COMMUNITY POLICING STRATEGY IN CROATIA: WHAT DO 
WE KNOW AND WHAT DO WE NOT KNOW AFTER 15 YEARS OF 
IMPLEMENTATION?

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ABSTRACT
Purpose:
This paper presents an overview of the most important community policing research in 
Croatia, including the most recent one comparing police officers’ attitudes towards community 
policing before adoption of the community policing strategy in 2002, and at the beginning of 
2016, as well as the level of implementation of community policing in Croatia from the police 
organization’s point of view in 2003 and 2016.

Methods:
A representative sample of 500 Croatian police officers from six police administrations 
participated in the 2002 and 2016 surveys. The respondents evaluated the level of implementation 
of community policing in Croatia from the police organization’s point of view through a checklist, 
which includes relevant sets of indicators of the implementation of community policing at the 
organizational level.

Findings:
Despite obvious difficulties with the implementation of community policing, today, police 
oficers in Croatia consider the community policing model as really necessary and desirable both 
before the introduction of the community policing strategy (2002), as well as at the beginning 
of the implementation of community policing (2003). It is also interesting that some vulnerable 
populations like Roma in Croatia perceive the quality of police contact much better than the 
majority of the Croatian population.

Research limitations:
Some of the presented community policing surveys in Croatia have been conducted on 
small samples of respondents, particularly those that were aimed at obtaining data on Croatian 
citizens’ perception of community policing.

Originality:
This paper summarizes the results of the most important published and unpublished 
community policing evaluations in Croatia. The paper also, for the first time, presents 
comparisons between the very beginnings of community policing in Croatia and the present 
level of community policing implementation in Croatia.

Keywords: Croatia, community policing, evaluation, police attitudes, public perceptions

I  INTRODUCTION

Numerous authors (Sheley, 1999; Das, 2000; Nield, 2001; Uldriks & Van Renen, 2003, Bayley, 
2005; Greenwood & Huisman, 2006; Pino & Wiatrowski, 2006a; Manning, 2010) agree that 
modern democratic policing includes the rule of law, legitimacy, transparency, accountability, 
subordination to the civil authority, police safety, and local autonomy in developing policing 
and other strategies. Many scholars (Champion & Rush, 1997; Edwards, 2000; Brogden & 
Nijhar, 2005; den Heyer, 2011; Kempa, 2012) also claim that the community policing model is 
best suited to achieving these democratic policing principles because of various community 
policing goals, including problem solving, police collaboration with various public and private 
organizations, decentralization, and the commitment to democratizing all public institutions, 
including the police. It is therefore not surprising that, as in many other post-socialist countries 
(Goldsmith, 2003; Meško & Lobičnik, 2005; Meško, 2009; Lobičnik & Meško, 2010), in Croatia, 
police have adopted community policing philosophies and practices within the framework of 
the democratization process and the transfer of policing notions from the West after the socio-
political changes in the 1990s.

Although community policing efforts have been evident across the world for decades, its 
implementation has received insufficient attention and corollary “little is known about how one 
might successfully get such a program under way” (Kappeler & Gaines, 2011: 186). There is a lot of
misunderstanding regarding what community policing is and what it is not (Pino & Wiatrowski, 2006b). The modern police services in countries with stable democracies, which try to use community policing model as a mean to respond to the challenges posed by contemporary society and improve the quality of their work, often face a dilemma regarding community policing basic concepts (Champion & Rush, 1997; Miller & Hess, 2008; Corder, 2014): is it just police public relations, soft on crime, cosmetic change, flamboyant policing display, social care or police elitism; does it abolish police intervention; is it really innovative policing approach or is it the old way of policing under the new name? The situation is even more complex in post-socialist countries like Croatia, where community policing model is usually introduced instantly by decree, without sufficient proper understanding and adequate personal, material and legal resources (Meško & Lobnikar, 2005; Jere, Sotlar & Meško, 2012; Kešetović & Kentera, 2013; Kešetović, 2013; Meško, Lobnikar, Jere & Sotlar, 2013). This paper presents an overview of the most important community policing research and practices in Croatia and explores the commitment of the Croatian police to community policing.

