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Diversity within police forces: a framework for comprehensive policy analysis

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Abstract

The police are a special public institution to study with regard to diversity: although in theory every officer can become police chief, empirical data on police forces in Europe shows that the level of diversity (in terms of gender, migrant background, and sexual orientation) is not representative of society upon entry into the force, and diminishes as rank increases. Academic literature indicates internal factors as the cause, but also as the main anchor points to improve this relation. Thus, it is important to study organisational diversity policies. However, this field of study contains some serious gaps. First, comprehensive studies are scarce: most publications focus on only one or two of three important policy areas (recruitment, promotion and retention). Second, comparative studies are rare, although these provide the necessary information to formulate new hypotheses. This article presents a framework of policy areas, types and measures to study and compare diversity policies within police forces in a comprehensive way.

Key words: police, diversity, diversity policy, organisation, HRM, framework

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Introduction

Many forms of diversity have become more salient in European countries (Vertovec, 2007; Zapata, 2009). Meanwhile, both in the professional and academic world, awareness has grown of the importance for organisations to adapt to their diverse surroundings. Private and public organisations have turned to specific policies to facilitate the inclusion of employees of diverse backgrounds. In Europe, this organisational tendency is reinforced by the adoption of diversity as a central political priority by the European Union (Shaw, 2005).

First, this article briefly outlines the introduction of diversity in other public institutions. It then presents the police as a special organisation to study: although in theory everyone in the line can rise to the highest ranks, in practice the level of diversity within police forces in Europe is not representative of society to begin with and diminishes as ranks ascend. This is illustrated with empirical data on a variety of police forces in Europe, defining diversity as differences in gender, migrant background and sexual orientation. Unfortunately, not all desired data were available: much information had to be distilled from scattered sources, and the information on diversity in terms of migrant background, and especially in terms of sexual orientation, was much scarcer than the information on gender diversity. Completing these data is beyond the scope of this article, although this observation is a plea for more attention for and data-gathering on these forms of diversity. Academic literature on the introduction of diversity within the police organisation indicates many external factors that explain negative relations between the police and diversity. However, in the end, internal factors are always indicated as the root causes for this imbalance, as well as the most important anchor points for improving it. Therefore it is important to study policies that aim to make the level of diversity within police forces more representative of society.

Second, academic literature on this specific topic presents many of these policies, which can be categorised in three organisational areas: recruitment, promotion and retention. However, no empirical study analyses policies in all of these areas at the same time, despite the fact that their effectiveness is likely to be influenced by the interaction between those areas. Furthermore, comparative research on the topic is scarce, although this would greatly enhance the possibilities to formulate hypotheses, for example, on relations between contextual factors and types of policies, relations between police areas, and so forth. Therefore, this article presents a framework that

includes all three areas, summarising many of the policy measures mentioned in the literature in a comprehensive way.

The article strives to answer two main questions. First, what is the relationship between the level of diversity among police officers and the hierarchical level of police officers? Second, which policies regarding recruitment, retention and promotion can be formulated to make the level of diversity among police officers more representative of society? The aim of the article is to illustrate the internal dynamics with respect to the diversity of the police organisation as a whole and offer an analytical framework that offers an overview of all possible diversity polices. This enhances the possibilities of scientists to formulate robust hypotheses regarding these diversity policies as well as the possibilities of practitioners to critically evaluate diversity policies and choose which ones might be successfully implemented.

1. Introducing diversity in the police as a public institution

How public institutions adapt to societal diversity is interesting to study because of the scope of their impact: their potential 'customers' are all citizens. Section 1.1 describes briefly how the introduction of diversity comes to the fore in publications on health, educational and political institutions, while section 1.2 introduces in more detail the police as a public institution of specific interest for various reasons.

1.1 Introducing diversity within public institutions

Many public institutions are realising the importance of adapting their organisations to societal diversity. This includes the health sector, where much has been written about creating a more diverse work force, for example, by reforming the educational system (Cohen, Gabriel & Terrell, 2002), by incorporating a new management philosophy (Muller & Haase, 1994), by introducing new performance indicators (Dreachslin & Saunders, 1999) or by a complete institutional reform (Smedley, Butler & Bristow, 2004). Most publications refer to the health work force in general, although some comment specifically on the necessity to increase diversity among dentists (Mitchell & Lassiter, 2006; Noonan & Evans, 2003), among paediatrics (Jewett, Anderson & Gilchrist, 2005), among nurses in general (Andrews & Boyle, 2003) or among psychiatrists and in mental health institutions in general (Fernando, 2003). Most publica-

tions focus on cultural and ethnic diversity, although some were explicitly dedicated to gender issues, such as the representation of women in key executive leadership positions in health care and public health administration (Lantz, 2008).

This also applies to a wide variety of institutions in the education sector. Contributions comment on how to make the special education workforce more diverse (Tyler et al, 2004), or how to test the effects of racial and ethnic diversity among teachers on organisational outcomes in public education (Pitts, 2005). Education policy responses to various forms of diversity in Canadian society have been analysed (Levin & Riffel, 1994) and the role of linguistic diversity (ethnic minorities, deaf persons) and gendered discourses in schools have been described (Corson, 2001). While some researchers focus on the role of race, diversity and social justice in teacher education (Cochran-Smith, 2004), others argue for the incorporation of specific topics, such as sexual orientation, in business cases for management students (McQuarrie, 1998). Some move to a higher level of abstraction and reflect on how diversity is and should be conceptualised in organisational practices in higher education (Smith, 1995).

Finally, there are several studies on diversity in political institutions. Mansbridge (2000), for example, argues for descriptive representation in politics. This would mean that politicians are in their own lives and persons in some sense typical of others in society and therefore, in a way, represent them. This is also called 'descriptive representation' (Pitkin, 1967) the 'politics of presence' Phillips (1995) and 'self-representation' (Williams, 1998). Some studies intend to prove the positive political outcomes of this kind of minority representation in specific empirical contexts (Banducci et al, 2004), although constrained by factors such as a highly racialised political context and party control (Preuhs, 2006). Others have tried to indicate the real demand there is for descriptive representation for certain groups (Chaney & Fevre, 2002).

