Review Article

The power of the locality: does plural policing really exist in Belgium?

Abstract

The evolution from government to governance leading to multiple partnerships in policing and in pluralization of regular police functions is widespread in Europe. Although this trend is frequently described and analysed by Anglo-Saxon scholars, empiric research findings outside the United Kingdom are scarce. In this article we focus on the organisation of the Belgian regular police force and the passing on of particular police functions to other -as well private as public- partners and agencies. We analyse the situation after the major police reform in 1998, and situate the research findings in the broader context of changes in police systems in different countries. Police centralisation and decentralisation movements do influence outsourcing tendencies. We develop a theoretical overview of the issue of plural policing on the one hand and a theoretical framework to allocate reforms in police systems in different countries on the other. For Belgium we analyse the organisational and operational setting of the regular police, and public and private agents performing police tasks. The empirical research is based on an in-depth study of 25years of security policy in Belgium (interviews with politicians) and an extended document analysi.[1,2] Concluding we discuss the specific place the regular police, called a 'cannibal police force' still takes within the security governance, leaving no place for outsourcing to private partners. In this regard, Belgium takes a unique place in comparison to the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands.

Keywords: plural policing, pluralization,; police, public order, mayor, municipalities, public space

Elke Devroe
Associate professor, University of Leiden, The Netherlands

Correspondence: Elke Devroe, Associate professor, University of Leiden, Institute of Public Administration, Institute of Public Administration, Faculty Campus The Hague, Schouwburgstraat 2, 2511 VA The Hague, The Netherlands, Tel 0031 70 8009375/0032 488 29 33 60, Email e.devroe@cdh.leidenuniv.nl

Introduction

The evolution towards 'plural policing' or 'pluralization' of governance of order and security, emerging from the latter part of the 20th Century onwards, is frequently analysed by Anglo-Saxon scholars.[3–13] Multiple models of partnerships unite police with a range of private security, government agencies, organized groups, neighbourhood watch groups and citizens.[14] In different countries, the relationships among the group members and the police can vary but is guided by distinct laws, policies, customs and practices. These efforts are now subsumed under a popular new policing movement: a strategy now labeled 'plural policing' or 'third-party policing.' Plural policing combines the concepts 'policing' and 'plural'. The transference from 'police' to 'policing' refers to the shift from government to governance with the state being no longer the exclusive provider of security.[15–18] The metaphor of a rowing boat was used where the state concentrates on the steering functions of governance, leaving the responsibility of rowing to other, more dispersed agent'.[19,20] The security provision is, in neo-liberal societies, executed by a dispersed group of agents, as well state (like regular police) actors as non-state (private security and citizens) actors, each with partial responsibility for the delivery of security policing-, services and technologies.[21] The sovereign state 'hitherto considered focal to both provision and accountability in this field, is reconfigured as but one node of a broader, more diverse 'network of power'.[3] As the state police cannot longer act alone on complex issues of crime and civil unrest,[9] other agencies, both public and private, benefit from this deficit to fill in the control gap.

New forms of additional policing have emerged, including subcontracted police and community support officers, municipal guards, neighbourhood and street wardens, estate rangers, caretakers and concierges, as well as private security guards and citizen patrols.[22–24] Often, the concept of plural policing seems to be coupled to supposed new ('networked' or 'nodal') forms of governance of security.[25] Internationally there has been an increasing diversification of police roles and functions within and external to public police agencies,[26] referred to as a process of 'auxiliarisation' (taken civilians into the police force).[9,19,27–31] Johnston[27] points at the important intra-organisational dimension of 'auxiliarisation' as a part of the pluralization process. Public police services deploy what can be termed as 'civilians in uniform', that is 'quasi' uniformed police personnel whose role is to enhance the delivery of police services and augment traditional policing functions (e.g., foot patrols).[26] According to Zedner[14] attempts for non-police governmental employees or private citizens to provide support to prevent or reduce crime and deviance, often occurred. This can be called 'joint policing', collaborative, proactive, preventive actions to reduce or remove crime and to protect and secure spaces and places.[11] The process of 'joint policing' involves partnerships of multiple stakeholders to circumvent deviancy and crime, including citizen's efforts.[32]

A significant manifestation of this has been researched illustrating the growing role of private security in policing 'mass private property'.[33–35] More and more security governance in public spaces is undertaken privately, thus calling further into question conventional explanations of the distinction between the roles of public and private authorities.[36] Privatization, as in the 'contracting out' of urban services, has been heralded as a reform to promote efficiency and responsiveness in local government service delivery.[20] According to Feigenbaum et al.,[37] privatization is part of a broader agenda to shrink government and shift the social contract. For municipalities, however, the approach to privatization can be just a pragmatic one focused on experimenting with new forms of service delivery in search of cost efficiencies and greater service quality.[38–40] The proposition of pluralization of policing

often seemed to have reached the status of a universal, rather identical process throughout the world.[41] This trend was not only analysed as the rise of plural policing, but also an increasingly disconnecting of 'police' and 'policing', or as the establishment of a 'police extended family', a concept which embodies the latest attempt to secure police sovereignty over the governance of community policing/safety.[4] In the UK this trend is best exemplified through the emergence of police community support officers (PCSOs).[41,42,43] Until recently, however, outside the Anglo-Saxon world there was a lack of empirical studies on plural policing.[41]

Anglo-Saxon literature, like the important study of Loade[3] and Jones et al.,[9] was to a large extent dominating the theme. Additional empirical research in continental countries is needed. So can results from a multiple case study design be a precondition for detailed understanding of the institutional contexts, cultures, historical traditions and agency of actors that have a bearing on how plural forms of policing are configured to meet local contingencies.[44] These contingencies relate to the intra-organisational dynamics driving the pluralization of policing, which Johnston[27] argues has been neglected in studies of security governance. That meant that until now this claim of a universally similar trend has seemed to remain largely uncontested.[45] In fact, the lack of international comparisons implied that theories and explanations of plural policing were only based upon a specific (Anglo-Saxon) sample of countries. The scarce international comparative research shows though that one should be careful with inaccurate generalizations.[46] Could Anglo-Saxon evolutions be transferred to other, civil law 'Napoleonistic' continental countries, like Belgium? Do we observe the same privatization expansion as we detect in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom? In an effort to broaden the empirical knowledge body on pluralization, this article analyses the Belgian evolution of policing security (by the regular police and other actors) on a local level. The data were gathered by a multiple case study, analysing 25years (1985-2010) of security governance[1] in Belgium. Community policing being the mandatory police model since the police reform in 1998,[2] we limit this article to police functions where close contact with citizens is required.[3]

We focus on police-citizen contacts in public space, and thus functions like surveillance, intervention, foot patrol and neighbourhood policing. Loader's[2] theoretical framework on the extent and nature of pluralization in mind, namely policing 'by', 'through', 'beyond' and 'below' government, the fifth dimension 'above' government (developments in transnational policing arrangements) is not discussed in this article. In a first (theoretical) section we analyse some international evolutions exerting a possible influence on plural policing processes. A first paragraph in this section focuses on securitization trends and extended crime control arrangements. A second paragraph analysis police reforms in different countries, and offers a theoretical framework for classification. In the second (empirical) section we focus on the Belgian situation. A first paragraph describes dynamics and evolutions within the police organization itself, in particular after the reform of 1998.

