Editorial: Wind of changes in Finnish police research

The Police College of Finland reorganised its main functions (i.e., education, research, and development) in the beginning of 2013. The wind of changes did not leave the college’s thematic research areas untouched. Our research areas are now named Police Work and Organisation, Policing, and Police in Society.

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Project news: Police in Social Media and Organised Crime Portfolio

Among 28 ongoing research projects The Police College of Finland undertakes a research project that addresses social media as a new tool for crisis communication and management. The other project presented in this issue studies the investments of organised crime in the EU and analyses their impact on legitimate markets and economy.

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Newest publications

Comparison of the careers of female and male police officers, the review of the behaviour of parents in the conflict situation with the child, hate crimes reported to the police in 2011, Finnish-Russian police lexicon and other newest publications.

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Editorial: Wind of changes in Finnish police research

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Police Work and Organisation includes research focusing on police education, the police profession, human resources and work welfare. It also covers topics such as management and organisational structures in policing. These research themes often deal with police capabilities and know-how, as well as the development of the police organisation.

Policing covers research on operational activities which the police carry out independently or in cooperation with other agencies. The themes are often related to criminal investigation, licensing services, and surveillance and emergency operations. This area of research interest also includes strategies, tactics and systems supporting police operation. The effectiveness of these activities is an important aspect of research on policing.

Police in Society approaches the police force as a central social institution in society. Relevant research questions relate to relationships between the police and the citizens as well as the police and other institutions in society. Moreover, changes in the police operational environment, development of criminality, and internal security challenges in general belong to this research area.

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Research relevant for the police is one of the statutory tasks of the Police College of Finland. The new division of research areas will help us in meeting this purpose better than the old one. The emphasis is more on the police, but there still remains enough room for national and international co-operation with various partners from a wide range of disciplines. Research relevant for the police has strong links, for instance, to criminological research and security research.

Dr Vesa Muttilainen
Director of Research
Police College of Finland
Review:
Annual Student Survey

Student Survey as a part of Police College’s quality assurance

Student Surveys have been carried out at Police College annually since 2010. Surveys are based on a national research project, “Students’ College”, which gathers information from polytechnic and university students, organised by the Research Foundation of Study and Education (Otus ry) and the Ministry of Culture and Education.

At Police College, the target groups of the survey are all students enrolled either in Police Studies (basic degree) or in advanced training. The aim is to gather information about students’ well-being as well as their experience of education and studying environment. The questionnaire involves themes such as students’ study paths, motivation to apply to police training, physical and mental well-being and coping in studies, teaching and student counselling, possibilities to influence the college’s activity, and the experience of atmosphere and belonging to the community.

Annually collected surveys offer follow-up data about students’ situations. They also afford an opportunity to compare the experiences of students at different degree levels, those of men and women, as well as Finnish and Swedish students. The aim is to include students in the college’s development and quality system. The results are used to develop studies and education, especially during the ongoing reforms in the educational and degree structure of police training in Finland.

Competence Area of Student Services

Some projects on Police Work and Organisation

- Effectiveness of Police Training
- the State of the Criminal Inquiry and Analysis in Finland
- Improved Education in the Public Safety and Security Sectors in Kosovo
Research projects: Police in Social Media

Ongoing project in Policing:
The use of Social Media in Finnish Police

The Finnish police utilize social media in several different ways. By participating in social media, police can support basic police operations such as crime prevention. Also by being visible in social media, the police can lower the threshold of approaching the police. In addition, social media is an effective way to increase both citizens’ and the authorities’ awareness of security issues.

The Police College of Finland is currently undertaking a research project that addresses social media as a critical new tool for crisis communication and management. The project focus is on the bipolar use of social media and the citizen approach in different crisis situations. In addition, the research seeks to present possibilities for guidelines.

These aspects will be discussed on the basis of the EU research project iSAR+ (Online and Mobile Communications for Crisis Response and Search and Rescue, financed by EU FP7 Topic SEC-2012.6.1-3). The project also aims to research, experiment and analyze effective and efficient ways of ensuring the contribution of new media technology users to crisis response efforts.

The Police College of Finland will also analyze costs and benefits of social media and act as an end-user. Other Finnish partners in the iSAR+ project are the University of Eastern Finland, the Emergency Services College, and the North-Savo Rescue Department.

