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## **Community policing: local and regional authorities guaranteeing a new partnership**

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### Summary:

The report takes stock of the feeling of urban insecurity that still prevails and stresses that the way in which the police tackle disorder and crime in European societies must be modernised in order to win back the public's trust and to adapt to the diversity of community demand.

It evaluates experiences carried out in several European countries which have brought the police closer to the public and states the founding principles of community policing as well as criteria for its implementation.

In order to ensure that policy and institutional action are consistent the central, mobilising and coordinating role of local authorities with regard to players and security agencies is underlined.

R : Chamber of Regions / L : Chamber of Local Authorities  
ILDG : Independent and Liberal Democrat Group of the Congress  
EPP/CD : Group European People's Party – Christian Democrats of the Congress  
SOC : Socialist Group of the Congress  
NR : Member not belonging to a Political Group of the Congress



## Introduction

For many years the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities has pursued an intensive work programme (reports, conferences, round tables) addressing various aspects of crime prevention and urban security. One of the results was the adoption of the following instruments:

- Resolution 180 (2004) and Recommendation 152 (2004) on local policing in Europe,
- Resolution 220 (2006) and Recommendation 197 (2006) on urban security in Europe.

In view of the recent increase in insecurity and the deterioration of the quality of life in Europe's towns and cities, and the growing fear of crime among the population, the Congress has decided to continue its work on the security of Europe's citizens and to include the main theme of security policies against violence in the priorities of its Committee on Social Cohesion in 2007-2008.

People's perception of their everyday security and their confidence in the forces responsible for maintaining law and order also make them able to appreciate the right to live without violence. The Committee on Social Cohesion accordingly considered that the question of community policing and relations with the local population was a topical subject which deserved to be given proper attention.

Based on the examples of a few countries (Belgium, France, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom), the purpose of this report<sup>1</sup> is to show how community policing helps to improve urban security and the essential role local and regional authorities play in mobilising the relevant players and professionals. The Committee of Ministers itself, in Recommendation Rec(2003)21 to member states concerning partnership in crime prevention, acknowledged that "the development and implementation of crime prevention strategies involving the community and local authorities are potentially efficient and cost-effective".

## Theoretical and strategic recommendations

In Europe systems of policing are organised in very different ways from one state to another. However, despite these differences, the emerging consensus is that the hard-line repressive policing model is unsuitable, or at least inadequate, to have a structural impact in containing insecurity trends. It can be seen that this model is not only unable lastingly to prevent a rise in crime, but also - and perhaps more essential - to lessen people's feelings of insecurity.<sup>2</sup> Increasing professionalism in the police has paradoxically gone hand in hand with an increasing remoteness from the general public. The "big case" culture, a reactive approach to police intervention, the growing technicality of the equipment used and the tendency towards motorised patrols are all factors which have helped gradually to remove the police from the streets. Since this distances them from local people, to whom they are less visible, they are increasingly unable to address the public's primary concerns, which are often linked to "anti-social behaviour" in the broad sense. The rising number of offences of violence against the person, cyclical outbreaks of urban unrest, the damage done by drug-related crime, an enduring impression of insecurity in some sectors of the population, the courts' excessive case-load and prison overcrowding all show the limits of this policing model. The gulf between police targets and priorities and community sentiment that things are getting worse leads to a growing mutual incomprehension, which pushes the two sides ever further apart.

There would therefore now seem to be unanimous agreement that the way the police tackle disorder and crime in our societies must be modernised. Here too, many western countries are opting for the same solution: a new territorial focus, an effort to bring the police closer to the people, a more proactive concept of police duties and a collaborative, partnership-based approach. These are the principles behind the gradual emergence of theories designated by the umbrella term "local policing" although they include many variants. While the common denominator is a desire to bring the police closer to the public, this concept covers different policing models. First and foremost there is the "community policing" approach followed in English-speaking countries. A legacy of the "broken

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<sup>1</sup> The Secretariat of the Congress wishes to thank the expert, Mr Jean-Charles Froment, University Professor and Director of the CERDHAP (Centre for Studies and Research into Law and Public Administration) - Law Faculty of the Pierre Mendès France University, Grenoble (France) for preparing this report.

<sup>2</sup> D. Monjardet, preface to Chalom M. and Léonard L., "Insécurité, police de proximité et gouvernance locale", Paris, L'Harmattan, collection "Sécurité et Société", 2001.

windows" theory,<sup>3</sup> community policing calls for a redefinition of police priorities. According to the, now classic, article by J.Q. Wilson et G.L. Kelling,<sup>4</sup> a broken window on a car, an abandoned vehicle, graffiti on walls and street furniture are all visible signs of urban decay, equated by local people with a weakening of social and institutional controls in their neighbourhood. They contribute to the impression that disorderly behaviour generally goes unpunished and can help push people over the edge into delinquency. At the same time, they are the ingredients of a climate of isolation and fear, in which individuals are tempted to abandon public places for the private sphere.

This withdrawal from the public arena then enhances the collapse of community controls, contributing to the formation of a vicious circle. To counter this "spiral of decline",<sup>5</sup> the police must refocus their action on reducing disorder in the community. Community policing obeys a number of principles: a broadening of the police's mandate, a willingness to take social demands into account, a stronger partnership with the public and with other institutional players active in the security field, a territorial focus and organisational decentralisation.<sup>6</sup>

It is nonetheless a variable concept. The policing systems it has inspired utilise sometimes very different operating methods,<sup>7</sup> ranging from "soft policing" models, closest to the initial idea of involving members of the community in the police's work, of which the CAPS (Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy) is the classic example,<sup>8</sup> to intensive policing applying the so-called zero tolerance approach, of which New York's experience is the most frequently cited - and often over-simplified - example. Another variant is known as "problem solving policing",<sup>9</sup> with an emphasis on diagnosing problems and developing methodical responses different from the solutions proposed by the criminal justice system. Nonetheless, not all local policing models fit into these moulds. The variety of the terms used to describe the organisational and functional changes these solutions entail says a great deal: community policing, district policing, neighbourhood policing, proximity policing, area based policing, contact policing. There is accordingly no uniform model. Generally speaking, although the founding principle of "community policing" in the English-speaking world and "local policing" in continental Europe is the same - improving the relationship between the police and the community - two different logics can be seen to co-exist: the style of community policing tends towards "policing the community with the community"<sup>10</sup> with the objective of creating a secure environment in partnership with local people, whereas continental-style local policing attempts to restore social ties while opting for a strictly institutional response to the problems posed.<sup>11</sup>

