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Doctrinal approach to the tasks within special investigation activity

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Abstract

The Special Investigation Activity (SIA) involves concrete missions through which collected information is transformed into operational actions and practical results, contributing to the prevention, detection, and counteraction of crimes, as well as to the protection of public security and order.

SIA tasks are seen both as stages in achieving the general objective and as autonomous, interconnected actions with specific legal significance. They may serve to support criminal proceedings or directly protect individuals. Law No. 59/2012 regulates these tasks, highlighting a distinction between crime prevention and the investigation of committed or attempted offenses. Recent legal amendments have shifted the focus from investigating crimes to the broader prevention of criminality, limiting the use of special measures strictly within the boundaries of criminal proceedings. A key distinction is made between the terms "crime" and "criminality," emphasizing that SIA should remain a tool reserved for serious cases. The term "prevention of criminality" is used in both national legislation and the case law of the ECtHR, generally understood as the prevention of criminal offenses.

Keywords: special investigative activity, information, the tasks of special investigative activity, special investigative measures, investigative officer.

1. Introduction

Special investigative activity is a fundamental component of the national public security protection mechanism, comprising measures, methods, and procedures to prevent, detect, and combat criminal phenomena. In the context of evolving criminality and the diversification of forms of antisocial behavior, the tasks provided by Law no. 59/2012 acquire strategic importance, as they reflect both the necessity of obtaining relevant information in an operational manner and the state's obligation to intervene effectively, proportionally, and lawfully. Understanding the content of these tasks requires analyzing

them from a legal, criminological, and operational perspective, taking into account the interdependence between special investigative activity and criminal proceedings, as well as the distinct role that each category of tasks plays in the overall architecture of public security. Legislative amendments in recent years have led to a more rigorous delineation of operational competencies from procedural-criminal activities, a factor that influences both the application of special investigative measures and their practical outcomes. Therefore, the analysis of the tasks of special investigative activity becomes essential for understanding how they contribute to uncovering latent criminality, preventing offenses, and identifying individuals who pose a threat to the rule of law.

2. Methods and materials applied

For the preparation of the study, doctrinal sources, normative acts, activity reports, and scientific articles related to special investigation activity were consulted. The analysis of the phenomenon was supported by the application of scientific methods specific to legal theory, such as the logical method, comparative analysis, systemic approach, and statistical methods. Additionally, the works of local researchers, empirical data, and the opinions of professionals from specialized units involved in special investigation activities were utilized.

3. Results and discussion

The tasks of special investigative activity essentially represent concrete missions aimed at carrying out operational actions, through which the obtained information is converted into practical measures and tangible results. These tasks reflect not only the informational and documentary dimension of the activity but also its active role in preventing, identifying, and countering criminal phenomena, as well as in protecting public security and order.

Beyond the sense of a mission, tasks can also be interpreted as successive stages in the chain of actions oriented toward achieving the pursued goal (Shumilov, 2008, p.14). Thus, each task has a distinct function within the sequence of operations, contributing to the achievement of the overall objective. If one or more tasks are not completed, it becomes evident that the activity's goal cannot be fully achieved.

Specialized literature (Glavan, 2022, p.78-100) has formulated various interpretations regarding the content of each task, including attempts to systematize them according to the sequence of actions, operational importance, or degree of autonomy. However, the tasks of special investigative activity remain both interdependent and autonomous: each has its own content, is determined by the specific method of execution, and involves certain legal relevance. Moreover, semantic analysis of these tasks requires considering both the internal interconnections of operational activity and the criminal procedure, as some tasks directly support procedural activities while others independently influence the protection of persons or specific legal interests.

Each subject of special investigative activity under Article 6 of Law No. 59/2012 fulfills the tasks established in Article 2 within the scope of the authority granted by special laws of the Republic of Moldova. Analyzing the tasks in the article shows their organization into distinct groups, a division generated by essential differences between the objectives of special investigative activity. Thus, the first group of tasks (letter a) has a predominantly general and proactive character, aiming to investigate criminal phenomena as a whole, while

the second group (letter c) is limited to reactive and targeted interventions applicable in specific situations.

In the previous version of the law, the scope of the first group of tasks was significantly broader: in addition to detection and prevention activities, it included crime suppression, identification of persons involved in organizing and committing crimes, as well as discovery and investigation of offenses. Following the objective of legally delimiting special investigative activity based on whether it is conducted within or outside the criminal process, this group of tasks was restricted to "detection and prevention of criminality," with tasks regarding identification, suppression, and investigation of crimes transferred to the regulation under the Criminal Procedure Code (Amendments to the draft law, 2023). This also involved a terminological adjustment: the term "crime" was replaced with "criminality," so the phrase "detection and prevention of crimes" became "detection and prevention of criminality." This change naturally raises the issue of semantic and legal differentiation between the two notions.

