

## RUSSIAN EXPERIENCE IN TRANSFORMING TEACHING METHODS IN LEGAL DISCIPLINES IN COURSE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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**Abstract** The purpose of the present research is to analyze specific features of educational process in legal sphere in course of the COVID-19 pandemic. The research objectives comprise the following issues: firstly, depiction of the initial state of teaching in legal sphere at the beginning of the pandemic; secondly, transformation process of teaching methods taking into account distinguishing features of the Russian legislation in the field of education; thirdly, correlation of administrative restriction practices with academic freedoms on the example of the Russian Federation. One of the results of this study is the conclusion that it is necessary to prioritize the study of the fundamental theory of law in comparison with commenting on the current legislation in order to be able to substantiate the regulation of non-standard situations in the life of society. The principal outcome of the present survey is a consideration that the Russian legislation in the sphere of education that requires implementation of such educational procedures components as training, education, scientific activity and upbringing cannot be completely implemented under conditions of the imposed administrative restrictions in course of the pandemic.

**Keywords**  
higher  
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## 1 Introduction

The COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, as will be the case with the inevitable future pandemics, is currently challenging, and will continue to pose obstacles to obtaining empirical data concerning the transformation of the higher legal education system worldwide. The majority of states follow either the “restrictions strategy” or the “mitigation of the pandemic consequences” strategy (Baral et al., 2021). Within this context, Russia has demonstrated efficiency in its healthcare system and its medical sciences. Both the teaching staff and students of Russian higher educational institutions have overcome the peak of the pandemic with minimal losses while simultaneously gaining substantial experience in reformatting both educational and scientific activities in the sphere of jurisprudence (Potapenko & Luparev, 2020). The general trend of publications on the subject of the claimed research in the world as a whole, and in Russia in particular, is characterized by the fact that the authors initially were not ready to analyze the almost complete restructuring of the work of higher educational institutions in the teaching of law. Until 2020, there was a paucity of scientific research concerning teaching under pandemic conditions. Indeed, the process of understanding sanitary and epidemiological restrictions, and their impact upon the education system, is ongoing.

In Russia, historically, higher legal education has been rooted in several types of educational organizations including the following: classical universities (Ageeva et al., 2020), military and law enforcement higher educational institutions, specialized legal higher educational institutions, as well as technical (Shchukina, Egorenkova & Bondareva, 2020) and other educational organizations which are not professionally oriented toward the law.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were studies being performed in Russia focusing on the issues of legal education in the specific context of the digital economy (Epifanova et. al., 2020). The pandemic has not only intensified the debate concerning the introduction of distance forms of legal education within the system of interactive and innovative means and methods of teaching legal disciplines (Nikonova, 2020), but has also accelerated the digitalization of legal education (Osina, Tolstopyatenko & Malinovsky, 2021). Any analysis of methodologies that are appropriate in the sphere of distance education must be considered not only in

the context of the current pandemic but also in normal times. It appears that behavioral crises emerged among both university professors and students concerning the theory and methodology of teaching legal disciplines in higher educational organizations. These crises may be explained by the gaps in the theory of administrative law, particularly regarding medical emergency situations, but also due to research gaps which theoretically substantiate the introduction of various administrative restrictive steps taken by state authorities both within the country and in relation to external migration.

The authors also will assess the inclusive legal education within the context of the current pandemic. An array of legal barriers hindered introduction of a full-fledged, inclusive legal educational system in Russia even under normal conditions. (Krasnova & Khristoforova, 2020). On the one hand, the introduction of distant educational technologies seems to have facilitated access to educational resources for people with disabilities, but, on the other hand, they significantly restricted their potential to socialize.