Regardless of these different nuances, it can nonetheless be observed that "local policing" is now a key concern in all police systems in the western world. The first community policing projects in the United States were launched in the 1980s and, with the federal agencies' support, spread throughout the country in the 1990s, a process facilitated by the decentralisation of the US police.<sup>12</sup> European police forces have also launched projects:<sup>13</sup> the United Kingdom ("neighbourhood policing"),<sup>14</sup> Germany<sup>15</sup>, Belgium, Spain, Norway (the Strategy Plan for Preventive Policing, 2000-2005), France, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland ("proxipol")... all have recently devised or revised schemes aimed at bringing the police closer to the population against a background of increased involvement of local

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<sup>3</sup> Kelling G. and Coles C., "Fixing broken windows. Restoring Order and Reducing Crime in our Communities", New York, Free Press, 1996.

<sup>4</sup> Wilson J.Q. and Kelling G.L., "Broken Windows. The police and neighbourhood safety", *The Atlantic Monthly*, March 1982, No. 249, pp.29-38.

<sup>5</sup> Skogan W., "Disorder and decline. Crime and the spiral of urban decay in American neighbourhoods", New York, Free Press, 1990.

<sup>6</sup> Skogan W. and Hartnett S., "Community Policing, Chicago Style", New York, Oxford University Press, 1997.

<sup>7</sup> Ocqueteau F. (ed.), "Community Policing et Zero Tolerance à New York et Chicago. En finir avec les mythes", Paris, La Documentation Française, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Brodeur J.P., "Les visages de la police. Pratiques et perceptions", Montreal, Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2003, p. 143.

<sup>9</sup> Goldstein H., "Improving police: a problem oriented approach", *Crime and Delinquency*, 1979, pp. 237-258

<sup>10</sup> Donzelot J. and Wyvekens A., "Community policing: 'Chicago style'", *Les Cahiers de la Sécurité Intérieure*, 2000, No. 41, pp. 245-26 ; Donzelot J., "Faire société", Paris, Seuil, 2003.

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<sup>12</sup> Skogan W., "La police communautaire aux Etats-Unis", *Les Cahiers de la Sécurité Intérieure*, 1993, No.13, pp.121-149.

<sup>13</sup> Dossier "Les dilemmes de la proximité. Des polices d'Europe en chantier", *Les Cahiers de la Sécurité Intérieure*, 2000, No. 39. Also see the dossier "Evaluer la police ?", 2003, No.53.

<sup>14</sup> Tuffin R., Morris J. and Poole A., "An evaluation of the impact of the National Reassurance Policing Programme", Home Office research study, 2006, 296.

<sup>15</sup> Jobard F., "Les deux visages de la sécurité en Allemagne", in "Les Etats à l'épreuve de la sécurité", Froment J.-C., Gleizal J.-J., Kaluszynski M. (ed.), PUG, 2003, pp. 191 et seq.

authorities in the definition and implementation of security policies.<sup>16</sup> In all of these countries the development of local policing is a major component of the redefinition of policing strategies (Portugal being another example). This applies especially in the countries of central and eastern Europe. In countries such as Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia the establishment of municipal police forces from 1991 facilitated the reforms of the police needed to rebuild positive ties between the police and the population in the context of the transition to democracy.

In France, it was in 1992 that P. Quilès, then Minister of the Interior, made local policing a priority for the urban police. However, although the term itself was not in use, local policing was clearly already a policy concern before this date. In the early 1980s, when the first municipal police forces were only just being established, the idea was mooted of intensifying the police presence in the community through neighbourhood police units ("îlotage"). By the end of the decade the word "proximity" was already being used in the official rhetoric, with the police being referred to as an instrument of "social proximity" or for the "management of proximity". The expression "proximity policing" first appeared in the administrative authorities' internal documents in the late 1990s; from which time on its use spread.<sup>17</sup> In 1997, under the aegis of Prime Minister Jospin, a colloquy held in Villepinte championed the idea of fostering a more secure society in partnership with and as close as possible to the grassroots population.<sup>18</sup> At the level of the national police, a major institutional reform, "the *pol-prox*", was introduced in 1999, despite considerable resistance within the force itself. This reform, however, suffered the consequences of a change of policy direction following the presidential and legislative elections of 2002, as a result of which considerably less importance was attached to the local approach in policing strategies. At the same time, in France the local policing role has in practice been assumed by municipal police forces, which have steadily been gaining ground since the mid-1980s. France's police forces constitute a genuine testing ground for a new policing model, development of which is nonetheless restricted by the diversity of their situations and the ambiguity of their fields of competence as defined by law.

In Belgium the local police were established in 2003 (Circular CP1 of the Federal Public Service of Internal Affairs dated 27 May 2003 concerning the definition and interpretation of Community Policing applicable to the integrated police force organised on two levels (Moniteur Belge, 9, VII.2003)), based on the Netherlands' experience and the models to be found in English-speaking countries. This police force was conceived in accordance with five principles: external orientation - greater police involvement in the community and identification of the population's needs and expectations; problem solving; partnership development; accountability - with the aim of better justifying police action and enhancing transparency and police accountability vis-à-vis the public; empowerment - a wider mandate for the police, enabling it to respond to the population's demands in a more autonomous manner or to refer those demands to the relevant agencies.<sup>19</sup>

