Police Professionalism in the European Union

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Introduction

When I was asked to prepare a lecture on whether European police co-operation had become more professional, I was initially quite baffled. This response seems perhaps quite strange for someone who has been involved in several research projects on European police co-operation for two decades and has been active in building curricula and frequent teaching in national and international institutions. Still, a reflection on the original question is that the European police research community has not yet performed an empirical mapping of the way in which European and cross-border police cooperation has become more professional. On the one hand, we do not really have a clue as to how we seek to enhance levels of professionalism in European police co-operation, except – of course – that we want cooperation to be legitimate (according to valid international legislation), effective (reduction of transnational organised crime and control of transnational public order issues), and ethical (proportionate, justifiable, and in line with human rights norms as well as professional codes of ethics). Yet, somehow these norms and expectations of international police cooperation seem very much implicit in the discourse about European police education and research. Moreover, and this is quite understandable in the light of differences between national police systems - we do not have common European standards for police professionalism - and not even when they are "merely" applied to international cooperation practices. It is around these initial questions that I have sought to structure this essay.

Mapping the Police Professional Community in Europe[1]

Police officers are trained in each and every Member State of the European Union. As Sheptycki (2007: 55) argues, there is "no standard model for policing rolled out across Europe". Today, there are still considerable differences in the way police officers are trained and educated, in the standards of knowledge and levels of competence they have to achieve, and in the learning process they are subjected to throughout their police career (Verbruggen, 2013: 523). The difference in police training and education systems can be seen from the perspective of national sovereignty concerning the design of models, systems and structures of policing. The statistics of Eurostat on the number of police officers in Europe are introduced by an exotic array of different officers, namely "criminal police, traffic police, border police, gendarmerie, uniformed police, city guard, municipal police", with the exclusion of "civilian staff, customs officers, tax police, military police, secret service police, part-time officers, special duty reserves, cadets, (and) court police." (Eurostat 2010: 14). Roughly, the 27 Member States together employ about 1,5 million public police officers.[2] The largest numbers are employed in Germany (247.619 in 2008), Spain (224.086 in 2008), France (228.402 in 2008), and Italy (324.339 in 2006). The United Nations established that on average, there were 300 police officers per 100.000 inhabitants worldwide in 2006; it recommends a minimum police strength of 222 police officers per 100.000 inhabitants. In Europe, East and West European countries have a relatively high median of police personnel (around 400 per 100.000).

Hence, we may observe that the professional community that is potentially reached by training, education and life-long learning is considerably large but also vastly differentiated. We do not have statistics on how many of those police officers are engaged in international policing activities either operationally or strategically, neither do we know what kind of international policing activity they undertake (for instance information exchange, border policing, participation in a joint team, acting in the capacity of liaison officer). However, several police officers are still insufficiently informed about relevant frameworks of international police co-operation and a very small number seems to have any practical-operational experience with international police cooperation. On several occasions I raised this question in a Dutch class for police officers who

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1 Disclaimer: This article does not seek to represent a factual reconstruction of the police education systems in Europe. It is primarily meant to be a thought-provoking essay which contains observations about police professionalism in Europe.

2 Meanwhile, we may observe that the number of private security personnel continues to grow and that the median ratio worldwide is now 0.83 private security to police. Source: http://publicintelligence.net/global-private-securitypolice-officer-personnel-levels-by-countryper-capita-2011/; accessed 21 March 2013.

are educated to achieve the level of Bachelor in Policing, and I was mainly told there was "no" or "hardly any" international dimension involved in their daily activities. Hence, from this small test we may derive the following questions: 1) "Is European police cooperation a fully embedded practice in daily policing?" (the answer from my students is usually a "no"); 2) "Should European police cooperation be fully integrated in daily policing?" (my students are very hesitant); 3) Should the EU introduce a European Criminal Code and/or a European Criminal Procedure Code for transnational crimes and terrorism?" (my students are generally very positive). Now, of course we know that this exercise cannot by any means be generalised, but it is rather disconcerting that twenty years after the entry into force of the Treaty of Maastricht, which heralded European police cooperation and the establishment of the European Drugs Office, European policing seems so minimally engrained in the knowledge, experience and professional outlook of young police officers.