Before addressing this distinction, it should be noted that Law No. 59/2012, in its current form, has removed all provisions relating to crime investigation. Grounds that allowed the use of special investigative measures to verify information regarding crimes in preparation or attempt stages, as well as uncertain circumstances regarding the initiation of criminal prosecution (according to the previous version of Article 19, paragraph 1), have been repealed. Consequently, the law in force no longer permits the application of special investigative measures to control criminal acts in the pre-offense stages or, much less, to investigate crimes already committed.

Within the same regulatory context, the investigative officer is obliged to notify the criminal prosecution authority when obtained information indicates that a crime is being prepared, committed, or has been committed. In such cases, the procedure is carried out according to the Criminal Procedure Code, as provided in Article 19, paragraph 2; Article 20, paragraph 11; and Article 24, paragraph 1 of Law No. 59/2012. In other words, intervention occurs exclusively within the limits of the criminal process, specifically in the prosecution phase, considering that Article 134 of the CPC establishes that special investigative measures are carried out only within the criminal prosecution, except for two activities allowed prior to its initiation – "collection of information" and "identification of the subscriber or user of an electronic communications network."

Considering that the criminal process arises at the moment of notification or self-notification of the competent authority regarding the preparation or commission of a crime (Article 1, paragraph 1, CPC), and prosecution begins when there is reasonable suspicion that a crime has been committed (Article 274, paragraph 1, CPC), as well as the fact that the application of special investigative measures is limited to the stage of verifying information regarding the preparation or commission of crimes, it follows that the task of crime suppression may become difficult to achieve in practice.

The concept of criminality, a fundamental notion in criminology (Gladchi, 2001, p.245), designates the set of human behaviors incriminated and sanctioned by criminal law (Ciobanu, 2007, p.19). Although there are doctrinal differences in emphasis – some authors consider criminality synonymous exclusively with the sphere of crimes, while others include other forms of law violations (Larii, 2020, p.76) – it is essential that the term "crime" is inevitably part of the semantic structure of "criminality" (Gladchi, 2019, p.17).

Therefore, in the criminological sense, "detection and prevention of criminality" primarily involves identifying and preventing crimes, and, in a broader sense, includes other

legal offenses, such as misdemeanors, without departing from the central objective of preventing criminal phenomena.

From the perspective of special investigative activity, including other categories of law violations in the scope of "detection and prevention of criminality" is, if not inadmissible, at least debatable. Special investigative activity is an instrument aimed at combating serious crime, carried out using special resources, means, and methods, justified only when less intrusive interventions cannot yield effective results. Applying such mechanisms to acts with a low degree of social danger cannot be justified either in terms of operational costs or the proportionality of limiting fundamental rights. It is relevant that special investigative measures can only be authorized when necessary and proportionate to the interference with human rights.

Although the phrase "crime prevention" is not new in the context of Law No. 59/2012, being present both in the definition of special investigative activity (Article 1) and in the previous version of Article 24 – which established the purpose of using the results of these measures – its consistent interpretation was crime prevention. Moreover, in the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights, the term is used in the same sense. In Ludi v. Switzerland, the ECtHR examined communication interceptions in the context of crime prevention, emphasizing that such interventions can be legitimate even in the pre-investigation phase if there are reasonable grounds to believe that a crime is imminent (Ludi v. Switzerland, 1992).

Detection of criminality should be understood as the process of identifying latent crimes – those criminal acts not known to authorities through official sources (Didâc et al., 2009, p.173). Criminological studies indicate that the volume of latent, or "black," criminality exceeds several times the number of registered crimes. The persistence of this obscure zone favors the consolidation of criminal groups, undermines the principle of the inevitability of punishment, and generates conditions for the commission of more serious offenses (Ursu et al., 2018, p.188-193).

In theory and practice of specialized structures responsible for special investigative activity, detection of criminality is conceptualized as a specific organizational and tactical form, carried out through investigative and operational searches aimed at proactively collecting primary information about criminal activity indicators and involved persons. This activity is performed both on the initiative of investigative officers and under their professional obligation to contribute to achieving the general objectives of special investigative activity.