Italy took the French model as the basis for its local policing scheme, adopted under a decree of 24 November 2000, which aimed to foster closer links between the State police and the general public. Commenting on this legislation, the Director General of Public Security, Mr De Gennaro, explained the theories underlying this reform in the following terms "Simple yet ambitious, revolutionary but at the same time traditional, this decree sets out to introduce the local policing philosophy in the overall organisation of police activities ... The local dimension becomes one of the primary focuses of police work ... The aim is to understand the unease within the population, while anticipating security demands and establishing a strong relationship of trust with the public, to the point where the police officer becomes a reassuring authority with a constant presence, thereby transforming the police into the principal means of social control while establishing an active partnership with local authorities and healthy forces within society."<sup>20</sup> In parallel with these reforms in the State police, Italy's local authorities had earlier introduced neighbourhood police units as one of the reference models for municipal police activities. For many years now various Italian cities have been experimenting with neighbourhood police units attached to the municipal police force, which have long established a firm foothold within the community. This form of organisation exists for example in Alexandria, Piacenza,

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<sup>16</sup> Council of Europe, Resolution 220 (2006) and Recommendation 197 (2006) on urban security in Europe, both adopted by the Congress of Local Authorities on 31 May 2006.

<sup>17</sup> Jankowski B., "La police de proximité : regard de la recherche sur un nouveau style de police", Report produced for the IHESI, Paris, 1992.

<sup>18</sup> Ministry of the Interior, "Des villes plus sûres pour des citoyens libres", Proceedings of the Villepinte colloquy, 24-25 October 1997.

<sup>19</sup> Seron V., Smeets S., Smits M. and Tange C. (ed.), "Police de proximité. Un modèle Belge entre questions et pratiques", Politeia, Police Studies Centre, 2003.

<sup>20</sup> Carrer F., "La polizia di prossimità. La partecipazione del cittadino alla gestione della sicurezza nel panorama internazionale", published by Francoangeli, 2003.

La Spezia, Modena, Pavia, Grosseto, Monza, Turin and Milan. Neighbourhood police units have always been well accepted in Italy. The lack of such units is moreover cited by members of the public as a cause of urban insecurity. In an opinion poll conducted in Turin in 1994, over 50% of the respondents regarded these units as useful or essential, and 80% believed that a unit's sole presence could partly or fully improve security conditions in the district concerned.<sup>21</sup>

In Spain local policing was introduced under the Plan Policia 2000. This reform was initiated in 1996, designed in 1997 and implemented in stages with effect from 1998. Community policing (in Spain the terms local policing, community policing and neighbourhood policing are used interchangeably) became the reference model for the reorganisation of policing strategies at all levels (the state, the autonomous regions and the local level). The objective was to move towards a "social interaction process", which would concern not only citizens' groups or associations but also individual members of the public, "each individual member of the community", with the result that everyone could turn to "their own police officer" when they so wished or when the need arose. In this context the aims were to bring the police and the public closer together, so as to provide the public with a personalised response. The two key characteristics of this local policing model are strong interaction between the community and the police - the latter being responsible not only for identifying problems but for finding solutions to them - and a necessary organisational decentralisation, to allow improved adaptation of police responses to the demands specific to each sector, on the basis of field knowledge and awareness of local social realities. Lastly, frontline police officers must be able to rely on the police organisation as a whole for training, resources and intelligence, whereas the police officer should in return pass on to the organisation all of the information necessary to ensure a coordinated, effective response.<sup>22</sup>

Looking beyond the differences between these various reforms, it is possible to identify a number of principles common to all local policing schemes, as follows: the local police are "decentralised", accepted by the public and entrusted with a broader mandate. In France the National Institute for Advanced Security Studies (the INHES, formerly the IHESI) has produced a "Practical guide to local policing", which sets out three objectives:

- a capacity to anticipate and prevent problems;
- knowledge of the local area and its population;
- meeting the population's expectations as far as possible.

This guide recommends specific operating methods: "organisation of police action in terms of well-identified territories, constant contact with the population, versatility and adaptability enhancing the police function's image, empowerment and answerability of those active in the field at all levels, a high standard of service."<sup>23</sup>

On this basis, it is necessary first to determine the principles on which such a police force should be organised, if it is to be really true to the spirit of "local policing" (A) and second to make a number of strategic recommendations concerning the implementation of such a policing scheme, aimed at overcoming certain obstacles and avoiding the pitfalls that may jeopardise the chances of success of this kind of reform (B).<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Carrer F., "La problématique de la sécurité en Italie", in Froment J.-C., Gleizal J.-J. and Kaluszynski M., "Les États à l'épreuve de la sécurité", PUG, 2003, pp. 145 et seq.

<sup>22</sup> Ferret J. and Maffre P., "L'usage de la notion de police de proximité en Espagne : indice d'une mutation inachevée", Les cahiers de la sécurité intérieure, No. 39, 2000, pp. 77 et seq.; Perez Perez J.-M., "La policia de proximidad en Espana", Revista de documentacion, Ministerio del interior, No. 12, 2001, pp. 39 et seq.; Guillen Lassiera F and Rabot A., OISIN II research project into a common methodology for assessing the impact of local policing reforms in Europe, Final report by the Spanish team, unpublished, 2003.

<sup>23</sup> IHESI, "Guide pratique de la police de proximité", La Documentation Française, Paris, 2000.

<sup>24</sup> This report will be based in particular on information gleaned from the implementation of local policing schemes in Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, France and Belgium.

## **A. Theoretical recommendations: founding principles of community policing**

The diversity of "community policing" models means that there is no single standard for this form of policing, and seeking to apply one would moreover be counter-productive. By definition, a local police force is destined to reflect the particularities of the territorial, human, geographical, cultural and other contexts that determine its organisation and operating methods. It is accordingly a police force whose adaptability must be safeguarded to enable it to cope with the variety of social demands and whose capacities for frontline action must be enhanced. In this respect, considerable prudence is called for when disseminating "good practices" - firstly, because what constitutes a good practice in one place will not necessarily qualify as such elsewhere and, secondly, because, despite the considerable time and effort devoted to producing them, official "theories" and "organisation charts" systematically lack any input on the inevitably slow, protracted and difficult implementation of the accompanying professional tools, skills and know-how.

