Policy on Community-Oriented Policing in the European Union

Policy paper
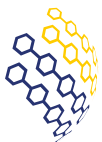
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PREFACE

This policy paper was written in tandem with the toolbox 'Community-Oriented Policing in the European Union Today' and focusses on the main theme of the Austrian Presidency; Community-oriented Policing. Since it would not be advisable to create a 'one for all' COP procedure for all EU MS, we decided to focus on the various policy and legislative measures on Community-Oriented Policing (COP) taken by the EU Member States (MS).

This policy paper first looks into the EU policy on COP. After discussing the reasons to implement COP in the different MS, it presents an overview of the methods MS use to implement COP. Chapter five formulates how COP officers engage with minorities. Finally, chapter six gives a brief overview of how the six pillars of COP are implemented in the national COP strategies.

CONTENTS

01 INTRODUCTION

In this policy paper we will investigate the various policy and legislative measures on Community-Oriented Policing (COP) taken by the EU Member States (MS). In order to gain this information the EUCPN Secretariat sent out a questionnaire to all MS. The analysis below is based on the information obtained through this questionnaire filled in by 18 of 27 EUCPN National Representatives. In order to present a more complete image of this topic, we enriched the results with insights found in available literature and information gathered by CEPOL in the framework of the informal COSI and JHA Council. Through this initiative, we received information from six more MS. We would especially like to thank the National Representatives and Substitutes of the 24 MS who sent us answers to the questionnaire. These answers form the corner stone of this policy paper.

We will first look at the implementation of COP in the European Union (EU) and then we look deeper into why and how the MS carry out the principles of COP. This paper fits into a larger exercise commissioned by the Austrian Presidency of 2018. Next to this policy paper, the EUCPN Secretariat also created a toolbox which contains a number of good practices from EU MS with regard to COP. The objective of this toolbox is to support policy-makers and practitioners, mainly police chiefs and upper management within police organisations, in achieving a successful COP strategy.

Even though this paper was commissioned by the Austrian Presidency, the opinions expressed do not necessarily express the view of Austria in the EU.
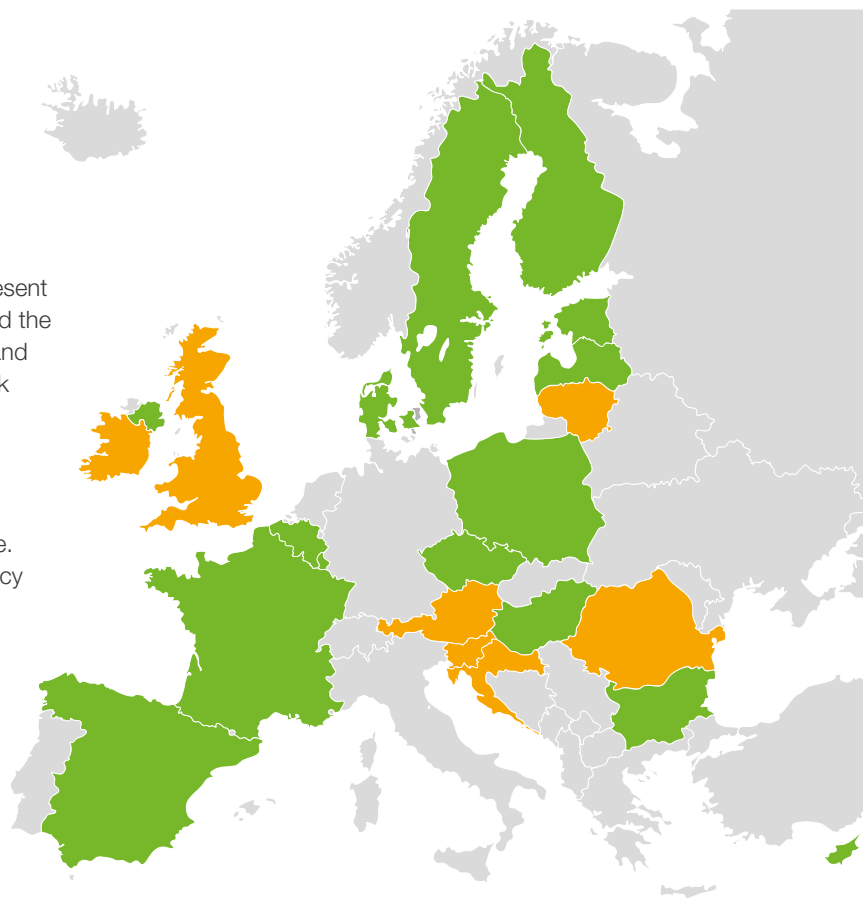
● *Information obtained through questionnaire*
● *Information obtained through COSI*
● *No information*

02 COMMUNITY-ORIENTED POLICING IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

In the EU acquis, there is no compulsory necessity for full compliance with legislation, policies and regulations about COP for the member and candidate countries. Each country tries to make and implement its own COP strategies both at national and local level. There is a EU Commission recommendation for MS about COP in the field of interior, however MS are not legally obliged to comply with these recommendations.[1] Considering the diversity of cultures, traditions, religions and practices it would not be advisable to create a 'one for all' COP procedure for all EU MS. Therefore, the goal of the Austrian Presidency was not to create a single European COP model for all Member States, but to develop a situation-appropriate, Europe-wide strengthening of COP which could contribute to the development of a European police culture, thus leading

to a common understanding of COP based on common European values.[2] Because of this, the EU MS will continue to develop their own ways of delivering COP and numerous strategies, practices and approaches will be adopted with the label of COP.[3] For example in Finland "preventative police work" refers to activities and approaches that are more or less similar to community-oriented policing.