A significant proportion of criminal acts remain in the latent crime zone, as victims, either due to lack of trust in state authorities or for other personal or circumstantial reasons, avoid seeking help from competent bodies. Another segment of latent crime consists of offenses that do not target an individualized victim capable of notifying authorities but affect public, social, or state interests. This includes, for example, illegal trafficking of drugs, weapons, explosives, and certain systemic economic offenses (Zelenskaya, 2008, p.20-27).

The level of latency is also amplified by offenders' conduct, who deliberately seek to hide or destroy evidence of committed acts – either by manipulating or eliminating the corpus delicti, falsely reporting disappearances, intimidating or coercing victims, or obtaining illicit benefits to conceal the crime.

In this context, crime prevention involves authorized bodies carrying out a set of measures aimed at preventing crimes, eliminating criminogenic causes and conditions, identifying persons and situations of operational relevance, and influencing the preventive

behavior of individuals or groups with criminal potential (Roman et al., 2017, p.192-201). The main purpose of these measures is to deter criminal intent.

The importance of crime prevention lies in multiple aspects: strengthening the sense of security and public trust in authorities responsible for protecting legal norms; optimizing the use of logistical resources necessary for other tasks, such as crime discovery and investigation; reducing repressive interventions and costs associated with criminal procedures; and lowering financial expenses related to prosecution, trial, punishment execution, and operation of institutions involved in combating crime.

Crime prevention is analyzed in doctrine by its influence on causes, conditions, and motivations that may generate criminal behavior, as well as on the conduct of certain individuals or groups, with the goal of preventing antisocial acts. This task essentially aims to prevent as many potential crimes as possible.

Specialized literature distinguishes two main forms of prevention: general prevention and individual prevention. General preventive measures address a wide group of people and may include activities such as discussions and lectures on observing rules that ensure the protection of life, health, and property (e.g., avoiding high-crime areas, refraining from disclosing family financial information or security system details, including through minors). Also within general prevention is the distribution of informational materials regarding appropriate behavior in public spaces, including warnings about increased scams, home burglaries, or pickpocketing in public transport.

General preventive measures encompass all actions undertaken by law enforcement authorities to reduce criminogenic vulnerabilities in public spaces. These actions may include sending recommendations and documents to local public administration authorities indicating the need to modernize street lighting, ensure proper visibility in residential areas, or equip parking lots and other high-traffic locations with video surveillance and access control systems.

In the context of preventive activities, investigative officers are required to use operational recognition skills regarding material objects whose illicit circulation constitutes a crime. This category includes weapons, ammunition, explosive devices, pyrotechnic substances, narcotics, psychotropic substances and their precursors, as well as toxic, radioactive, chemical substances, or other objects of operational relevance.

Identifying these objects involves specialists with advanced competencies in relevant scientific fields – forensic experts, chemists, physicists, toxicologists, bacteriologists, and other professionals with specific technical training. At the same time, preventive activity requires using modern technical means to detect hidden objects: metal detectors, gas analyzers, portable kits for rapid analysis of narcotics or explosives, thermal imagers, endoscopic systems, etc.

For identifying explosive devices, specialized portable detectors capable of detecting explosive vapors in the air or residual particles on surfaces (Explosive Trace Detectors – ETD) are used. These devices generally operate based on ion mobility spectrometry (IMS) or mass spectrometry and are produced by companies such as Rapiscan or Morpho.

In recent years, the use of odorless plastic explosives in improvised explosive devices has become increasingly common. Explosives such as C-4 or Semtex are favored by criminals due to chemical stability, difficulty of detection by traditional methods, and the inability of specially trained dogs to detect their vapors. Consequently, effective detection of these explosives requires, in addition to marking procedures, advanced technical means

that allow identifying other components of the device: batteries powering circuits, detonators, cables and electrical conductors, as well as impact elements (projectiles or fragments intended to amplify the effects of the explosion).

These auxiliary elements are generally easier to detect using specialized equipment, such as metal detectors (for metallic components), X-ray devices (which allow visualization of the internal structure of objects), or advanced scanners using spectrometry techniques to analyze chemical composition (Detection solutions for explosives, narcotics, and radiation sources, 2019).

In the process of checking the contents of luggage—whether bags, suitcases, or parcels—it is recommended to use equipment based on X-ray technology and fluoroscopic devices. Correspondence scanners, controlled by microprocessors, have proven to be particularly effective due to their ability to automatically detect specific metallic components of "postal" explosive devices, as well as various concealed contraband items in mail shipments. These technologies significantly contribute to reducing operational risks and increasing security levels within logistics flows.