At the same time, it is necessary to define some minimum common principles, so as to ensure that this policing concept remains true to the founding ideas, without prejudice to the form it ultimately takes or its necessary adaptation to the variety of situations on the ground. For instance, it can be seen that a local police force is characterised by decentralisation (allowing its component units and officers considerable practical autonomy to intervene upstream from law-breaking or anti-social behaviour), a preference for persuasion and prevention rather than hard-line coercion, a focus on communication and co-operation with the public (through an increased number of patrols and the implementation of situational prevention mechanisms), a broader mandate encompassing problem-solving (through identification of the common factors behind a series of disorders so as to allow a non-sequential response) and the adjustment of police priorities to public expectations (with the implementation, from time to time, of satisfaction surveys and assessments).

Local policing is a functional concept and accordingly in principle divorced from the police's organic status. A police force's identity is indeed not determined by whether it is a state or a decentralised force, or a federal or federated one. However, the model is far more easily accessible by a local police force, on account of the range of characteristics of this form of policing (territorial focus, closeness to the community and public service role, versatility of the forms of action taken) and their implications in terms of recruitment and training, organisation of activities and knowledge of the community.<sup>25</sup> Local and regional authorities moreover play a strategic role in the organisation and running of security partnerships, which further enhances the benefits to be derived from establishing a local police force. These arguments are discussed in detail below.

### **1. Territorial focus**

Local policing necessitates a much more street-level approach to police action, so as to enable the development of a detailed knowledge not only of the neighbourhood concerned but also of the resident population.

#### *- Precise knowledge of the neighbourhood*

Local policing is organised on a territorial basis. To be more precise, it is based on a sectoral approach: "each administrative district, or ward, is made up of a number of sectors (divided into neighbourhoods), constituting the scene of performance of police duties, with the opening of police stations to which versatile, non-specialist police teams are assigned, benefiting from the back-up of other police services in the fields of intervention, intelligence and investigation."<sup>26</sup> Assigning police officers to a neighbourhood team is essential. The aim is to make them more visible and to facilitate their integration in their area of intervention, the key to the relationship of trust they will attempt to build with the community.

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<sup>25</sup> Council of Europe, Recommendation 152 (2004) and Resolution 180 (2004) on local policing in Europe, both adopted by the Congress of Local Authorities on 27 May 2004.

<sup>26</sup> "Guide de la sécurité dans la ville", published by Weka, November 2006.

This territorial focus entails initial consideration of a number of parameters:<sup>27</sup>

*- Criteria for defining appropriate areas of intervention*

The boundaries of wards must be defined not only according to police logic (the incidence of crime in certain neighbourhoods, internal organisation, ease of patrolling, etc.), but also in line with the human, social, economic and geographical realities of the areas of intervention and so as to take account of the territorial organisation of other professional services with a view to fostering the harmonisation of practices among public players, facilitating the exchange of information between them and enhancing the possibilities for them to cross-match their means of intervention (deployment of resources, expert knowledge, etc.).

*- Assigning police officers to a dedicated neighbourhood team*

Police mobility must be curtailed so that police officers can be embedded in a given neighbourhood for a length of time sufficient to ensure that local people get to know their faces and that they themselves become familiar with specific local issues and problems and the institutional environment in which they operate. A legally decentralised local police force may be better able to respond to this need, particularly by making it easier to recruit police officers locally.

*- Conditions for physically occupying the territory*

Police officers occupy the territory by ensuring a stronger physical presence in their areas of intervention. Wherever possible, the local police must patrol on foot, by bicycle or possibly on horseback in certain areas such as parks. They must be within reach of the population, open to contacts with it and simultaneously exert real dissuasion through their presence. This presence must be assessed in terms of availability and accessibility. Police conduct is important here. They must behave in a welcoming, receptive manner. The installation of neighbourhood police stations is also a must, although the emphasis should above all be on accessibility (appropriate opening hours, welcoming premises, etc.). A local presence may also involve the implantation of police information points or contact points in local shops (post offices, newsagents, etc.), or in buildings occupied by other public authorities. Again, police call boxes can be installed in what are known to be high-crime areas. The use of electronic communications technology must also be promoted, with the police offering "on-line services" (e.g. an on-line police station in Italy, electronic police services in Spain).

*- Ensuring consistency of police and institutional action within the same territory*

Care must also be taken to ensure the consistency of interventions by different police departments, so that each department bears in mind the constraints and objectives of the others. For example, a heavy-handed arrest by police officers on night duty can have extremely negative consequences for the co-operation work carried on by local police on day duty when dealing with certain groups of individuals. The aim is therefore to develop an interdepartmental culture (including between different police agencies where different police forces - state and decentralised - intervene in the same territory) by fostering exchanges of information concerning work in progress, neighbourhood problems, etc. Albeit necessary within the same police agency and between different police agencies, this consistency is also essential between bodies belonging to the different institutions involved in prevention and mediation (the education system, social workers, private security firms, etc.). The territorial continuity of institutional action is vital to the effectiveness of any long-term work. Holding regular coordination meetings, setting up ad hoc working groups, participation in partnership structures with a policy-making role, the development of information exchange initiatives, of joint training sessions, of inter-departmental internships, etc. are all measures which can facilitate a consistent, coherent approach by the various professional players involved. In many European countries local authorities assume a central coordinating role with regard to security agencies in the broad sense. On account of their local presence and their familiarity with the diverse multi-agency systems they are naturally in a position to take the lead in local partnership structures.

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<sup>27</sup> Identified inter alia by the Council of Europe regarding policing of disadvantaged urban areas. Cf Recommendation Rec (2003) 2 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on neighbourhood services in disadvantaged urban areas, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 13 February 2003.

### *- Identifying the population's needs*

A constant focus of local policing is to foster the emergence of a new relationship between the police and the community, characterised by trust, a sense of service and co-operation. From this standpoint, one of the keys to local policing's success is its ability to acquaint itself with the community's needs and to respond to them.

