



# THE ROLE OF THE POLICE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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## **Abstract**

*Police is an organization whose activities significantly contribute to sustainable development goals implementation. The nature and subject of its activity are related to maintaining relations with the society with which it is in constant interaction. At the same time, an important issue, as in the case of other public organizations, is the social responsibility of the police. Its dimensions determine the creation of an atmosphere conducive to social participation next to the police in national security. In the effective implementation of a model of social responsibility of the police, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of internal factors (the police) and external factors (the police and its stakeholders) influencing the results of this process. For the police, being a responsible organization does not mean only fulfilling all formal and legal requirements. To be perceived as a trustworthy organization, it must think and act in terms of the future, see and consider various implications, take into account human dignity, observe fair rules of operation, respond quickly to the comments and suggestions of stakeholders.*

**Keywords:** *police, sustainable development, social responsibility, society.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

One of the goals of the "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" resolution adopted by the United Nations Assembly in 2015 was to build effective and responsible institutions conducive to social inclusion at all levels. Undoubtedly, in every democratic country, one of the fundamental institutions implementing projects in this area is the police. At the same time, the indicated

organization one should a priori perceive as socially responsible. By this, considering the functions performed by the police: preventive, repressive, and service, one should understand that police itself meets the criteria of a socially responsible organization (Roberg & Kuykendall, 1993, p. 13).

## **2 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE POLICE**

In the era of globalization, social responsibility has become a factor that determines the existence of organizations, not only economic entities but also other organizations. In these cases, only the

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sources of this responsibility are different. The same goal should guide all organizations to implementing socially beneficial solutions, despite the differences in the subject of their activities. It is thanks to the proper implementation of social responsibility that organizations integrate social and environmental issues in their daily activities and mutual relations with stakeholders voluntarily (Zemigala, 2007, p. 100).

Dynamic changes take place not only outside but also inside a given entity. Social responsibility is an indicator of how an entity functions and to what extent it is responsible for society. However, one should point out that the model of social responsibility of the police must include criteria and indicators that cover the nature of the activities conducted by them. You cannot judge the police using the same assumptions as, for example, with business organizations. The literature on the subject proposes a model of socially responsible police based on criteria and determinants assigned to them:

- ethical criterion (determinants: having a formal code of ethical conduct; having a system for monitoring ethical conduct among employees; conducting training in ethics among

employees; having a system of motivating employees to behave ethically).

- social criterion (determinants: having a documented equal opportunities policy in the organization, having documents of the occupational safety system, monitoring the opinion of the organization among employees, the operation of trade unions and their participation in the organization's decision-making process, monitoring stakeholder opinions about the organization's work, constant improvement of the management system in the organization).
- ecological criterion (determinants: the use of technologies that are safe for people and the environment, having procedures that ensure the safety of people and the natural environment, shaping pro-ecological attitudes among employees) (Hryszkiewicz, 2012, pp. 70-74).

In the pursuit of effective implementation of this model of social responsibility of the police, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of internal factors (police) and external factors (police and its stakeholders) that affect the results of this process. (Table 1).

*Table 1. Factors conditioning the implementation of the Police social responsibility model*

Internal factors	External factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- high social competencies of Police officers,</li> <li>- shaping decentralization processes,</li> <li>- ensuring a continuous process of professional development of officers,</li> <li>- increasing the quality of performed activities and customer service,</li> <li>- development level of internal communication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the existence of platforms for cooperation with the local community,</li> <li>- developed level of external communication,</li> <li>- stakeholder perception considering the assessment of the work of the Police,</li> <li>- legal conditions.</li> </ul>

*Source: Author's compilation*

The absolute precondition for adapting the model of social responsibility of the police is certainly the police officers themselves, or more precisely, what they do, how they build a relationship with stakeholders - clients of this formation, and how they approach their goals. A necessary condition to achieve the set of goals is, apart from the possibility of achieving them, that the members of the organization themselves are flexible, creative, characterized by creativity, and perceive the constant need to improve their competencies. Therefore, it is essential to undertake activities aimed not only at staff training but also at making

them feel satisfied with what they are doing and where they do it, and at making them identify with the organization itself (Ścibiorek, 2012, pp. 21-22).