A second paragraph defines security arrangements of surveillance and control outside the regular police, such as 'community guards' and 'community guard recorders'. Figures will clarify the different arrangements. The conclusive section will formulate an answer to the central statement of many Anglo-Saxon scholars that industrialized countries are becoming increasingly 'pluralized-privatized' and regular police is losing its 'core' functions in favour of other, non-police actors.[1] For a broader description of the research designs and results, see Devroe (2012a) 'A Swelling Culture of Control?' (PHD).[2]

In fact in the Act on the police Reform 'Act on the Integrated Police on two levels', 1998, no notions were made with respect to Community Policing (COP) as the mandatory police model for Belgium police officers. The COP-model was only cited in the Explanatory Memorandum of the Act. It was in 2000 that COP was explicitly introduced as the official vision. Therefore it lay provisionally as a structural change in the Act (Law of the 'Integrated Police on two levels', 1998). Article to police functions where close contact with citizens is required.[3] We focus on police-citizen contacts in public space, and thus functions like surveillance, intervention, foot patrol and neighbourhood policing. Loader's[2] theoretical framework on the extent and nature of pluralization in mind, namely policing 'by', 'through', 'beyond' and 'below' government, the fifth dimension 'above' government (developments in transnational policing arrangements) is not discussed in this article. In a first (theoretical) section we analyse some international evolutions exerting a possible influence on plural policing processes.

A first paragraph in this section focuses on securitization trends and extended crime control arrangements. A second paragraph analysis police reforms in different countries, and offers a theoretical framework for classification. In the second (empirical) section we focus on the Belgian situation. A first paragraph describes dynamics and evolutions within the police organization itself, in particular after the reform of 1998. A second paragraph defines security arrangements of surveillance and control outside the regular police, such as 'community guards' and 'community guard recorders'. Figures will clarify the different arrangements. The conclusive section will formulate an answer to the central statement of many Anglo-Saxon scholars that industrialized countries are becoming increasingly 'pluralized-privatized' and regular police is losing its 'core' functions in favour of other, non-police actors.

Theories on international policing evolutions

Securitization and the extended tentacles of crime control

The securitization process, commonly transforming problems into security issues, increased extremely after 9/11.[47] The so-called 'Copenhagen School' approaches security as a social construct,[48–50] where issues are presented as existential threats and use of exceptional measures are seen as legitimized in dealing with such threats. On a smaller scale, we can refer to 'risk justice',[51] governance not lead by concrete, individual suspicion but by generalizing risks from certain groups and certain places, also called 'risk taxation'.[52] The neo-liberal way of thinking focused on enforcement and control of undisciplined people in need.[53] 'The fear is that social deficiencies may be redefined as crime problems which need to be controlled and managed, rather than addressed in themselves'.[54] Crime was extended to daily life problem of incivilities and social disorder, problems that –according to an anxious and intolerant population[55] and a withdrawing central state- had to be dealt with by other (public and private) local agencies and citizens themselves. It is about an approach which seeks to enable

---

[1]For a broader description of the research design and results, see Devroe (2012a) 'A Swelling Culture of Control?' (PHD).

[2]In fact in the Act on the police Reform 'Act on the Integrated Police on two levels', 1998, no notions were made with respect to Community Policing (COP) as the mandatory police model for Belgium police officers. The COP-model was only cited in the Explanatory Memorandum of the Act. It was in 2000 that COP was explicitly introduced as the official vision. Therefore it lay provisionally as a structural change in the Act (Law of the 'Integrated Police on two levels', 1998).

[3]Leaving policing of transnational crime such as terrorism, financial-economic crimes, child pornography and human trafficking out of sight in this contribution.

local communities or neighbourhoods to develop the protective capacity to reduce or eliminate the risks of crime and disorder.[56] [3]Leaving policing of transnational crime such as terrorism, financial-economic crimes, child pornography and human trafficking out of sight in this contribution.

Scholars describe the expansion of the 'safety' concept to 'community safety',[6,25] where 'Community safety is concerned with more than crime and aims to get to the heart of what disrupts people's quality of life'.[57] The key good to be achieved is the overriding collective good of public order, from with citizens derive their private security and offenders their stake in conformity'.[57] Community safety refers to the wish to meet peoples risk and threat perception in neighbourhoods.[19] So plural policing is often organized on a local level[58,59] it is about 'an approach of crime management that places crime and disorder within a local community context and attempts to address it within that context'.[60] Forms of control became increasingly inscribed into the fabric of local territorial and spatial interactions.[61] Safety became the primary policy goal 'which sits at the intersection of attempts by the state to deliver welfare and security, and policing and control in local communities'.[62] The 'preoccupation with local safety-particularly with low-level incivilities and sub-criminal categories of 'disorder' – also reflects the limited capacity for state action'.[61] Crime control policy widened to the 'quality of life' discourse, where 'quality of life' represents a desire by urban residents to be free from the dirt, disorder, and incivilities that were widespread.[63] Public policy focused on this trends.

Public policy has tended to define contemporary crime and disorder problems in rather simplistic terms of the breakdown of informal control, moral decline and a collapse in social capital.[6] It is logic that the regular police could impossibly be the sole actor in tackling all these problems.[64] Besides this fact, government emphasis on the 'criminalization' of disorder and anti-social 'behaviour'[65,66] along with the emphasis on partnership working, linking local municipalities and other public agencies into policing activities, particularly those relating to 'behaviour in public spaces.[7] The policy of anti-social 'behaviour suggests an increasingly disciplinary society and, contrary to contemporary political rhetoric regarding social inclusion, a markedly more exclusive one, selectively targeting a particular range of stigmatized behaviours and individuals for reasons that are often beyond the perpetrators control and, at best, for which they are seldom solely responsible'.[67] Worldwide the security sector has become a large sector with private security firms performing many different tasks.[68–71] The welfare state was replaced by market principles through the privatization of public spaces and services and an overall shrinkage of government.[72] Where 'public' (in the sense of public good) could be an indication of certain societal values, such as justice, solidarity, equality and inclusivity, 'private' stands for commercializing.[73] In some cases public–private partnerships are being promoted as an alternative to privatization because they maintain a relational interaction.[74] Another important aspect of pluralization within state-provided policing concerns the growing involvement of municipalities in the provision of integral security and policing services. Crawford[7] has identified several key aspects of municipal policing including the provision of local authority patrols,

the employment of public auxiliaries, and various activities associated with the policing of low level incivilities and anti-social behaviour.

