

UDC 342.9

DOI <https://doi.org/10.32782/2521-6473.2025-1.7>

**K. O. Chepkova**, Candidate of Legal Sciences,  
Doctoral student at the scientific and organizational department  
of the Military Institute  
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

## JUVENILE PREVENTION UNITS OF THE NATIONAL POLICE OF UKRAINE AS A SUBJECT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE FIELD OF CHILD PROTECTION DURING THE ARMED CONFLICT

*The juvenile prevention units of the National Police of Ukraine are one of the subjects of public administration whose powers are aimed at protecting the rights of children. This issue is always relevant, especially during an armed conflict.*

*The article analyzes the activities of the juvenile prevention units of the National Police of Ukraine both during the peaceful period and during the armed conflict. The author reviews the legal acts regulating the activities of the juvenile prevention units of the National Police. Based on the principle of legal force and the hierarchy of legal acts, the author reviews the regulatory framework governing the competence of juvenile prevention units (the Laws of Ukraine "On Bodies and Agencies and Services for Children and Special Institutions for Children", "On the National Police", resolutions and orders of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, and the Order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine "Instruction on the Organization of Work of Juvenile Prevention Units of the National Police of Ukraine").*

*The author of the article analyzes the areas of activity of representatives of juvenile prevention of the National Police units which arose during the armed conflict. In particular, the involvement of representatives of the juvenile prevention units of the National Police in the implementation of forced evacuation. The author also emphasizes the increased workload of representatives of juvenile prevention units due to the growing number of internally displaced persons, including children. The article reviews the public administration instruments used by representatives of the juvenile prevention units of the National Police. These include: individual act, plan acts, action acts, e-governance.*

**Key words:** child, juvenile prevention, armed conflict, public administration, instruments of public administration.

**К. О. Чепкова. Підрозділи ювенальної превенції Національної поліції України як суб'єкт публічної адміністрації в сфері захисту прав дитини під час збройного конфлікту**

*Підрозділи ювенальної превенції Національної поліції України є одним із суб'єктів публічного адміністрування, повноваження яких спрямовані на захист прав дітей. Це питання завжди є актуальним, особливо під час збройного конфлікту.*

*Стаття присвячена аналізу діяльності підрозділів ювенальної превенції Національної поліції України як під час мирного періоду, так і під час збройного конфлікту. Автором здійснено огляд нормативно-правових актів, які врегульовують діяльність підрозділів ювенальної превенції Національної поліції. Беручи за основу принцип юридичної сили та ієрархії нормативно-правових актів здійснено огляд нормативного врегулювання компетенції підрозділів ювенальної превенції (Закони України "Про органи і органи і служби у справах дітей та спеціальні установи для дітей", "Про Національну поліцію", постанови та розпорядження Кабінету Міністрів України, наказ Міністерства внутрішніх справ України "Інструкція з організації роботи підрозділів ювенальної превенції Національної поліції України").*

*Автором статті проаналізовані напрями діяльності представників підрозділів ювенальної превенції, які виникли під час збройного конфлікту. Зокрема, залучення представників підрозділів ювенальної превенції Національної поліції до реалізації обов'язкової евакуації в примусовий спосіб. Також акцентовано на збільшенні навантаження на представників підрозділів ювенальної превенції у зв'язку із збільшенням кількості внутрішньо переміщених осіб, в тому числі дітей.*

*У статті здійснено огляд інструментів публічного адміністрування, які застосовуються представниками підрозділів ювенальної превенції. Серед яких: індивідуальний акт, акти-плани, акти-дії, електронне врядування.*

**Ключові слова:** дитина, ювенальна превенція, збройний конфлікт, публічна адміністрація, інструменти публічного адміністрування.

**Formulation of the problem.** Ukraine, as a country that has ratified a number of international legal acts in the field of child protection, forms its state policy on the principles declared at the international level. One of the trends in most countries of the world is the formation of a separate police unit that deals exclusively with children. Ukraine is no exception. For a long time, the structure of the National Police of Ukraine has had a structure of juvenile prevention units (a three-tier system). The main areas of work of representatives of juvenile prevention units are as follows: 1) prevention of administrative and criminal offenses among children; 2) police care for underage children; 3) preventive registration of children. Since the beginning of the armed conflict on the territory of Ukraine, the tasks of juvenile prevention units have increased.

© K. O. Chepkova, 2025

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Issues related to the functioning of the juvenile prevention units of the National Police have been the subject of research by both domestic and foreign administrative scientists, in particular, such as Ischenko I.V., Kobko E.V., Musaeva S.S., Ortynskyi V., Udrenas G.I. et al.