The authors' point of view is that the delicate equilibrium between distance and face-to-face teaching methods is the new challenge facing higher legal education. While facilitating an extensive range of possible applications of distance learning for full-time students, educators should minimize distance learning to the extent possible. Distance learning should be restricted only for those that are unable to attend live sessions, for example, those studying in absentia or those whose disabilities might make it very difficult, if not impossible, to attend the classroom. Despite advances in technologies that admittedly make distance learning feasible, these methods, we argue, are simply no substitute for the study of law live. Distance learning deprives students of the unique benefits of being infused with what we might term the "transfer of spirit of the law" from a university professor to a student, along with all the distinguishing features of the psychological interaction between them. This interactional model of education is particularly important in the study of law given that law involves the interaction of people: judges, lawyers, clients, mediators, arbitrators, etc.

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## **2 Theoretical, Informational, Empirical and Methodological Bases of the Study**

### **2.1 Initial state of higher legal education in Russia at the beginning of the pandemic COVID-19**

Russian educational bodies, as well the country as a whole, have chosen an integrated method of carrying out the educational process in the course of the pandemic. This method includes the administrative restrictions concept and the concept of mitigating the consequences of the pandemic itself. It also includes the restrictive activities affecting universities' economy and procedures of students' socialization and psychological stability of professors and law students. It has become evident, that the current legal theory lacks criteria for finding equilibrium between administrative restrictions in the course of the pandemic on the one hand and the personal rights of citizens on the other hand. The pandemic and similar phenomena are rarely associated with peculiarities in the system of higher legal education. However, the pandemic has forced the educational community in the world as a whole and, Russia in particular, to grapple with two specific issues: 1) the arrangement of higher legal education; 2) the explanation of the legal components of activities associated with the pandemic. The current pandemic, and future pandemics when they inevitably occur, impedes the process of obtaining empirical data that help uncover how the processes of higher legal education systems have undergone transformations around the world. Worldwide, but in Russia in particular, the general trend concerning scientific papers is distinguished by the fact that authors generally were not ready to analyze the operational modes of higher educational bodies in the specific sphere of legal education. The dearth of information can be attributed to two primary factors. First, until 2020, there was no research specifically dedicated to the topic of teaching during a pandemic. Second, the procedure of conceptualization of the sanitary and epidemiological restrictions and their consequences for the educational system is ongoing.

The majority of states follow either the path of restrictions or the path of the mitigation of the pandemic consequences (Baral et al. [2021](#)). During the pandemic, Russia's healthcare system and medical sciences have performed remarkably well and extremely efficiently. Both university professors and students have overcome the

worst (hopefully) of the pandemic with virtually no lethal outcomes and at the same time gained significant experience in restructuring educational and scientific activities in the legal sphere (Potapenko & Luparev, 2020).

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Russian educational organizations that train law students have entered the teaching process with varying degrees of preparedness. Not all universities were able to immediately rebuild the educational process in the face of restrictions on freedom of movement and the need to comply with other sanitary and epidemiological standards. The process of transitioning to the implementation of the educational process in the context of the pandemic began in completely different directions. There were several reasons for this.

The first reason is rooted in the Russian tradition of granting the state authorities of the constituent units of the Russian Federation a considerable degree of autonomy in identifying the administrative regimes of various types of educational organizations. The Decree of the President of the Russian Federation dated 02.04.2020 No. 239 “On measures to ensure the sanitary and epidemiological well-being of the population in the territory of the Russian Federation in relation to the spread of a new coronavirus infection (COVID-19)” gave the right to the highest officials (heads of the highest executive bodies of state power) of the constituent units of the Russian Federation, based upon the sanitary and epidemiological situation and features of the spread of a new coronavirus infection (COVID-19), to ensure the development and implementation of a set of restrictive and other measures, primarily, as follows:

- “a) to determine within the borders of the relevant constituent unit of the Russian Federation where the implementation of a set of restrictive and other steps aimed at the provision of sanitary and epidemiological well-being of the population is envisaged, including in the conditions of the introduction of a high-alert regime, an emergency situation;
- b) to suspend (to restrict) activities of the particular bodies located in the relevant territory irrespective of their legal form (status) and type of ownership as well as the activities of individual entrepreneurs;

c) to lay down a specific regime of movement within the relevant territory for individuals and vehicles excluding the vehicles which effect interregional logistics operations.”