During the 1980s and 1990s, several local municipalities began to allocate resources to the provision of localized patrol services in public places.[75] In Belgium, the Incivility Act (1999) broadened public order competences of the Mayor to tackling incivilities with communal fines.[76] This significant shift of 'localisation' of crime and order maintenance, making municipalities accountable, nourished pluralization of former police functions.[76] The regulatory environment of policing continues to be highly disjointed and segmented.[5,43] We call these societal re-arrangements 'triggers' towards plural policing tendencies, where interactive arrangements pop up in which public as well as private actors participate trying to solve societal problems, creating societal opportunities, and attending to the institutions within which these governing activities take place. Not only securitization processes trigger the emergence of other security providers, but changes in police systems can do as well. This is the subject of out next paragraph.

National European police systems in motion

The empirical reality of pluralization within a country is indisputable interconnected with the organization of the national police system, the political agenda setting and many other tendencies. It is obvious that representatives of public institutions, such as police leaders, unionists, politicians, policy-makers, and public administrators continue to play key roles in shaping the ways in which policing is provided as well as regulated.[25] Dynamics in police reforms are crucial context factors in pluralization movements. Greene[77] uses the metaphor of the sea in grasping the reality of policing developments. 'Like the sea', he writes, 'the many levels and interdependencies of policing give it depth, breadth and animation'.[77] He describes the 'voyage on the sea of ideas on policing, seeking to link macro, meso and micro perspectives of policing such that they can be seen as influencing the ebb and flow of policing in modern society'.[77] Indeed, the policing reality is tied to broader political, economic, legal, cultural and technological changes that are unfolding at local and nation-state levels.[78,79]

Nowadays different European countries changed the architecture of their national police system. The analysis of different police systems in Europe, led to a theoretical framework for classifying national police systems, which will be of use to understand underlying pluralization forces. In their ten years research (2005-2015) Ponsaers et al.,[80,81] focused upon those agencies of which competences are legally defined by the national legislator, more precisely those competences which are linked to the use of the monopoly of legal and legitimate violence. Notwithstanding the reality of international and European agencies directed towards police cooperation (e.g. Interpol, Europol, Frontex, etc.), the operational police work is largely defined within national boundaries. This is precisely the reason why the notion 'national police system' was used in this research. The research leads to the development of a theoretical framework that can be of help in understanding plural policing tendencies in Europe. The model distinguishes police forces (police services) from police types (character of police organisation). Table 1 clarifies the developed theoretical model of police-typology.

Table 1 Typology of national police systems

	One force	Different forces
One type of police	Unified police system	Territorial divided police system
Different types of police		Historical diverse police system

We now explain each type of police system, namely what Ponsaers et al.,[80,81] call the

I.   Territorial divided police systems.

II.   The historical diverse police systems.
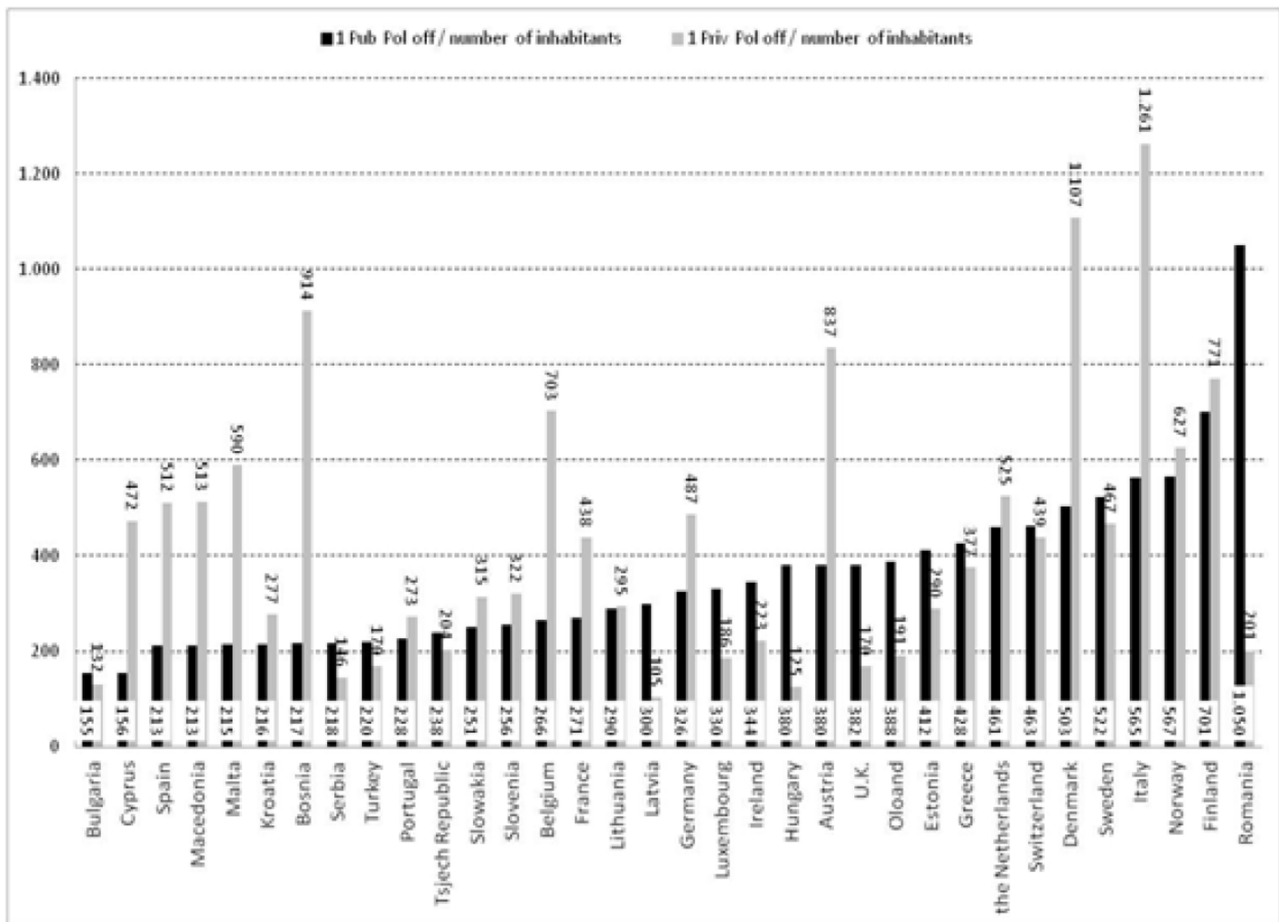
III.   Unified police systems (Figure 1).