2 THE CROATIAN COMMUNITY POLICING STRATEGY

The Croatian Community Policing Strategy represents the continuation of reforms that were introduced at the beginning of this century in the Croatian Ministry of the Interior following the socio-political and economic changes in the 1990s. The new provisions of the Police Act (Zakon o policiji, 2000) from the year 2000 encouraged cooperation between the police and the public, between the police and other stakeholders in the community, and the ability to create partnerships to achieve security (Kovčo Vukadin, Borovec & Ljubin Golub, 2013). In 2003, experts from the Croatian Ministry of the Interior developed a new strategy for police activities called the Croatian Community Policing Strategy, as the planned process of change to be implemented over an extended period of time, which required a high level of interconnection between policing theory and practice and active participation of all police resources. The ultimate goal of this reform process was to transform the Croatian traditional policing model into a community policing model that was compatible with EU standards of modern democratic policing (Cajner Mraović, Faber & Volarević, 2003).

Generally speaking, there are two main approaches to community policing implementation: involving all police officers and introducing specialized community policing officers and specialized community policing units (Kappeler & Gaines, 2011). As both of them have certain advantages and disadvantages (Vito, Walsh & Kunselman, 2005; Reaves, 2010), the Croatian community policing strategy has tried to reconcile them by mutually connected projects which were believed to guarantee the full implementation of the community policing model and, at the same time, achieving the main goal.

The Croatian Community Policing Strategy originally encompassed following six projects:

- Reform of the operative and preventive activities of the uniformed police: Introducing community policing officers who have to establish high quality relations with residents living on the territory they are assigned to.
- Development and advancement of crime prevention activities: A series of joint evidence-based activities of the police and citizens aimed at reducing risk factors for crime and deviance.
- Organization of prevention in local communities: Coordination, cooperation and collaboration of police and other local community stakeholders in reducing safety problems and crime risks.
- Reform of public relations: Timely and objective reporting on state of security and safety.
- Reform of the police education and professional development system: Linking police theory and practice.
- Internal democratization of the police: Adequate positioning of uniformed police, particularly a clear and transparent promotion system, which also means depoliticisation of the police.

The new posts of "contact police officer" and "police officer for prevention" were introduced, representing the backbone of uniformed police reform (Faber & Cajner Mraovic, 2003). Contact police officers have a permanent patrolling area, where they work in proactive, cooperative
relationships with citizens and community stakeholders along with responsible persons in various institutions and organizations in order to observe and resolve problems in their areas. Although community policing officers are the bearers of community policing, it should be performed by every member of police force. In addition, the police were given the opportunity to establish coordinating bodies, consisting of representatives of both citizens and the police. Together, they identify problems in the community and highlight priorities for their resolution.

2.1 Expectations of community policing in Croatia

Because of the theoretical foundation of the Community Policing Strategy, which includes Normative Sponsorship Theory, Broken Windows Theory, and Social Resource Theory (Bitaliwo, 2014), we expect that the community policing strategy, through its six projects, has an impact on strengthening formal and informal social control. There is a number of such impacts that, in our opinion, provide reason to believe that the community policing model is an appropriate model of police activity in line with contemporary living conditions (Cajner Mraović, Faber & Volarević, 2003).

Inclusion of a personal component in police activities

Community policing officers are in constant communication with citizens, which contributes to a gradual decrease in alienation and anonymity. An increase in the intensity and quality of contact between the police and citizens contributes to the elimination of stereotypes regarding the police and reduces the psychological distance between the police and the general public. Cooperation between the police and citizens is marked by the joint work and better connections between the police and other social services and institutions, thus activating all the social potentials (Cajner Mraović, Faber & Volarević, 2003).

Access of the police to a higher quantity and quality of information

Community policing enables the general public to get to know the police better and the police to get to know citizens better as individuals. This is the way in which the police can obtain valuable information and can forestall incidents of various kinds, including criminal acts (Cajner Mraović, Faber & Volarević, 2003).

Minimizing the risk of over-reacting by police officers in a given situation

The fact that citizens and police officers have the opportunity to get to know one another better and that there is a kind of interaction between them produces a level of mutual respect in their contacts, which may consequently result in a police officer being ready to exhaust all other options available before resorting to means of coercion, in line with the stipulations contained in the Police Act. The crucial difference is that the police officer does not act in that way just because he or she is acting in line with his or her personal belief (Cajner Mraović, Faber & Volarević, 2003).

