVD RF). They spend as much as 34 hours per week making money while off duty or even while on duty. The nature of this work is very diverse; we identified about 50 different types of off-duty activities, ranging from legal to criminal.

According to our estimates, police officers make more money from their off-duty employment as a whole than they get paid as police officers from the MVD RF. Assessment of off-duty income derived from only two sources (mostly as transporter/driver-security and family retail business) and amounts to about $3 billion per year, versus $5 billion from the federal budget spent on law enforcement.

To get a full picture of all the amounts of money that police officers are making outside their primary employment, one would need to evaluate the turnover for all 50 types of their off-duty activities. Therefore, with lack of data on that, we evaluate the revenue from only two types, for which we have collected the information.

First of all, we have data on the police mass groups work. Typically, this is a personal security protection and transportation services for which data were obtained from the survey. In total, this type of off-duty part-time work employs more than half of police officers nationwide. Additional earning, on average, is about $600 per month. Given the fact that about half of the police officers are involved in off-duty activity and their total number in the MVD RF is about 1 million officers, the total earning is approximately $300 million per year. Another significant component is their family retail business; according to surveys, it occupies 10–20% of police officers. Given the fact that the average income in the sphere of small business is about $2,000 per month, the total revenue in this area was about $3.4 billion per year.

Thus, from two types of off-duty activities, police officers’ additional income is about $4 billion per year (however, there are about five dozen known types of part-time work for police officers). Given that all the expenditures of the federal budget for law enforcement in recent years were no more than $5 billion per year, it can be argued that the total income from off-duty employment received by police officers is considerably more than what the MVD pays.

All of this has at least two serious consequences. First, police officers have a high degree of autonomy from the government, as they have learned to make a second income, and the state is not the only, and often is not their main, patron. Second, there is a spontaneous privatization of law enforcement controlled by private groups. These groups independently influence the appointments, promotions, the level of real income, and, possibly, policy in the sphere of law enforcement.

Off-duty employment for police officers was, in part, due to social, economic, and political factors, which was a form of a complex mechanism at the stage of the Soviet system.

5. By the end of 2014, the value of the Russian ruble dramatically fell in comparison to the US dollar. If in January 2014, $1 US was traded for 32 rubles, then on 15 December 2014, the ruble lost its value more than twice, $1 US = 65 rubles.
collapse. Second, there were some changes in working conditions and social attitudes of law enforcement officers themselves due to a new microenvironment. Obviously, micro-changes took place under the influence of changes in the macroconditions in the political system, the government, and the social system. There were three important causes for that.

First is the desire of Russia’s ruling elite to give, to the smallest group of people as possible, the most favorable conditions in the division of former state-owned property. In such conditions, the police officers found themselves under strict control of major players who were taking away property at the regional and federal levels. As a result, on the one hand, law enforcement was not allowed to directly participate in the state property appropriation, which stimulated them (at least their leaders) to take part in it without prior arrangement. On the other hand, they have become a tool in property distribution and, therefore, in one way or another they got some opportunity to take part in it too by having access to vital information, providing services for which, in return, the elite groups had to pay, and so on. In addition, the status quo of police, prosecutors, and courts directly subordinate to political elite led to a narrowing of the scope of the law and practice in Russian society, which was not burdened by strict traditions of legality. This led to the fact that the conditions for the development of police off-duty activity have appeared, but the mechanism to control the situation did not.

The second cause of police officers’ off-duty activities is relatively low wages and poor working conditions. This is due to poor state budgets (particularly in the first stage of the Reforms), and the fact that those in power can privatize law enforcement for nothing.

Third, transition to a market economy and democracy in Russia has led to a failure of law-enforcement professional ethics. The provisions of new ethics for law and society did not develop quickly. Furthermore, the Ministry of the Interior was not concerned about generating one. Instead, the police officers’ market ethics appeared spontaneously with a crooked’s man philosophy: “You have shoulder straps, the badge and a head on one’s shoulders, so go and make money.” In other words, it was expected that police officers would make money with all the means and resources available to law enforcement. Now, over the past decade of market reforms, this ethic has taken root, captured major segments of law enforcement agencies, and become complicated and relatively independent regulator of law enforcement officers’ behavior.