The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) worked on COP since 20 years. They developed a first general guidebook in 2007, but for each country where they help to introduce COP a national manual or action plan is developed by the police which is based on the national strategy. This gives countries the opportunity to establish their own priorities[4].

On the one hand, some Member States have a long tradition of using COP principles but have recently adopted revised editions of how it manifests in every day policing.
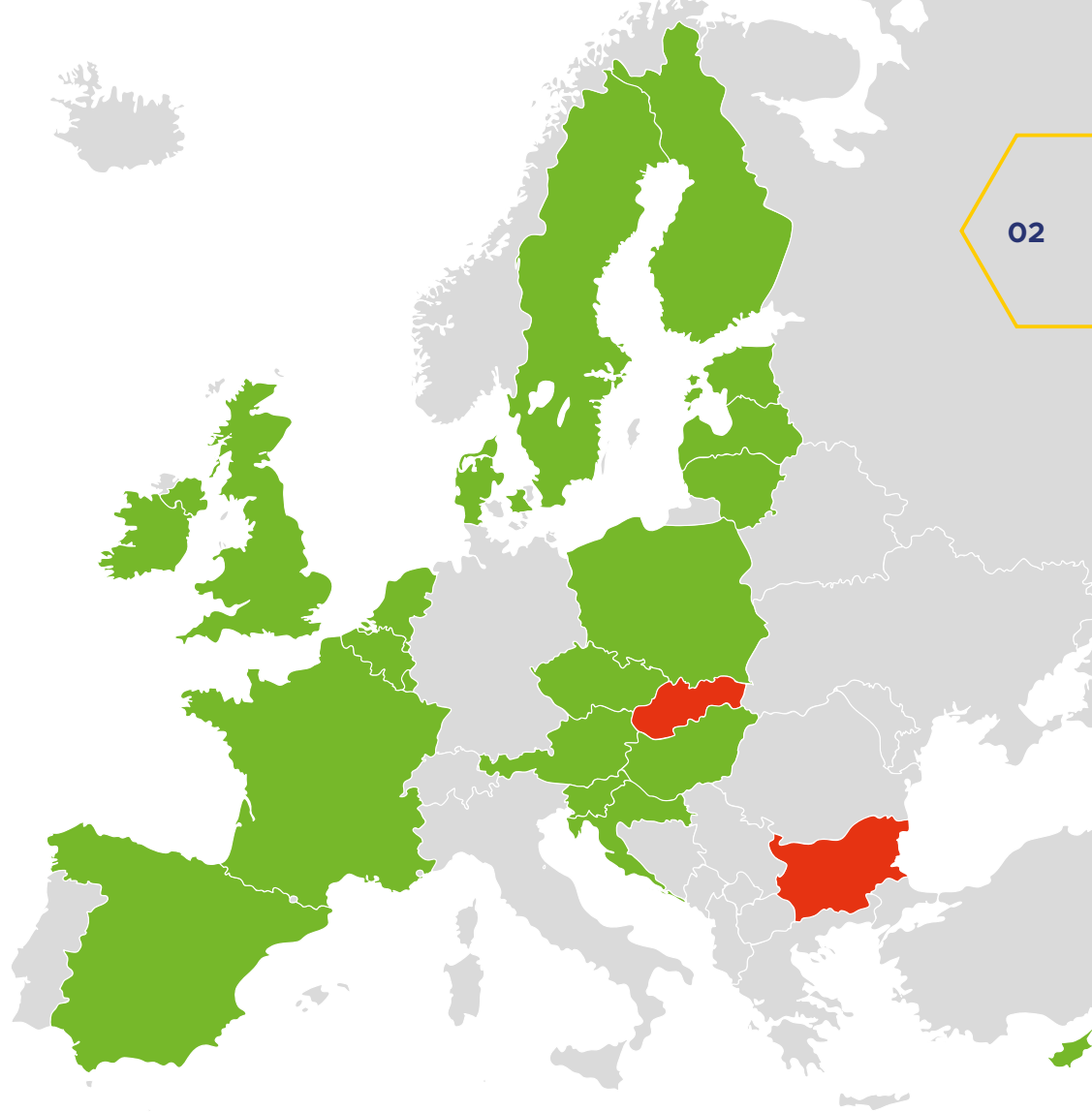
In 22 out of 24 responding MS, COP is a policing method. In some MS there is no specific national COP strategy, but the principles are highlighted as a key method in or form a part of other (crime prevention) strategies as is the case in Czech Republic and Hungary. The two responding MS which do not implement COP are Bulgaria and the Slovakia Republic. In Bulgaria it was implemented in 2002, but due to political changes in 2010 the Bulgarian Police no longer uses this model. In the Slovak Crime Prevention Strategy (2016-2020) the second priority, increasing the safety of municipalities and cities, includes COP as a method to achieve this goal.

On the one hand, some MS have a long tradition of using COP principles but have recently adopted revised editions of how it manifests in every day policing. For example in Ireland a New Community Policing Framework is being piloted in 2019 in anticipation of national roll-out thereafter. An internal revision of the current system of COP and a number of important oversight reports contributed to the revision process. New national guidelines for local police work based on community-oriented policing principles were developed by the Danish National Police in December 2018. The new guidelines are based on many years of experience in the local police districts and the international research conducted on COP .

On the other hand, in other MS COP only achieved a full break-through in recent years even though activities of a community oriented nature were being carried out by local law enforcement well before that; Sweden in 2015, Malta in 2017 and France in 2018.

03 WHY IMPLEMENTED?

There are numerous reasons why MS started implementing COP as a policing strategy.