To some extent this entails implementing schemes allowing local people to express their views about the problems they are facing and the strategies being used to tackle them. It also means establishing contacts with population groups who are hard to reach - because of their lifestyle, a language barrier or cultural practices - and proactively seeking to identify their needs. There are various ways of doing this: surveys of the local population, meetings with community representatives, visits to local institutions such as schools and community centres, ensuring that members of the public know how to communicate with particular police agencies (for example, by publishing the relevant telephone numbers and email addresses, encouraging police officers to hand out "contact cards", having officers wear their names on their uniforms, as in Belgium since the "Octopus" reform, or in some areas handing out leaflets bearing the names, photos and email addresses of neighbourhood police officers).<sup>28</sup>

At a more structural level, this can entail taking account of the identity of a given population group within a neighbourhood (intercultural management) in order to adjust police responses while upholding the fundamental principles of a state governed by the rule of law. The Matonge unit in Brussels, set up in April 2001, offers an illustration of this kind of contact work between police officers, the community and other institutional and voluntary-sector players aimed at developing a project which takes account of a neighbourhood's cultural identity. While taking care to strike a balance between recognising the specific lifestyle of this African quarter of Brussels and safeguarding local people's right to a quiet life, a genuine policy decision has been made to present this neighbourhood as a multicultural showcase, a place where Europe meets Africa, gradually allowing the restoration of a climate of trust between the public authorities and the local population.

## **2. A police that serves the public**

Improved knowledge of the territory and of the local community's needs is not an end in itself for the local police, which must not only treat this information as a source of intelligence for its traditional law-enforcing activities, but must also be able to manage it and use it to develop effective responses.

### *- An effective response to the diversity of the community's social demands*

Firstly, community demands are extremely heterogeneous, depending on the varying social, economic, ethnic and other profiles of the population groups expressing them. Secondly, the needs voiced by the population only marginally concern crime as such, but more generally refer to a number of situations and/or behaviours regarded as a nuisance, problematic or abnormal, this latter qualifier also depending on themselves variable standards of perception. Such demands may for instance concern nuisance parking, noise pollution, street cleanliness and fouling by dogs, disputes with neighbours, stray animals, thefts, vandalism, etc. They are accordingly more broadly linked to disorders having a negative impact on the quality of daily life... It is therefore from this angle - that of the "quality of life" or "liveability" to borrow a Belgian expression - that the population's concerns must be assessed. The police must learn to take into account the diversity of these demands by developing an organisation that will enable it to respond either directly or indirectly, notably by relaying demands to the competent public services. (Providing police officers with a handheld computer allowing them immediate access to all kinds of information may prove very useful in this context.) The local police's future legitimacy will to a large extent depend on its ability not to decline competence for dealing with demands of this type.

However, this is no easy task. It entails reorganising police departments to adapt to the diversity of community demands, and also, at a deeper level, a change in police culture, in police officers' perception of their job and in the relative status of their different tasks. This redefinition of police action invalidates hitherto dominant concepts of the "noble tasks" of police work. Regarding the police as a public service in fact involves a change of reference values for their activity. It attaches prime

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<sup>28</sup> Beck A, "Best practice in developing and delivering local policing in Europe: a compendium", Council of Europe, 18 January 2005, p. 8.



importance to the police's ability to respond to all kinds of user demands. The user is no longer a mere member of the public, but, by expressing needs, becomes a driver of police activity. A sign that the police have grasped this shift in reference values is the introduction of a complaints system, enabling users to express their dissatisfaction (via a free call line, for example), and a complaints handling process (a kind of police "after-sales service") aimed at identifying the reasons for complaints (rudeness, unprofessional conduct, reception conditions, slow response times when incidents are reported, feedback or the lack thereof, etc.), take stock of overall user satisfaction with police services and draw conclusions making it possible to adapt police activities so as to better satisfy community demands. The police must not be afraid of addressing user dissatisfaction, for example during public meetings, but on the contrary show that they take complaints seriously and are attempting to improve the public service they offer.

#### *- Solving community problems*

Analysing the activities of municipal police forces in France, Virginie Malochet points out that they seek to go beyond individual problems in order to pinpoint the difficulties facing the community as a whole and devise methodical means of dealing with them.<sup>29</sup> From this angle, their approach is consistent with the spirit of "problem solving policing". H. Goldstein wrote that a problem-oriented police sets itself the goal of becoming an effective, consensus-seeking intelligence-led police. Firstly, it must precisely define the purposes of its action, and to do so rid itself of the legal classifications, which do not suffice to describe the problems because they exclude those of a non-criminal nature and concentrate police activities on arresting offenders. However, law-enforcement is but a means, not an end in itself. Goldstein proposes starting from community concerns. His definition of a problem embraces the extremely broad range of disorders that lead members of the public to call the police.<sup>30</sup> Unlike community policing, problem solving policing, however, endorses the decision-making empowerment of police authorities, who have the last say regarding the priorities assigned to their actions. It is then for the police to make a careful assessment of the existing forms of responses and consider how they can be improved in order to identify innovative operational solutions, constituting alternatives to criminal proceedings, that will help win back the public's trust.

### **3. Prevention, repression and dissuasion**

A local police force does not have a precise mandate, but rather relies on the diversity of its police officers' skills and interventions to develop an appropriate, comprehensive response to all the demands made of it. In this respect, local policing is not preventive, dissuasive or repressive in nature, but all three at once.

#### *- A general surveillance activity*

Local policing also partakes of a strategy of keeping a reinforced dissuasive police presence on the street. It is accordingly a police which wishes to be seen as much as to see. In this respect, local policing helps to combat not only genuine insecurity, but also the perception of insecurity. According to the "broken windows" theory,<sup>31</sup> visible signs of neighbourhood neglect and decay foster the emergence of a sense of impunity and force the most fearful members of the community off the streets. Conversely, the patrolling of public areas by police officers is a sign that social controls are operational, symbolises the presence of authority and reassures the general public, whose confidence is necessary to their participation. Since local people are reassured by the presence of uniformed police and the environment seems safer to them, they can repossess the neighbourhood, occupy public spaces and thus take a hand in the informal social control processes that complement institutional controls. The police must accordingly learn afresh how to manifest a symbolic presence where there is a community demand for it, regardless of an area's crime rates: outside schools, near bus stops, in front of churches, in the vicinity of cinemas or other leisure facilities, inside stations, and so on. They must also ensure a systematic presence at public meetings, which may for instance be held in places symbolising the life of the neighbourhood (schools, outposts of the town hall, youth centres, etc.).