On a less depressing note, it should be emphasised that police officers are much better educated now than they used to be, and that attention for international and European policing has been introduced into several curricula at national police academies. Moreover, the emphasis on knowledge-sharing and best practices is strongly promoted by the European Commission, which provides national police academies an incentive to develop international programmes, which are often geared at different levels (Master, Bachelor) as well as different specialisations (criminal investigation, public order policing, police leadership). Meanwhile, CEPOL[3], which was established as an agency of the European Union in 2006, organises between 60 and 100 courses, seminars[4] and conferences a year about topics which relate to European policing, which gives rise to numerous contacts between individual police officers and to the creation of (virtual) communities of knowledge. These efforts are also supported by an electronic learning environment, webinars, and publications (see Schröder in this volume). Moreover, the European Police Exchange Programme is one of CEPOL's pillar activities, offering police officers, experts and police trainers the opportunity to spend up to two weeks with a police force in another country.[5]

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[3] French acronym for European Police Academy.

[4] See https://www.cepol.europa.eu/index.php?id=courses-seminars for an overview; accessed 21 March 2013.

[5] http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/pdf/expro_faq_s_en.pdf; accessed 22 March 2013.

Defining Police Professionalism in Europe

When we address the question to what extent European police cooperation has become more professional, we should also reflect on the preliminary definition of police professionalism. How is professionalism generally defined and understood? On the Internet, one finds the following definitions of professionalism:

- "The competence or skill expected of a professional"
- "The practising of an activity by a professional rather than an amateur"
- "The level of excellence that is expected of a (police) professional"
- "Acting in a self-reflective manner"
- "Ability to build trust and legitimacy" through dialogue with the community

Hence, the concept of police professionalism seems to be constructed around a core body of knowledge and competences that are engrained into each individual police officer, but it reaches beyond that to the extent that the police professional is expected to act in an excellent, self-reflective, trustworthy and legitimate manner. What seems important in the definition of police professionalism is not (only) what the police officer knows or should know, but how this knowledge is being operationalised in a specific context, and how the delivery of this operational performance is received and assessed. From this, it follows that police professionalism cannot be defined as a static quality, but as an art which is continuously subject to (internal and external) reflection as well as perfection. Stone and Travis have proposed a conceptual framework for policing which is not centred around data analysis but around accountability, legitimacy and innovation, along with (national) coherence. Hence, from the perspective of equal justice, there should be a high common standard for professional performance (Bruggeman, Van Branteghem and Van Nuffel, 2007).[6] "Stone and Travis also want mobility of officers and uniformity of standards across state and local boundaries" (...); "they think this is necessary if police officers are to be "true professionals", like doctors, lawyers or engineers" (Sklansky, 2011: 5). Professionally trained and educated police officers are more immune to breaches of integrity and corruption, they are generally more receptive to new ideas and proposals, they dare to take initiative, and they are more likely to engage in partnership with citizens and other security providers. Moreover, when trained and educated in an internationalised environment, police officers develop their

[6] In this context it may be observed that in 2007, the Belgian police adopted a model on excellent police service, based on the EFQM-model; for details see http://www.police.ac.be/menu_epz.htm; accessed 26 March 2013.

linguistic, technological, entrepreneurial and multi-cultural skills, which turns them into smart cops who are ready for the challenges in 21st-century western societies.