On the one hand, to **increase the feeling of safety**. The **perception** of many is that **crime rates have been increasing**, even though **crime rates have been declining** in Europe since the mid-1990s.[5] This is also the main reason that Austria decided to focus on COP during their Presidency of the European Crime Prevention Network; scientific studies showed that even though the actual occurrence of crime in Austria had been falling steadily, the actual feeling of safety amongst citizens had decreased. This data corroborated the desire of the Austrian Ministry of Interior to enhance the involvement of the community in finding collective answers to common problems by actively engaging citizens. This is how Security.Together came into existence in 2016.[6] In the questionnaire other MS such as Estonia, Denmark, Luxemburg and Hungary also highlight the

fact that COP has great potential to reduce the fear of crime and promotes an objective and subjective sense of security at the local level as reasons to implement COP

On the other hand, COP was introduced to **increase the level of trust in police services**. Elevated levels of fear of crime correlate with a **decreased confidence in the functioning of police forces and organisations**.[7] The correlation between the implementation of COP and the aim to **strengthen the citizens' confidence in police** is cited by various MS in the questionnaire. Especially by **post-socialist countries**[8] where police have adopted COP philosophies and practices within the framework of the **democratization process** and the transfer of policing notions from the West after the socio-political changes in the 1990s.[9] When the communist regimes collapsed in these MS the local police systems were

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still based on an old Soviet model of coercion in which law enforcement agencies acted more as supervisors of society. This police system could hardly meet public needs and a police transformation was necessary. The police forces of these MS tried to find ways to **improve its public image** and **bring the police closer to the public**. They tried to achieve this by treating the police systems as a homogenous structure and showing the citizens that their representatives are equal members of civil society. Next to this, they wanted to create a proactive police force which gave priority to an early identification of possible causes for crime and their elimination; preventing rather than just responding to problems. OSCE also uses the concept of COP as part of the exercise to modernize police work and gain the trust of citizens in post-war countries. They view COP as part of a shift from a police force to a police service.[10] In the USA, the UK, Belgium and other MS this **lack of trust** between the public and the police is the result of **the dominant classic police model** that is referred to as bureaucratic, centrally organised, quick response on law enforcement but low on interaction with the public, reactive, not preventive, etc.[11]

Furthermore, several MS[12] indicate that they want to **increase the cooperation with the community** and take their desires, needs and expectations into consideration when defining and solving problems. At the same time Poland and Czech Republic want to activate the communities and make citizens aware that not only the police, but the whole society is responsible for security,

public order and the quality of life in the community.

In Denmark, Sweden and Malta the (re)introduction of COP was linked to a recent **larger police reform**. In 2015 new opportunities were created to implement COP in Sweden. The Swedish Police had made attempts to implement COP, e.g. in the 1990s when the Swedish Police was divided into 21 independent police authorities, but COP did not achieve a full break-through until 2015 when the Swedish Police became one single authority. In Denmark a large police reform was implemented in 2007, reducing the number of police districts from 54 to 12. As a result, many smaller local police stations were closed, and many police officers in rural areas were gradually assigned to new tasks. In order to meet new demands to the police, the local police officers needed to work smarter in order to maintain the relations with the local citizens. COP was introduced as a method and a framework to achieve this goal. In Malta, COP was introduced in 2017 when the Malta police force was restructured in an attempt to install a sense of proactive, rather than reactive policing. This restructuring coincides with the new Crime Prevention Strategy.

04 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY-ORIENTED POLICING

It is not within the scope of this policy paper to identify important factors for a successful implementation of COP. For this interesting matter we refer to the toolbox on 'Community-Oriented Policing in the European Union Today' where **10 key principles** were determined. In this chapter we will go deeper into how COP is put into practice today across the EU MS, or what differences and similarities can be found in its implementation.

According to Meško,the implementation of COP often receives insufficient attention and corollary. There is a lot of misunderstanding regarding what community policing is and what it is not. COP cannot be successfully implemented without sufficient proper understanding and adequate personal, material and legal resources.[13]

The questionnaire shows that in all Member States the decision to introduce COP was made **top-down**. In some MS such as Sweden, Ireland, Denmark, Cyprus, Lithuania and Latvia **pilot projects** were carried out in several urban and rural municipalities. After a positive evaluation and the necessary modifications the COP activities could be rolled-out at the national level. In Denmark, in contrast to the other MS, the 13 pilot projects were initiated by the local police districts and not by the central government. In Cyprus, the Community Policing Program has been implemented through the adoption of three programs; Neighborhood Police Officer, Neighborhood Watch