Thus, law enforcement off-duty employment is not the result of individual mistakes or crime of some corrupt officers but, rather, is caused by social mechanisms with many factors. In other words, large-scale law enforcement off-duty activity is a systemic pathology.

Low pay is the main motivation of the police officers, explaining why they are engaged in off-duty activities. However, analysis shows that their earnings are at about the national average, and taking into account the additional revenue, it is 1.8 times above the average. However, based on the specifics of police officers’ work, the total income of the respondents is 1.9 times lower than they actually want to make.

During surveys, we asked respondents two questions:

1. What is the current pay for your work, and
2. Given the specifics of your work, how much do you think you should be paid?
The average estimation to the first question was 30,490 rubles (before 15 December 2014). But what is more important, to the second question, how much police officers should be paid the response was an average estimate of about 85,081 rubles. As one can see, the difference between actual and desired wages is about three times more. Based on the above, if one takes the total income of police officers, what would be the proportion of part-time work in it? The average percentage of income earnings among police officers is about 42%. That is, in part, on average part-time work gets a little less than the main job pays. Thus, the total income of a police officer, including off-duty employment, on average is about 42,250 rubles.

Of course, the gaps between real and desired pay are differentiated. Different categories of police officers with diverse rank, seniority, and position are different as well. For example, the average salary of the low-ranking officer is about 17,000 rubles (not in rural areas, where it is as low as 9,000 rubles), and the desired pay is at least 66,000. For senior officers, it is, respectively, 35,300 rubles and 79,000 rubles, and the provincial differences are even larger (all numbers are before December 2014). (See table 1.)

However, according to the calculation of average additional earnings by police officers, one cannot say that the law enforcement profession is a low-paid job. Senior law enforcement officers are involved in different forms of economic activity and get paid on a very different scale. They provide a so-called institutional opportunity of the police organizations’ participation in upcoming business. Senior officers provide “protection” to private businessmen and criminal groups, and channel the criminal proceeds to special funds that eventually will assist law enforcement.

There are regional differences in off-duty activity of law enforcement, but the proportion of police officers involved in such activity is never below 30%. Overall, the surveyed regions can be divided into two main groups. The first is “highly commercialized” regions, which are Moscow and the Moscow region, where 75% of police officers take second employment in off-duty hours and almost 50% of officers while on duty. The second group comprises the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Actual pay</th>
<th>Share in total earnings</th>
<th>Income with additional earnings</th>
<th>Desired pay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>32,220</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>54,610</td>
<td>88,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krasnodar</td>
<td>19,330</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30,680</td>
<td>69,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nizhniy Novgorod</td>
<td>19,740</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>37,250</td>
<td>63,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irkutsk</td>
<td>28,790</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47,980</td>
<td>81,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moscow region</td>
<td>26,130</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>59,390</td>
<td>90,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rostov region</td>
<td>19,700</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>33,970</td>
<td>76,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>23,490</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40,500</td>
<td>75,810</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All data provided in the tables were collected from interviews, run through statistical analysis, and entered into tables by the authors.
“moderately commercialized” regions (see table 2). About 36–45% of police officers work a second job off-duty and about 17–22% while on duty.

There are regional differences in off-duty activity of law enforcement, but the proportion of police officers involved in such activity is never below 30%.

Table 3 shows that off-duty employment is widespread among police officers and is not only legal second employment such as security jobs and transporters/drivers but openly criminal activity as well. Rather than conventionally taking the first two types of jobs (security, transporters/drivers) as not criminal, we calculated the ratio of legal and illegal types (see table 3). It was found that this ratio varies significantly while off duty and while on duty. While off duty, the ratio of legal and illegal types is 3 to 1, and while on duty, it is 2 to 3.

Thus, whereas off-duty the legal ways of earning money is 3 times more (conditionally), while illegal (1.5 times) prevail on duty. Therefore, the question whether providing security refers to legal earning or not, requires additional study, since this activity can include as ordinary security services as well as providing “protection, or roof.”