Benchmarking with Adjacent European Professional Communities

Throughout the European Union, not only police forces, but several other organisations are affected by EU-legislation and EU-strategies that have been established in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice. Adjacent professional communities include customs officials, border control officials, immigration officials, judges and prosecutors. All of them are exposed to EU policies on Justice and Home Affairs. This is not limited to officials working inside the EU Member States, but also applies to officials who are employed in relevant public services in accession states (think of Croatia, Iceland and Turkey)[7] as well as in 17 European neighbourhood countries (think of Morocco, Georgia or Ukraine) [8]. The bilateral agreements between the EU and these countries contain the general objective to promote legislative and regulatory approximation towards higher standards in all relevant areas, as well as promote the rule of law and good governance, including the effectiveness of public administration and the impartiality and effectiveness of the judiciary and promoting the fight against corruption and fraud. In the recent past, all countries that have acceded the European Union have had to adopt and implement the EU acquis on border control, immigration, police cooperation, asylum and crime prevention (Grabbe, 2002: 10). In that process, legal transposition and harmonisation have been the key to accession. Justice, home affairs and fundamental rights, as well as police and judiciary reform, remain essential areas for financial assistance of the EU to countries like Macedonia and Montenegro. Hence, a certain standardised level of police professionalisation across the EU countries as well as its neighbouring countries may result from these programmes.[9]

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7 See http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/index_en.htm; accessed 21 March 2013.

8 For an overview, see the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument at: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/overview/index_en.htm; accessed 21 March 2013.

9 Inside Member States of the EU, work is also undertaken to ensure national consistency by laying down standards of policing. See for instance the development of the Authorised Professional Practice (APP) in the United Kingdom (NPIA Annual Report 2011/2012, p. 5).

When it concerns the training and education of customs officials, the EU introduced several programmes (the latest is "Customs 2020"[10]), which have included a variety of instruments to promote information sharing and knowledge exchange, for instance through an exchange learning programme (Mattheus). The European Commission has been keen on promoting the development of linguistic training for customs officials as well as engaging them in an e-learning environment. Joint actions have included exchanges of officials, project groups, seminars, benchmarking and training.[11] The customs exchange programme involved short stays as well as longer traineeships of up to six months. Currently, customs training is mainly regarded from the perspective of "human competency building", which means that knowledge and skills have to be updated in the context of serving the needs of the Union. To this end, a multi-facetted training programme will be developed.

When we look at EU-training for border guards, it is instructive to note that systems and structures of border control vary greatly across the European Union, and it is acknowledged that each EU country has its own training needs and solutions. However, the same standards have to be used throughout the European Union when it concerns external border control: "Working together requires a common understanding of themes ranging from communication to technology, the law and its application, and ultimately of the border guard mission itself."[12] Frontex – the EU border management agency – is thus in the process of developing a training programme which is complementary to the national training schemes. The cooperation works both bottom-up (Member States work together with Frontex to develop training materials and curricula), as well as "top-down"(integration of EU modules into national training programmes). Frontex seeks to achieve a "multiplier" effect by working with training coordinators as well as by means of a "train-the-trainers"-programme. Frontex currently seeks to align its training and education programme with the "Bologna-process" (European Higher Education Area), as well as the "Copenhagen-process" (promoting vocational training within and beyond the workplace). In

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10 European Commission, "Amended proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an action programme for Customs in the European Union for the period 2014-2020 (Customs 2020) and repealing Decision No 624/2007/EC", Brussels, 29.8.2012; http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/com_2012_464_en.pdf; accessed 22 March 2013.

11 For an assessment of the implementation of the Customs 2002 programme, see for instance: "Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council – Report on the Implementation of the Customs 2002 programme (1998-2002); http://eur-lex.europa.eu/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prod!DocNumber&type_doc=COMfinal&an_doc=2003&nu_doc=672&lg=en; accessed 22 March 2013.

12 http://www.frontex.europa.eu/training/principles; accessed 22 March 2013.

2007, Frontex launched a Common Core Curriculum (CCC), representing the first standardised set of skills and knowledge criteria for basic-level border guard training in the EU; this curriculum, which ranges from specialist issues such as investigating document fraud to general issues like the international legal framework on human rights – is regularly revised and updated.