- ● Pilot project
- ● Entire country
- ● No information
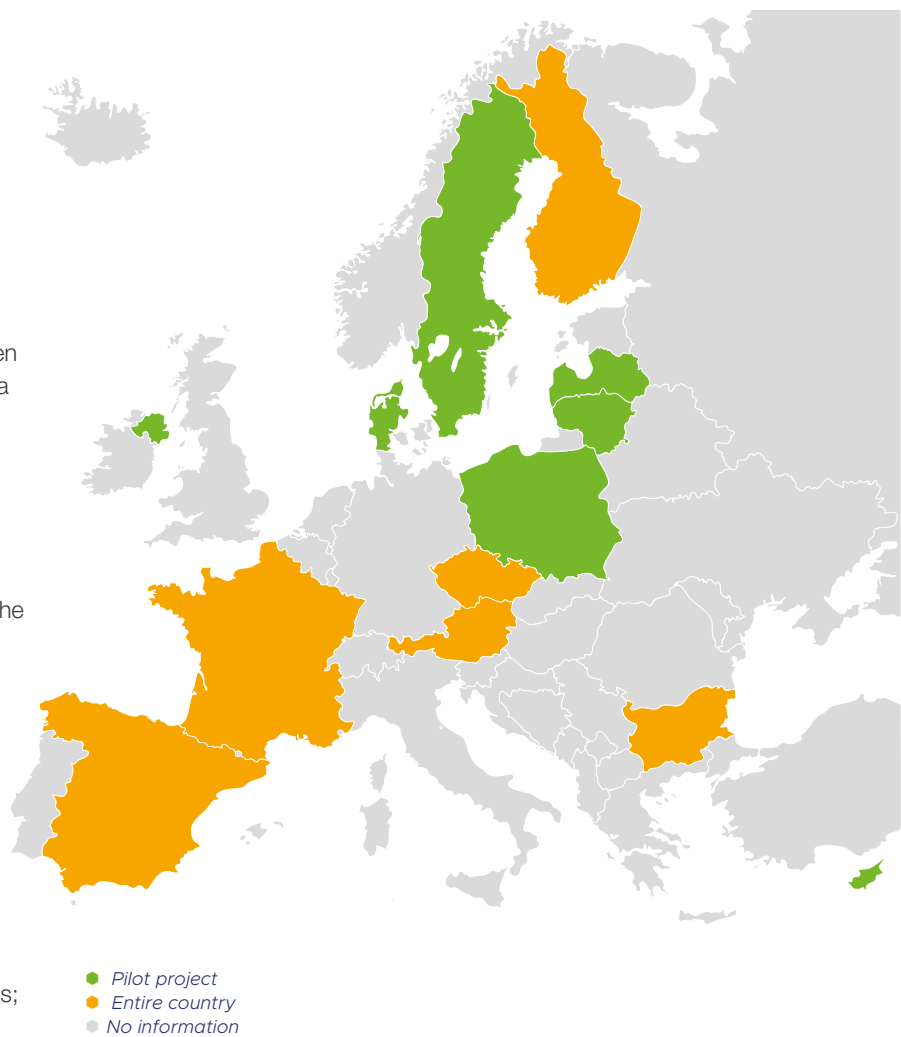
Program and the Bicycle Patrol Program. All three programs were preceded by a pilot project. In other MS COP was implemented immediately in the whole country.

In Croatia and Bulgaria, the new COP model was prepared by a **working group**. In Bulgaria, a standing **working group** consisting of members with expertise in different fields was established in 2002. That working group had the mission to develop the concept of COP. The strategy, containing the principles, mechanisms and practical activities, was approved at ministerial level.

Once the concept of COP is approved at the national level these principles need to be translated to and implemented by the local level. In this view different resources can be allocated; guidelines, training, additional state budget, etc.

First of all, police officers and the communities they serve are informed by the development of **guidelines**, brochures and handbooks. Lithuania issued a Safe Neighbourhood Handbook which provides information on the characteristics and benefits of safe neighbour-hoods, it describes how to create a safe neighbourhood group, monitor the surroundings, include more neigh-bours in activities which focus on assessing its safety, etc. Even though national guidelines are put in place from the top, the ethos and delivery is often bottom-up. One way to assure that COP address local needs is by developing **local crime prevention plans**. In the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Latvia, Poland and Slovenia these plans are drafted with the direct involvement of the community members and various stakeholders.

A second, very important resource, is the **training** of police officers. According to OSCE police officers should be properly trained in order to make COP work. OSCE's advice regarding training is to avoid short trainings, but rather embed COP training in national training programs, as this is more sustainable. This way the content of the training is also adopted by the relevant institutions: police headquarter, ministry of justice and interior, etc.[14] Besides, according to the idea of life-long learning, police chiefs should receive additional training, on top of the intensive training at the early career stages. [15]

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The questionnaire shows that most Member States focus more and more on training. In Ireland the New Community Policing Framework has a training plan and IT based 'Community Policing Toolkit" which will, once finalised and operational, provide the necessary training and resource support to assigned Community Policing Teams. Denmark declares that in the future community-oriented policing will play an even bigger role in training programs. In Latvia new trainings for police officers were planned for the second quarter 2018 and 2019. In Spain different resources were allocated to the training of the police officers and the material required to get a closer contact with the citizen, but since the creation of Community Policing Units, the training is carried out in a more specialized way. In Malta and France, where the principles of COP are implemented rather recently, new training modules were developed. In Malta all officers receive the training, while in France gendarmes from territorial brigades within the National Centre for Public Security Training in particular are trained. In Poland the police management also receives training about COP in the existing specialist courses. The topics covered in these trainings include: communication and negotiating skills, problem solving, territorial security diagnoses, etc.

Trainings are organized in various ways depending on the Member State. In Cyprus the trainees undergo a three week program of intensive training at the Police Academy. Apart from the theoretical courses the trainees also undergo a two day practical training carrying out their duties and tasks with other operative members of the Neighbourhood Police Officers. Both short-term and long-term training measures shall be integrated in all basic training in Austria. In Sweden the 'train the trainer' method is being used to nationally implement the 'meth-odological support on commitments to the citizens'. In Finland there is no standardized program or module for COP. The subject is embedded in various courses of the basic degree and advanced studies. In England and Wales knowledge is also exchanged at a peer-to-peer level through POLKA: a secure online collaboration tool which tens of thousands of police officers and staff have access to.