In general, these data are confirmed by police officers answering the question “What are the more common ways to make money by police officers, those that are not prohibited by law or illegal?” Accordingly, 59% of the police officers answered legitimate and 41% saw it as

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2. Regional differences in law enforcement activity (percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moscow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krasnodar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nizhniy Novgorod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irkutsk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moscow region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rostov region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 3. Types of off-duty employment by police officers (percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Types of earning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing security to person or business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers/transporters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail in family business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bribe instead of issuing fine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bribe from small shops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bribe for filing documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining suspects’ guilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bribe at stop and ID check</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
illegal. Although in general, the ratio is about 3 to 2 in favor of legitimate, it is still alarming that 40% of police officers and their colleagues are engaged in criminal activities. However, those who believe that there are more illegal ways of making money do believe that 30% of police officers make money while on duty. Those who seek legitimate ways in making money are only 10%. Hence, it turns out that police officers are more engaged in illegal (criminal) activity while on duty, at the time when they are expected to be fighting crime.

Currently, there is close contact between the police and businessmen. On one hand, police officers are involved in conflict resolution of some companies. On the other hand, from businessmen the police take money, office equipment, automobiles, and so on, required for their work.

Table 4 shows that to find off-duty employment is not easy for officers depending on field expertise and their activities.

Russian Police Reforms in 2009 pushed for development of a specific job market. Police (as a commercial entity), private security, and criminals perform as partners vs. rivals and are fighting for every dollar, where power remains the basic method of pressure. Moreover, security is one of the main components of any company’s vital functioning and costs money to business owners. To police, providing “protection” has become not only a major way to survive in the new economic and political environment but also a way to strengthen police, improving capacity and transforming into a force, which, along with the Federal Security Service (FSB) and Customs, controls business enterprises in the field of security.

Thus, by the end of 2015, we can speak about the monopoly position of law enforcement providing “protection” in the security market. Therefore, since the beginning of the Police Reforms in 2009, the police have become deeply ingrained in the economy and become one of the major business partners and suppliers of various services in security. Police interaction with businesses also includes influence, information sharing, knocking out debt, threatening competitors, collecting compromise.

In order to identify the scale of police participation in business enterprise activities, we asked several questions. The first question was intended to see how often police officers are involved in commercial dispute resolutions—conflicts between businessmen and managers by protecting one of the parties’ interests. Oddly, only 35% believe that

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Police units</th>
<th>Easy to find</th>
<th>Not easy, but possible</th>
<th>Impossible</th>
<th>Total percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Combat OC</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Investigation</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrol Service</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Crime</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Police</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detectives</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Police</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
such incidents never take place, 65% believe that such cases do take place, and 11% responded that it happens very often.

The second question was how businesses pay police officers for the services provided. According to the survey, 23% of respondents said that businessmen transfer money to the police association funds, 46% said businesses purchase computers, office equipment, and the like, and 20% percent said they got part-time jobs with those companies and were paid in cash. Only 37% pointed out that there isn’t any help from the business.

Senior officers and managers use police department resources, including low-ranking officers and employees, to provide a “protection” to some businesses, which paves the way for a sort of partnership between the MVD officials and subordinates. While taking care of a big business, many police department executives ignore “grass-eaters” and low-ranking officers. As one can see from table 5, the frequency of police officers’ involvement in commercial dispute resolutions directly related to illegal business during officers’ working hours, that is, suspension or termination of criminal cases, and in determining the suspect’s guilt and sale of secret information.

In contrast to businessmen, police and the general public have quite conflicting and tense, rather than partnership, relationships. This fact is acknowledged by the police themselves. To the question of how the Russian population treats the police, with trust or distrust, only 3% of the population trust the police and will call for help. In contrast, the majority of the population, 58%, described relations with police as very cautious and 32% as negative, and 7% of people believe that one should be afraid of the police.

Among other different reasons, respondents report police officers’ negative attitudes to the population. Thus, 27% believe that it happens frequently and 63% say that such negativity is taking place, but rarely. In contrast, only 10% of police officers believe that there are no cases of abuse or rude treatment toward the population.