Also judges, prosecutors and defence lawyers are affected by European training. The European Commission sees new opportunities in the Lisbon Treaty (EU competence to "support the training of the judiciary and of judicial staff in matters relative to judicial cooperation in civil and criminal law." Moreover, the Europe 2020 strategy calls for efficient investment in training and for a coherent legal context at European level. The establishment of a European Judicial Training programme gears around the objective of promoting trust in EU-wide justice.[13] In line with the Stockholm Programme[14], it is the objective of the European Commission to enable half of all the legal practitioners[15] in the European Union to participate in European judicial training activities by 2020 through the use of all available resources at local, national and European level. The saying is "The national judge becomes the front-line of Union law". In view of promoting mutual recognition and effective implementation of legislation, it is argued that "National judges, at all levels of jurisdiction and all locations from Sicily to Lapland should have an adequate level of knowledge of Union law and national judicial systems". This is an extremely high ambition, and it is certainly a lot higher than the EU-wide ambition for the training of police officers. The Stockholm Action Programme includes the objective of an Erasmus-style exchange programme for law enforcement authorities.

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13 See: "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Social and Economic Committee and the Committee of the Regions Building Trust in EU-wide Justice: A New Dimension in European Judicial Training.", 13/9/2011; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011DC0551:EN:NOT; accessed 22 March 2013.

14 "The Stockholm Programme – An Open and Secure Europe Serving and Protecting Citizens", OJ C 115, 4.5.2010; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010XG0504(01):EN:NOT; accessed 22 March 2013; Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Social and Economic Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Delivering an Area of Freedom, Security and Justice for Europe's citizens – Action Plan Implementing the Stockholm Programme", Brussels, 20.4.2010; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0171:EN:NOT; accessed 22 March 2013.

15 The total is 1.401.296, from European judicial systems 2010, CEPEJ, Council of Europe, quoted in the 2011 Communication of the European Commission (see note 10).

Given the encouragement of multi-agency cooperation by the EU, it is also interesting to see whether there is any attention for integrated training between officials of different agencies. Unfortunately, in several Member States there is still an absence of joint training for police and – for instance – customs. Some Member States have however fully integrated police-customs teams, for instance in the Rotterdam harbour. There are also experiences with joint trainings, for instance between customs and border officials with a focus on airport security, small weapons, identity documents. The European Commission prepares a document about structural cooperation between police and customs, which is expected to be published in 2014.

Though at first sight it seems as if the EU is investing more strategic effort and financial support into the training and education of public officials who are employed in fully communautarised EU-policies (external border management, immigration and asylum), the EU has also made considerable progress in areas which are less fully integrated (justice). The more communautarian the relevant policy area (the less intergovernmental), the more integrated European professionalization programmes. The educational programme which is currently being unfolded for border guards reaches significantly further than the training and educational objectives for police officers, as there is no full "Bolognification" of European police training and education, no institutional partnership with academic instutions, and no commonly agreed core curriculum.[16]

The Effect of the European Union on Police Professionalisation

The objectives of the EU concerning the creation of common learning and education opportunities for officials who are active in different domains of the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice imply that the European integration process can only be full established and preserved if the relevant officials fully participate in a cross-border professional space. Participation in various programmes, ranging from Webinars and E-modules to a long-term exchange inherently stimulates three aspects of professionalisation. First of all, the participation in EU programmes stimulates mutual learning about each other's (police) system. This includes aspects such as history, legal framework, competences, authority relationships, recruitment patterns, training programmes,

[16] Frontex develops a Bachelor and Master Programme for border officials. The CEPOL Governing Board has approved the establishment of a Working Group that will look into the feasibility of an EU-wide Master Programme for police officers (first meetings are held in the course of 2013).

career mobility, and programmatic approaches with regard to a wide range of safety issues. Until now, limited attention seems to have been paid to knowledge transfer at the national level: usually, there is no evaluation of the extent to which the acquired knowledge is shared with colleagues in the police organisation, and whether this prompts new insights or initiatives.