Meanwhile, restrictions on the activities of educational bodies could be imposed on the basis of the agreement with the Government of the Russian Federation. Almost all constituent units of the Russian Federation have taken the path of introducing restrictions on the activities of higher educational institutions in terms of the presence of students in full-time classes. During the first stage of the pandemic, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation and other federal executive authorities which regulate activities of educational organizations that carry out the selection of students of law faculties, began to regulate the educational process but delegated discretionary authority to the educational organizations themselves. A typical example is the Order of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation No. 397 dated 14.03.2020 "On the organization of educational activities in organizations implementing educational programs of higher education and related additional professional programs in the context of preventing the spread of a new coronavirus infection in the territory of the Russian Federation". Meanwhile, the educational organizations belonging to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and MoD, which were training legal personnel for the needs of the relevant executive authorities, after implementation of the restrictive measures, turned to distance education incrementally, as they grew to realize specific features of the sanitary and epidemiological situation in both military and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation educational organizations.

The sanitary restriction steps themselves have become the subject of stormy debates in the scientific legal spheres (Potapenko & Luparev, [2020](#)), as well as in the law enforcement practice of Russian courts.

The educational organizations have faced problems associated with both preparing for distant forms of education and performing the socializing function in relation to students.

As Osina, Tolstopyatenko & Malinovsky rightfully outline: "the process of digital transformation of higher education (including transformation of legal high schools) was triggered prior to Covid-19 pandemic and the coronavirus became a catalyst for digitalization of almost all spheres of public life" (Osina, Tolstopyatenko & Malinovsky, [2021](#)).

## **2.2 Solving the problems of distance education for law students**

Such software as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Skype for Business, and Moodle were operated in Russian universities by the beginning of the pandemic.

It required a significant effort to make Microsoft Teams operational. For example, each student and university professor had to be assigned a unique username (login) and password. This data then had to be linked to the above-mentioned data to the services like Microsoft Forms, in order to arrange for testing system and other means of student assessment. According to the authors who represent the educational organization that has implemented Microsoft Teams and Moodle software systems, Microsoft Teams software has proven to be a highly efficient tool for teaching in the legal disciplines. This software (taking into account its smartphone version) allowed the following: firstly, to instruct both students and university professors of the operational potential of the software which proceeds comparatively rapidly, literally, in the course of one/two seminars; secondly, the software has extensive communication potential for teaching the legal sciences; thirdly, it provides the possibility to effect administrative collaboration within the teaching staff.

Those higher education organizations (it turned out to be the significant part of them) that did not implement high-level collaboration systems during the pandemic, or which confined themselves to the traditional means of digital interaction, faced serious challenges at the initial stage of work during the pandemic. In the absence of licensed versions of Zoom, these institutions resorted to free versions with a time limit of up to 45 minutes for remote sessions and even household messengers such as WhatsApp.

Since September 2020, almost all Russian educational organizations that train lawyers have reached a sufficient level of digital interaction both with students and within the teaching staff.

Distance education has exposed numerous challenges related to the arrangement of digital collaboration with students. First, since the system of administrative restrictive measures in the Russian Federation stipulated certain restrictions on the freedom of movement, many students were forced to stay at their place of permanent residence, and these were not always localities where their higher education institutions were located. Another significant obstacle centered around students' lack of access to traditional library stocks due to a lack of stable Internet connection in some localities. This speaks to the larger issue of educational inequality. Lack of Internet access typically disproportionately impacts those students living in more rural communities.

The lack of access to traditional library resources for a certain period in the context of the pandemic was detrimental to law students in Russia. A significant contributing factor in this regard is that classical papers on law have not been fully digitized to date, and Russian legal theory is largely based on works originated in the Soviet period.