The ability of a police officer to recognize potentially violent or otherwise dangerous individuals

Police officers have the duty to get to know the local population in the community, and provided they have professional knowledge in criminology, they will be able to recognize, in a timely manner, individuals representing personal, social, economic, educational, health or other risk factors (Cajner Mraović, Faber & Volarević, 2003).

More appropriate response to social problems

Police officers are focused on resolving problems, and contact with citizens enables them to gain insight into problems and to speed up the resolution process. The police, just like any other social institution with a pronounced bureaucratic structure and distance from citizens (institutional anomy), cannot function as a service to these citizens, i.e. cannot serve them, if they do not know what they really need (Cajner Mraović, Faber & Volarević, 2003).
Encouraging participation

Community police, because of the frequent contacts between police officers and citizens, gain useful information regarding the latter’s problems and needs, and pass the knowledge on to the relevant social services and institutions. This process encourages problem resolution and encourages citizens to turn to the police for help (Cajner Mraović, Faber & Volarević, 2003).

Developing an informal social control mechanism

This is really about the practical application of the theory of social control, according to which cohesion among the population is considered to provide the prerequisite on which common goals can be defined and joint efforts can be organized in order to reach these goals. This is essentially about the fact that people will act in a positive way if the environment fosters the things they care about and consider important for their personal benefit (Cajner Mraović, Faber & Volarević, 2003).

3 KEY EVALUATION STUDIES ON CROATIAN COMMUNITY POLICING

3.1 Citizens’ surveys

Surveys of citizens’ opinion about police and their perception of safety and fear of crime are more than important research area: they “have become a key police research tool” (Skogan, 2014: 449). This is illustrated by the fact that these kinds of surveys are regularly conducted in many European countries according to standardized methodology. The most complex national public opinion survey on citizens’ perception of safety and security in Croatia was conducted in 2009, as the result of the previous three-year cooperation between the Croatian Ministry of the Interior and the United Nations Development Programme on citizen safety and public security projects. It was expected that the results of the survey would support the sustainability of the community policing strategy and indicate priorities for further changes in the general police approach to questions of citizen safety.

This survey encompassed a total of 4,500 respondents over 18 years of age. The sample was representative by county, settlement size, gender and age. Two quantitative methods were combined in conducting this survey: telephone interviewing and personal interviewing in households. The given results offer a somewhat idyllic picture of Croatian society: more than half of respondents consider the amount of crime and disturbance of public peace in their place of residence as small, and even less than half of them perceive that there is a risk of becoming a victim of crime. Finally, around two-thirds of respondents perceive criminal threats as smaller in their place of residence compared to the Croatian average (GfK, 2009). The general sense of security among Croatian citizens was also confirmed by the fact that only 18% of citizens had undertaken some measures of protection from a physical assault or assault on their property. Safety measures, in the largest percentage, referred to not carrying larger amounts of money, having a watchdog or anti-theft doors. The respondents did not express any feeling of insecurity when they were alone at night in their homes or in the street: as many as 93% of them reported they felt safe in their homes and 86% of them stated they felt safe in the street at night (GfK, 2009).

The respondents also evaluated local police conduct and their contacts with the police. The obtained results revealed that Croatian citizens perceived the police positively mostly in regards to their orderly appearance and politeness, while a small number agree that police officers are motivated and that the police is efficient in preventing crime. One third of citizens had contacts with the police in the past twelve months, and the majority of them described it positively because the police officers had devoted to them either their full, or a decent amount of attention. Among the 12% of those who had an unpleasant personal experience with the police, those experiences mostly referred to traffic police. Although 16% of respondents had helped the police in the past twelve months, as many as 91% are willing to help. However, respondents were divided in their desire for more frequent contacts with police officers in the future: 48% did not want such contacts and 45% did. A great majority agree that better cooperation between the police and the public is needed. Half of citizens believed that the police informed the public objectively and
regularly, while around one-third expressed the opposite opinion. The majority of citizens stated that the police should inform the public more on all relevant topics, especially on road traffic safety (GfK, 2009).