The impression is that little systematic use is made of the knowledge that thas been acquired; a similar observation was made about the early generation customs training and exchange programme. In addition, shared training and education of police officers across different Member States invites participants to reflect more on their own national police performance as well as to reflect on foreign law enforcement practices. Good working relationships facilitate effective knowledge sharing and may improve trust, informal exchange of knowledge as well as help to set up communication channels.

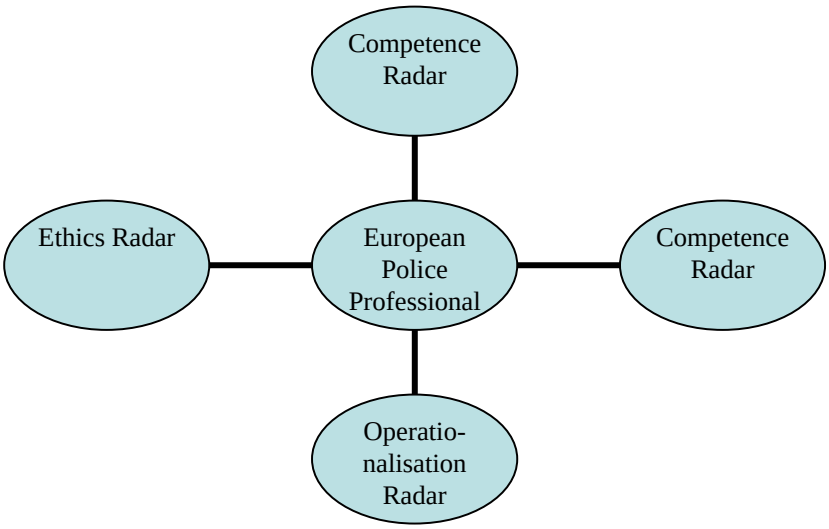
Based on cross-national empirical research, the COMPOSITE project[17] recommends the improvement of awareness of organisational and legislative differences: "Differing organisational structures and procedures, and differing laws and legislation across countries, have been shown to create barriers to knowledge sharing across countries, in particular due to the lack of awareness of the differences between countries." Eventually, improved knowledge about the national systems, as well as European policies, may make it easier for individual police officers to find their way through Europe, and to enhance their awareness of other initiatives as well as international projects and organisations. European cooperation generally involves more peer scrutiny as well as a level of exposure of police processes, such as transmitting information, implementing ICT, dealing with legal assistance requests, setting up an investigation team, or establishing a specialised practice. Foreign inspection visits (think of the Schengen Evaluation exercise) may prompt national police forces into maximising police performance and it may incentivise them to further develop police professionalism.

The Wheel of European Police Professionalism

What, then, is the required knowledge and competence a public police officer must possess in order to effectively engage in European police co-operation? Police officers may participate in European police cooperation in a variety of capacities, depending on their rank and remit in the national police organisation. This essay proposes that there are a few relevant "radars" for each individual

[17] From: *Police Knowledge Sharing Capabilities* (WP 3.3), www.composite-project.eu; pp. 56-57.

police professional, aspects of which have to be developed or improved in order to participate in international projects. The first “radar” is the Knowledge Radar, which encompasses the knowledge about the national police organisation and relevant legislation, as well as knowledge about various European domains. In addition, police officers who engage in international cooperation have to develop certain competences, which we shall call the “Competency Radar”. Moreover, each and every police officer has to be able to make an ethical assessment of the kind of cooperation in which he or she engages, which we call the “Ethics Radar”. Finally, police officers have to be able to operationalise the knowledge they have achieved, either within their own domestic environment, or within an international working space. This is what we call the “Operationalisation Radar”. Together, the four competences form the “Wheel of (European) Police Professionalism”:



When we look at the knowledge that has to be acquired by a police professional in order to be able to participate in European police cooperation, he or she is faced with quite a significant challenge. Despite the fact that the EU has much improved its information and communication about its policies and legislative agenda, it is already rather bewildering and confusing to know and understand the wide array of actors that are involved in some form of police or security

cooperation. Gradually, a body of literature is beginning to emerge which explains the historical evolution of each of those actors, their position in the arena, their mandates and their impact on international law enforcement cooperation. Hence, the average internationally oriented police professional has to be able to make a distinction between the EU and the Council of Europe; has to know his or her way around different agencies such as Europol, CEPOL and Frontex; and should know how this institutional landscape is governed (role of the national parliaments as well as the European Parliament, European Commission, European Court of Justice, European Court of Auditors, the Fundamental Rights Agency and the European Data Protection Supervisor. However, the required knowledge is not limited to institutional knowledge, but has to be complemented with knowledge about the relevant acquis in the domain of justice and home affairs cooperation. This acquis – which is subject to continuous revision – is already quite impressive as it comprises hundreds of council decisions in the field of European police cooperation alone (Block, 2011). This body of knowledge is complemented by the need to know and understand several strategic concepts which have been developed, ranging from "new security threats", which evolve from the merging between internal and external security, to more practical strategic concepts, such as "interoperability", "mutual recognition" and "the principle of availability". Specific strategies have been established around geographical areas (for instance co-operation with Russia, West-Africa or the Arab Region), topics and threats (drugs, terrorism, organised crime, trafficking in human beings, cybercrime), actionable priorities (implementation, time-schedule for legislative proposals). No need to say that knowledge is only worth being acquired when it can be transferred, when it can be made actionable, and when it is used as active input in the immediate working environment of the police professional. A condition for a successful exploitation of this knowledge is an open, receptive and responsive professional environment within the domestic police services. Further research is required about whether domestic environments prove fertile breeding grounds for European police cooperation.[18]

To any police practitioner, the European Union is Babylonian. It is a complex framework, with regulatory, legislative, political and cultural elements. The legislative acquis in the field of police co-operation is significant. Any police officer may have to acquire a basic understanding of the main legal instruments

[18] The author prepares a jointly edited book (with Ludo Block) on liaison officers. One of the findings which will be presented in this book is the total absence of standardisation in the training and preparation of police liaison officers, as well as the lack of a return and evaluation programme upon the return of the liaison officer in his or her domestic context. Hence, the knowledge and expertise of LO's tends to go completely lost in the process (to be published by Boom / Eleven Publishers, 2013).

in the EU, notably the Treaties that have been constitutive of the provisions on international police co-operation. Several instruments may be interest, varying from instruments that ought to facilitate international police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters, as well as public order instruments. Moreover, for a police officer who seeks to become an active participant in EU cooperation structures, it may be helpful to comprehend the mandates of Europol, Eurojust and Frontex. Practical Knowledge about how instruments of the EU may be employed, such as the establishment of a Joint Investigation Team, may be acquired in international seminars on intelligence-led policing, ICT, and funding.

The Competency Radar of an international police professional includes several competencies, including cultural competencies (police organisational culture, ethnic cultures), linguistic competencies (including communicative skills and passive as well as active performance of some European languages), strategic competencies (the ability to create networks and to act as a liaison and advisor; the ability to identify, analyse and advise on threats and opportunities), as well as operational competencies (making it happen; fixing an international project; see below).[19] Bowling and Sheptycki (2012: 87) speak of a transnational subculture of policing, in which different roles are played within the complex architecture of policing, such as the "diplomat", the "entrepreneur", the "public relations expert" or the "spy".

The Ethics Radar of a European police professional includes knowledge of international police ethics instruments, ranging from the Council of Europe Code on Ethics and UN Code for Law Enforcement Officials, the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights, and international data protection requirements in the area of police cooperation. Police officers who act in the capacity of senior manager it is instructive that except for acting as a moral compass of their (inter-)national police agency, they ought to seek regular advice on international issues concerning social legitimacy and fundamental rights. In order to ensure compliance with international codes of police ethics, they can contribute to the continuous improvement of internal and external accountability by means of a systematic focus on transparency and oversight. Police leaders may seek to ensure that their police agency is part of an international police ethics culture by stimulating serving police officers to take part in regular exchange, site visits, evaluations and as well as giving human rights and ethics training (see also Bruggeman and Den Boer, 2010; Den Boer and Pyo, 2011).