However, one public sector has been left out so far: the security sector. This sector includes institutions such as the army, the police, prisons, and so forth. One of them, the police, is especially interesting to study in relation to diversity, for a variety of reasons, as will be outlined in the next section.

1.2 Distinctive features of the police in relation to diversity

The police are of specific interest when it comes to diversity policies. First of all, more than any other public service or organisation, the police form an institution with a highly symbolic meaning. At the same time, they represent the capacity of a state to regulate behaviours and enforce order within its territory, and also the civil

interests of public welfare, security, morality, and safety. Second, they are one of the best known public institutions. Even minimally competent members of society are aware of the police's existence, are able to invoke the services it provides with remarkable competence, and know how to conduct themselves in its presence. As Bittner (2005: 150) says: "To imagine people who are not at all touched by the police one must conjure images of virtually complete isolation or of enormous wealth and power." Third, the contacts the police have with large groups of citizens are constant, intense and direct (Theodoris & Mavrommati, 2004). Contact is not limited to certain domains, as is the case of teachers in a school or doctors in a hospital; it can occur in many spheres, including in what were, before the 18th century and the rise of the modern police, exclusively matters of private life.

Also, the police organisation seems to have a specific internal logic that is not common in most public institutions. On the one hand, hierarchy plays an important role in the organisation, which is known for its uniformity, its focus on physical performance and its conservative task of maintaining order (Cashmore, 2002; Phillips, 2005; Johnston, 2006). On the other hand, no matter on what hierarchical level a new recruit starts, the possibility is always open to move upwards in the organisation by applying for promotion courses. In theory, everyone can become chief of the police force. This is different than, for example, the hierarchy that exists in a hospital in which nurses are trained to be nurses and are expected to assist doctors until they retire; they are not considered to be aspiring doctors and or expected to become doctors by completing additional training during their career. A good starting point for diversity, or so it seems… because in practice, at least in the European context, the level of diversity seems to be unrepresentative of the level of diversity in society upon entry into the organisation and this level diminishes as rank increases. This relationship is summarised in an abstract way in Figure 1, and illustrated in three steps with empirical data afterwards.

Observation A) Low level of diversity among police officers entering the organisation

The level of diversity is lower than the societal average at the entry-level of the organisation. To illustrate this observation, diversity is understood in terms of gender, migration background and sexual orientation: i.e. the percentage of female police officers, homosexual police officers or police officers with a migration background is lower than the average in society. For example, the percentage of female police officers (non-civilian staff) among the basic officers of a variety of European police forces never reaches 50 percent (see Figure 2).

