

Community Policing and Conflict (Self-)Management

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BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

The Czech COMPOSITE-team monitors the process of changes in the municipal police. An important characteristic of the municipal police is its close relationship to citizens and work according to the principles of community policing. This change is long-term and continues the process of democratisation in the Czech Republic after 1989. Democratisation also applies to police organisations. In 1991, the municipal police was established by law in the Czech Republic. Diversification of police organisations in the Czech Republic was a step towards taking responsibility for some of the security issues by municipalities. The municipal police is the authority of the municipality that provides local issues of public order within the jurisdiction of the municipality and performs other tasks stipulated by law. In our Czech targeted study we are dealing with long-term changes within the municipal police:

- Municipal police should be citizen oriented.
- Differences between National Police and Municipal Police.
- Permanent change from repression to prevention.
- Solution of conflict situations.

GOAL OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of the project is the analysis and evaluation of conflict situations and circumstances of attacks within the community police.

DESIGN

The targeted study on community policing and conflict (self-)management is designed in three levels:

- A. Relationship between police and public - institutional level
- B. Relationship between police and public - individual level
- C. Ability of individual officers to comply with community policing

The first two levels are a qualitative research. The third level is a quantitative research.

First level: We will deal with the relationship between the police and the public at an institutional level. The basic research question is “How close is the police to citizens as an institution?” At this point qualitative research tools will be used, such as the study of documents and their analysis. We will look at how the police organisation communicates, how the organisational culture of the police looks like and how social media is embedded. This section is closely connected with the previous research of the COMPOSITE-project.



Second level: We will determine the relationship between the police and the public at an individual level. The selected police organisation works over a long period on projects designed to bring the police closer to citizens. We will analyse these projects, seek their common features as well as the central idea of these projects. This part is also a qualitative research.

Third level: This final level of the Czech targeted study is a quantitative research. By interviewing a selected group of police officers we will investigate the ability of individual officers to comply with community policing directives in conflict situations. This part of the research is the most important for us. We will work with a research tool especially developed for this purpose: the Solution of Conflict Situations and Circumstances of Assaults Questionnaire (SoCon). This research tool consists of two parts. The first part identifies the reasons for conflicts between citizens and police officers and the ways to solve them. The second part deals with the detection of abilities of police officers to work with the principles of community policing.