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[19] An interesting example of a competency requirement framework for the internationalisation of police education is the matrix model of functional roles developed by the Netherlands Police Education Council (Politieonderwijsraad, 2009) See: http://www.politieonderwijsraad.nl/cms/publish/content/downloaddocument.asp?document_id=148; accessed 26 March 2013.

Finally, the "operationalisation radar" of the European police professional means that actionable knowledge has been acquired about realising effective implementation of international instruments. This implies that when one undertakes a form of international police cooperation, for instance the establishment of a Joint Investigation Team or a Police-Customs Cooperation Centre, compliance with EU-instruments has to be ensured from the outset.

The competencies that are required from a police professional who acts on a European scale has to be matched with a "European Police Competence Ladder", which distinguishes between the different responsibilities and mandates within a certain police organisation. Here we can make a distinction between the High Professional Echelon (for instance a very senior manager or director of a European police or security organisation, such as the Director of Europol or the European Police Academy); the Middle Professional Echelon (for instance police officers who act in a relatively independent capacity as programme manager, liaison officer, programme developer; police trainer, police expert); and the Professional Echelon (for instance police officers who act as strategic advisor within their police force, international affairs coordinators, managers of international projects and programmes).

Police Professionalism in Europe: Towards Convergence?

If police officers in Europe seek to cooperate more effectively, a curriculum which contains agreed common standards on knowledge, competency, ethics and operationalisation requirements may offer a future horizon for further professionalisation. No need to say that a step towards professional convergence is an inherently normative one. Hence, we will see whether fresh initiatives, such as the establishment of academic consortia, will lead to the creation of a sustainable common professionalisation trajectory for European police officers. At this particular moment, we are faced with several hurdles, including the differences in police educational standards within as well as between the EU Member States. Several other practicalities relate to different demands in terms of ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System), different opinions about the necessity and level of police professionalisation, language requirements, entry costs and logistics. Hence, for the time being, the internationalisation of police professionalisation will consist of several bilateral or multilateral forms of cooperation, such as the Master of Science in Policing, which is a form of academic cooperation between the Police Academy of The Netherlands and Canterbury Christ Church University. The Master aims at the achievement of all requirements in the final qualification framework, which in turn demands that the (European) police professional gains professional

competence, such as the ability to function in a complex, multidisciplinary, international or unpredictable environment of policing and governance; contextual competence, which includes the ability to analyse the influence of European structures and regulations on policing strategies; social competence, such as the ability to deal with (inter)national cultural differences when it comes to networking in police matters; and individual competence, such as the ability to critically analyse new sources of information and convert them into original proposals for a strategic approach in policing.

How do we assess the current state of affairs concerning police professionalisation in Europe? In terms of knowledge and ethics, there is a wide offer of courses, seminars and handbooks, but the question remains whether this reaches the widest possible group of potentially interested police officials. As we have observed above, the lid on access and entry to education and exchange usually rests with senior police management; if a course or exchange programme is considered too costly or not in the interest of the relevant police organisation, it is difficult to get beyond this line and to attract new potential. In terms of competency and operationalisation skills, the EU can certainly do a lot more, particularly in insisting on learning by doing through exchange programmes and in ensuring that police officers who perform well in an international law enforcement are seen and rewarded by their own police organisation.