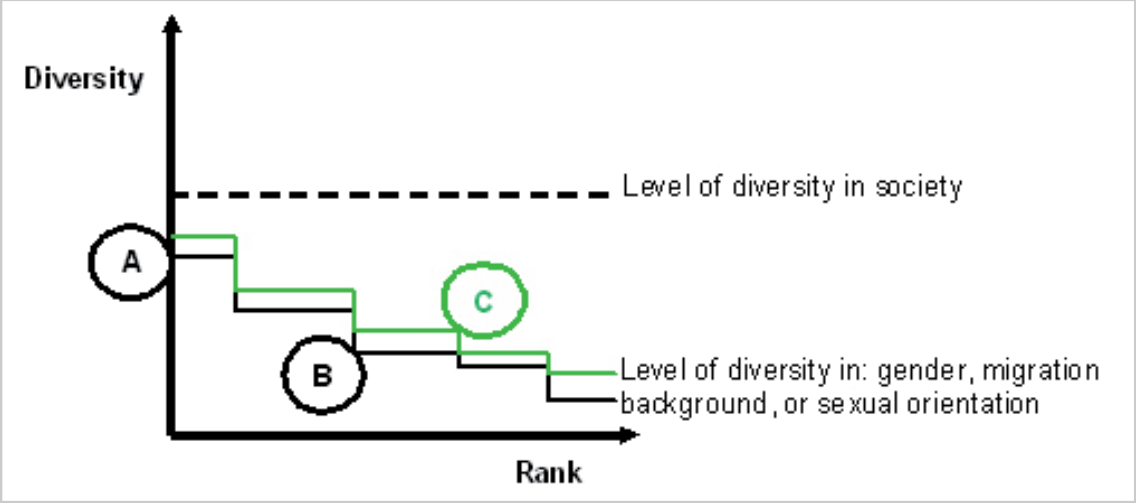

Figure 1. Relation between diversity and rank in the police organisation

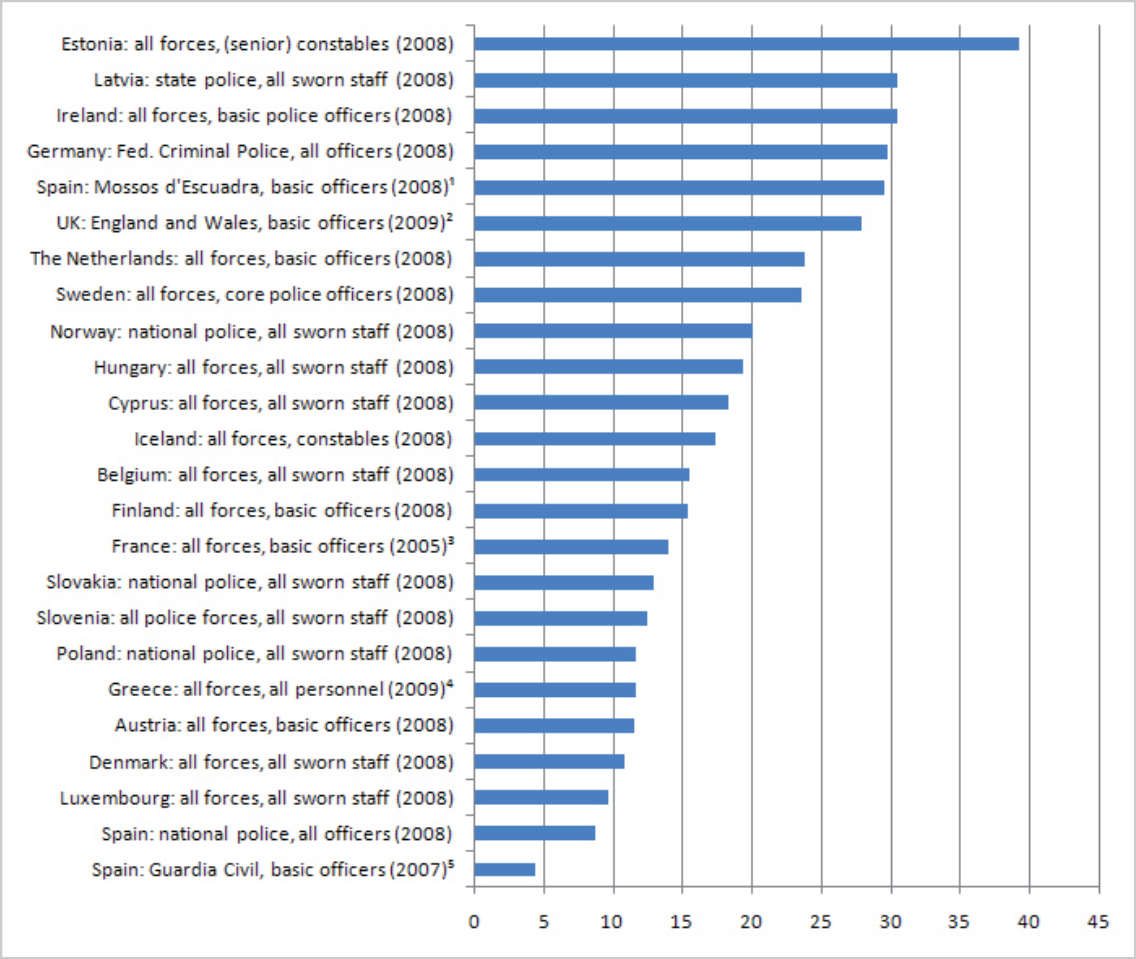

Figure 2. Sources: European Network of Policewomen (2008) Facts & Figures 2008 + other data sources: 1 (Programa d'Equitat, 2009), 2 (Home Office, 2009), 3 (Pruvost, 2009), 4 (Ministry of Citizen Protection, website), and 5 (Guardia Civil, 2007)

It should be noted that this article focuses on the executive part of the personnel, i.e. the personnel in the line. Including data on the administrative or civilian part of the police personnel would probably have shown that women are often overrepresented, especially in the lower echelons of the organisation. For example, 70 percent of the civilian staff in the Swedish Police Service (Swedish Police Service, 2009) and between 60 and 75 percent of the lower echelons (until 'income level 8') of the civilian staff in the Dutch police forces (LECD, 2008) are female. Also, this article focuses on hierarchical levels and diversity, leaving aside the relation between specialisations and diversity.

There is considerably less data on police officers with a migration background. In France, this information is officially unavailable, as French policy rejects registration on the basis of race, ethnicity or religion. However, the impression of politicians and academics is that the immigrant population is heavily underrepresented (Zauberman & Levy, 2003). The category only recently appeared in Catalonia (Spain), where in 2009 3.1 percent of the new recruits in training for the Mossos d'Escuadra had at least one parent born abroad, of which 2.3 percent had at least one parent born outside of the European Union (ISPC, 2009). Despite the fact that the German government introduced a rule that allows non-nationals to become police officers when they are urgently needed, ethnic minorities made up around 1 percent of the entire German police force in 1999 (Franzke, 1999). The United Kingdom and the Netherlands do offer recent statistics on ethnic minority representation within police forces. For example, in 2009, police forces in England and Wales counted 4.8 percent minority police officers at the constable rank (Home Office, 2009). And in the Netherlands, 6 percent of the police officers have a migration background (LECD, 2009).

Finally, figures on sexual orientation are even scarcer. This is not surprising as it is neither a visible characteristic nor is its registration generally found morally or legally acceptable. Even so, the rise of gay police officer associations indicates both attention to this form of diversity within police forces and a struggle for tolerance and recognition. In 2002, the Stockholm police department became the first in Europe to permit its officers to march along with the Gay Pride Parade in uniform, which caused a considerable stir. In the following years, police in Britain, Norway and the Netherlands were also given permission to march in uniform at respective Gay Pride festivals. Currently, gay police associations exist in various European countries. They have also united themselves at the European level in the Gay Police European Network.[1]

1 See http://www.eurogaypolice.com/, last accessed March 2010.

Country	Name	Founded
United Kingdom	Gay Police Organisation (originally LAGPA)	1990
Sweden	Föreningen för GayPoliser y Sverige	2000
Germany*	VelsPol Deutschland	2005
Austria	Gay Cops Austria	2005
Italy**	Polis Aperta	2005
Spain	Gaylespol	2007
The Netherlands*	Landelijk Homonetwerk Politie "Roze in Blauw"	2008

* Some gay police associations for regional police forces were founded much earlier, such as Niederrhein-Westfalen in 1996 in Germany, and Amsterdam-Amstelland in 1999 in the Netherlands.
** In Italy, Polis Aperta is still a clandestine organisation, not recognised by any public institution.

Table 1. Gay police associations (country and year of foundation)

Sources: websites of respective gay police associations

Observation B) The level of diversity among police officers diminishes as rank increases

Again, if diversity is understood in terms of gender, migration background and sexual orientation, this means that the percentage of female police officers, homosexual police officers or police officers with a migration background is lower in the higher echelons of the police organisation than in the lower ones. This observation is based on empirical data on gender and migration background, although information on the migration background of higher-ranking police officers is scarce. There is no statistical data on the sexual orientation of police officers by rank.