Figure 1 European comparison: number (N) of inhabitants per public police officer; per private security officer (2011).

We briefly discuss this Figure that offers a handsome frame for scholars to classify police systems from their own country of interest.

Territorial divided police systems

From a conceptual point of view it is not common that one force includes different types of police. Within one (national) police system, hierarchical lines between different forces can be integrated, or can function autonomously. In spite of the fact that one police system includes different forces, it is also possible that all these forces have the same design and format. Mostly this is the case in police systems that are based on territorial (local or supra-local) division of labour. In this kind of police systems, each force is constituted with the same type of police. In other words, all police officers of the different forces have the same training, date-bases, control agencies, etc., but have different hierarchical leadership. Therefore the authors frame these type the 'Territorial Divided Police Systems'. The Belgian police system for example, as well as the United Kingdom and Germany, are territorial divided systems.

Historical diverse police systems

A police force executes a variety of police functions at the same time. A force that executes a broad range of these police functions has integrated competences, or better is general of nature. Nevertheless, a force can also have specialized competences in one (or a few) specific functions, e.g., a criminal police force, or a gendarmerie, which is a military unit specialised in maintenance of public order. In complex police systems, police forces reflect often differences in geographical scope. Some forces are considered as national or federal forces, others are limited to a provincial or a regional level, or even to a municipal level. From this point of view, police forces within one police system can have different geographical competences. Some forces have national competences, others have limited territorial competences. Often a police system is characterized by a tension between central and local decision making authorities (power structures). Different police forces within one police system can have different training and educational programmes, salary scales and grades, they can have different controlling bodies, or different data bases, different regulations, different labour unions, etc. In other words: different police forces can represent different types of police. In most cases, this patch-work format of a police system is the result of long historical developments. Therefore we call these 'Historical Diverse Police Systems'. Sometimes this kind of police systems contains autonomous 'functional police' forces.

Unified police systems

In certain police systems, we observe only one police force. Mostly these kind of police systems are the result of reform and therefore we call these 'Unified Police Systems'. Often the system is identical to the force and called 'National Police' or 'Federal Police'. Conclusive we determined a huge diversity in the evolution of police systems in different countries. Some countries, like some Scandinavian countries, Scotland and the Netherlands, know a unified police system. Others still mention 'pluralization' although the entire police function is in the hands of the state police. In other countries the historical evolution led to hybrid, fragmented police systems, and overlap of police functions on a given territory. It would be interesting to allocate pluralization situations in different countries within the theoretical framework presented in table1 to detect parallel or diverging dynamics in the organisation of the regular police apparatus. Although this exercise is not the scoop of this article, we strongly believe that both currents are interconnected. The next section, being the presentation of the empirical results, focuses on the Belgian situation of policing.

Belgian security policing arrangements

The Belgian police apparatus

The so-called 'Octopus Agreement[4] 'dated 23 May 1998 gave rise to the 'Integrated Police Force on Two Levels Act;[5] (WGP) of 7 December 1998.[82] Since the introduction of the Police Reform Act , Belgium has two types of police: A local police force[6] and a federal police force, together: the integrated police. Approximately 47,000men and women are employed by the police.[7] Of that, approximately 39,000 are operation police officers. There are also approximately 8,000 employees without police powers who mainly work in administrative and logistic support functions (the so-called Calog personnel). Though these two levels are dependent on different authorities, there are, within the framework of integrated community policing,[83] functional links between the two police levels' that are provided for by law, but no hierarchical.[76] The Police Act (1998) lays down the functional connections between these two levels. Responsibilities for operational, integrated community policing lies at the feet of the ministers of Home Affairs and Justice. Moreover, there are two advisory bodies (federal police council and the local mayors police council) and an advisory commission (permanent commission of local police, where all police chiefs are represented by 16 of their number who have been elected), who must also contribute towards the coordination and cohesion of the divided system. The federal police are integrally financed nationally, while the local police are financed for 2/3rd by municipalities and for 1/3rd by the federal police. This means that the Mayor, whose autonomy is subscribed in the Constitution, has an independent political position disposing of an administrative (local) police force to guarantee security on the territory.

After the transformation of the national state in 1988, Belgium (with 589 municipalities) became divided into the Flemish/Dutch, German and French speaking community councils and the regional governments of Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels-Capital. Each of these regional authorities developed different approaches to urban security, and have to be accounting to the security policy of the Minister of Interior and of Justice.[76] Whilst Federal and Regional authorities retain responsibility for formulating policy responses on security issues, policy implementation is the responsibility of the municipal authorities. Regional authorities 'steer' social policy responses (policy formulation, e.g. agenda setting, allocation of resources, etc.,) to quality of life issues, Federal authorities steer law enforcement and the maintenance of public order, whilst municipal authorities are obliged to 'row' both criminal justice and social policy approaches. The need on the local level for a qualified, well organized community oriented local police force, is obvious.[8,84] This article focuses on recent evolutions, important to the subject of this article.

The private sector

As mentioned before, pluralization is often associated with privatisation. International trends show in some countries a bigger private security employment than employment by the public police. In many countries the private security sector keeps on growing.[69,70] Apparently, this is not the case in Belgium, as illustrated in Table 1. This Table provides an overview of the presence of a public police officer per number of inhabitants and the presence of a private security guard (Table 1). In Belgium one public police officer is taking care of (only) 266 inhabitants, illustrating an average presence of public policing comparing to other EU countries. One private security officer in Belgium operates for 703 inhabitants (1rd of public policing), a ratio still being very modest.[85,86,9] In the UK the ratio in favour of the private sector is much higher, having the disposition of one private guard available for (only) 170 inhabitants. European countries with the highest private capacity (ratio to inhabitants) are Bulgaria, Servia, Hungary, Poland and Romania (former Eastern European countries) and Letland. While Bulgaria, Servia, Letland, Hungary and Poland show a strong presence of public policing as well, in Romenia public police officer has to take care of 1050 inhabitants, demonstrating the least public police capacity in this figure. Romenia illustrates a vast divergence in private (strong representation) and public (very limited) capacity per inhabitants. When we discuss competences appointed to private security guards (fields of action) in Belgium, only limited competences are granted to them by Law.[10]

Surveillance in public space is only permitted for goods, surveillance on citizens being reserved to public agents. Private guards can report sacks being left in the streets, damage to plants in public parks, covered street numbers or street signs, campers illegally parked and graffiti. They have to report these offences to the police, like any other citizen. They mostly perform parking ticket control (outsourced to them by municipalities), VIP guardianship and guardianship in and around privately owned buildings, like shopping malls and banks. They have no more tools of coercion than any other citizen. An immense ideological-based resistance –particular in the Walloon part of the country[76] prevented privatisation growth. In Belgium most outsourcing is enquired by the private sector itself, with a very limited part being outsourced by the public sector or by the Mayor.[87] This is due to the limited competences foreseen in the

---

[4]Referring to the 8 different political parties that agreed in consensus on the police reform, after Dutroux, the child molester, escaped from prison in 1996.
[5]Law of December 7th 1998 on the integrated police on two levels, *B.S.* January 5th 1999, Wet van 07 December 1998 on the integrated police at two levels.
[6]Before the police reform in 1998, the 'municipal' police, after the reform: the local (zonal) police (municipal police and brigades of the gendarmerie).
[7]Morphology of the police forces, CGL.