Despite some hopeful signs, certain worrybeads remain. First, until now, European police cooperation has very much been an issue for the top echelon of national police services. “Europe” as such is not very much alive within the grassroots of police organisations. The gulf between the “management cops” and the “street cops” remains a hidden threshold in the internationalisation process. Only when senior police managers acknowledge, endorse, support and nourish a European police professionalisation project, individual police officers throughout the ranks may feel sufficiently encouraged and protected to dive into the deep. Hence, international police leadership is a *conditio sine qua non* for the establishment of a truly European police professional culture. A second concern is that participation in European police cooperation projects tends to be very uneven between the Member States. A differentiated and fragmented support for police professionalisation will make it more difficult for individual police students to find their way to international courses and colleagues. Third, until now there has been little or no educational interaction with other security professionals in the context of EU-cooperation, and this in turn may undermine the chances of establishing a durable and effective multi-agency cooperation between security actors. Another critical condition for a successful police professionalisation project is that a sufficient number of well-trained, multi-lingual educators and programme managers is available in order to carry the weight of such a programme.

Concluding Notes: Challenges and Opportunities

Returning to the question whether European police cooperation has become more professional, a fair answer is that we do not know. There is a lack of empirical evidence about the way in which domestic and international training and education has improved the quality of cross-border law enforcement co-operation. Except for some detailed empirical research in certain border areas, we lack an overall assessment. The successor to the Stockholm Programme may address this void and could include the objective that further research ought to be undertaken in this field to establish a coherent European framework of police professionalisation.

Moreover, a new EU-wide strategy for the consolidation of the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice may include the objective to strengthen the institutional development of CEPOL. Another objective may be the creation and implementation of a professionalisation strategy for internal security officials, in accordance with the EU policy cycle, as well as in line with the encouragement of multi-agency co-operation. Except for discussions within the new CEPOL-group about a European Police Master, programmes may be established in addition to national and European programmes (such as the European Police Exchange Programme). European Life Long Learning Programmes have been introduced and financed by the European Union, and they may also be applied more systematically to the continuous training of police professionals. Hence, police academies and other educational institutes which provide training and education to security professionals may tie in more strongly with the "Copenhagen process" (VET - vocational education and training), which seeks to establish a European training and education area, with transparent qualifications systems which enable the transfer and accumulation of learning outcomes, and of which it is envisaged that it will increase transfrontier mobility.[20]

Furthermore, it is feasible to establish modular EU bachelor programmes for police professionals, which can be taught in different educational environments by well-qualified trainers and in virtual or long-distance-learning programmes. In addition, an integrated EU Master Programme for internal security professionals and a Graduate School for police and security professionals who wish to write a doctoral dissertation is not out of reach. Even if only 0,01 % of

[20] For the Global Vision on VET, see: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/vocational/council10_en.pdf; accessed 26 March 2013.

all police professionals in Europe would enroll into such a "pracademic" programme, it would have sufficient critical mass to operate feasibly.

This essay closes with some reflections on the future of police professionalism in Europe. Several authors have reflected on the future of public police organisations (e.g. Newburn, 2007). With the growing role of new technology and faced with changing societal composition, police organisations may have to fundamentally change their image of police professionalism. Though the state may remain a strong actor, policing can be performed by other and foreign non-state actors too, and this may turn policing into a more plural, competitive, strategic, selective, service-oriented, and entrepreneurial exercise (see for instance McLaughlin, 2007: 88; Van Steden and Jones, 2010). These are long-term projections which may not bear any direct relationship to what police officers experience on a daily basis. However, a future perspective, even if it is a long shot away, provides focus to international police professionalisation.

CURRENT	**FUTURE**	**IMPACT ON POLICE ORGANISATIONS**	**IMPACT ON INDIVIDUAL POLICE PROFESSIONALS**
State	Multi-level	Pluralisation	Flexible Performance
Public	Private	Competition	Customer (Citizen)-Oriented Performance
Information	Intelligence	Pro-activeness	Strategic Performance
Community	Individual	Surveillance	Selective Performance
Institution	Product	Project budgeting	Entrepreneurial Performance
Local Threat	Glocal Threat	Threat Assessment	Strategic Analysis

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