Police force	Relation diversity and rank
Greece	In 2003, 3 percent of the higher ranks (superintendent to lieutenant general) were occupied by women, while the average percentage of women in the entire police organisation was 11.6 percent (Theodoridis & Mavrommati, 2004).
Spain (Guardia Civil)	In 2007, 0.2 percent of the officials and 2.7 percent of the superior officials (the highest rank) were women, versus around 4 percent female police officers at the base (Guardia Civil, 2007).
Spain (Mossos d'Escuadra)	In 2008, none of the 9 commissioners was female, 10.3 percent of the 'intendentes' (second highest rank) were female, and 7.6 percent of the inspectors (third highest rank) were female, versus 29.5 percent of female police officers in the police force in general (Programa d'Equitat, 2009).

Spain (Policia Nacional)	In 2008, 8.7 percent of the constables were female, and 11.4 percent of the sub-inspectors were female, versus 1.6 percent of the (chief) inspectors, and 1.9 percent of the (chief) superintendents (European Network of Policewomen, 2008).
The Netherlands	In 2008, the percentage of women in the higher-ranking positions of all 26 Dutch police forces (from strategic leadership positions to direction) was 18.9 percent, versus 22.1 percent of female police officers in general. Also, the percentage of police officers with a migration background was 4.1 percent, versus 5.6 percent at the base (LECD, 2009).
Austria	In 2008, 11.5 percent of the basic police officers were female, versus 3.1 percent of the middle management and 2.1 percent of the senior management positions (European Network of Policewomen, 2008).
Belgium	In 2008, 15.5 percent of the basic police officers were female, versus 7.5 percent of the middle management and 6.8 percent of the senior management positions (European Network of Policewomen, 2008).
Estonia	In 2008, although 39.2 percent of the basic police officers were female, only 28.9 percent of the management positions were occupied by women, and only 4.5 percent of the senior management positions (European Network of Policewomen, 2008).
Finland	In 2008, 15.4 percent of the basic police officers were female, versus 6.8 percent of the senior police officers, 5.1 percent of the commanding police officers and 2.8 percent of the high command positions (European Network of Policewomen, 2008).
Iceland	In 2008, 17.4 percent of the constables were female, versus 0 percent of the sergeants, 7.8 percent of the (chief) inspectors and 2 percent of the (chief) superintendents (European Network of Policewomen, 2008).
Sweden	In 2008, 23.6 percent of the core police officers were female, versus 13.9 percent of the managerial officers (European Network of Policewomen, 2008).
UK (England and Wales)	In 2009, the proportion of women in the more senior ranks (Chief Inspector and above) was 13.0 percent, versus 27.9 percent of female police officers in general, while minority ethnic officers accounted for 2.8 percent, versus 6.3 percent of minority police officers at the base (Home Office, 2009).
Denmark	In 2010, 2 out of 12 police directors are female. None seem to have a migration background, as their skin colour is white and their last names are Danish (Danish Police Force website).

There are only two exceptions to this rule regarding gender diversity. The first exception is Ireland: in 2008, 30.4 percent of the basic police officers were female, versus 9.8 percent of the sergeants and inspectors, 4.6 percent of the (chief) superintendents

and 16.7 percent of the (deputy, assistant) commissioners (European Network of Policewomen, 2008). This considerable rise in gender diversity requires a case study that has not been conducted so far and that goes beyond the scope of this article. The second exception is France: in 2005, women were more present among the higher-ranking than among the lower-ranking police officers. Eighteen percent of the commissioners were female, versus 14 percent of female patrol officers. According to Pruvost, this is a consequence of two factors. First, since the 1970s a government feminist policy has focused only on the higher ranks, for which higher education instead of physical strength was required. Second, there exists a conviction among police officers that women are fit to be police leaders because of their skills, but unfit to be patrol officers because of the risks (Pruvost, 2009). As a result, female police officers are more likely to access high ranks from the outside than by moving up internally from the lower ranks.

What academic explanations are there for this low level of diversity on entering the police force and the diminishing of diversity on rising in rank?

Ad A & B) Academic literature: factors with a negative impact on diversity within the police force

According to earlier publications on diversity within police forces, several external factors have a negative impact on the level of diversity among police officers on entering the police force. The main factor is that entering the police might not be seen as attractive to women or minority groups for various reasons, such as the lack of skills, the perception of being unwelcome because they see few police officers that share their diverse characteristics, the expectation of a hostile reaction of friends and family, or a preference for other professions with more status and less demanding working conditions (Waters et al, 2007). In the case of minorities with a migration background, this is mainly caused by greater numbers of negative contacts with the police, and amplified by highly visible examples of this negative relationship between the police and diverse groups, such as the Stephen Lawrence affair[2] in the United Kingdom or the riots in the banlieus of Paris in 2005.

2 In 1999, the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (Macpherson, 1999) raised questions about racism in the public organisations of the United Kingdom. Under scrutiny were the actions of the police following the murder of the black teenager Stephen Lawrence, and the subsequent mishandling of the case by the public authorities, which meant that his murderers were never convicted.

However, most academic studies also indicate that the root causes of these incidents, as all interactions between the police organisation and its environment, are internal. The common denominator most often invoked is 'police culture' (Cashmore, 2002; Goldsmith, 1990; Skogan & Hartnett, 1997). This culture is repeatedly labelled as conservative and traditional (Brown, 1997), dysfunctional (Bernstein & Kostelac, 2002; Metz & Kulik, 2008), 'macho' (Rowe & Garland, 2007), racist (Waters *et al*, 2007), homophobic and sexist (Miller *et al*, 2003). These, and other internal factors, such as intergroup racial conflict (Walker & O'Conner, 1999), lack of leadership (McLauglin, 2007; Metz & Kulik, 2008) or different discourses (Dick & Cassell, 2002), are also said to be the reasons why non-white, homosexual or female police officers are hesitant to enter, do not advance as quickly as others to higher echelons of the organisation, or even leave the police force sooner than planned.