From the questionnaire we can also conclude that in most Member States no additional **financial resources** were allocated for training or material. The programs related to COP have no financial resources of its own yet and the activities are financed by the general budget of the police. In the beginning, Bulgaria even relied on the support of the non-government sector for printing materials, trainings and awareness campaigns. The activities of Bicycle Patrol Program in Cyprus are supported by the EU Funds. However, in England and Wales the Police Transformation Fund has been used to support improvements to COP. This extra funding is meant to improve services to the public in the future. The funding is led by the police itself and enables investment in reform, transformation and digitisation projects which benefit the whole policing system.
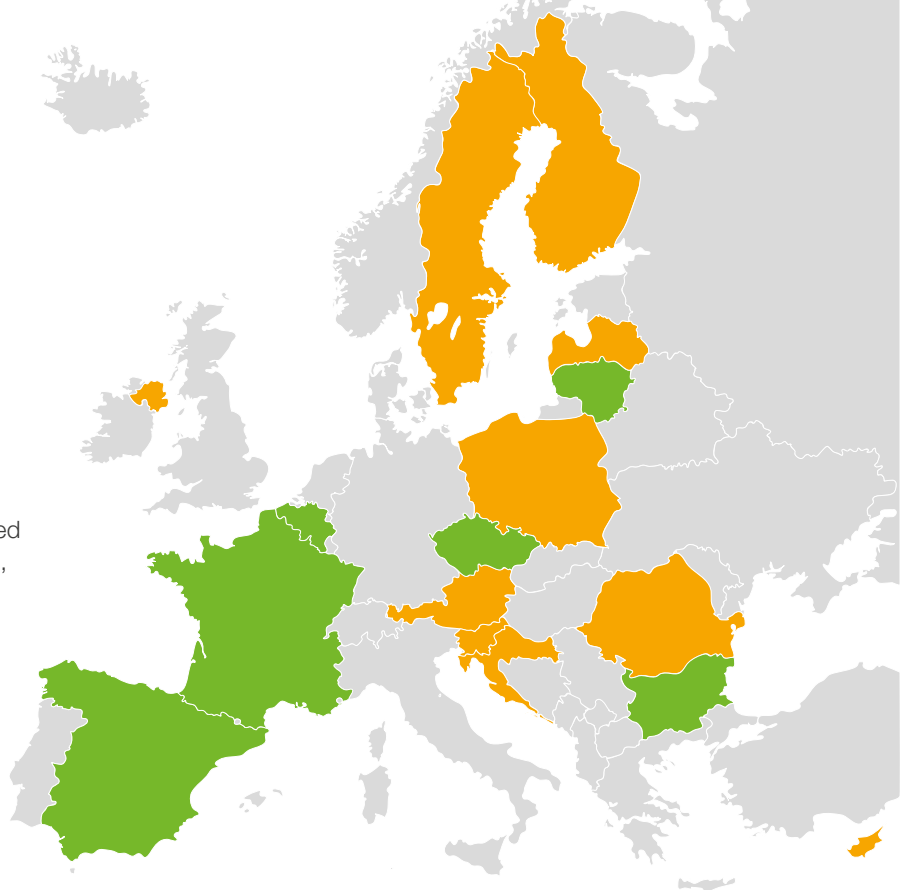
When implementing COP MS can decide whether they involve all police officers or whether they introduce dedicated community policing teams. In Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, France, Lithuania, Luxemburg and Spain COP is a **mission of every police officer**. This might change overtime. In Luxemburg e.g. the local police stations organized the community-oriented policing between 1999 and early 2018, but since the change of the 2018 law, all police officers also have a local mission.

In other MS **new positions** were created; in Austria the security officers, security coordinators, security partners and security municipal councillors form the so-called Security Forum. This must be considered a commitment by the police to embed people-oriented police work in the meaning of "community policing" within their organisational structure. In Lithuania a position of community policing officer was created from the position of district inspector when they started the pilot project in 2011. However, now COP is put at the heart of the work of all police officers, rather than relying on individual officer. In Finland these duties are most often carried out by police officers who work in preventative police units. In Denmark COP activities are mainly performed by local police officers which are dedicated to specific geographical neighbourhoods. Denmark chooses to dedicate COP tasks to specialised officers assuming that deep knowledge about the community-oriented approach as well as local knowledge about the neighbourhood or community is considered a huge advantage. However, the Danish Police has an ambition of bringing crime prevention into every aspect of police work. Hence, COP is considered a relevant method for all police officers.

- ● *All police officers are involved*
- ● *Specialised offers and units*
- ● *No information*

This also applies in Ireland where dedicated community policing teams are supported by all other Gardaí who operate with a community policing ethos in all functions. In Slovenia preventive work in a community policing area is the task of the entire police station, but it is planned, coordinated and analysed by the community policing officer. It is worth to mention that in Cyprus only police officers with more than 3 years of experience in various police departments can apply for a job as Neighborhood Police Officer (NPO). They are members of the police, with all the power of a police officer, but they carry out their duties in a uniform with specific badges, distinguishing them from the rest of the police officers.