Preventive individual impact targets those persons for whom there is a high probability that, without appropriate intervention, they may commit illegal acts. The purpose of this form of prevention is to determine these individuals to abandon their criminal intentions through measures adapted to their behavior and criminal history.

In this context, a crucial role is played by the identification and preventive influence of previously convicted persons, especially recidivists; persons who adopt an antisocial lifestyle; as well as those who manifest evident hostility toward legal norms and state authorities. Individualized interventions aim to reduce the risk of recidivism, correct deviant behaviors, and consolidate a safe social climate.

The integration of these measures—both general and targeted at individuals with criminal risk—forms a distinct organizational and tactical structure of special investigative activity, called special investigative prophylaxis. This represents an essential direction of action in crime prevention, ensuring a balance between technical means, proactive interventions, and individualized influences exercised on persons predisposed to criminal behavior.

Another fundamental task provided in Article 2 of Law No. 59/2012 concerns the identification of different categories of persons (Glavan, 2009, p.149), including:

- persons missing without a trace;
- persons evading criminal prosecution or trial;
- persons avoiding the execution of a sentence or having escaped from detention facilities.

The fulfillment of this task requires the combined application of organizational measures, criminal procedural measures, and special investigative measures aimed at ensuring the rapid location of sought persons, identifying circumstances that facilitate illegal life or prolonged sheltering of these individuals. The information gathered during search activities is systematized in the search file (Roman, 2019, p.130).

The search for persons missing without a trace (Cicala, 2023, p.87-94) concerns situations in which a person abruptly ceases contact with family or acquaintances without obvious reasons, and their whereabouts remain unknown. A person is considered missing without a trace if they leave in an unknown direction without informing relatives, get lost, or unjustifiably interrupt contact with their home, workplace, or other destinations under unclear circumstances. In such cases, relatives or interested persons file an official report

with the territorial police authority. A person who leaves the family for personal reasons but whose location is known does not fall into this category (Botnari, 2022, p.105).

Persons missing without a trace should not be confused with persons declared missing without notice. According to the Civil Code, a person can be declared missing without notice only if their absence from home exceeds one year from the last information about their location, and the declaration is made by the court at the request of the interested party (art. 165 CC). Therefore, the initial qualification is "missing without a trace," and only after the legal one-year period, in the absence of any new information, can the court recognize the status of "missing without notice" (Civil Code of RM).

It is relevant to mention that in some departmental regulations, as well as in the works of certain specialists in special investigative activity, the two terms—"missing without a trace" and "missing without notice"—are used interchangeably, although legally they designate distinct situations.

This category also includes minors who run away from home or from boarding institutions, persons escaping from temporary placement centers, and patients with mental disorders who leave the home or medical units without authorization.

The search task also includes, besides these categories, establishing the identity of unidentified corpses, as well as identifying persons who, due to age or health condition, cannot provide information about their own identity (art. 19 para. (1) point 2 lit. b) of Law No. 59/2012).

According to statistical data, approximately 27 disappearances without a trace are reported annually, most of whom are later found. On average, three unidentified corpses are recorded per year, while six corpses are identified, including from previous cases (Activity Report of the General Prosecutor's Office RM, 2015-2024).

Disappearances without a trace involve major risks, as persons disappear under suspicious circumstances without notifying relatives. The effectiveness of intervention depends on the promptness and quality of investigative measures, based on information provided by citizens. Searches must be initiated immediately after the report, without waiting for the legal three-day term, as delays may have serious consequences, as demonstrated in the Strășeni case of 2016, when a minor was found deceased (Three police officers from Strășeni, 2016).

In contrast, prompt intervention can save lives. For example, on October 9, 2024, the police in Anenii Noi responded quickly to the disappearance of a 10-year-old child, mobilizing authorities, family, and volunteers. The boy was found on the same day, safe, approximately 7 km from home. This case illustrates the importance of a rapid and coordinated response in missing person investigations (Strășeni girl case, 2016).

The search for missing persons is a complex process involving tactical, methodological, and scientific-technical tasks, aimed at determining the location of the individual or identifying the corpse in the event of death. The main sources of information include traces of vital or criminal activity, as well as the person or corpse, and their collection is carried out using traditional criminalistics methods and modern techniques available to police authorities.

The initial stage relies on statements from relatives, acquaintances, and colleagues, which allow the creation of a psychological profile of the missing person, including habits, behavior, frequented locations, social relationships, health condition, risk predispositions, or intentions to leave (Алешкина, 2006, p.92).