Kari Pylväs, Researcher MA(Ed)
Vesa Muttilainen, Senior Researcher Ph.D
Terhi Kankaanranta, Senior Researcher Ph.D

Some other projects on Policing

- Knowledge management and effectiveness in the distributed working environment: Joint Crime Investigation and Analysis of Finnish Police, Customs and the Border Guard
- Development of Environmental Security challenges and possibilities of the regulatory process
- Violence experienced by children and investigated by police
Research projects: Investments of organised crime in the EU

Ongoing project in Police in Society: Organised Crime Portfolio

Project Organised Crime Portfolio (OCP) is funded by the EU Commission and carried out by an international consortium coordinated by Transcrime – Università Cattolica Sacro Cuore (Milan, Italy). Seven EU member states are taking part in the project: Italy, Spain, France, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Ireland and Finland. Partners in cooperation are mainly universities and asset recovery offices. The organisation in charge in Finland is the Police College of Finland.

The aim of the project is to study the investments of organised crime (OC) in the EU and to analyse their impact on legitimate markets and economy. By focusing on the origin, magnitude, uses and types of investments of illicit proceeds, the research provides information on the main drivers behind the investment choices of OC groups and the type of assets, markets and sectors where OC groups invest.

The objective of the OCP is also to provide the EU Commission with instruments to encourage the production and collection of harmonized data across Europe and to allow EU stakeholders to develop horizontal methods and tools to strategically prevent and fight organised and financial crime. The results of the project will be presented at the final conference in Brussels in November 2014.

Sarianna Petrell, Researcher
Police College of Finland

Some other projects on Police in Society
- Corruption and Bribery in Business and Public Sector Activities
- Gambling and Recorded Crime
- Finnish Child Victim Survey 2013
Newest publications

For international readership (i.e., published in English), Matti Vuorensyrjä compares the careers of female and male police officers using the common criteria of career success: education, experience, rank, and earnings (see Vuorensyrjä, 2013).

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Matti Vuorensyrjä has searched for empirical traces of the effects of cost disease on work and labour with a simple model, which reconstructs and renews the model discovered by Baumol in 1967 (see Vuorensyrjä, 2013).

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Are children with disabilities and long-term illnesses at increased risk of disciplinary violence? Anna Heinonen and Noora Ellonen have examined the association between disability status and the risk of disciplinary violence at the hands of parents (see Heinonen & Ellonen, 2013).

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Our researchers have increased the understanding of the effects of witnessing and experiencing physical violence at home on the psychosocial adjustment of children (see Ellonen et al., 2013).

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For national readership, Noora Ellonen describes the behaviour of parents of Finnish children from birth to 12 years old in the context of conflict situations with the child (see Ellonen 2012, abstract in English).

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Jenni Niemi and Iina Sahramäki have scrutinized the police records for suspected hate crimes in order to figure out the amount and the features of hate crime in Finland (see Niemi & Sahramäki 2012, abstract in English).

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Antti Laakso has used a large number of references to draw up a Finnish-Russian police lexicon to support the language skills of police. (See Laakso 2013).

See the Publication Register of the Police College of Finland
At the Police College of Finland

This Collaboration aims to promote comparative policing research and knowledge exchange based on a model of co-production involving working on and with police organisations.

This includes the opportunities to conduct comparative research amongst a group of countries of similar size and social and economic environment; the creation of a forum to exchange knowledge about policing between different countries; and the opportunities to bring together researchers and practitioners to bid for European research funds.

Seminars

Seminar Speakers

Dr. Paul Ponsaers, Professor Emeritus from College University Ghent, Belgium

Dr. Heidi de Mare, Senior Researcher from the Police Academy of the Netherlands

In the programme

- Interesting presentations
- working groups
- visits to the Police Museum and Police College training area
- an evening programme in the police summer cottage Majaranta.

The Third National Safety and Security Research Seminar
Identification of Common - key for the target-oriented networking

The National Safety and Security Research Seminar was organised at Tampere University in Finland on the 16th of May 2013.

The aim of the seminar was to continue the tradition as an interaction forum on research on safety, administration, business, education and practical issues.

One of the head organisers was the safety & security cluster of Pirkanmaa region – coordinated by the Police College of Finland.

Missions of Safety & Security Cluster of Pirkanmaa Region

- to put together the regional safety and security organisations
- to create a bridge for cooperation between the separate actors.
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Police College of Finland

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