Observation C) The level of diversity within police forces in Europe has increased over the last decade

Both the percentage of basic police officers with a diverse profile and the percentage of police officers at the highest levels of the organisation with a diverse profile have increased, at least compared to 10 years ago. Again, numbers are mostly available for gender diversity. For example, in Estonia, the number of female police officers has risen every year from 12.4 percent in 1992 to 33.3 percent in 2006 (Resetnikova, 2006). In France the number of female police officers has also risen at all levels: from 9 percent female commissioners in 1996 to 18 percent in 2005, from 9 percent female inspectors to 17 percent in 2005, and from 7 percent female patrol officers to 14 percent in 2005 (Pruvost, 2009). In the police force in England and Wales, the number of female police officers rose from 17 percent in 2000 (Westmarland, 2001) to 27.9 percent in 2009, while the number of women in the ranks of Chief Inspector and above rose from 12.3 percent in 2008 to 13 percent in 2009 (Home Office, 2009). The percentage of police officers with a migration background rose from 2.9 percent in 2004 (Waters *et al*, 2007) to 6.3 percent in 2009 (Home Office, 2009). Finally, the percentage of police officers with a migration background in the higher echelons of the Dutch police forces ('income scale 13-18') rose from 3.3 percent (LECD, 2008) in 2007 to 4.1 percent (LECD, 2009) in 2008. Also promising for gender diversity was the relatively high percentage of female police students in 2008 in Austria, 27.1 percent versus 11.5 percent of female basic police officers, and in Finland, 22.7 percent

versus 15.4 percent of female basic police officers (European Network of Policewomen, 2008).

However, recently, some of these increases have come to a halt, and in some cases the percentages even decreased. For example, the percentage of police officers with a migration background in the Dutch police forces barely rose between 2007 and 2008: from 5.8 percent to 5.9 percent (LECD 2008, 2009). Also, in 2007 female police officers made up 9.1 percent of the National Police in Spain versus 9.6 percent in 2008, 11.9 percent in 2009 and 11 percent in 2010 (*20minutos*). The number of female students at the Catalan Police Academy (basic education, Mossos d'Escuadra) was 17.5 percent in 1999-2000, 29.9 percent in 2006-2007 (ISPC, student statistics 2006-2007) and 21.5 percent in 2008-2009 (ISPC, 2009). And this also goes for the percentage of women in the leadership of regional police forces in the Netherlands, which was 13 percent in 2006, 16 percent in 2007, and 15.3 percent in 2008 (Nederlandse Politie, 2008).

In general, then, these results support the conclusion that police forces are not static, and a positive trend (although always somewhat delayed in the translation to higher hierarchical levels) can be observed with regard to the level of diversity among police officers. What academic explanations are there for this trend?

Ad C) Academic literature: factors with a positive impact on diversity

First of all, external institutional factors, such as national laws and policies that favour the increase of diversity within organisations in general, can have very positive effects. These are especially important when police forces have less autonomy to determine their own policies. In this sense, the European Union also plays a role. For example, as early as 1993, a report of the Council of Europe clearly stated that "[t]he composition of police forces should normally be representative of the community it serves. This diversification of recruitment will establish a more trusting climate between the police and different population groups" (Council of Europe, 1993: 18).

Even so, internal factors are again indicated as a basic condition for a real change and effective growth towards more diversity within police forces, even by Van der Lippe *et al*, who distinguish various highly important internal organisational and external societal variables that influence the incorporation and promotion of female police officers (Van der Lippe *et al*, 2004). For that matter, the negative perception of police culture mentioned earlier has been contradicted over the last 15 years. For

example, Paoline argues that it is incorrect to talk about a unitary police culture in the first place, because organisational style, rank and individual officer style create variation in the cultural homogeneity of officers (Paoline III *et al*, 2000; Paoline, 2003). Also, several other authors argue that police culture, as all cultures, should not be seen as a static, but as a changeable phenomenon, with potentially positive effects (Chan, 1997; Metz & Kulik, 2008).

In sum, the first section shows that the police are an institution to study with regard to diversity because of the scope and nature of their tasks and their specific internal dynamics. In theory, all officers could become police commanders, but empirical data reveals that persons with a diverse profile are less likely to join the police force and less likely to ascend the ranks. Academic publications indicate internal factors as the root causes for this negative relationship and as the most important anchor points for turning it around. This draws attention to policies that aim to introduce (more) diversity within police organisations. The next step, then, is to analyse what has already been written on those policies and indicate what is still missing.

2. A review of recent prominent studies on diversity within the police

This review points to two gaps in the literature on diversity within the police force. First, there are few comprehensive policy analyses or evaluations. In this article, comprehensive means to provide an overview of policies in all areas related to diversity. Second, comparative studies regarding the police are scarce, especially when it comes to policies aimed at diversity within the organisation.

2.1 Few comprehensive analyses

Many studies are dedicated to specific diversity policies that can be related to three main policy areas: recruitment, promotion, and retention. These publications often have a critical evaluative character and often include recommendations, if not for improving practice, than for necessary further research. Curiously, researchers appear to focus on no more than one or two policy areas at a time. The combination between recruitment (and selection) and promotion policy measures is a common one (Blay, 2008; Casey, 2000; Jain & Agocs, 2008; Johnston, 2006, Zhao *et al*, 2006), while

others focus on the retention of police officers with a diverse profile, for example, by outlining measures that aim to improve the working environment of police officers (Armitage, 2006; Miller *et al*, 2003) or to manage relations with associations of Black and/or Asian police officers (Holdaway & O'Neill, 2004; Phillips, 2005), or to implement special training programmes (Cashmore, 2002; Rowe & Garland, 2007; Sharp & Asherton, 2007). In other words, there are no academic publications that provide us with an overview of diversity policy measures in all three policy areas, despite the fact that all of them have been argued to be important and inter-related:

First, recruitment and selection of police officers with a diverse profile is important, because, according to Mansbridge (2000: 101), "…especially in a context where the communication between representative and constituent would otherwise be undermined by distrust, descriptive traits allow a representative to represent constituents' substantive interests better." This would mean that regarding their own lives and persons, police officers are in some sense typical of others in society and therefore, in a way, represent them.