**The article aims** to analyze the role and place of the juvenile prevention units of the National Police, as one of the subjects of public administration, in the field of child protection, and to consider the public administration instruments that these units are mandated to use during armed conflict.

**Presenting main material.** From the outset, it is important to note that the tasks of juvenile prevention do not exclude other police units. The units of district police officers, patrol police, criminal police, including cyber police, pre-trial investigation bodies, and regular units are actively involved in solving certain tasks of juvenile prevention (this follows from the provisions of a number of departmental legal acts). However, the ways of solving these tasks in the activities of each service have their own peculiarities and mechanisms of implementation. The system of juvenile prevention units within the National Police of Ukraine is the leading subject of juvenile prevention activities.

Until 2014, there was criminal police for children. In connection with reforms in the system, in 2017, juvenile prevention units were created within the National Police of Ukraine. Modern juvenile prevention units in Ukraine were created as a result of reforming the former criminal police for children. Before the reform, the primary task of these units was to counteract the involvement of children in criminal activities. This service was empowered to carry out operational and investigative activities regarding both criminal behavior of minors and criminal intentions against them.

Modern juvenile prevention units are not subjects of operational and investigative activities, they operate as part of the police preventive activity departments, so they operate in public without the right to conduct operational and investigative activities [1, p. 92].

The activities, main tasks and powers of the juvenile prevention units of the National Police are spelled out in a number of legal acts. Based on the principle of legal force and the hierarchy of legal acts, the following acts are considered:

- The Law of Ukraine “On Bodies and Services for Children and Special Institutions for Children” (social protection of children and prevention of offenses among them is entrusted within the defined competence to: authorized units of the National Police) [2].

- Law of Ukraine “On the National Police”. The National Police of Ukraine (police) is a central executive body that serves the public by ensuring the protection of human rights and freedoms, combating crime, and maintaining public safety and order [3]. The activities of the police are directed and coordinated by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine through the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in accordance with the law.

The main powers include control over compliance with the requirements of laws and other regulatory legal acts on guardianship, care of orphans and children deprived of parental care, taking measures to prevent child neglect, delinquency among children, and social patronage of children who have served a sentence of imprisonment.

- The Regulation on the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on October 28, 2015, No. 878 [4].

- The Regulation on the National Police of Ukraine, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 28.10.2015 No. 877, which also defines the competence of the National Police in relation to children – “within the competence defined by law, it monitors compliance with the requirements of laws and other regulatory legal acts on guardianship, care for orphans and children deprived of parental care, takes measures to prevent child neglect, offenses in the children's environment, as well as social patronage of children who have been sentenced to [5].

On Reforming the Internal Affairs Bodies of Ukraine, Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of October 22, 2014, No. 1118-r, which set the task of reviewing the status of the police for children in accordance with the requirements of international law in the field of juvenile justice [5].

- Instruction on the organization of the work of juvenile prevention units of the National Police of Ukraine, approved by the Order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine of 19.12.2017 No. 1044 [6].

The structure of juvenile prevention units is structured on three levels:

I – the juvenile prevention unit of the central police authority;

II – units of juvenile prevention of the main departments of the National Police in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, regions and the city of Kyiv;

III – juvenile prevention units of territorial (separate) units of the main departments of the National Police.

Juvenile prevention units are a subject of public administration because their activities are aimed at implementing laws and other bylaws by making administrative decisions and providing services within their competence. The above-mentioned units carry out organizational and administrative activities, which are more aimed at providing services to the population and implementing government decisions [8, p. 46].

During an armed conflict, the role and place of juvenile prevention units becomes even more important. This is because during an armed conflict, children are the most vulnerable and defenseless category of society.

Today, juvenile prevention officers have an extremely difficult mission: to return the stolen childhood of young Ukrainians, to help them get used to a new life and to do everything possible to make this world safe for them [8, p. 48].

The police's powers to ensure children's rights cover a wide range of tasks that require cooperation with social services and work with the child's environment, as children often model their behavior based on the experience of relationships in their families and close environment. A juvenile police officer is an official in the National Police who works directly to prevent juvenile delinquency. If representatives of other services need to communicate with a child, they turn directly to a juvenile police officer who is experienced in such work.

The main tasks of juvenile prevention units include:

- 1) preventive activities aimed at preventing children from committing criminal and administrative offenses, identifying the causes and conditions that contribute to this, taking measures within their competence to eliminate them;
- 2) maintaining preventive records of children prone to committing offenses and conducting individual prevention measures with them;
- 3) participate in establishing the whereabouts of a child in case of his/her missing or obtaining data for this purpose within the framework of criminal proceedings initiated on the fact of his/her missing;
- 4) taking measures to prevent and counteract domestic violence committed by and against children, as well as child abuse;
- 5) taking measures to prevent child neglect, including the exercise of police custody of minors;
- 6) carrying out activities related to the protection of a child's right to general secondary education.