The search proceeds simultaneously with verification of hypotheses regarding homicide or abduction and involves inspecting the residence, surrounding areas, and other suspicious locations, collecting material evidence, and conducting expert examinations. In the case of corpses, special technical means (loops, hooks, trawls, endoscopes), protective equipment, and collaboration with the medical examiner are used to establish the cause and time of death.

Practical analysis shows a correlation between missing persons and unidentified corpses, many of the missing being victims of crimes, accidents, or suicide. Rapid and well-coordinated procedures increase the chances of finding and correctly identifying individuals, reducing risks and tragic outcomes of disappearances (Алешкина, 2006, p.93).

For examination and visual inspection of dark rooms with restricted access or hard-to-reach areas (cavities), flexible technical endoscopes are used. They have integrated lighting powered by the network or batteries and can be equipped with photo or video systems for recording and observing images. A major advantage of these devices is their resistance in aggressive environments.

In the case of discovering an unknown corpse, specific tasks are required, necessitating appropriate methods: determining the time and cause of death, identifying the manner of death (in criminal cases), detecting and collecting traces of the perpetrator, and identifying the body. External examination of the corpse is conducted with the participation of a medical examiner. The main challenge remains determining the exact time of death (Алешкина, 2006, p.95).

Persons evading criminal prosecution or trial are those for whom an order has been issued assigning them the status of suspect (art. 63 CPP), accused, or defendant (art. 65 CPP), whose whereabouts are unknown, and who have been ordered to be sought (art. 288, 321 CPP).

The status of suspect is established through: the retention report, the order or ruling applying a non-custodial preventive measure, and the order recognizing the person as a suspect. The accused is recognized through the indictment order and loses this status once criminal prosecution ceases or they are removed from investigation (art. 65 para. 4 CPP). The defendant is the person against whom the case has been sent to trial (art. 65 para. 2 CPP).

Persons avoiding execution of a sentence are those convicted who do not present themselves for execution of a final ruling (art. 65 para. 3 CPP). Escape from detention facilities is defined as the unauthorized exit of a detainee, and the detainee is one under institutional deprivation of liberty according to a final or enforceable court decision (Government Decision No. 583, 2006).

Official statistics show that between 2015 and 2024, the number of accused, defendants, and convicts being sought doubled, from 4,576 to 8,521. On average, approximately 4,639 persons are announced as wanted annually, and about 4,238 are found, resulting in a difference of around 400 persons (Activity Report of the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Moldova, 2015-2024).

Specialized studies identify the main causes of escapes (Chetraru, 2012, p.223-232):

Informal communication norms among detainees and the influence of the criminal subculture;

Insufficient professional training of prison staff and lack of experience;

Superficial educational work, not adapted to the criminological characteristics of detainees prone to escape;

Poor condition of technical-engineering security equipment.

A concrete case occurred on the evening of May 4, 2021, when three detainees escaped from Penitentiary No. 10-Goian by damaging window bars and scaling guard buildings, avoiding surveillance systems. The incident highlighted vulnerabilities in prison security, such as deficiencies in guarding and insufficient equipment, which facilitated the escape (Three detainees escaped from Penitentiary No.10-Goian, 2001).

The collection of information regarding possible acts or events that could endanger public order or safety in detention facilities is a task introduced by the 2023 legislative amendments to Law No. 59/2012. Its purpose is to protect public order and safety in prisons against potential risks. The term "to endanger" indicates future threats, giving the activity a proactive, prevention-focused character.

Although the task primarily involves information gathering, responsible authorities must also take preventive measures to eliminate conditions favoring these risks, such as persuading detainees, disinformation, or relocating the detainees.

Public order is doctrinally defined as a system of stable social relations ensuring peaceful coexistence, protection of persons and property, and the normal functioning of public institutions. In the 2017-2020 national strategy, public order is described as the efficient functioning of the rule of law, respect for citizens' rights, and restoration of disrupted balances. It is also regulated in the Criminal and Contraventional Codes, where offenses affecting public order include hooliganism, vandalism, and begging, while other offenses such as terrorism or hostage-taking affect public security.

Although public order and security are interdependent, they differ in the severity of threats. Public order refers to maintaining a stable social climate and compliance with norms, while public security protects the community from major dangers. Thus, any threat to public security also affects public order, but not all acts disturbing public order constitute a direct threat to security (Brânză, 2005, p.556).

Comparative doctrine emphasizes that almost any crime can be considered, to some extent, a violation of public order, which justifies including both public order and security as objects of protection for special investigative activity. Minor offenses, with a lower degree of social danger, are normally not the subject of this activity.