---

[8]For a more extensive analysis of the Belgian police reform, see Devroe and Ponsaers, 2013.
[9]In Belgium the police ratio is 1 public police officer for 1.266 inhabitants, one private security officers for 1.703 inhabitants. In 2011 Belgium calculated 220 licensed private surveillance companies and 15411 private security officers (CoESS, 2011).
[10]Act concerning surveillance enterprises, security firms and internal surveillance services, *B.S.* April 10th 1990 and Act on the regulation of the private and special security, *B.S.* December, 31th 2004.

Acts and the restricted labour offer. Conclusive we state that Belgium is qualified by huge segregation from Anglo-Saxon trends. As Table 1 points out, policing 'through' government[3] to the private sector, is rather scarce in Belgium.

External security arrangements in public space

This paragraph analysis the actual organisation of security provision by actors and agencies, external to the police force. Only in two particular domains police functions are outsourced, namely 'public order and incivilities' and 'traffic'. In Figure 2 as well the position of these external actors is illustrated, as their relationship to the regular police, clarifying the regular police achievement of 'eating up' most of the external dispositive (Table 1). We now elaborate on Figure 2. Already before the police reform of 1998, a lot of municipalities disposed of prevention officers, in the framework of

the prevention and security contracts (started in 1991) financed by the Ministry of Home Affairs.[88] In most cities, these prevention officers were incorporated within the local police forces and an extension of police officers. The recruitment of these prevention officers, low educated jobless people, was to a large extent inspired by the employment policy of the federal government. In 1994 the Ministry negotiated contracts with 29 municipalities.[88] From 1996 on, a major investment was done, adding 'city wardens' and 'park watchers'to these contracts. The name changed to 'Security and society contract' stressing the societal 'social cohesion' aspect of these kind of prevention. The Minister of Home Affairs admonished Mayors to take these wardens out of the police organization and to finance them by means of municipal budgets. This meant the installation of independent municipal services, autonomous from the local forces. Figure 2 illustrates this shift of prevention officers from the police to the municipal administration.
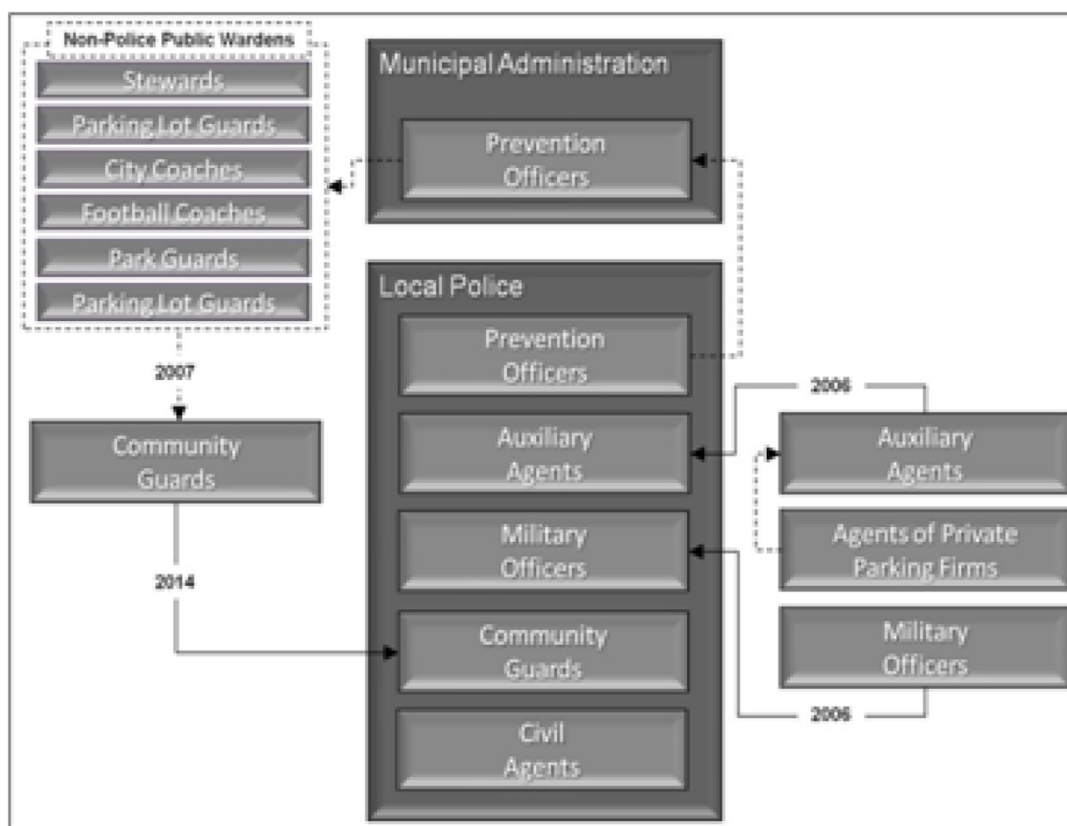

Figure 2 Flows of actors and agencies providing security in relation to the police.

It was in this context that municipalities engaged a relatively important amount (+/-1,500) of non-police public wardens, e.g. stewards, parking lot coaches, city coaches, football coaches, park guards, parking lot guards, etc. With Bourdieu[89] we can nominate these '*semi-autonomous fields*'[11] as these specific domains became policed autonomously from the police in the broader societal context of social cohesion projects steered by the Mayor. After this 'insourcing' trend within the municipality, the variety (nomination,

badge, uniform, competences, tasks) grew enormously, leaving the citizen with a dispersed, locally organised assembling of all kinds of personnel operating in public space. It is important to mention here that none of these wardens were private security officers. Becoming aware of the proliferation of these different municipal services, with different guidelines, the Ministry of Home Affairs decided in 2007 to regroup these services in one unified municipal service, the so-called 'Community Guards'.[12] The connection between the 'politics of behaviour' trend of tackling incivilities and public wardens patrolling the streets, giving fines for anti-social behaviour in public space, becomes clear at this point. By this Act, 'community guard-reporters' received specific competences to report certain forms of

---

[11]For Bourdieu the concept of a *field* is a structured social space with its own rules, schemes of domination and legitimate opinions. According to him, fields are 'relatively autonomous' from the wider social structure (Bourdieu, 1994). We find 'public order', 'traffic' and other crime phenomena to be these kind of 'fields' he describes, functioning 'rather autonomous' from the broader police organization.