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<sup>29</sup> Malochet V, "Les policiers municipaux. Les ambivalences d'une profession", doctoral thesis in sociology, Victor Segalen University- Bordeaux II, November 2005

<sup>30</sup> Goldstein H., "Improving police: a problem oriented approach", Crime and Delinquency, 1979

<sup>31</sup> Wilson J.Q. and Kelling G.L., "Broken Windows. The police and neighbourhood safety".

From this standpoint, local policing is, and must be conceived as, an adjunct to a genuine situational prevention strategy. In other words, local policing is one component of a more general strategy permitting the repossession of public space, making the official surveillance measures implemented in public places more visible and allowing advance identification of physical environments which create opportunities for crime, with the aim of either making its commission more difficult or depriving the perpetrators of justifications for their acts. The organisational aspects of local policing (location of police stations, timing of patrols, etc.) must therefore be determined with due regard to other measures implemented as part of a situational prevention policy (CCTV surveillance, urban design features of various kinds, opening hours of other professional services, police call boxes, lighting, etc.). That is to say a local policing policy cannot be devised in isolation but must be part of a more comprehensive debate on all the complementary tactics that can be used to counter crime.

*- A versatility logic*

Versatility is a key feature of local policing, which requires police officers to perform a whole range of "peri-policing" tasks. Neighbourhood involvement, privileged relations with the community, the effort to respond to the public's expectations, preventive action, informal problem settlement, the surveillance role played in public places and the broader social mandate are all factors which lead to a dispersion of police activities towards new responsibilities. This observation should constitute food for thought when it comes to defining police tasks and determining the nature of the powers to be conferred on the police, or not. For instance, on the subject of French municipal police forces, Virginie Malochet considers that municipal police officers' low legal empowerment fosters a broader approach to their interventions, in that they do not concentrate on activities which could distance them from the tasks the public expects them to perform.<sup>32</sup>

## **B. Strategic recommendations: Criteria for implementing local policing**

Implementing a local policing approach is a reform of substance which concerns all police activities. It is therefore necessary fully to appreciate all that it entails, so that it is treated not as a parallel adjustment of policing methods but, indeed, as an effort to place things on a new footing, to introduce a new policing philosophy, which is complementary to the hard-line policing model and equals it in importance. Some writers unhesitatingly use the term "cultural revolution" to describe the changes induced by this policing model. It is accordingly necessary to size up exactly what this reform entails.

### **1. Getting the measure of the reform and investing the resources (human, material, organisational, financial, statistics, etc.) needed to ensure its success**

It is very difficult to form an idea of the costs of introducing local policing and the resources that need to be devoted to it. At the same time, local policing must be part and parcel of a global strategy to modernise the police taking into consideration the interactions between the job culture, departmental organisation and the activities of the police as a whole. This makes it possible to pinpoint a number of criteria that can contribute to the success of this policing model:

*- Rethinking in-house policy towards job status*

Since it brings a deep-rooted change in professional practices, in favour of a less impersonal, essentially preventive approach to community relations, local policing could be perceived as a departure from more traditional (hard-line) policing methods, with the ensuing risk that individual police officers come to regard their overall greater involvement in the social treatment of crime as less status-enhancing and divorced from the police's "real" job of fighting crime. Recruitment, initial and on-the-job training, as well as the entire in-house careers policy (material incentives, bonuses, promotions to a higher rank, and so on) must take this factor into account so as to be able gradually to disseminate a new image of the foundations of police activity.

*- Ensuring rational allocation of human resources*

Local policing requires a greater field presence (police stations and officers on the beat). It accordingly necessitates the mass mobilisation of personnel, which can be achieved by bringing in additional staff, redeploying staff between police departments or agencies or assigning "mobile" personnel to

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<sup>32</sup> Malochet V., "Les policiers municipaux", PUF, 2007.

dedicated neighbourhood teams. At all events it must go hand in hand with a redrawing of the policing map and more modern human resources planning. Here too, the establishment of local police forces facilitates such an approach by making it far easier to adapt police strength to neighbourhood needs, whereas it is a known fact that redeployment of national police forces at the local level always represents a very cumbersome operation, can come up against much resistance and is often doomed to failure.

*- Adapting middle and senior management*

The effectiveness of a reform depends directly on appropriate forms of management and work organisation. It is accordingly a good strategic move not to confine training in local policing to beat officers alone, but to extend it to all levels of management. Police managers must carry the reform without giving the impression that it is being imposed on them. Similarly, this factor must be taken into account when recruiting managerial-level personnel.

*- Modernising data collection systems*

The entire local policing theory is based on both a modernisation of the traditional techniques for making use of intelligence and a desire to obtain useful information from local people in order to adapt police services to social demands. This dual approach accordingly entails a significant investment in reform of the police's data collection and processing system. Although the New York Police Department's Compstat process has provided many police forces with a model for more centralised organisation of police information, other proven methods involve conducting public security surveys within the community, along the lines of the neighbourhood surveys performed in the Netherlands, or in Catalonia to accompany the deployment of the "Mossos d'esquadra", the aim being to gather more valuable information on local people's perception of the police and concerns. Information can also be obtained by developing police contacts with other frontline operators within the neighbourhood (parks wardens, building janitors, sports club leaders, building maintenance firms, reception staff, etc.), holding consultation meetings with focus groups, relying on "informants" (such as the networks of local informants in Belgium) or introducing user representation within police departments themselves (such as the advisory groups in Quebec).