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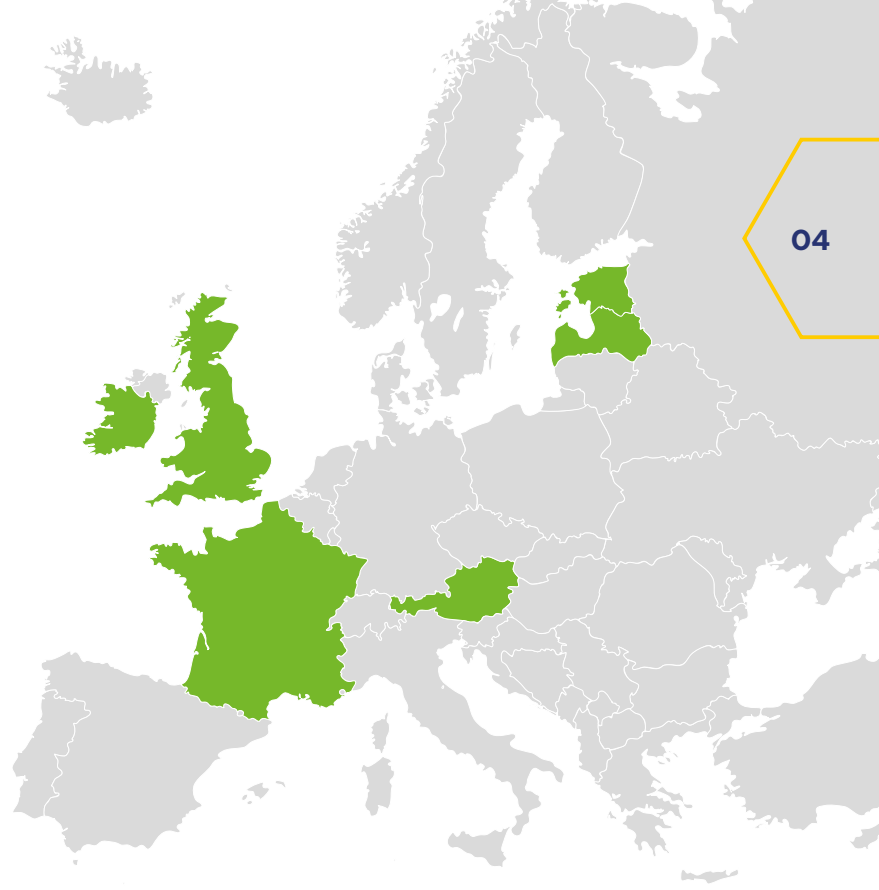
● *Cooperation with volunteers*

Additionally, several Member States cooperate with **volunteers**. In France for example the national police's **citizen reserve system** allows adult volunteers, wishing to actively express civic and solidarity commitment for the benefit of the community and everyone, to participate in missions of solidarity, communication with the population and crime prevention. Its main purpose is to strengthen the link between the police and the population, and to incorporate the participation of civilians in prevention, public support, communication and partnership missions into the functioning of a police station. The commitment is for one year and renewable. The missions are organized according to the availability of the volunteer citizen reservist and the operational needs of the host police station. Besides, there is the **universal civic service scheme**: this scheme offers every volunteer aged 18 to 25 the opportunity to commit themselves to a collective project by carrying out a mission of general interest in the field of prevention within the police services.

In Lithuania volunteering practices consists of three main segments: **Safe Neighbourhood initiative, Police Supporters and Young Police Supporters**. Police supporters have the authority to ensure public order by detaining people who violate laws and to provide medical assistance to victims in case of a crime. The Police Supporters Act enables police supporters to patrol independently. Before they start their duties they undergo a preparation process, which includes agreeing on a patrol route and discussing an appropriate response to emerging situations. At the beginning of 2018 there were 1020 young police supporters in Lithuania. Their main duties cover legal education, promotion of patriotic sentiments, promoting intolerance to crime, etc. In Austria, Cyprus, Estonia, Malta and the UK police officers are also augmented by unpaid volunteer police officers.

05 COMMUNITY-ORIENTED POLICING: ENGAGING WITH MINORITIES

In order for COP to be effective residents should trust the police and should be willing to cooperate with the police. This is, as a result of increasingly multicultural and multi-faith communities, often far from the truth in many poor and minority neighbourhoods.[16] This is attributed to several factors such as perceptions of racial profiling, frequency of victimization, injustice, lack of concern on the part of the police and ineffectiveness of policing efforts.[17]

The questionnaires show that many Member States are aware of this phenomenon and have undertaken steps to counter this. Possible actions are the creation of a dedicated working group, the development of a special strategy, the focus on minorities in existing strategies or making sure that the police reflects the communities they serve.

In Slovenia a **permanent working group** has been founded in 2014 which is systematically dealing with multiculturalism and subcultural groups. This group actively collaborates with representatives of the Office for National Minorities of the Republic of Slovenia, the Institute for Ethnic Studies, with legitimate representatives of Roma associations, organisations and other entities that represent individual communities and subcultural groups in the Republic of Slovenia. Good practices in working with the Roma community are being transferred to all communities, minorities and (sub) cultures in Slovenia.

A **new Strategy on Policing Minorities** is currently under construction In Czech Republic. The Strategy addresses the issue of communication and interaction between the police and the community in the area of minorities. The basic tool of minority policing are the so called **minority liaison officers**. Their main task is to mediate communication between minorities and the Czech Police and to establish cooperation with local governments.

Finland's Strategy on Preventive Police Work 2019–2023 highlights '**Work with minorities** *to prevent the emergence of communities living outside the society'* as one of the five **priorities** for 2019. In the case of vulnerable groups, particularly among the immigrants seeking refuge from war and persecution, the police make an extra effort to build personal contacts with community representatives and leaders.

During the recent years the **Danish Police** has had a major focus on citizens' perceived safety as well as trust in the police, with special attention to **socially marginalised neighbourhoods**. They consider COP as an approach, which can improve safety and trust in these neighbourhoods.

In the UK and Romania they try to assure that the **police reflect the communities they serve**. In Romania the "Mission: Possible" tries to attract ethnic minority students to a career within the police. The police forces in the UK have made real improvements in diversity, with a greater proportion of black and minority ethnic (BME) officers in England and Wales than ever before.