Due to the ongoing armed conflict, an important area of activity for juvenile prevention representatives is working with children who are internally displaced. It is important to continue supervision and work with children who are internally displaced and lived in unreliable families or were marked by a tendency to misbehave. Data on such minors should be transmitted by representatives of the juvenile police of the region from which the child came. However, it is possible that in regions where active hostilities have been/are ongoing, materials and personal files of children may be destroyed.

It can be concluded that in the context of armed conflict, communication practice is of great importance through the active work of police juvenile prevention units in educational institutions and cooperation with children's public organizations. It is necessary not only to protect children from the negative influence of the environment, which, of course, is the primary task, but also to teach safety rules in the context of hostilities, because children are easily manipulated [9; 10].

It is worth noting that due to internal displacement of the population, there is an increase in the number of children in the territories for which police units of juvenile prevention are responsible, which leads to an increase in the workload of police officers. At the same time, there is no increase in the staff of juvenile prevention units.

I.V. Ishchenko in his dissertation research "Administrative and legal principles of juvenile prevention by the units of the National Police of Ukraine" conducted a statistical study on the number of children per one police officer of the juvenile prevention unit. Using Odesa region as an example, the researchers found the following. The Juvenile Prevention Service in Odesa region currently has 142 positions for approximately 459 thousand people under the age of 18, of which 58 positions are in the territorial police units of Odesa (about 157 thousand minors).

According to mathematical calculations, it turns out that currently one juvenile prevention police officer in Odesa should conditionally cover approximately 2,700 children, and 3,200 children in Odesa region. If we calculate the ratio of positions of the juvenile prevention units to the number of educational institutions (general education and preschool) in Odesa region, it turns out that there are on average 10 such institutions per inspector (senior inspector), including 5 schools and equivalent institutions. In addition, special educational institutions, vocational education institutions, and first-year students of higher education institutions, where people aged 14 to 18 study, were not taken into account. This age period of childhood requires increased attention and preventive measures [1, p. 95-96].

Another important area of activity of juvenile prevention representatives during the current armed conflict is their involvement in the evacuation of children and their legal representatives.

In 2023, the national lawmaker, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, introduced a mechanism for forced evacuation by amending the Procedure for Evacuation in the Event of a Threat or Occurrence of Emergency [11]. The purpose of such evacuation is to protect children in the area of hostilities and armed conflicts.

Regional military administrations, in agreement with the military command authorities in the respective territory and the Coordination Headquarters for Evacuation Measures and Effective Response to Mass Displacement of the Population, established by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, may decide to conduct forced evacuation of children with their parents, persons in loco parentis, or other legal representatives from a particular settlement in the area where hostilities are taking place.

Any mechanism must have executors – "hands and feet". Forced evacuation is no exception. This evacuation is carried out on the basis of orders of regional military administrations, which determine the settlements from which the evacuation will be carried out, the period of implementation and who is involved in its implementation. In particular, these are the district evacuation commission, representatives of the regional departments of civil protection, science and education, social protection, health, children's services, the Main Department of the National Police, and the Main Department of the State Emergency Service [12].

Considering that children are evacuated by force, representatives of juvenile prevention units are among the main participants in this mechanism.

The direct implementation of legal mechanisms is carried out by authorized public administration entities, which are endowed with instruments for their implementation.

Public administration instruments are a set of administrative and legal measures directly used by public administration entities to ensure (protect) the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of individuals and the public interest of the State and society as a whole [12, p. 204].

Most administrative law scholars distinguish the following main groups of public administration instruments: 1) normative acts; 2) individual acts; 3) administrative contracts; 4) plan acts; 5) action acts; 6) e-governance, etc. The list is not exhaustive and may change depending on the development of public relations.

So, which public administration instruments can be used exclusively by representatives of juvenile prevention units?

Firstly, these are individual acts, which should be understood as decisions of public administration entities to resolve specific administrative cases, which entail legal consequences for certain subjects of administrative law, and their validity is terminated after a single application (exercise of administrative duties and rights established in them).

Examples of individual acts that can be applied by representatives of juvenile prevention units are protocols on bringing to administrative responsibility children aged 16 to 18 who have committed administrative offenses, as well as parents or persons in loco parentis who do not fulfill their statutory obligations to ensure the necessary conditions for the life, education and upbringing of children [14].