Nonetheless, the licensed access to such digital platforms as Web of Science, Scopus, and Russian Science Citation Index, (<https://elibrary.ru/defaultx.asp?>), University on-line library (<https://biblioclub.ru>), Urait (<https://urait.ru/>), "Lan" digital library system (<https://e.lanbook.com/>), Scientific and educational portal Znanium (<https://znanium.com/>), East View (<https://dlib.eastview.com/>), Grebennikon digital library (<https://grebennikon.ru/>), National digital library (<https://rusneb.ru/>), Presidential Library named after B. N. Yeltsin (<https://www.prlib.ru/>), Springer Link (<https://link.springer.com/>), provided both law university professors and students with an opportunity not only to qualitatively improve their knowledge in the sphere of digital scientific source databases but also to work with foreign, primarily, English-language sources of information.

At the same time, it is important to note that the relatively successful transition to digital platforms in the sphere of legal education is characterized by their technological nature. The current stage of this transition poses challenges of a methodological nature which contribute to improvements in the efficiency and quality of the educational process.

It is widely recognized that law university professors of Russian higher education bodies often lack (sufficient) knowledge of English, French, German and other foreign languages. It is important for those associated with the law – professors, students, practitioners, judges, etc. - to be able to easily access legal articles and monographs that are not written in Russian. The pandemic has helped to underscore the demand for professional translation of texts from other languages into Russian (and vice versa). The pandemic has served to intensify the demand on usage of numerous translation Internet-services which, with due diligence and professional adjustment, not only provide an opportunity for legal stakeholders to gain a general idea of works written in foreign languages, but also has encouraged those having involvement in the legal sphere to improve their knowledge of foreign languages. For instance, Google translates the term "administrative law" as "loi administrative" but Yandex translates the same term as «droit administratif». Such discrepancies forced us to turn to professional translators of legal texts. It is no coincidence that some Russian educational organizations, in particular, the Moscow State University named after M. V. Lomonosov, has created a new position known as translator-secretary ([https://www.law.msu.ru/pages/kadry\\_gr\\_proc](https://www.law.msu.ru/pages/kadry_gr_proc)).

### **2.3 Methodology**

The research methodology utilized for this article was grounded primarily in the personal observation method conducted through research into the ongoing processes in the sphere of legal education in Russia during the COVID-19 pandemic. An important feature that emerges from an analysis of the data reviewed is the preservation of the confidentiality of the participants while studying social processes (Avraam et al., 2021). The correlation of the choice between the research methods was determined by a number of circumstances related to confidential data protection. First of all, during the initial stages of the development of the pandemic, there was a significant fraction of the public, including members of the scientific and

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pedagogical environment, who denied the very existence of the coronavirus infection and behaved as they did before the pandemic. Accordingly, during the early stages of the pandemic (i.e. March-July 2020), it was impossible to construct a statistical sampling of the scientific and pedagogical community's reaction to the transition to distance learning. The second circumstance that had to be taken into account while correlating the research methods is that both university professors and students who had either contracted the coronavirus infection but had recovered from it, or who had relatives/close friends/colleagues who had contracted the disease, changed their attitude concerning distance legal education (i.e. the real-life experience of the disease caused them to now favor distance learning, whereas before they had opposed it). However, because information about a person's health is confidential, we are unable to say with a high degree of likelihood how many university professors and students among the COVID-19 – positive or COVID-19 – negative groups changed their attitude toward distance learning methods.

Along with the personal visualization methods, we also applied the comparative analysis method of the dynamics of morbidity rate in the Russian Federation as a whole, and in specific constituent units of the Russian Federation, in particular. The application of this method was vividly illustrated when the largest increase in coronavirus cases led to full-time classes being suspended in such constituent units of the Russian Federation as Moscow and St. Petersburg until February 2021. As for the constituent units of the Russian Federation which demonstrated lower morbidity and mortality rates than in the federal cities Moscow and St. Petersburg, the higher education institutions, depending upon their degree of readiness to apply infection control measures, chose a hybrid organizational method consisting of a combination of face-to-face and distance learning models.

