

# 8TH INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CONFERENCE ON LOCAL SAFETY AND SECURITY



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## POLICE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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# Introduction

Local self-government enables communities to independently manage public matters. While municipalities have political and administrative autonomy, the state ensures legality and alignment with national laws through oversight. This balance allows for local decision-making with appropriate accountability.

# Key Stakeholders and Responsibilities



Neighborhoods bring together people from different social backgrounds, creating complex dynamics that police must understand. Today, policing goes beyond enforcement — it focuses on prevention, building trust, and working with communities. By forming strong local partnerships, police can better respond to challenges like crime, poverty, and social hardship.. In recent years, the police have increasingly focused on crime prevention and cooperation with the local community in solving these problems, rather than focusing solely on repressive measures.





# Local Government and Municipalities



Local governments create the framework for effective policing by providing infrastructure, setting policies, and addressing community needs. In Slovenia, municipalities are the basic units of local governance. Key bodies include the mayor, municipal council, and supervisory board. The mayor enforces council decisions, the council adopts local policies and budgets, while the supervisory board ensures financial transparency and oversight.

# The Police as an authority and its structure in the Republic of Slovenia

- Essential for maintaining law and order.
- Responsible for crime prevention, emergency response, and public engagement.
- Duties defined by the Police Tasks and Powers Act.
- Focus on law enforcement and ensuring compliance.
- Modern policing goes beyond repression — emphasizes prevention and cooperation.
- Modern police have a broader role in community service.
- Officers act as advisors, mediators, and sometimes perform social work.
- Available 24/7 to respond to various community needs.
- Occasionally take on tasks beyond traditional duties, such as assisting lost persons or guiding tourists.



# The Legal Framework for Cooperation Between the Police and Local Communities



The laws that regulate the cooperation between the police and local communities represent the foundation for the establishment of effective policing in the community. The Police Tasks and Powers Act recommends that the police cooperate with local communities in the field of crime prevention and other local security issues. Also, the Organisation And Work of The Police Act requires that the police cooperate with bodies of self-governing local communities, public authorities, legal entities, foreign security authorities etc. To establish such cooperation agreement with the listed organization and/or establish councils, advisory committees or any other forms of partnership.



# Police Work in the Community

Community policing first emerged in the U.S. during WWI, with officers working closely with schools and neighborhoods. In Europe, it gained ground in the 1960s, particularly in the UK, Netherlands, and Sweden, and spread more widely in the 1990s. In Slovenia, post-WWII policing was militarized under the People's Militia. Over time, it evolved toward a more preventive and community-oriented approach, leading to a formal strategy in 2013 focused on trust, safety, and cooperation.





# Police Work in the Community



The concept of “community” includes space, people, shared needs, and activities. Cities, villages, and neighborhoods increasingly rely on community-based approaches to address issues like crime and deviant behavior. Police play a vital role as they have the most direct contact with residents. Community policing focuses on collaboration between police and the public to solve local problems and improve quality of life, with key elements being problem-solving and regular consultation.







# Police Work in the Community

In recent years, "community policing" has been gaining ground in police practice, which translates to greater involvement of the police in the daily life of local communities.

This brings with it the need to reorganize police tasks, so that the emphasis is on cooperation with residents and their involvement in solving problems such as crime and disorder. In Slovenia, this approach has been part of police strategy since 2013 and, is expected to have a long-term impact on solving security issues more effectively. At the local level, the police are becoming part of the community, solving problems in cooperation with people, especially in preventive work.



# Challenges and cooperation

- ☐ Officers often face resistance and coordination issues in the field.
- ☐ Implementation varies due to differing views at local and national levels.
- ☐ Staff-related challenges affect consistency and effectiveness.
- ☐ Improvements require more training and clearer task definitions.
- ☐ Despite ongoing development, progress shows positive impact of police-community cooperation.



# Conclusion

Collaboration between police and local governments is essential for modern public safety. By overcoming challenges and leveraging technology and community participation, both entities can create safer, more resilient communities. Future initiatives should foster transparency, innovation, and inclusivity to enhance public trust and safety.



# Thank you for your attention!

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