06 SIX PILLARS OF COMMUNITY-ORIENTED POLICING

As mentioned in the first chapter EU MS developed their own ways of delivering COP and adopted numerous strategies, practices and approaches under the label of COP. Defining COP remains a challenge because of this. To meet this challenge Unity, a three year project funded by the European Commission's Horizon 2020 Programme, has identified **6 pillars** that provide a clear and robust concept of COP, whilst at the same time providing a flexible framework that allows to adapt on the local level to the specific needs of the community. These pillars are inextricably linked together and reinforce each other. In our questionnaire we asked the MS if and how these 6 pillars are implemented in their national COP strategy:

- trust and confidence building
- accountability
- information sharing and communication
- addressing local needs
- collaboration
- crime prevention.

6.1 Trust & confidence between the police and the community

In the Anglo-American model, COP is often implemented in a way to contribute to a **visible presence** in the streets, as a means of providing reassurance and a source of security to the public.[18] This vision is also reflected in the questionnaires from Poland, Denmark, France, Cyprus and Slovenia. In the Danish National guidelines, based on COP, evolves around three principles on good local police work. One of these principles is 'visibility and accessibility'. They try to achieve this by assigning amongst others local police officers to a specific geographical neighbourhood. Another method to achieve this, which is also referred to by other MS, is by creating new patrol models such as foot-and bike patrolling. In Cyprus, Bicycle Patrol is one of the three programs that have been adopted to implement COP. By introducing Bicycle Patrol in four coastal cities Cyprus tries to bring police officers closer to citizens, to be more mobile and to reach areas that are not accessible by car or motorbike. Another goal is to serve the tourist population and deal with non-policing incidents as well as serving as first responders to more serious incidents, until the appropriate police units arrive at the scene.

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6.2 Accountability of the police to the community

As mentioned in chapter 3, post-socialist countries police have adopted COP philosophies and practices within the framework of the **democratization process**. According to Cole, mechanisms of police accountability or oversight of policing have to be a priority if Europe is to sustain an identity of democratic policing. However, there is no historical or research evidence that European citizens have felt that their local or national police forces are directly accountable to them. The only avenues through which citizens could directly call the police to account are through the courts or via a police complaints structure or Ombudsman. There is no direct neighbourhood or community oversight of police actions anywhere in Europe. Hence, the extent to which the police are answerable to communities in Europe is still unclear.[19] In Latvia, one of the goals of the **prevention plans** is to inform the community about the results, priorities and achievements of the police in the area. In France **biannual meetings with elected officials** and the population are organized. One of the goals of these meetings is to report on the activity of the gendarmerie. Additionally, the policies are not only evaluated on quantified performance indicators but also on qualitative indicators measuring service quality and user satisfaction. In Northern Ireland a number of measures to enhance the accountability of policing were implemented. These include amongst others; the establishment of a Policing Board to enhance account-ability of police at a strategic level, the establishment of a Police Ombudsman to provide for the independent investigation of police complaints, the formation of local Policing and Community Safety Partnerships in each geographic police district to facilitate local accountability and partnership working with local communities.

6.3 Addressing local needs

Municipalities are often responsible for crime prevention activities, this enhances the ability to address local needs. In several MS this is **embedded by decree**.

> Municipalities are often responsible for crime prevention activities, this enhances the ability to address local needs.

For example in Lithuania the local self-governance act provides the autonomous functioning of municipalities. This includes developing and implementing crime prevention programs. In the Czech Republic the local activities in the field of crime prevention are guided by Section 35 on municipalities, under which "municipality shall hold sole and independent responsibility for laying down, while respecting local conditions and local customs, conditions for the development of social care and provisions necessary to satisfy the needs of their citizens". In Denmark, Latvia and France a **problem oriented approach** is applied, therefore responses to problems in an area should be built on a prior analysis. In Denmark this analysis should be carried out in collaboration with the local intelligence- and analyses units and crime prevention departments in the police districts. In France the analysis forms the base of the local security strategy that each district head and commander of a departmental gendarmerie group has to develop. In Latvia COP officers have to make a risk assessment and inform the involved parties about the security improvements that should be implemented. Other MS decide to dedicate COP activities to **local delegations or specialised police officers**, assuming they are more aware of the criminal idiosyncrasy of the municipality where they are located.

6.4 Working in a collaborative manner

The most common method to ensure that police works in a collaborative manner with the community is by gathering various stakeholders when defining and solving local problems. Not only citizens, but also local associations, professionals, representatives of religious minorities, etc. are involved. This can be organised in different ways. In Lithuania the police representatives are also members of the **Crime Prevention Working Groups** that operate in the municipalities. The task of such groups is to identify the most dangerous and prob-lematic neighbourhoods of the municipality that require the most active intervention. The Police representatives provide information on the local criminogenic situation

and recommend measures that should be taken to address local problems. In Slovenia forms of cooperation with the local community also includes participation in consultative bodies, with the involvement of the COP officer, a representative of the police station leaders or another competent person. This work in consultative bodies is based on the Local Community Act. In Poland a total of 1120 **public debates** were held throughout the country in 2018. During these debates several topics were discussed: local security, symptoms of social pathology, as well as other problems affecting the sense of security of citizens. In Finland various stakeholders are gathered in order to draft the **local and regional security plans**. In Spain the national police has established several **collaboration agreements** with different groups in which different ways of mutual collaboration have been set. As mentioned earlier, involving **citizens** as **volunteers** is another method to increase partnership collaboration between the police and the community.

6.5 Communication & interaction between the police and the community

A first method to increase the communication and interaction between the police and the community are the more traditional ways of contact; neighbourhood meetings, thematic meeting, public debates, increased visibility etc. as a way for the citizens to inform the police about their concerns.