## **2. Accompanying the introduction of local policing with a genuine partnership approach**

In many European states changes in security policies have been founded on a genuine partnership approach at neighbourhood level.<sup>33</sup> Here, the police are no longer alone in tackling insecurity. They co-operate with other institutional players whose activities are complementary to their own. This trend is also doubtless behind an adaptation of police intervention methods, made necessary by the need to endow the police with a new legitimacy and a changed image in the context of far-reaching public policy reforms. This broader institutional partnership also allows the local police to legitimise their action not just because it makes it easier to harmonise the interventions of the various professional agencies working in the same neighbourhood, but also in that it offers opportunities to relay demands addressed to the police to those most capable of providing a rapid, effective institutional response to the problem concerned. The resulting integration of professional services can but enhance the sense of continuity and overall consistency of the public authorities' action, as perceived by the general public.

Regular, active police participation in local partnerships can therefore be seen to be absolutely essential. It is a precondition for local policing's success. However, the police must also make allowances for the fact that their presence may sometimes give rise to certain misgivings on the part of other players, particularly in the social work sector. Striving to understand the sense and purpose of other agencies' interventions, their specific cultures and the professional constraints they have to contend with will help guarantee some chance of success for such partnerships, which must always be based on respect for differences and for the distribution of responsibilities so as to avoid deadlocks and misunderstandings which may jeopardise the reforms as a whole.

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<sup>33</sup> Froment J.-C., Gleizal J.-J and Kaluszynski M. (ed.), "Les Etats à l'épreuve de la sécurité", PUG, 2003

In France the IHESI has conducted research into partnerships between the police and other agencies which has made it possible to list a number of preconditions for the success of these forms of co-operation:

- timely mobilisation of the players able to deal with a given situation - and ideally all the appropriate players;
- a partnership based on person-to-person contacts founded on trust, mutual esteem and respect;
- all partners should adopt an approach in line with the local policing spirit, i.e., to reiterate the general objective of local policing, creating conditions conducive to genuine public safety and order;
- the need for the police to provide feedback on the outcome or impact of action taken by local community players (such as filing of a complaint, reporting of individuals or incidents, and so on).<sup>34</sup>

### **3. Considering how to give the police greater legitimacy in the eyes of the population**

Although the police's legitimacy depends on their ability to offer effective responses to the demands addressed to them, it also necessitates a reinforcement of police ethics.<sup>35</sup> The issue of observance and protection of human rights in the work of police agencies has assumed growing importance over the past decade. It is a matter of strengthening, or in some cases restoring, public confidence in the police. This situation has arisen in part as a result of the increasing diversity of the communities living in Europe and also due to the emergence of an internationally recognised body of law that affords greater protection to the individual and makes organisations more accountable for their actions. In 1997 the Directorate General for Human Rights of the Council of Europe launched a programme "Police and human rights 1997-2000", with the aim of raising awareness of human rights standards within police organisations all over Europe. It was recognised that, whilst human rights in policing was, in itself, an old subject, the goal of translating the theory of human rights protection into a set of tools for daily practice remained a challenge which required considerable attention.

All police officers must be familiar with and understand both international human rights standards and their own country's legal provisions on human rights. They must also understand how these should be applied in their everyday work and interaction with citizens.<sup>36</sup> Independent institutions must be set up to exercise police oversight (the National Commission for Security Ethics in France, the independent commission responsible for inspecting police cells in the Netherlands, human rights "champions" in the United Kingdom, etc.). In a way, the very nature of local policing requires that pride of place be given to protecting human rights: the local police's visibility, their presence in the neighbourhood's very heart and the frequency of their contacts with citizens, often belonging to extremely diverse communities, are key arguments for making human rights a cornerstone of the system. If that is not the case, it is likely that any reform undertaken will be doomed to failure.

A special effort needs to be made to improve the police's reputation among minorities (young people, ethnic minorities, etc.) as surveys show that they have a particularly poor image of the police. These survey results must be published and taken on board in order to initiate a debate on how to improve the situation. The possibility of recruiting police officers with ethnic minority backgrounds is worth considering, so as to open up the police to the population as a whole, make it easier to take minority communities' demands into consideration and ensure that the police better reflects the diversity of society. A recruitment policy along these lines - and the career paths of officers recruited in this context - must be subject to regular scrutiny to verify both that there is indeed a genuine tendency towards greater diversity within the police and the impact of this trend in terms of police practices and the police's image.

Another sensitive issue needs to be addressed here. Since local policing is based on modernised, and increasingly precise, collection of information and of community demands, the use made of the resulting data must be absolutely transparent. A number of questions must be asked: What information is really necessary to the performance of a task assigned to the police? What methods

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<sup>34</sup> "Guide de la sécurité dans la ville", published by Weka, November 2006

<sup>35</sup> Council of Europe, Recommendation 10 (2001) of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the European Code of Police Ethics, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 19 September 2001.

<sup>36</sup> Council of Europe, Local policing in Europe, Explanatory memorandum, Rapporteurs: Barnes S. and Mangin P., 16 April 2004, p. 18.

should be used to gather it? What about the status of those supplying information (for example, a key, and delicate, question is to what extent those who attend neighbourhood meetings are representative of the population at large)? Which kinds of information can legitimately be obtained from the population? Which kinds of information should it not be asked to provide? How can the police report back on the uses made of this information?<sup>37</sup> What monitoring mechanisms can be implemented to oversee the nature of the information gathered and the use made of it? Etc.

#### 4. Anticipating the pitfalls of local policing

With regard to crime rates, it can paradoxically be seen that local policing may, at least initially, lead to an increase in the number of offences recorded. This is because the increased police presence and the police's greater involvement in combating disorders and anti-social behaviour are likely to lead to increased reporting of misdemeanours and petty offences, which people were formerly disinclined to bring to the notice of the police out of fear, discouragement, weariness or scepticism about the police themselves. Although it is, in certain respects, an indicator of increased confidence in the police, this pressure on the non-reporting rate, on the "black" figure of unreported offences, poses interpretation and evaluation problems. It is difficult to persuade the public, local decision-makers and possibly also senior police officers to accept that local policing may result (even temporarily) in an increase in the crime figures, to which special attention is paid and the annual publication of which gives rise to much media and political comment. Other potential problems caused by the introduction of local policing include exponential growth in, sometimes unreaonsable, community demands, longer response times, greater exposure of the police to user dissatisfaction, significant changes in working hours, etc.