[12]Act May, 15th 2009 on 'Community guards' and Community guard-recorders', *B.S.* June, 12th 2009.

146

social disorder to the municipal administration, which could fine offenders on a purely administrative basis.[1] In the French-speaking part of the country, these guards are called 'wardens of peace'.[13] A similar trajectory was completed by the so-called 'Auxiliary Agents', which were introduced by the Ministry of Home Affairs as assistant personal within the municipalities, like an autonomous force for traffic offences, mostly controlling the payment of parking lots in public space.

In 2006 these 'Auxiliary Agents' (+/- 1,500) were integrated in the local police forces, leaving the Mayor without staff to control parking behaviour. When being integrated in the police force, the competences of these 'auxiliary agents' were enlarged, broadening regular police power. As a consequence of this loss, most municipalities outsourced the parking control function to agents of private parking firms. In 2006 another mechanism was introduced. The military force had to economize and the federal government decided to offer the opportunity to certain categories of the military personnel to make a career shift to the local police in the framework of the employment policy. This opportunity was repeated several times during the last decennium. In sum a number of +/- 1,500 soldiers joined in this context the local police .Furthermore, the police reform of 1998 initiated the possibility to engage civil personnel (Calog) within the force. Including civilians into the police system is an insourcing condition as well. Today most local forces, but also the federal police, dispose of highly educated civil personnel in an important number of functions (criminal analysts, strategic advisors, staff-personnel, accountants, consolation and coordination officers, etc.). This could refer to the concept of 'the police extended family', operational in the UK. Conclusive we state that the police's response to the governmental pluralization incentives was one of becoming a 'gormandising' actor themselves. The expansions presented in Figure 2, consuming former external services, can be called currents of 'insourcing' or the commencement of performing specific functions internally. It is a strategic decision that is often made to maintain control of critical production or competencies. This kind of insourcing or 'reverse' contracting requires, according to Warner & Hefetz [74] government capacity to re-internalize service delivery should the contract fail to adequately control costs, preserve quality, or address broader community goals. In Belgium, it was not 'contract failure' that lead to gormandising trends, but political ideologies from the Minister of Interior, granting the police their demands of self-protection and thus broadening their powers as 'leaders' in the security governance field.

Conclusion

In this article we provided an expansive overview of literature on plural policing and post modern tendencies towards securization and privatisation. For a better understanding of plural policing trends we additionally elaborated on some results of a ten years comparative research on police systems in Europe. In a second section we presented–based on a case study with triangulation of methods- the Belgian Security Policing Arrangements, and elaborated as well on public as on private policing. We conclude this article with a strong statement: the Belgian police demonstrate cannibalistic characteristics. Devouring former externally organized public agents as well as agencies (army), they achieved an exclusive market position in selling and protecting security. Together with the ideological options the Belgian government takes not to engage private security in control and surveillance of disorder in the public domain, the regular police remain for the moment the sole provider of security. Under the cloak

of 'partnership' with other agencies partners can be 'insourced' to work in the force (for ex. for economic-financial crime) of within the framework of 'private-public collaboration' (for ex. collaboration with banks and insurance companies). In training tasks, police wants to 'network' with academics, trying to incorporate scientific resources into the force, becoming a state within a state. As long as scholars are approached in an instrumental way (to serve police goals) this superficially perceived collaborative model is doomed to fail.[90] Other, more reciprocal models of cooperation, where external partners are treated as independent experts instead of 'police property'[91,92] are needed and necessary. In order to strengthen powers in important security domains (like organised crime), the Belgian police seeks increasingly to reject basic community services and administrative tasks. The fact that dynamics of police withdrawing on these semi-autonomous fields will create powerful attempts of the private sector to incorporate public policing tasks, is often neglected. Once public police functions are sold by private companies, it becomes incredible difficult to recuperate these back into the regular police.

The actual organizational police dynamic in Belgium is oriented towards a reinforcement of the own organization. These police dynamics of 'territorial battles' are hardly weakened by political forces. On the contrary, the government subscribed to this self-protective power reflexes. Reason for this is the fact that the minister of Home Affairs will always need - in times of crisis, mass manifestations and riots- a smooth functioning strong police body in order to keep the peace. Besides that these gormandizing police attitude favours other societal political goals like promoting employment for non-educated jobless people, necessary in times of economic deficit. As mentioned these dynamics are connected on a large scale with specific thematic 'semi-autonomous fields', domains where the police assumes to book 'territorial profit' (like disorder and traffic). Viewed from a distance, this creates images of an 'organization in motion', exploding on specific points and imploding in others. Characterizing this 'animated moving Octopus' by limiting the view to pluralization trends is not adequate, and it creates the image of an imploding undivided whole in favour of divers internal and external parts. Many police Acts mention 'cooperation' but in practice this means 'police taking the lead'. After discussion within a governmental working group, the Belgian police presented their future concept in 2014. The bill 'vision for the police 2025'[14] goes under the promising title 'networking police' and intends to shift from an information position based on 'power' to a model of 'collaborative intelligence'.[93]

Acknowledgments

Conflicts of interest

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest.

References

1. Devroe E. A swelling culture of control. *The genesis and application of the law on administrative sanctions in Belgium*. Ghent University, Belgium. 2012;528 p.

2. Devroe E. A swelling culture of control. The genesis and application of the incivilities law in Belgium. In: Ponsaers P, editor. *Social analysis of security. Financial, economic and ecological crime, crime, (in) security and distrust, public and private policing*. Eleven international Publishing, Netherlands. 2012. p.355–362.

---

[13]Act on the community guards in Wallonia, 14 février 2008.

[14]Press conference Minister of Home Affairs and Police, June 30th 2014.

3. Loader I. Plural Policing and Democratic Governance. *Social and Legal Studies*. 2000;9(3):323–345.

4. Johnston L. From 'pluralization' to 'the police extended family': discourses on the governance of community policing in Britain. *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*. 2003;31(3):185–204.

5. Crawford A. Plural Policing: The Mixed Economy of Visible Patrols in England and Wales. *Researching Criminal Justice, Policy Press, Bristol*. 2005;128 p.