Under the current research circumstances, and in order to obtain the most accurate picture, we decided that it was necessary to apply the inductive general scientific method. The research team drew its observations from a sample of 30 legal higher educational institutions. Those located in the Russian Federation included Moscow, St. Petersburg, the Krasnodar region, the Voronezh region, and the Rostov region. The higher legal educational institutions located outside of Russia included the Polish Republic (Ganczak et al., [2021](#)), the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Slovakia, the People's Republic of China, and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. This approach

made it possible to move scientific thought to the results of the study utilizing the comparative legal paradigm.

## **2.4 Discussion**

In the sphere of legal education, issues surrounding both the theoretical estimation of the extent of legal regulation during the pandemic and teaching law students using digital techniques are disputable.

Generating estimations, in the context of the legal sciences of protective and other administrative measures, are not a new phenomenon for the Russian legal sciences. Article 31 of the Federal Law "On the Sanitary and Epidemiological Welfare of the Population" dated 30.03.1999 No. 52-FZ stipulates the introduction of quarantine as a protective measure in the event of a threat of the occurrence and spread of infectious diseases. However, what is unclear, and what remains fundamentally in dispute, are questions surrounding which state authority is entitled to introduce the quarantine. Regarding Russia's borders with foreign states, it is clear that the Government of the Russian Federation is vested with the exclusive competence to decide questions concerning quarantine. Ambiguities exist, however, concerning powers vested within the territories of constituent entities of the Russian Federation to impose quarantines.

The following is a summary of the federal regulatory framework for introduction of protective steps in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic in Russia:

- Federal Laws dated December 21, 1994, No. 68-FZ "On the protection of the population and territories from Natural and Man-made Emergencies", and dated March 30, 1999, No. 52-FZ "On the sanitary and epidemiological welfare of the population";
- Decrees of the President of the Russian Federation dated March 25, 2020, No. 206 "On the declaration of non-working days in the Russian Federation"; and dated April 2, 2020, No. 239 "On measures to ensure the sanitary and epidemiological well-being of the population in the territory of the Russian Federation in connection with the spread of a new coronavirus infection (COVID-19)"; and dated April 28, 2020, No. 294 "On the

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extension of measures to ensure the sanitary and epidemiological well-being of the population in the territory of the Russian Federation in connection with the spread of a new coronavirus infection (COVID-19)"; and dated May 11, 2020, No. 316 "On the definition of the procedure for extending the measures to ensure the sanitary and epidemiological well-being of the population in the subjects of the Russian Federation in connection with the spread of a new coronavirus infection (COVID-19)";

- methodological recommendations MR 3.1.0178-20, approved by the Chief State Sanitary Doctor of the Russian Federation dated May 8, 2020.

Regional regulative acts (for example from the Krasnodar region) have been presented as follows:

- resolution of the Head of the Administration (Governor) of the Krasnodar region dated March 13, 2020, No. 129 "On the introduction of a high-alert regime within the territory of the Krasnodar region and measures to prevent the spread of a new coronavirus infection (COVID-19)";
- regulation of the chief state sanitary doctor for the Krasnodar region dated March 31, 2020, No. 7.

During the initial stages of the spread of the coronavirus infection, the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation published the reviews of the judicial practice as follows:

- "Review on certain issues of judicial practice related to the application of legislation and measures to counteract the spread of the new coronavirus infection (COVID-19) No. 1 on the territory of the Russian Federation" (approved by the Presidium of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation dated 21.04.2020);
- "Review on certain issues of judicial practice related to the application of legislation and measures to counteract the spread of the new coronavirus infection (COVID-19) No. 2 on the territory of the Russian Federation" (approved by the Presidium of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation 30.04.2020).