However, more recently ICT tools are used to support and facilitate a two-cay communication and interaction between citizens and the police. In the toolbox on community-oriented policing in the EU today, this is referred to as a 'next generation of COP projects'. The success of community schemes is dependent upon the police's ability to engage with the community, but this engagement is in need of development and innovation[20]. Social media can positively affect COP by offering public security planners and citizens new communication channels for contesting, challenging, debating, aligning, organizing and participating in security processes, independent of location and at minimal costs. It will increase chances for swift collaboration between the police and the community, together aiming for a safe and secure society. Collaboration of the police with the community can evolve into successful, more effective and efficient policing.[21] The police should make better use of the social media opportunity by strengthening teams that do social media work. On the one hand social media users

can send information to the police to highlight issues that concern them which can help police forces to gather evidence and help discover unreported crimes. On the other hand police forces can use social media channels to give feedback to the community thereby creating a climate of trust and enhanced engagement with the community. [22]

In Finland **Virtual Community Policing** is an example of special proactive police work. There are two types of preventive online police methods in several police departments. First, the Virtual Community Police consists of full or part-time virtual police officers working to solve problems and prevent crimes by using COP methods online. The second method uses social media as a COP tool. Police officers have their own Facebook profiles, which they use for communication and information sharing purposes with different online communities and individuals. [23]

In Poland an interactive **National Security Threat Map** was developed which enables citizens to report, anonymous and free of charge, areas where threats occurs that negatively influences the sense of security. The Police ensures that every indication will be properly been taken care of and that the effect of this action will be visible on the map. This application results in the identification of threats that were not identified in the past.

The questionnaire shows that several other Member States also already make use of the strengths of social media. For example in Austria where social media, such as Facebook, is used as a key element of the COP project. A Facebook account is created for each participating district so COP officers can share regional information. In 2013 a police App was created with information about wanted persons, stolen items, prevention, feedback and a crime map, etc. Besides this, there are plans to create a YouTube Channel where short films and video clips will be placed to provide the public with information about COP in general and the implementation of the strategy in Austria in particular. In the UK a website was developed which makes it easier for the public to access data, but it also enables them to find information and contact details of the officers that make up their neighbourhood policing team. In Poland a mobile application has been developed which allows citizens to identify community police officers throughout the country. It also allows citizens to call or send an e-mail to the community police officers.

In France a 24-hour digital brigade is available In digital territories since February 2018. In Denmark and Finland

the local preventive action plans should include a strategy on how the police can make effectively use of and strengthen their presence in social media.

6.6 Increase crime prevention

Local prevention plans aim to identify security threats in a timely manner. In Latvia prevention plans include preventive discussions with (potential) victims of for example property theft. During these discussions the COP officer informs the victim about security improvements that can be implemented. Additionally, the COP officers have to prepare a media strategy on current security issues.

Preventive activities can also be developed by the **national level**. The Crime Prevention office was established in Cyprus in 2005. Its main mission is the prevention of crime with the active participation of citizens. To achieve this, leaflets regarding the prevention of burglaries and theft from homes, vehicles, etc. were published. In addition, they inform the public on security measures by giving lectures to various groups and businesses. In Romania the National Institute for Crime Prevention and Research on criminality is responsible for developing prevention campaigns on various themes covering the whole spectrum of crime. In Finland **multi-disciplinary Anchor Teams** are set up in various police departments. These teams organise activities for young offenders and their parents in collaboration with social work and health care. The goal is to reduce violence, prevent victimisation and incipient criminal careers. This activity is one of the five priorities in the strategy for preventative police work.

CONCLUSION

In this policy paper we tried to give an overview of the various policy and legislative measures on Community-Oriented Policing taken by the EU Member States. Considering the diversity of cultures, traditions, religions and practices most Member States implement their own COP strategies both at national and local level.

The reasons to start using COP as a policing strategy are numerous. Two main reasons that are cited by various Member State is the desire to increase the feeling of safety and the level of trust in police services. The latter was especially the case in post-socialist countries. Nowadays, this trust in police services is lacking in many poor and minority neighbourhoods. Therefore, several Member States are undertaken steps to engage more with these target groups. Besides, Member States aim to increase the cooperation with the community and involve all citizens in achieving security, public order and quality of life in the community. In other Member States the introduction of COP was one element of a larger police reform.

In most Member States the decision to implement COP was instituted from above, whether or not preceded by a pilot project in one or several urban or rural municipalities. When implementing COP the properly training of police officers is one of the main prerequisites. Therefore, a positive development is the fact that training gets more and more attention in different Member States. Depending on the national police structure and situation, Member States either choose to involve all police officers or to introduce dedicated COP teams or officers. Additionally, police officers can be assisted by (unpaid) volunteers which also increases the collaboration with citizens.

In the last chapter we gave an overview of how the different Member States implement the six pillars identified by Unity. First of all, trust and confidence between the police and the community is often achieved by increasing visible presence of the police in the streets. Secondly, it remains unclear how the police are accountable to communities in Europe. Thirdly, municipalities take responsibility to address local needs by carrying out a prior analysis before drafting local crime prevention strategies. Fourthly, it is very clear that most Member States introduce innovate methods to increase the communication with the community. Strengthening police teams that do social media work should be considered as a promising method to advance the two-cay communication and interaction between citizens and the police. Finally, preventive activities that increase crime prevention should be carried out by the local level. If these activities are developed by the national level, they should be adjusted, based on the local context in each community.

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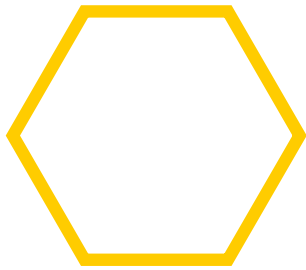
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