| TABLE 5. The scale of off-duty police officers who participate in business conflict resolution for their own financial benefit (percent) |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                 | Often | Rarely | Never |
| Share of those working while on duty | 33    | 20    | 8     |
| Number of hours/week            | 14    | 12    | 10    |
| Types of work                   |       |       |       |
| Providing protection            | 38    | 48    | 53    |
| Transporters/drivers            | 24    | 25    | 30    |
| Bribes instead of issuing fines | 40    | 39    | 28    |
| Bribes from small shops         | 30    | 25    | 16    |
| Bribes for filing documents     | 22    | 23    | 12    |
| Selling information             | 11    | 6     | 4     |
| Defining suspects’ guilt        | 16    | 10    | 7     |
| Bribes at stop and ID check     | 27    | 14    | 9     |
Nevertheless, it turned out from this survey that there is a relationship between illegal off-duty police employment and how police officers treat the population. The more the police officers are involved in personal business and off-duty employment, the more they become irritated toward residents. Simply, the police offices are not present or available do their work (see table 6).

In general, the current involvement of police officers in off-duty employment has a negative impact on their performance. Only 8% of police officers responded that it affects them positively and helps to maintain work. Fifty-six percent said it did interfere with their major duty, and 36% replied that it did not affect their work at all.

In addition, we analyzed the differences between the regions’ crime rates, which were distinguished by different levels of police off-duty (second employment) activity. For that, we divided the regions into two groups: one with a low level of off-duty activity (43% of police officers) and the second with a high level of off-duty activity (74% of police officers). The differences between the dynamics of crime are shown in table 7. In those regions where police officers’ off-duty employment is low, the dynamic of crime is much less.

Business activity has become a routine to the majority of police officers, who believe that a ban on off-duty employment is unfair. At the same time, paradoxically, the abolition of the ban, according to most respondents, will not lead to a change in police attitudes toward their work.

Police officers’ attitude to this problem is reflected in the next survey: “Is it fair that the government prohibits police officers off-duty employment?” Forty-four percent responded that the state ban is valid and should be enforced; 56% replied that it is unfair. Such attitude to the government’s ban is due to the large scale of police officers’ participation in off-duty activity, which is prohibited by law.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 6. Manner of police treatment of population depending on volume of work during the shift, percent. (Police Survey)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rude treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 7. Differences in the dynamic of crime in regions with different levels of police involvement in off-duty activities (percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO low off-duty employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO high off-duty employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, the question remains: Would it make any difference if the ban were terminated? If police officers were allowed to have off-duty employment, would that change the police officers’ attitude to work? Table 8 shows how police officers responded about the effect of a possible ban on off-duty employment.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Police Reforms sought to curb corruption at all levels of the Russian civil service and among uniformed law enforcement personnel. Many thought that renaming *militsiya* as *politsiya* would have a transformational effect, within the organization as well as how others would perceive it. Ultimately, the rebranding effort failed; the only concrete changes were the organization’s name and its personnel’s uniforms. In fact, the Reforms seem to have contributed to even worse corruption and abuse of power, as well as an expansion of the Ministry of the Interior’s ties with corrupt networks. The Law on Police was the centerpiece of efforts to improve Russian law enforcement work as well as increase the MVD’s legitimacy and effectiveness. Some specialists believed that the Law on Police was destined to fail, since its promoters lacked a clear vision for how to achieve reform, and the absence of a significant pro-reform constituency within the MVD.

Law enforcement, including the State Traffic Safety Inspectorate and Customs, is among the most corrupt areas of governmental activity in Russia, followed by healthcare, education, communal services, and social security services.

The reforms envisioned downsizing of the *militsiya* cadres by 30% and firing those officers with proven connections to organized crime and those who were involved in off-duty activity. Police officers ignore the government’s ban on off-duty employment. Moreover, they believe that its elimination will change the police officers’ performance toward their primary responsibility. This suggests that, in reality, the police officers are not too concerned about the government’s restrictions on off-duty employment. So, this is a degree of actual autonomy of law enforcement from the government in the Russian Federation. Paradoxically, law enforcement agencies, intended to guarantee the fair execution of the law, violate it on a daily basis. Moreover, these violations have a massive and habitual character, which leads to corruption at all levels of law enforcement.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Authors would like to express our special thanks of gratitude to Dr. D. Stageman (John Jay College of Criminal Justice), Dr. C. Lieberman (University of New Heaven) for continuing support and the Office for the Advancements of Research at John Jay College of Criminal Justice.
Justice, City University of New York for funding in conducting research and interviews in Russia and this project becoming a reality.

REFERENCES