The adaptation of actions taken to local conditions is also crucial in the operation of the police. We should mean here, that on the one hand, such shaping (decentralization) of the structure in police units will facilitate organizational solutions in the police itself, and on the other hand, will ensure proper relations between the police and the local community. Finding or building platforms for cooperation between them will largely depend on the trust of external stakeholders in the police.

That, in turn, should determine the processes of communication between the police and the local community. It is possible to effectively encourage and include local communities to cooperate with the police in various fields related to ensuring public safety and order only through properly implemented communication.

Following the applicable standards, we should note that the preconditions for effective communication with public administration are dialogue and open actions. State institutions, as in the case of the police, should themselves strive to popularize their activities. Failure to inform society about plans, projects, and the results of their implementation on an ongoing basis, may cause a distraction and suspicion of partiality, self-interest, and unethical behavior. The police in every country are public organizations whose nature is inseparably connected to society.

The essence of the police's activity points directly to the need for external communication. How that form of communication society accepts affects the creation and updating of its image. On the other hand, that image is the information to the people. It indicates whether the police properly perform the imposed duties, how a formation is managed, and is competent.

### **3 THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY POLICING CONCEPT**

In wishing to adapt to changes, police, just like any organization in the modern world, must be assessed by their relationships with stakeholders. The police should direct its actions to solve the recipients' (clients) problems and serve them. Therefore, police should clearly define its pro-social mission and assess its strengths and weaknesses to build a strategy based on cooperation, more precisely, cooperation with the structures of its environment.

One of the proposals that enable understanding of cooperation is the concept of community policing, widely implemented in the world since the 1980s, which focuses on reducing crime and disorder by providing police services covering aspects of traditional legal solutions. At the same time, it prevents the committing of prohibited acts, identifies and solves problems existing in local communities, and engages the latter to cooperate with the police. Consequently, a balance is

assumed between reactive police interventions and proactive actions focused on solving problems, including looking for the causes of threats to security and disorder. (US DOJ, 2007, pp. 3-4).

Key elements of the community policing concept remain the organizational transformation of the police, partnership in the police-community relationship, and problem-solving. Organizational transformation of the police should be based on the decentralization of the structures of police units to enable police forces to establish relationships in the local environment, and at the same time to delegate to them the power to act in the broadest possible dimension. With the acquisition of competencies by police officers because of training processes in the field of communication with the local community, the possibility of identifying problems and solving them will remain important. Transformation is also a change in the management of the police structures, considering such issues as organizational culture, decision-making process, operational strategy, and the image of the organization.

Partnership in the police-local community relationship means broadly understood cooperation of organizational units of the police with partners coming from the local community, i.e., residents, local government units, the media, and business entities. On the other hand, one should understand problem-solving as a process consisting of joint identification by the police and the local community of problems at the local and then undertaking actions to solve them.

It can be noted that the adoption and implementation of community policing largely depends on the social, cultural, and political context in each country. The process of implementing the concept in question may therefore take various forms, depending on the influence of factors such as cohesion and social networks, prevailing views on law enforcement, (de)centralization of public institutions, the adopted strategy of local police activities, or the need to build citizens' trust to this organization. In some cases, however, it seems that the concept of community policing is treated as the main symbol of the functioning of the police in a given country. In practice, police activities are based on

a traditional, i.e., reactive model with a strong focus on the enforcement of the law by policemen.

#### 4 CONCLUSIONS

To effectively adapt to the dynamic changes in the modern world, the police must constantly look for non-standard methods for an effective response to the existing conditions and strive for thinking ahead. It must continuously improve itself and introduce changes that meet new expectations and exceed current limitations.

The police are a hierarchical organization. As a social creation, the local community should involve it in its initiatives. So, police should consider environmental issues. For the police, being a responsible organization does not only mean meeting all formal and legal requirements. To be perceived responsible organization, police must think and act in terms of the future, see and consider various implications and human dignity,

adherence to fair principles of functioning, and promptly respond to comments and suggestions from stakeholders. Acting socially responsibly, each police unit should be sensitive to local culture and customs. Consequently, this will have an impact on the partnership with stakeholders.

To sum up, each country should treat the police as one of the basic institutions ensuring its proper functioning. It will mainly concern the area of security and public order. To properly implement its mission and strategy, the police must also consider the tasks in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, which is building effective, responsible, and transparent institutions at all levels. At the same time, it is only in this way that the police, with the participation of the state apparatus, can create favorable conditions for the inclusion of society in joint activities and participation in bearing responsibility for them.

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