Second, efforts to improve the retention and promotion of police officers with a diverse profile are important (Johnston, 2006). As Pharr (2000: 455) indicates: "Diversity politics seem to focus on the necessity for having everyone present and treated well in any given setting or organization. However, a danger of diversity politics lies in the possibility that it may become a tool of oppression by creating the illusion of participation when in fact there is no shared power." Also, Dyke and Dyke (2002: 80-81) argue that "…(an) abstract affirmation of diversity can be part of the strategy for the maintenance of uniformity. …if the appearance of diversity is enough to satisfy the demand for it, then the appearance is created at the expense of the reality." These arguments are reinforced by the results of empirical studies, showing that minority ethnic members of staff were more likely to leave the police force and less likely to ascend (Phillips, 2005) and indicating that there will be no real changes towards more diversity in the organisational culture as long as minority police officers are not incorporated in sufficient numbers in all of the ranks of the organisation (Bowling & Phillips, 2002: 230), because new members will simply adopt the same stereotypes their fellow officers have (Cashmore, 2002; Holdaway, 1998; Sharp & Asherton, 2007).

In sum, recruitment, promotion, and retention are all important policy areas for diversity policy measures. Also, it is very probable that policies in one area influence those in another area and vice versa. Therefore, a non-comprehensive approach risks not exposing all relevant variables. This is especially an obstacle when critical

analyses and recommendations for improvement are the goal, as was the case in the majority of the publications discussed in this subsection.

2.2 Few comparative studies

Another observation is that (international) comparative studies continue to be rare, both for studies on the police in general and even more so for studies on diversity policies within the police. Early pioneers are Berkley (1968) and Bayley (1985), of which the latter commented at the time: "By and large, the police have not been subjected to comparative analysis. Until very recently neither historians nor social scientists appeared to recognize that police existed, let alone that they played an important role in social life. … Police are noticed only during dramatic events of political oppression… Since the mid-1960's this situation has changed. … Comparative international work is still rare, however…." (Bayley, 1985: 4). But this lack of comparative studies continues to the present day, as was recently confirmed by Jaschke *et al* (2007) and by Ponsaers, Tange and Van Outrive (2009), who argue for a move beyond the scientific and disciplinary ethnocentrism of research on policing and the police as a public institution in both a national and international context. Some positive exceptions are Van der Lippe *et al*, who wrote an article about gender diversity in four police forces in different European countries, and Casey (2009), who published a book on comparative policing and dedicated a part to the theme of police and diversity.

Why are international studies considered important? The first reason is that a worldwide description of criminal justice practices and institutions is an essential first step towards the long-term goal of understanding their characteristics better. It would resolve the paucity of up-to-date information about policing worldwide, enabling the development of generalisations about the range of variation in police practice. Because of this lack of information, there have been few attempts to generalise so far, not even about fairly straightforward matters such as degrees of centralisation/decentralisation, ratios of police to population, proportions of personnel assigned to different ranks or functions, qualifications for recruitment, and training programmes (Bayley, 1999).

The second reason is one that applies to all comparative research by social scientists: only by extending the range of examples can more powerful insights be developed to explain variation. In their marginalisation of international comparisons, researchers of criminal justice institutions have been unable to see patterns of systematic variation. As a result, we know little about the factors that shape the charac-

ter of policing and explanations tend to be simplistic, such as "historical reasons" or "people get the government they deserve" (Bayley, 1999: 8). Jaschke *et al* add:

> "We don't need more 'comparative seminars' where representatives from different countries tell their stories about how policing is done in their countries. Without comparable data, such exercises are of limited value. A far more ambitious approach is to develop systematic comparative studies based on shared methodological instruments, used to collect and produce truly comparative data. Only then can national differences be used as variables to test hypotheses and build theory" (2007: 91).

The third reason is that understanding the factors associated with differences in policing is not simply an academic exercise, but essential for practitioners who aim to successfully reform these public institutions. Only by examining the correlations of police practice abroad can one determine the conditions that are likely to facilitate or inhibit particular reforms at home (Bayley, 1999).

Why, then, are (international) comparative studies still so rare? One barrier is that key definitions often vary between countries and are not always easily identified and controlled (Mawby, 1999), making comparisons problematic. Looking at academic contributions, this seems to especially be the case concerning diversity policies within police forces. Diversity is often (implicitly) defined differently by focusing exclusively on a certain group or groups. These groups are distinguished by gender (Dick & Cassell, 2002; Dudek, 2007; Metz & Kulik, 2008; Zhao *et al*, 2006), sexual orientation (Blackbourne, 2006; Miller, Forest & Jurik, 2003), ethnicity, race or skin colour (Cashmore, 2002; Jaeger & Vitalis, 2005; Jain & Agocs, 2008; Johnston, 2006; Holdaway, 1998; Holdaway & O'Neill, 2004; Phillips, 2005; Walker & O'Conner, 1999), and religion (Armitage, 2007). Making this variance explicit and reflecting on the scientific and practical consequences of the chosen definition would significantly lower this barrier. A more radical solution would be to make the definition of diversity a central research topic (Van Ewijk, 2010).

Another important factor is the often limited availability of valid, reliable and detailed data (Mawby, 1999). This implies that researchers have to generate the data themselves, which is a time- and cost-intensive process. However, this should not prevent social scientists from focusing on the police as a research topic. After all, if that would happen in all fields of study where data is scarce, social science would not have advanced the way it has.

Finally, the basis on which to compare and categorise is often complex (Mawby, 1999). This also goes for diversity policies within the police organisation. The next section offers a tool to overcome this problem, by outlining an analytical framework

that includes all policy areas related to diversity policies within the police organisation.

3. A comprehensive view

This section provides a comprehensive framework by which to structure data on diversity policies within the police force, based on the policy areas of recruitment, promotion and retention.[3] This facilitates both evaluations of the interactions between those areas and comparative studies.