Already in February 2021, based on the experience of applying the law for almost a year, the Court issued a "Review on certain issues of judicial practice related to the application of legislation and measures to counter the spread of the new coronavirus infection (COVID-19) No. 3" (approved by the Presidium of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation dated 17.02.2021).

During March, 2020, the subject of law enforcement practices, as well as scientific discussions and, accordingly, including the issue of teaching administrative law, tackled only cases involving administrative responsibility under Article 6.3 of the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Russian Federation and cases involving the involuntary hospitalization of persons who refused to be under observation due to possible Covid-19 infection in connection with their following return from foreign countries, in accordance with Chapter 31 of the Code of Administrative Procedure of the Russian Federation. As early as April 2020, the question arose as to which regime of restrictions in connection with the coronavirus is legal – the emergency mode or the high-alert mode.

Subparagraph 6 of Part 1 of Article 18 of Federal Law No. 68-FZ dated 21.12.1994 (as amended on 08.12.2020) "On the Protection of the Population and Territories from Natural and Man-made Emergencies" provides for the right of citizens to be reimbursed by the federal government for the damage caused to their health and property as a result of emergencies. Obviously, neither Russia's federal budget, nor the budgets of the constituent units of the Russian Federation (nor, for that matter, any budget of any state worldwide), had the capacity to fully reimburse citizens for all damages related to the lockdowns and the increase of the death rate that resulted from the high incidence of diseases caused by COVID-19. The introduction of the high-alert regime allowed the following: on the one hand, the introduction of administrative protective sanitary and epidemiological measures legally, and, on the other hand, it allowed these measures to be paid for under the Russian Federation's budget system.

Representatives of the Russian judicial community, in their works, generally spoke in favor of expanding administrative and judicial control in cases involving the involuntary hospitalization of persons in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (Burashnikova, 2020). On the contrary, foreign authors tended to be more reserved

about direct administrative prohibitions on freedom of movement without proper grounds (Vereshchagin, 2020).

Our sample surveys, conducted among students of law faculties at Voronezh, Krasnodar and Moscow (totally, there have been interviewed: 200 students in Krasnodar, 30 students in Voronezh and 30 students in Moscow), found that at least 90 percent of the interviewed students agreed with the importance of complying with the legal restrictive legislation related to the pandemic; nine percent were neutral to such measures (depending upon the presence or absence of an entity affecting the relevant control); and, just one percent denied it was important to observe such restrictions.

From the perspective of legal ideology, the students held opinions that were broken down into the following percentages: 69 percent of students from the law faculties of Voronezh and Krasnodar believed that the restrictive measures established in the specified constituent entities of the Russian Federation might have been more facilitative. Accordingly, 31 percent of law students from the regions studied believed that stricter administrative restrictions would have reduced the level of morbidity and the death rate. 80 percent of Moscow law students supported a more facilitative regime. Evidently, this result correlates with the severity of the restrictive measures, on the one hand, with those measures' interference with the essence of the educational process on the other hand. The outright prohibition on full-time education was introduced in Moscow and it was valid until February, 2021. Beginning on September 1, 2020, in Voronezh, Krasnodar, Saratov and other major regional centers, education was carried out in hybrid (mixed) regime. The authors are aware that the representativeness of the data obtained is correlated with the survey period (February – March, 2021) and the nature of the educational organizations. We had no chance to obtain data from the students of military and law enforcement higher education organizations, which we can surmise are less likely to be critical of specified regulative measures than the students of classical universities.

The results from our survey of university professors of law faculties and legal educational organizations are as follows. 100 percent of law university professors reported that they unconditionally complied with the restrictive measures instituted. This result is best explained by the current model of law-abiding behavior. From the perspective of the concept that determines the composition and severity of the administrative and restrictive activities, the university professors' opinions were divided, with the key factor being the stage of the anti-pandemic administrative restrictions. With respect to the more severe measures typical for the first stage, i.e., the actual lockdown in April-May, 2020, 52 percent of the university professors interviewed considered the measures as excessively harsh and associated them with the closure of large non-food stores. Referring to the measures which were in effect and still are in effect (since June, 2020 and until April, 2021), the university professors considered them as adequate against the background of the launch of large-scale vaccination in Russia in March-April, 2021.

