

New Law Enforcement Academic Research Group in Hungary¹

We Hungarians mention repeatedly with proud that Hungarian language is rich because we can express things, phenomenons, ideas with different words. That is why a researcher has difficulties when he or she tries to translate the most important expressions. The core of the mistranslation is that Hungarians have two similar expression for 'law enforcement', and the question related to that problem is still under debate: which one is the proper expression and which one should be used in regulations and literature?

It is still under professional debate which branch of law should regulate law enforcement. Does it belong to the civil service or does it have more relation to the criminal sciences? In my opinion as a jurisprudent of civil administration it should be considered as a part of the civil administration, but many opposite argument could be advanced. The sciences of law enforcement have significant tradition in Hungary. During the second part of the 19th century and the first part of the 20th one researches on law enforcement were conducted on European level. During this period law enforcement was without doubt part of the civil service because this acknowledged theory stated that law enforcement itself is the first operational mechanism of civil service and all other branches could be derived from it. Many aspects of the 100 years old Hungarian law enforcement statements are still relevant, and we think that those statements and the thought of our great ancestors should be revised and taken into consideration.

However the four decades of socialist leadership had its toll on the number of Hungarian law enforcement researches.

The Hungarian Constitution, drawn up according to the Soviet model, did not regulate the national armed forces for 4 decades, from 1949 till the change of regime in 1989. The national armed forces were regulated by lower level legislations.²

So the most interesting issue of the shift in the governmental system was probably the question whether we could overcome the difficulties and change the system of the dictatorial model of our law enforcement. The speciality of this system was the fact, that the basis of the organizational method were centralization, militant modality and hierarchy. There were reassuring signs and lots of opportunities for a change but the organizational model still follows the original 'state police' model. Furthermore the regulation of the police and other law enforcement agencies in the 90's were shaped by the regulations of the army.

It was a proud event when the Hungarian Academy of Sciences have finally acknowledged the science of law enforcement in 2007 and since then there has been a Subcommittee of Law Enforcement under the jurisdiction of the 9th Department, namely the Legal Science Department.

¹ Published in European Police Science and Research Bulletin, Issue 8, Summer 2013. 25-26.

² László Christián: Law Enforcement (Chapter XIV) In: Basic Law of Hungary – A First Commentary, Editors: Lóránt Csink, Balázs Schanda, András Zs. Varga, Clarus Press, Dublin 2012. 235-242

Recently there has been a significant change in the system of law enforcement higher education. At the beginning of 2012 the National University of Public Service was established that comprises the training of the officers of the military and the law enforcement services. Hopefully the Doctoral School of Law Enforcement can start operation at the Faculty of Law Enforcement which has a responsibility to support and initiate researches in the topic of law enforcement. The establishment of the Law Enforcement Academic Research Group (LEARG) can also be considered to be a significant initiative. It was founded in March, 2013.

The mission statement of the LEARG is conducting researches in the field of law enforcement, hereby raising its popularity. Each term we organize professional workshops at least three times related to the most current issues of law enforcement. Since the establishment of LEARG there have been two major programmes: the first topic was the challenges of communication related to the law enforcement services in the 19th century (Policing 2.0), at the second occasion the discussion was about the perspectives of the mobile monitoring in the law enforcement. In the near future we want to start a homepage to create a virtual place where researchers can meet and it could provide a platform for publications as well. Making contact with international organizations and similar academic organizations, taking part in international researches are among the aims of the LEARG.

Thus we welcome and appreciate advice and contact from international experts.

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