3.1 Playing the game: three diversity policy areas

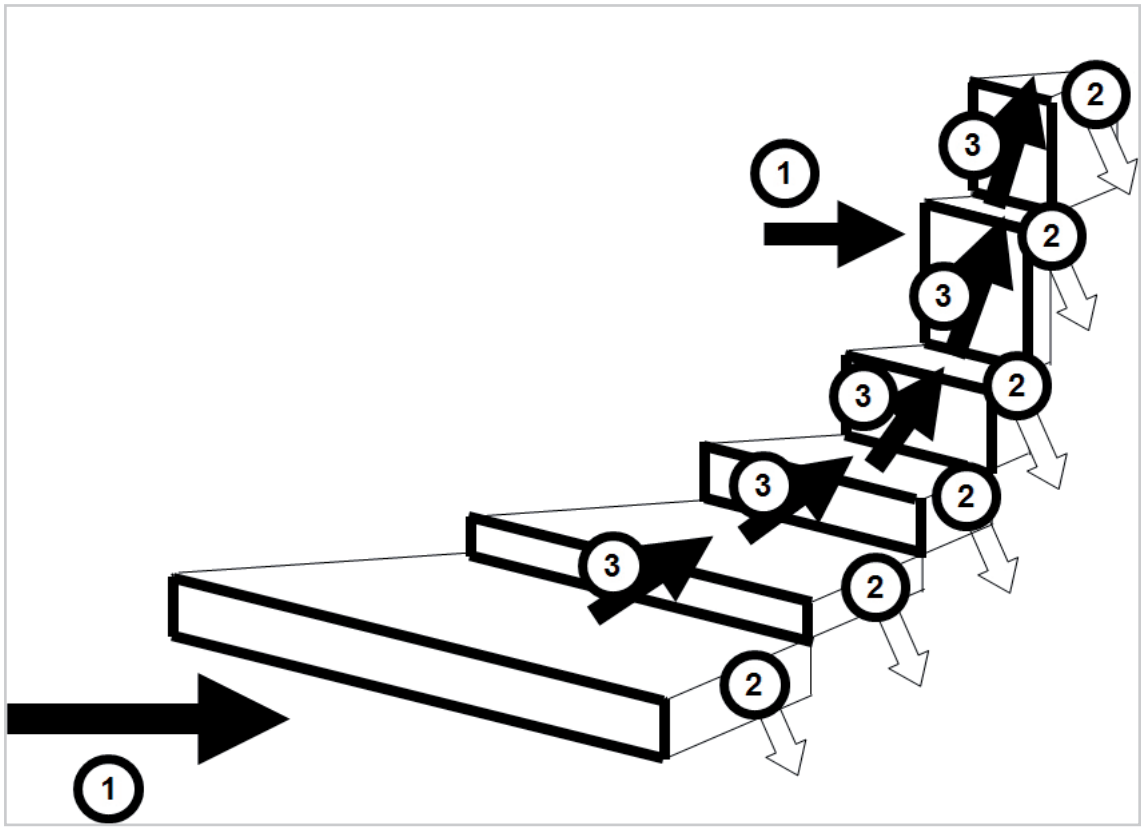

Figure 3. Visualisation of the career path of police officers

3 As said before in section 1.2, this article focuses on police officers in the line, i.e. it does not include the administrative and/or civilian staff of the organisation.

1) *Recruitment* refers to the inflow of new police officers. These might enter through the basic recruitment and selection process or via special side-entrance procedures for positions at higher levels in the organisation. Important policy measures would concern publicity campaigns, the content and format of tests, and so forth. Would one draw the analogy with a board game, this is where the game starts and participants receive a license to play.

2) *Retention*, refers to all policy measures specifically aimed at diminishing the unnatural outflow of police officers, in the sense that police officers leave the force before they retire. This includes attention for specific necessities of police officers, providing role models, coaches, etc. In the board game analogy, this means participants are stimulated to stay in the game as long as they can.

3) *Promotion*, finally, concerns the career path of police officers. The focus lies on the flow of police officers on to higher echelons, or hierarchical levels, of the organisation. This is related to education, in the sense that in order to rise in rank, police officers must pass certain courses. It is also related to job evaluation, talent programmes, content and goals of promotion courses, and so forth. Following the board game analogy, this is the path participants choose to follow to the finish and the way they can achieve more points to upgrade that finish.

Recruitment, retention and promotion together indicate the career path of police officers. Only by taking these areas into account can conclusions be drawn regarding diversity policies within the police organisation as a whole. Understanding how diversity is managed requires a comprehensive view, because these areas are all interdependent. Those that enter and stay can play the game and gain more points. Those that gain points, or believe they can, and are comfortable in the game enter and stay. By analysing what policies are formulated to attract police officers with a diverse profile and to make them keep playing the game, researchers gain more insight into the dynamics of diversity within police forces and can compare them with other police forces in a structured manner. Also, practitioners can predict the effectiveness of diversity policies by analysing the coherence between policy measures in different areas. It can also warn them about the importance of deliberation and conscious coordination, in cases where multiple actors "control" different (parts of the) areas.

3.2. The framework: types of policy measures per policy area

Finally, this subsection displays types of policies related to diversity within the police organisation, categorised per policy area. By offering a structured overview, a check-

list if you may, for researchers and practitioners to identify all possible policy measures a specific police force might deploy, the main question is answered. The broad policy types are illustrated with specific policy measures, based upon a broad selection of academic publications on diversity policies within police forces.