Safety in detention facilities involves creating a secure and stable environment in which staff and detainees are protected from violence, abuse, threats, or other dangers. Risk prevention and taking appropriate measures to protect them are essential, and information collection represents an effective tool for maintaining a safe environment in detention institutions (Execution Code of the Republic of Moldova, 2004).

According to Law No. 105/2008, "detention facility" refers to spaces where persons are held in custody, pre-trial arrest, or sentenced to imprisonment, including life imprisonment. In the Execution Code, art. 2231, the notion of "prison security" is defined as the set of activities carried out by the administration to limit the movement of convicts, prevent avoidance of punishment, and protect the life, integrity, and health of detainees, staff, and other persons in the institution. This definition can be extended to all detention facilities, emphasizing the importance of proper prison security management.

Ensuring the protection of witnesses and other participants in criminal proceedings represents a relatively new task for special investigative activity, introduced by the 2023 legislative reform of Law No. 59/2012. In previous regulations, Law No. 45/1994 provided for the obligation of operational bodies to contribute to the protection of collaborators, their relatives, and participants in criminal proceedings against attacks and other unlawful actions.

This task was not initially included in Law No. 59/2012 and was reintroduced only following the recent reform.

The need for protection derives from both internal developments and international standards regarding the fight against serious crime and the protection of participants in criminal proceedings. The United Nations Conventions against Transnational Organized Crime (2000) and Corruption (2003) provide for the protection of witnesses, experts, victims, and informants. Directive 2012/29/EU establishes minimum standards for victims' rights and support, including measures relevant for witnesses and other participants, such as legal assistance, psychological support, and protection against intimidation and retaliation (Glavan, 2013, p.109-213).

The 2023 reform introduced in art. 133 para. (3) of the Criminal Procedure Code the possibility of conducting special investigative measures for witnesses, victims, civil parties, or their relatives when there is an imminent danger to life, health, or freedom, to prevent crimes or avoid loss or distortion of evidence. These measures are carried out only with the request or written consent of the persons concerned and cease immediately when the grounds for ordering them disappear.

According to art. 90 CPP, a witness is a person summoned by judicial authorities who possesses relevant information for the case. The concept of "other participants in criminal proceedings" extends to victims, injured parties, civil parties, relatives, experts, specialists, interpreters, and translators. These participants may be exposed to risks in complex cases, justifying the application of protective measures to prevent intimidation and ensure the proper conduct of criminal proceedings.

Ensuring the protection of subjects of special investigative activity represents the final task introduced in art. 2 of Law No. 59/2012 and emphasizes the importance of the security of persons involved in these activities, considering the risks they may be exposed to. This involves a coordinated set of measures aimed at preventing criminal infiltration into authorities and specialized units, protecting confidential information and state data, and identifying abuses, corruption, and betrayal of service interests by employees.

Protection extends to officers, confidential collaborators, informants, experts, specialists, and other persons involved in special investigative activities, including their family members and those providing confidential support, in situations of real threat to life, health, or property. These subjects may be exposed to physical risks, intimidation, or reprisals from criminals or criminal organizations, making effective preventive measures necessary (Federal Law "On Operational-Search Activity," 2014).

Protection of these persons is essential not only for their personal security but also for the efficiency of investigations. The absence of adequate measures could compromise collaboration and investigative results. At the same time, ensuring protection respects human rights principles and contributes to the prevention of abuses, in accordance with international standards on investigating crimes, particularly in the field of organized crime and corruption.

Thus, the inclusion of this task in Law No. 59/2012 harmonizes national legislation with international practices, strengthening the rule of law and criminal justice. Protection of subjects of special investigative activity ensures a safe environment for collaboration and contributes to an efficient and accountable criminal system.

4. Conclusion. The analysis of special investigative activity highlights the complexity and rigor of the processes involved in crime prevention and combat. Implementation of the tasks provided by law requires not only strict compliance with the legal framework but also

continuous adaptation to new challenges arising from the evolution of crime. The efficiency of this activity depends on inter-institutional collaboration, professional competence of personnel, and proper use of investigative techniques and methods. At the same time, protection of involved subjects, information security, and respect for citizens' fundamental rights are essential elements for maintaining the legitimacy and credibility of the investigative process. In conclusion, special investigative activity should not be viewed merely as a set of technical procedures but as an integrated mechanism that balances operational efficiency with legal and ethical principles, thus contributing to public safety and preventing the negative effects of crime on society.

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