6. Crawford A. Fixing Broken Promises? Neighbourhood Wardens and Social Capital. *Urban Studies*. 2006;43(5–6):957–976.

7. Crawford A. The Pattern of Policing in the UK: Policing Beyond the Police. 2nd ed. In: Newburn T, editor. *The Handbook of Policing. Willan,* Cullompton, England. 2008.

8. Jones T, Newburn T. The Transformation of Policing? Understanding Current Trends in Policing Systems. *Br J Criminol*. 2002;42(1):129–146.

9. Jones T, Newburn T. *Plural policing: a comparative perspective.* Routledge, London, UK. 2006.

10. Lea J, Stenson K. Security, Sovereignty, and Non–State Governance 'From Below'. *Canadian Journal of Law and Society*. 2007;22(2):9–27.

11. Stenning P. Governance and Accountability in a Plural Policing Environment: The Story So Far. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*. 2009;3(1):22–33.

12. Reiner R. Who governs? Democracy, plutocracy, science and prophecy in policing. *Criminology and Criminal Justice*. 2013;13(2):161–180

13. Home Office. *Criminal Justice: The Way Ahead*. Home Office, London, UK. 2001.

14. Zedner L. Security, the State, and the Citizen: The Changing Architecture of Crime Control. *New Criminal Law Review: An International and Interdisciplinary Journal*. 2010;13(2):379–403.

15. Rhodes RAW. The hollowing out of the state: the changing nature of the public service in Britain. *Political Quarterly Review*. 1994;65(2):137–151.

16. Rhodes RAW. The new governance: governing without government. *Polit Stud*. 1996;44(4):652–667.

17. Rhodes RAW. Understanding governance. *Policy networks, governance and reflexity*. Open University Press, Philadelphia, USA. 2003.

18. Garland D. The Limits of the Sovereign State. *British Journal of Criminology*. 1996;34(4):445–471.

19. Johnston L, Shearing C. Governing Security. *Explorations in policing and justice*. Routledge, London, UK. 2003;183 p.

20. Osborne D, Gaebler T. Reinventing Government. How the Entrepreneurial Spirit Is Transforming the Public Sector. *Addison–Wesley*, New York, USA. 1993;13(1):187–192.

21. Williams M. Securitization and the liberalism of fear. *Security Dialogue*. 2011;42(4–5):443–463.

22. Zedner L. Too much security?. *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*. 2003;31(3):155–184.

23. Zedner L. Policing before and after the police: The historical antecedents of crime control. *Br Criminol*. 2006;46(1):78–96.

24. Crawford A. Policing and Security as 'Club Goods': The New Enclosures? In: Wood J, B Dupont, editors. *Democracy, Society and the Governance of Security*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, USA. 2006.

25. Shearing CD, Wood J. From the Guest–editors: reshaping policing: ideas in action. *Police Practice and research: an International Journal*. 2007;8(2):99–106.

26. Cherney A, Hong Chui W. Police auxiliaries in Australia: police liaison officers and the dilemmas of being part of the police extended family. *Policing and Society: An Int Journal of Research and Policy*. 2010;20(3):280–297.

27. Johnston L. Keeping the family together. Police community support. Officers and the 'police extended family' in London. *Policing and Society: An Int Journal of Research and Policy*. 2007;17(2):119–140.

28. Crawford A, Blackburn S, Lister S, et al. Patrolling with a purpose: an evaluation of Police Community Support Officers in Leeds and Bradford City Centres. *Leeds: Centre for Criminal Justice Studies,* University of Leeds, UK. 2004.

29. Crawford A, Lister S. The Extended Policing Family: Visible Patrols in Residential Areas, Joseph. *Rowntree Foundation, USA*. 2004.

30. Crawford A, Lister S. Additional Security Patrols in Residential Areas: Notes from the marketplace. *Policing and Society: An Int Journal of Research and Policy*. 2007;16(2):164–188.

31. Jones, T, Stedenb RV, Boutellierb H. Pluralization of policing in England and Wales and the Netherlands: exploring similarity and difference. *Policing and Society: An Int Journal of Research and Policy*. 2009;19(3):282–299.

32. Terpstra J. Police, local government, and citizens as participants in local security networks. *Police practice and research. An International Journal*. 2008;9(3):213–225

33. Jones T, Newburn T. Urban change and policing: mass private property re–considered. *European Journal on Criminology and Research*. 1999;7(2):225–244.

34. Button M. Private security and the policing of quasi–public space. *Int Journal of the Sociology of Law*. 2003;31(3):227–237.

35. Steden van R. Privatizing policing. *Willan, Devon, UK*. 2008.

36. Bayley DH, Shearing CD. The future of policing. *Law and society review*. 1996;30(3):585–606.

37. Feigenbaum HB, Henig JR. The political underpinnings of privatization: A typology. *World Politics*. 199446(2):185–208.

38. Warner ME, Hebdon R. Local government restructuring: Privatization and its alternatives. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. 2001;20(2):315–336.

39. Bel G, Hebdon R, Warner M. Local government reform: Privatization and its alternatives. *Local Government Studies*. 2007;33(4):507–515.

40. Hebdon R, Jalette P. The restructuring of municipal services: A Canada–United States comparison. *Government and Policy*. 2007;26(1):144–158.

41. Devroe E, Terpstra J. Plural policing in Western Europe: a comparison. *European Journal of policing studies*. 2015;2(3):235–245.

42. Cooper C, Jane A, Julie A. A national evaluation of community support Officers. Home Office Research Study 297. *Home Office, UK*. 2006.

43. Crawford A. The police, policing and the future of the 'extended police family. In: Brown J, editor. *The Future of Policing. Routledge, London*. 2013.

44. Jones T, Newburn T, Smith D. Democracy and Police and Crime Commissioners. In: Newburn T, Peay J editors. *Policing, Politics, Culture and Control*. Oxford, Hart Publishing, UK. 2012;219–244.

45. Ponsaers P, Edwards A, Verhage A, et al. Policing Barcelona. *European Journal of Policing Studies, Policing European Metropolises*. 2014;2(1):452–470.

46. Terpstra J, Bas van Stokkom, Spreeuwers R. Who patrols the streets? An international comparative study of plural policing. *Eleven international Publishing, The Hague, Netherlands*. 2013;172 p.

47. Buzan B, Waever O, Jaap de Wilde. *Security: a new framework for analysis*. Lynne Reinner Pub, USA. 1998;239 p.

48. Buzan B, Hansen L. The evolution of international security studies. *Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK*. 2010.

49. Brannan T, John P, Stoker G. Active citizenship and effective public services and programmes: How can we know what really works? *Urban Stud*. 2006;43(5–6):993–1008.