Policy area	**Policy types**	**Policy measures**
Recruitment	A. Publicity	Target groups (Casey, 2000; Metz & Kulik, 2008), media, channels (Blay, 2008; EPPHR, 2001; Wilson & Grammich, 2009; Wrench, 2007), language (Bennet, 1995), relation of content to diversity (EPPHR, 2001; Wrench, 2007), job descriptions (Johnston, 2006)
	B. Preparation	Preparatory programmes, target groups (Bennet, 1995; Bland *et al*, 1999; Blay, 2008; EPPHR, 2001; Metz & Kulik, 2008; Wrench, 2007)
	C. Selection process	Selection criteria (Blay, 2008; Casey, 2002; Metz & Kulik, 2008; Wrench, 2007), special criteria (Johnston, 2005), value of special skills (Johnston, 2006), tests (EPPHR, 2001), positive discrimination (Blay, 2008; Lewis & Ramakrishnan, 2007), profile evaluators and professors (Martínez, 2007), education and training of evaluators (Wrench, 2007)
	D. Profile new recruits (all levels)	Monitoring / registration profiles students (EPPHR, 2001), average profile (Jain & Agocs, 2008; Thériault, 2008), recruitment targets (Blay, 2008; Johnston, 2006; Metz & Kulik, 2008; Phillips, 2005), status recruitment targets (Van der Lippe *et al*, 2004)
Retention	A. Organisational structure	Diversity in vision and strategy (Metz & Kulik, 2008), diversity in organisational structure: diversity department or diversity manager (Casey, 2002; Dick & Cassell, 2002), diversity budget (Van der Lippe *et al*, 2004; Wilson & Grammich, 2009), complaint procedures / anti-discrimination institutions (Radford *et al*, 2006; Van der Lippe *et* al, 2004; Wrench, 2007)
	B. Internal communication	Internal awareness campaigns (Dick & Cassell, 2002; Radford *et al*, 2006), symbolic events (Metz & Kulik, 2008), behavioural/language guides (Martínez, 2007)
	C. Working environment	Neutral working environment (Coleman & Cheurprakobkit, 2009; EPPHR, 2001), special physical arrangements (Jain & Agocs, 2008), shift hours (Colvin, 2009; Martínez, 2007), shift composition (Colvin, 2009; Martínez, 2007), mentor/tutor/coach programme (Bennet, 1995), flexibility in working experiences (Wilson & Grammich, 2009)

	D. Associations of minority police officers	Type of associations, organisational support, role (Holdaway, 1998; Phillips, 2005; Radford *et al*, 2006)
	E. Content of courses	Themes in curriculum, all levels (Bennet, 1995; Coleman & Cheurprakobkit, 2009; EPPHR, 2001; Holdaway, 1998; Lewis & Ramakrishnan, 2007; Metz & Kulik, 2008), role (Ungerleider & McGregor, 2008), objectives (Bennet, 1995), role of civilians in design and implementation (EPPHR, 2001)
	F. Profile unnatural outflow	Monitoring / registration profiles unnatural outflow (Blay, 2008; Casey, 2000), average profile outflow (Bland *et al*, 1999), exit interviews (Martínez, 2007), motivational checks among those who stay (Wilson & Grammich, 2009)
Promotion	A. Publicity	Media, channels (Bland *et* al, 1999; Metz & Kulik, 2008), specific channels for specific groups (Martínez, 2007), talent programmes (Bland *et al*, 1999)
	B. Evaluation job performance	Evaluation criteria, profile evaluators (Johnston, 2006; Phillips, 2005; Thériault, 2008)
	C. Selection process	Selection criteria (Blay, 2008; Casey, 2002; Metz & Kulik, 2008; Wrench, 2007), special criteria (Johnston, 2006), value of special skills (Johnston, 2006), tests (EPPHR, 2001), positive discrimination (Blay, 2008; Lewis & Ramakrishnan,2007), profile evaluators and professors (Martínez, 2007), education and training of evaluators (Wrench, 2007)
	D. Practical access to courses / positions	Compatibility of working hours and other obligations (Van der Lippe *et al*, 2004; Martínez, 2007), compatibility of new responsibilities and other obligations (Van der Lippe *et al*, 2004)
	E. Profile per level	Monitoring / registration profiles per level (EPPHR, 2001), average profile (Blay, 2008; Dick & Cassell, 2002; Lewis & Ramakrishnan, 2007), targets for specific groups (Blay, 2008), status of targets (Van der Lippe *et al*, 2004)

Although, the adjectives ‘quantitative’ and ‘qualitative’ are also often used to distinguish between types of policies, this distinction is not employed here to avoid unnecessary confusion. That is, there is considerable disagreement in theory and practice about the difference between these two. For example, in a policy report on the Greek police, quantitative diversity policies mean that women, migrants, gays and lesbians are properly represented in the police force, while a qualitative reflection implies a

police force in which members of these groups are also proportionally represented in different ranks and jobs (Theodoridis & Mavrommati, 2004). Fourie, on the other hand, would consider both of these as quantitative. She states that quantitative policy measures are related to the monitoring of organisational demographics with statistical reports and analyses, while qualitative policy measures aim to create an environment in which differences are appreciated and everyone feels accepted and valued (Fourie, 2001).

Conclusions

As stated in the introduction, awareness has grown of the importance for organisations to adapt to their diverse surroundings, and private and public organisations have turned to specific policies to facilitate the inclusion of employees of diverse backgrounds. The police have been no exception to this rule. However, what has been argued in this article is that some exceptional conclusions can be drawn regarding diversity within the police force.

First, policies related to diversity within the police are of specific interest to study because the police form a highly symbolic institution. Also, academic literature has identified organisational factors as both the causes of the negative relation between diversity and the police and at the same time as the most important anchor points for improving that relation.

Second, this field of study contains two serious gaps: there are no comprehensive studies and few comparative studies. Using the comprehensive view by taking into account policies from all policy areas (recruitment, promotion and retention) will improve the understanding of researchers about the internal dynamics of the police force in relation to diversity: they will be better able to take all relevant variables into account when explaining or evaluating the effectiveness of certain policies. Using the comprehensive view will also assist practitioners in determining which successful policies can be copied to their organisational practice individually, and which require a more profound change in the organisation.

Finally, this article has provided a framework that facilitates the study and comparison of diversity policies within police forces in a structured way, and would like to end with a call to others to use it. After all, *"reflecting upon institutional actions in specific contexts could deepen our understanding of the mechanics behind conceptual issues in a way that abstract discussion does not"* (Weick, 1979: 164).

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