According to the data provided by Luis Santamaría and Joaquín Hortal, the easing of isolation measures that had been instituted in a large number of European states, in particular, in Spain, against the background of the lack of any large-scale vaccination program, resulted in an increase of morbidity after the protective restrictions were weakened (Santamaría & Hortal, 2021). In Russia, during the period following the large-scale vaccination in March, 2021, we have observed a steady decline in the incidents of the COVID-19 disease.

The introduction of protective isolation measures while teaching of law disciplines always correlates with the issue of respect for the rights and freedoms of citizens; this is an unstable balance (Da Costa & Emerson, 2020). The division of opinion among the teaching staff regarding the ideology of protective measures, as revealed in our study, proves that atypical situations that periodically (but assuredly will) occur, require a developed legal theory that allows for the rapid and efficient roll out of regulations that can combat crisis events such as the current pandemic.

In this sense, one of the shortcomings of the Russian legal science of the last decade has been the transition from fundamental theoretical research to applied ones, particularly to the legal commentary of the existing system of legal regulation. The sectors of scientific research that have received the highest level of financial

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assistance from the government has consistently fluctuated in Russia. The Russian Humanitarian Science Foundation, which was the main source for financing developments in the field of law, was restructured in 2017. There has been a gradual restructuring of the Russian Foundation for Basic Research, which since 2017 has become the legal successor of the Russian Humanitarian Science Foundation. The functionality of financing of the humanitarian scientific research has been transferred to the Russian Science Foundation. Consequently, a number of research teams which work in the legal sphere, have been deprived of the opportunity to carry out fundamental scientific research studies in these areas of knowledge which have yet to be assessed in Russian and sometimes even in foreign legal sciences. This failure is due to the fact that such research requires a fairly robust publication reserve on the subject of projects. However, an application for grant support is submitted only for the purpose of obtaining original scientific knowledge in the spheres which, as experience reveals, also includes the concepts of juridization (legalizing) the administrative protective measures during the pandemic.

### **3 Results**

The outcome of the study of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on possible reforms to the higher legal education bodies in Russian include both objective indicators and subjective views on the part of the research participants.

We have classified the outcomes that we consider to be objective into the following groups:

- transition to hybrid forms of education where the ratio between full-time and distance components is subject to alteration depending upon the specific sanitary and epidemiological situation in each region, as well as upon the subjective estimation by the head of the particular educational body of the alert level and the pandemic consequences for training and education of law students;
- observance of restrictive and protective measures of sanitary and epidemiological nature as an empirical basis for legal scientific research and case analysis material for law students;

- transition to actual use of digital platforms in the educational process in Russian legal higher schools and law faculties;
- a new stage of international scientific collaboration with the large-scale use of digital technologies.

Results that contain elements of subjective evaluation of researchers are the following:

- 1) distance education deprived the university professors and students of the opportunity to establish a psychological contact, which is especially important while teaching legal disciplines, which require comprehension both of the letter and the spirit of the law;
- 2) a university professor's work turned out to be much more intensive due to the permanent psychological tension caused by the necessity to spend significantly more time at the computer display or with other gadgets;
- 3) limitations in the socialization process and as well as in the implementation of the educational function, especially for undergraduate levels of a higher educational institution;
- 4) limiting connections in the teaching environment;
- 5) differentiation of the attitude of students and university professors of law faculties and universities towards the ideology of administrative restrictive measures among students was the following: 17-20 percent of students more frequently (depending on the region of the study) assessed the ideology of protective measures during the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic as unnecessarily harsh.

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