Second, there are acts of action. An example of such a tool is a record and prevention file on a particular child, the formation and maintenance of which is ensured by police units of juvenile prevention.

Third, it is e-governance. In particular, after forming a registration and prevention case for a particular child, police officers must enter information on the registration for preventive registration in the relevant information subsystem, which is part of the unified information system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, of children in respect of whom the juvenile prevention police of the National Police carry out preventive work [10, p. 56].

Another example of e-governance is the facilitation of keeping records of school-age children within the competence of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of September 13, 2017, No. 684 "On Approval of the Procedure for Keeping Records of School-age Children and Students" [15].

The fourth is plans. In particular, representatives of juvenile prevention units develop plans for preventive work with all children and those at risk of being involved in illegal activities. During an armed conflict, the issue of when a party to the conflict begins to recruit children through social media to commit illegal acts for a reward is also relevant. Therefore, preventive work is of great importance and should be carried out systematically.

**Conclusions.** It can be stated that the juvenile prevention units of the National Police of Ukraine play an important role in protecting the rights of children both during peacetime and during armed conflict. The main purpose of the juvenile prevention units of the National Police of Ukraine is to prevent children from committing illegal acts and to protect children in case of possible illegal acts against them.

Since the beginning of the armed conflict, the workload of juvenile prevention units has increased due to migration within the country, mandatory evacuation measures, including forced evacuation, etc.

According to the results of the study, it can be stated that the juvenile prevention units of the National Police use such public administration instruments as: individual act, plan acts, action acts, e-governance.

### Bibliography:

1. Іщенко І.В. Адміністративно-правові засади здійснення підрозділами Національної поліції України ювенальної превенції : дис... канд.юрид. наук : 12.00.07. Харків, 2019. 305 с.
2. Про органи і служби у справах дітей та спеціальні установи для дітей : Закон України від 24.05.1995 № 20/95-ВР. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/20/95-%D0%B2%D1%80#Text>.
3. Про Національну поліцію : Закон України від 02.07.2015 № 580-VIII. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/580-19#Text>.
4. Положення про Міністерство внутрішніх справ України : постанова Кабінету Міністрів України від 28 жовтня 2015 р. № 878. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/878-2015-%D0%BF#Text>.
5. Положення про Національну поліцію : постанова Кабінету Міністрів України від 28 жовтня 2015 р. № 877. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/877-2015-%D0%BF#n9>.
6. Питання реформування органів внутрішніх справ України : розпорядження Кабінету Міністрів України від 22 жовтня 2014 р. № 1118-р. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1118-2014-%D1%80#Text>.
7. Інструкція з організації роботи підрозділів ювенальної превенції Національної поліції України, затверджена наказом Міністерства внутрішніх справ України від 19.12.2017 № 1044. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0686-18#Text>.
8. Кобко С. Підрозділи ювенальної превенції Національної поліції України в системі органів публічного адміністрування в умовах воєнного стану. *Юридичний вісник*. 2023. № 3. С. 47-52.



9. Ортинський В. Ювенальна превенція в Україні: функціональні особливості в період воєнного стану. *Вісник Національного університету "Львівська політехніка". Серія: "Юридичні науки"*. 2024. № 3 (43). С. 1-8.

10. Мусаєва С.С., Удренас Г.І. Профілактика та стан діяльності підрозділів ювенальної превенції Національної поліції України щодо запобігання вчиненню адміністративних правопорушень неповнолітніми особами. *Актуальні проблеми держави і права*. 2024. № 53-58.

11. Порядок проведення евакуації у разі загрози виникнення або виникнення надзвичайних ситуацій : постанова Кабінету Міністрів України від 30 жовтня 2013 р. № 841. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/841-2013-%D0%BF#Text>.

12. Про проведення обов'язкової евакуації населення з окремих населених пунктів Куп'янського району Харківської області в умовах воєнного стану : наказ Харківської обласної військової адміністрації від 14.03.2024 № 25 В. URL: <https://surl.li/jlhfne>

13. Адміністративне право України. Повний курс : підручник / В. Галунько, П. Діхтієвський, О. Кузьменко та ін. ; за ред. В. Галунька, О. Правоторової. Видання четверте. Херсон : ОЛДІ-ПЛЮС, 2021. 656 с.

14. Кодекс України про адміністративні правопорушення : Закон УРСР № 8074-10 від 07.12.1984. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/80731-10#n4139>.

15. Порядок ведення обліку дітей шкільного віку та учнів : постанова Кабінету Міністрів України від 13 вересня 2017 року № 684. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/684-2017-%D0%BF#Text>.