One of the most important objectives of the Croatian Community Policing Strategy is the strengthening of the sense of public security and reducing the fear of crime. On the sample of 1,096 respondents from different parts of Croatia, Borovec (2013) explored the influence of the Croatian Community Policing Strategy on fear of crime and perception of crime and incivilities in Croatia. It was the first time in Croatia that the key dimensions of community policing were extracted. The results of discriminant analysis confirmed that individual, socio-demographic characteristics of respondents are significant predictors of the fear of crime and the perception of safety in general. This study revealed the two-dimensional structure of the “perception of safety” construct, which consists of affective (fear of crime) and cognitive components (perception of victimization risk, level of crime and incivilities). Furthermore, the findings suggest a complex relationship between community policing and citizens’ affective and cognitive perception of safety. While most of the extracted components of community policing have a positive effect on the perception of safety, others are not significantly connected or are connected contrary to expectation. The data prove that the attitudes toward the police and the perception of police effectiveness in preventing and detecting crime are the main factors of community policing and have the most significant impact on the sense of security (Borovec, 2013: 230). By proving that community policing is statistically significantly associated with citizens’ sense of safety, this study represents a significant contribution to evidence-based approach to police reform in Croatia.

3.2 Studies of specific population groups

Life in modern urban areas across the world follows the same patterns and shares the same risks, including dense population, high level of immigration, resulting in unemployment, inadequate housing and lack of infrastructure (kindergartens, schools, health care etc.), heterogeneous population, including people with completely different social experience and cultural values, alienation, including people, who do not know their neighbours and do not care, and anonymity, including individuals lost among other people, which encourages deviant behaviour. These circumstances directly influence police work on a daily basis. Considering the fact that the transformation of the role of the police in society is based on better cooperation between police and society, so creating such living conditions in which citizens would not have to be in constant fear for their personal safety, Karlović (2013) conducted a survey to show the role and contribution of the police to the public safety system and to emphasize the importance of the public attitude towards the police and police activities which help create and carry out measures for prevention which, as a result, reduce the crime rate and contribute to the sense of personal safety of each and every citizen. On a sample of 796 citizens of the Croatian capital city of Zagreb, Karlović (2013: 161) concludes that "the respondents living in the city of Zagreb estimate the level of social disorganization and crime in their place of living to be higher than the respondents from other counties estimate for their place of living". What is interesting is that those indicators are not completely consistent with either the sense of safety, that is, the expressed fear of crime or the actual rate of crime. Although the city of Zagreb is the third most dangerous place in Croatia when it comes to crime rates, its residents report less fear of crime than do the respondents from other counties with lower crime rates. The same author also finds that the more the citizens see the police in their neighbourhoods and the more informed they are about police activities, the more positive is their perception of police effectiveness in dealing with urban deviations or preventing social disorganization in their neighbourhoods.

The policing in diverse, multicultural communities is another kind of challenge for modern police (Lobnikar, Šuklje, Hozjan & Banutaj, 2013). As Europe’s largest ethnic minority (World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples, 2015), the Roma have historically been the target of persistent persecution and other forms of discrimination (Lobnikar et al., 2013) and according to the World Dictionary of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples (2015), the Roma population is the most discriminated minority in Croatia. Therefore, the relationship between the police and Roma communities is of great importance. A study (Nemec & Prpović, 2015) was conducted on a sample of 212 residents in the County of Međimurje and it involved residents
of two Roma settlements (Piškorovac and Parag), while the control group consisted of people of Croatian nationality who live near these settlements. Data required for the survey were collected on the basis of a questionnaire for the evaluation of the model of community policing (McKee, 2001). Significant differences were confirmed between the observed group of respondents in the perception of the quality of contact between the police and the local population, the perception of crime and incivilities and the perception of community cohesion. Roma perception of the quality of contact between the police and the local population was positive, while the majority of the Croatian population in the same areas perceived the quality of contacts worse. The results show the high level of quality of the relationship between the local police and the Roma population in Croatia.

Starting from the specific focus of community policing on the youth population (Champion & Rush, 1997; Miller & Hess, 2008). Bujević (2012) conducted research in order to determine how minors in the city of Zagreb, being Croatia's largest urban centre, perceive police officers of the Zagreb Police Administration, as well as the police as an organization. The research was conducted by means of a written on-site questionnaire on a sample of 202 pupils attending grades 1 to 3 in two grammar schools and two vocational schools in Zagreb. The obtained results show that minors in the city of Zagreb, in large part, do not positively perceive the police or their dealings. Furthermore, observed were certain differences in the perception of the police in regard to age, gender, type of school, previous contacts with police officers, risky and anti-social behaviour, as well as general attutde of minors toward authority.