The introduction of local policing must therefore go hand in hand with a genuine communication policy, an information campaign targeting local decision-makers, the media and the public (by means of web-sites, newsletters, public meetings, local media coverage, courses for citizens, the holding of news conferences when incidents occur, etc.). This work doubtless also needs to target members of the police themselves, so that they do not feel imprisoned by an unfamiliar logic (explanation of the objectives, etc.). Involving trade union organisations in the design of the reform itself is essential to increase the chances that those required to apply it in practice will subscribe to it. At all events an external and internal communication campaign must be run both before the reform's implementation and concurrently with it.

In general the police must learn to work with the media, to be willing to show a genuine openness about the results of police work, so as to be able to discuss them and to provide explanations. This communication issue is of particular importance in times of crisis, when news co-ordination and dissemination necessitate a real exchange between the various parties involved.

#### 5. Developing a genuine assessment process for local policing

Whenever a new system is implemented, it must necessarily go hand in hand with an appropriate assessment process. As regards police activities in general, and community policing in particular, the Sherman report<sup>38</sup> in the United States constituted an important step forward, supplemented, inter alia, by Peter Jordan's work<sup>39</sup> in the United Kingdom. Their assessments of the effectiveness of eleven different policing strategies - preventive, repressive or a mix of the two - led to the following conclusions:

- Increasing the number of police in a city cuts crime: **not established or effect unclear**;
- Fast response to reporting of incidents helps reduce crime: **not established in the United States** (nor in the UK, with the exception of burglaries);
- Substantially increasing random patrols in a neighbourhood deters crime in public places because of fear of a police "omnipresence": **not established**;
- Substantially increasing police presence in hot-spots and at previously observed "hot" times reduces the occurrence of crime: **well established**;

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<sup>37</sup> Seron V. and Smeets S., "Participation citoyenne et sécurité publique. Enjeux émergents et expériences locales", Politeia, Police Studies Centre, 2007; Brodeur J.-P. and Jobard F., "Citoyens et délateurs. La délation peut-elle être civique ?", "Autrement" publishing, collection "Mutations", 2005

<sup>38</sup> Sherman L., "Policing in Crime Prevention" in Sherman et al. (ed.), "Preventing Crime: what works, what doesn't, what's promising", Washington DC, US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, 1997, Chapter 8

<sup>39</sup> Jordan P., "Effective policing strategies for reducing crime", in Goldblatt J. and Lewis C. (ed.), "Reducing Offending: an Assessment of Research Evidence on Ways of Dealing with Offending Behaviour", London, Home Office, Research and Statistics Directorate, 1998, pp. 63-82.

- The more arrests police make in response to reported offences the less crime occurs: **not established in general** (in England, fairly well established in domestic violence cases, not at all established for juvenile violence);
- Targeting particular criminal profiles, with the idea that the higher the arrest rate for repeat offenders, the lower the number of serious crimes: **fairly well established** (but in the UK not well established for street drug trafficking);
- The greater the quantity and the better the quality of police contacts with the community through more frequent patrolling the less crime there is: **not well established** (except where the objective is to enhance the police's legitimacy with the public, where it is a good strategy);
- Problem oriented policing, where the theory is that the more the police are capable of identifying and reducing the closest causes of crime the less crime there is: **the theory has not yet been proven for lack of testing on a larger scale and through more thorough implementation**;
- Informal, but far more systematic, contacts between the police and young people will dissuade those likely to commit offences: **not established**;
- Targeting repeat victims can bring about a substantial reduction in multiple offences against the same victim: **well established**;
- Systematically working in partnership with multiple other agencies, to which the police provide information and which, once they have come to trust the police, supply information in return can substantially reduce crime: **well established**.

These results must be taken on board. They constitute an assessment grid that can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of local policing in relation to the real objectives assigned to it, rather than theoretical objectives which have not been shown to be valid or which earlier tests have proved to be invalid. At all events, assessment of police performance must go beyond a mere crime reduction logic. This is because it is now obvious that the police alone will never succeed in bringing about a substantial decrease in crime. The police's action is always part of a chain of social and private behaviour regulation mechanisms. This factor must be borne in mind in assessing police performance so that the police are not assigned sole responsibility for a complex process. Inter alia, this entails that assessment must not solely be based on endogenous criteria, but must include indicators external to the police, in particular when analysing police co-operation with partner agencies.

On the basis of these findings, it is possible to attempt a more accurate definition of the principles that should govern assessments of the effectiveness of local policing. This can be measured from two main standpoints:

- **The impact on the police institution itself**

To what extent has a reform on this scale involved genuine organisational changes in the police system? How is police co-operation with outside partners organised? What change dynamics can be deduced from this? This entails answering the following questions inter alia: Does the scheme target the right people and the right territories? Are the participants - principally members of the police - motivated and committed to the scheme? Did the scheme's designers consider possible material incentives and bonuses for the police officers involved? Which data are of relevance to the measurability of the declared objectives of a local policing scheme? What analysis can be made of the objectives of local policing, their measurability and the scheme's originality? Etc.

- **The impact of the strategies implemented in a given neighbourhood**

Where a reform has brought about significant changes in the police institution, how is it possible to measure the impact of a scheme with clear objectives on a given neighbourhood? If it is confirmed that implementation of a reform has changed the professional approaches applied in a given neighbourhood, how is it possible to measure the impact of a local policing strategy on the local environment? Have particularly interesting forms of local partnerships (between the police and other agencies) emerged to combat urban disorders? In the affirmative, what forms do they take? What instruments are used and how? What survey methods can be used vis-à-vis the public and which members of the public are best able to assess a reform process? Are there members of the public who are capable of making a valid assessment of the local police's work? Which categories of the public can be consulted and how? Lastly, which indicators have been shown to be worthwhile, and which not, in assessing the success of a well-defined, identifiable local policing scheme? Which types of developments have "something to say" about the effectiveness of local policing and which are irrelevant? Etc.