50. Edwards A, Hughes G. The preventive turn and the promotion of safer communities in England and Wales: political inventiveness and governmental instabilities. In: Crawford A editor. *Crime prevention policies in comparative perspective*. Willan publishing, Cullompton, UK. 2009;62–85 p.

51. Swaaningen van R. Justice as an insurance company: "actuarial justice" in the Netherlands. *Judicial Explorations*. 1996;22(5):80–97.

52. Bunt van der H. Op het kompas van het veiligheidsgevoel. In: Bijleveld C, H van de Bunt editors. *De grens van onveiligheid (diesrede VU), Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, Netherlands*. 2003.

53. Wacquant L. Straf de armen. *The new policy of social insecurity, Epo, Berchem*. 2006.

54. Crawford A. Questioning appeals to community within crime prevention and control. *European Journal on criminal policy and research*. 19997(4):509–530.

55. Furedi F. Culture of fear. *Meulenhoff*. 2006.

56. Prior D. Civil renewal and community safety: virtuous policy spiral or dynamic of exclusion? *Social policy and society*. 2005;4(4):357–367.

57. Hope T. The New Local Governance of Community Safety in England and Wales. *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*. 2005;47(2):369–387.

58. Sackers HJB. Shepherd, keeper and enforcer. The mayor and administrative sanction law. *Inaugural speech from January 15 2010, Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen, Netherlans*. 2010.

59. Prins R, Cachet L. Integrated security policy and the mayor. *Magazine for Security*. 2011;10(1):43–58.

60. Brannan T, John P, Stoker G. Re–energizing citizenship, strategies for civil renewal. *Palgrave, UK*. 2007;23 p.

61. Crawford A. *Crime and insecurity, the governance of safety in Europe*. Willian publishing, Cullompton, UK. 2002;10(3):283–285.

62. Edwards A, Hughes G. Resilient Fabians? Anti–social behaviour and community safety work in Wales. In: Squires P, editor. ASBO Nation The criminalisation of nuisance. *Policy press, Bristol*. 2008;57–72.

63. Reiner R. Crime and Control in Britain. *Sociology*. 2000;34(1):71–94.

64. Devroe E, Petrov M. Policing in Sofia. From centralisation to decentralisation. *European Journal of Police studies*. 2014;2(3):372–403.

65. Ponsaers P, Devroe E. On how a failing government creates an intrusive police force. In: Devroe E, editor. Tides and currents in police theories. *Cahiers Politiestudies*. 2012;25(4):115–135.

66. Card R, Ward R. The crime and disorder Act 1998. *A practitioner's Guide. Jordan*. 1998.

67. Squires P, Stephan D. Rougher justice: anti–social behaviour and young people. *Willan Publishing, Portland*. 2005.

68. Shearing CD, Stenning PC. Modern Private Security: Its Growth and Implications. *Crime and Justice*. 1981;3(1):193–245.

69. Shearing CD. The relationship between public and private policing. *Crime and Justice*. 1992;15(1):399–434.

70. Button M. Private Policing. Willan Publishing, Cullompton, UK. 2002.

71. Shearing CD, Marks M. Being a New Police in the Liquid 21st Century. *Policing*. 2011;5(3):210–218.

72. Hope T, Sparks, R. Crime, risk and insecurity: law and order in everyday life and political discourse. *Routledge, London, UK*. 2000;275 p.

73. Terpstra J. Regulation in hybrid security care – About the monitoring of a public good in a partially privatized system. *Magazine for safety*. 2011;10(4):41–58.

74. Warner MA, Hefetz A. Insourcing and Outsourcing. The Dynamics of Privatization among U.S. Municipalities 2002–2007. *Journal of the American Planning Association*. 2012;78(3):313–327.

75. Jones T, Newburn T, Harraway P. The growth of private security. *Criminal Justice Matters*. 2008;32(1):23–25.

76. Devroe E, Ponsaers P. Reforming the Belgian police system between central and local. In: Fyfe NR, editors. Centralizing forces? Comparative perspectives on contemporary police reform in northern and Western Europe. *Boom Legal Publishers/Eleven, Netherlands*. 2013;77–98 p.

77. Greene J. The Tides and Currents, Eddies and Whirpools and Riptides of Modern Policing: Connecting Thoughts. *Journal of Police Studies*. 2012;4(3):29–54.

78. Jones T, Lister S. The Policing of Public Space: Recent developments in Plural Policing in England and Wales. *European Journal of Policing studies*. 2015;2(3).

79. Devroe E. Tides and currents in police theories. *Cahiers Politiestudies*. 2012;25(4).

80. Ponsaers P, Devroe E. National police orders on the move in Europe. *Handbook police services International*. 2014;111:1–60.

81. Ponsaers P, Devroe E. The future of European national police orders? In: Ponsaers P, editors. *Future Police, Triggers for a mature debate. Maklu, Belgium*. 2015;45–85 p.

82. Ponsaers P. On evaluating Community (Oriented) Policing' through other police models. In: Van den Broeck T, Eliaerts Ch, editors. *Evaluating Community Policing. Brussels, Politeia, Greece*. 2002;51–76 p.

83. Ponsaers P. The development of community (oriented) policing and the relationship with other police models. Academic bibliography, *Kluwer, Belgium*. 2001;5:1–42.

84. Ryckeghem van, Willy Bruggeman, Marleen Easton U Gent, et al. A vision for the police in 2025: steering committee opts for networking police. In: Maarten De Waele, editors. *Cahiers Police Studies,* Maklu, Belgium. 2014;3(32):185–189.

85. Facts and Figures 2011. Brussels: CoESS General Secretariat. *CoESS*. 2012.

86. Confederation of European Security Services. *CoESS*. 2015.

87. Ponsaers P. The rise of the private security sector in Belgium? *Panopticon*. 2015;36(5):480–488.

88. Willekens Ph. Better one bird in the hand than ten in the air: integral safety. In: Devroe E, Dormaels A, editors. Local integral prevention policy. *From program to link, Order of the Day, Netherlands*. 2006;35:9–16.

89. Bourdieu P. *Science of science and reflexivity*. University of Chicago Press, USA. 2004;168 p.

90. Ponsaers P. Academicization of Higher Police Education - Opportunities and Dangers. Cahiers Police studies. *Law and Political Science*. 2012;4(22):53–68.

91. Reiner R. *The politics of the police*, 4th ed. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK. 2010.

92. Loader I. Why do the police matter? Beyond the myth of crime–fighting. In: Brown J, editor. *The future of policing.* Routledge, London, UK. 2013; p. 40–51.

93. Ponsaers, Bruggeman W, Easton M, et al. *The Future Police, Triggers for a mature debate*. Maklu, Antwerp, Belgium. 2015.