3.3 Police officer surveys

The police experience in previous authoritarian socio-economic systems had a negative impact on the police structure, its philosophy of operations, the police culture and organization as a whole. Negative human resources selection at all levels, serving the interests of a particular political structure, the ability to affect the outcome of an officer's actions through connections, distortions of the value system, actions "following orders" rather than following the law, and autocratic and undemocratic management of the police, were the inherent features of the police organizational structure. This is why it is necessary to carry out not only changes regarding the interaction with the service's users, citizens, but also regarding the members of the police force, their mutual relationships, the behaviour of the police, and regarding the laws and regulations that lay down the way the police is to function, as well as the changes in the "way of thinking" of police officers and their superiors.

As the first police reform cycle in Croatia ended with adoption of The Police Act in 2000, the group of police leaders from the Police directorate together with police scientists from Police Academy surveyed police officers and police managers across the country in 2002, to obtain their opinion on police reforms and their view of the further required changes in police organization and functioning. The collected data have not been published, but served as starting point for development of the community policing strategy: it turned out that police officers perceived the police professionalization and depoliticization as the priorities in future reforms.

Karlovic (2010) conducted research on attitudes about the organisation and functioning of police leaders and those who are not leaders, on a stratified quota sample of 500 police officers in the Zagreb Police Administration. An instrument comprising 42 assertions has been applied. The factor analysis has resulted in four varimax factors that have been named as follows: 1. "police and citizen cooperation/partnership and police education"; 2. "modified model" (community policing); 3. "hierarchical relationship in organisation"; and 4. "characteristics of police officers' work". Discriminant analysis has shown that police leaders have more positive attitudes toward the factor "police and citizen cooperation/partnership and police education" and more negative attitudes toward the factor "hierarchical relationship in organisation", while the attitudes of police who are not leaders are a mirror image of police leaders' attitudes.

4 COMMITMENT OF THE CROATIAN POLICE TO THE COMMUNITY POLICING STRATEGY TODAY

A representative sample of 500 Croatian police officers from six police administrations participated in the 2002 and 2016 surveys. The respondents evaluated the level of implementation
of community policing in Croatia from the police organization's point of view through a checklist, which includes relevant sets of indicators of the implementation of community policing at the organizational level.

**Table 1: Police assessment of police organization in 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>1 Very bad</th>
<th>2 Bad</th>
<th>3 Good</th>
<th>4 Very good</th>
<th>5 Excellent</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the structure and organization of the police in Croatia today</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the success of police work in Croatia today</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate to which extent the following aims in the current process of police reform are achieved:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Depoliticisation of the police</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Professionalization of the police</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate confidence in the leadership of the police:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- At the level of police stations-organizational units</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- At the level of the police administration</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- At the level of the Police Directorate</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the extent to which the system of appointment and dismissal of leaders are in compliance with the proclaimed aim of creating a depoliticized and professionalized police organization</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate to which extent you are satisfied with the possibility of career development in the police</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate to which extent you are satisfied with the Regulation on Titles in the Ministry of the Interior</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate to which extent you are satisfied with the Regulations on Awards in the Ministry of the Interior and Incentives for Police Work</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate to which extent you are satisfied with the system for evaluation of police officers</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the training system of training for handling and use of firearms</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the system of special physical training and maintenance of physical fitness</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the system of police education</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>1 Very bad</td>
<td>2 Bad</td>
<td>3 Good</td>
<td>4 Very good</td>
<td>5 Excellent</td>
<td>No response</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluate the system of additional professional training</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate your level of satisfaction with working in the police:</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the quality of public relations of the police:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Toward the public – citizens</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Toward the internal public-policeman officers</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the state of interpersonal relations in the police organization:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• At the level of your police department – organizational unit</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Generally in the police</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the extent to which law enforcement officers participate in determining the objectives of policing</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the extent to which police officers participate in the analysis of the performance of police work</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2: Police assessment of the need for further police reforms in 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluate the need for changes in police work:</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>1 Absolutely no</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 Absolutely yes</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing preventive action</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fostering proactive action</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reducing repression toward citizens</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Directing repression</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improving communication with citizens</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting victims and vulnerable groups of the population</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solving problems of citizens</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the need to organize the police as a public service for citizens in matters of security and law enforcement</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the need for a police officer to be a helper and a friend of law-abiding citizens</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the need for civil-citizens’ supervision of police work</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data presented in Table 1 and Table 2 reveal that the following changes are still needed in the Croatian police: organizational and structural changes; changes in the police culture; harmonization of the organization’s purpose with its value system (it is difficult for people to do what they do not believe in); greater participation in the process of decision-making; changes in the management style; full understanding of the fact that a strict hierarchical structure and poor-quality interaction between police leaders and police officers are an obstacle to development; changes in patterns of behaviour at all levels; encouragement for those showing initiative and creativity; appropriate definition and use of resources. The good news is that respondents show a high level of commitment to community policing reform: the obvious stagnation in internal aspects of community policing reforms have not distanced them from serving community goals.

5 CONCLUSION

Community policing requires huge changes at the level of police organization and at the community level (Miller & Hess, 2008). Based on the overview of community policing evaluation studies presented in this paper, one can conclude that, despite considerable effort aimed at gaining public trust, there are still problems with some aspects of police organization reforms: police officers today are equally dissatisfied with police human resources management system and impact of politics on police leadership as they used to be 15 years ago, when such discontent was among the crucial motives for introducing the community policing reform.

Although much has been written about the overall philosophy of community policing, fewer efforts have been directed towards understanding the strategies needed to build capabilities for change (Ford, 2007: 321). If the goal of the reform is only to change certain procedures or behaviour followed by police officers, it is enough to prepare them to change their capabilities to enable them to perform a new set of procedures. This kind of change can be introduced top-down, i.e. by seeking a change in behaviour. It can be achieved by issuing orders, although this approach is not recommended, as behaviour cannot be changed without a change in attitude about behaviour. People, of course, tend to behave in the way that allows them to support their attitudes and beliefs, and if behaviour change has been “imposed”, they will not be motivated to behave in a new way, and the behaviour will not be seen as “their own”. Thus, change will be very unstable and will not withstand difficulties. On the contrary, if the goal of the police reform is a subtler change, i.e. change at the level of the value system, as is the case with the community policing project, it is necessary to affect the identity of the police. This is a very demanding sort of change, as it changes the answer to the questions of what the police is and what its role in society is.

Both individuals and organizations have a need for survival, which means that it will be easier for them to change what they do than what they are. Ignorance of the fact is a frequent cause of problems, when initiating and implementing changes. According to Scholtes (1998), systems change must deal simultaneously with two aspects of the organizational culture – the “apparent” organization and the “below the surface” organization.

Also back in last century, Taylor, Fritsch and Caeti (1998) identified insufficient holistic studies, declarative level of community policing due to the substantial misunderstanding of its fundamental principles and involvement of politics as some of major threats to full community policing implementation across the world. Insufficient policing research is a problem that has also been recognised recently across all of Central and Eastern Europe. According to Meško, Sotlar and Lobnikar (2014: 616) “much more policing research in Central and Eastern Europe is needed”. They particularly stress depoliticisation, demilitarisation and support to police reforms among the topics in urgent need of the further attention of scholars. This is exactly the case in Croatia: we need to know what the police education and human resources management system as well as police leadership have done to build the capacity for challenging the underlying assumptions and beliefs of the “below the surface” police organizations throughout the change process. Despite the fact that lot of individual enthusiasm as compensation for the system deficiencies has been invested and lot of good work has been done through almost fifteen years, which results in many positive changes in the police and in the community, without such insights we do not know anything about the sustainability of these changes. This is a substantial risk because, as Kappeler and Gaines (2011: 91) are warning, history shows “that change takes time and that, at any given moment, the past and the future coexist” and “signs of the past can often repeat themselves and
reformers must be concerned that history finds well-meaning solutions to the problems of crime, policing, and accountability stifled and abused by institutional and social forces. At the moment, we know that community policing is an acceptable policing model for the Croatian police and Croatian citizens, but we do not know how serious such threats could be to its implementation in the future.

REFERENCES


