



Policy Brief 1°

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COMMUNITY POLICING

Philosophy and the Challenge of Implementation

Besnik Baka
IDM, Centre for Security Studies

Summary

The community policing philosophy in the last few years has attracted institutions' central attention, as a model that can eradicate the traditional gap that has existed between the police and the community, but also as an instrument that will improve the police performance in crime prevention and law enforcement in general. If based on the assumption that "crime is a product of social conditions" then it becomes clear that crime prevention may follow only through control and manipulation of social conditions,¹ thus making community policing a major priority that needs to be addressed. Community policing is about a philosophy and an ideology which aims to put police under the citizens' service and in defence of community interests, different from the past legacy when police was serving to and defending state interests. Its major intention is therefore to transform the "policing of the community" into a "policing for the community".²

The policy brief focuses on the main issues arising precisely from the transformation of the policing model – from the traditional conservator one towards the community policing theory and practice – through paying particular attention to impediments and other characteristics of this model. Based on the analysis of the institutional, legal and policy framework, this document emphasizes that the implementation of the community policing model is still in the initial stage.

¹ Trojanowicz et al, "Community Policing", Anderson publishing 2002

² Waddington, P. A. J. Policing Citizens : Authority and Rights. London, UK: Routledge, 1998. p 30.
<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/universitetsbiblioteket/Doc?id=10054941&ppg=39>

In this sense, one of the missing components is the inclusion – particularly citizens’ involvement and also that of institutions at the local level through partnerships for practical interactions with state police structures but not only. A unified approach at the national level must focus on the capacities of the state police but also on the needed support that must come through partnerships and not as a consequence of the perceived the “duty” or “obligation” vis a vis the authority of a law enforcement institution.

Encouraging the tendency to link the police activity with the local context and hence to avoid influence and political interfering represents a need that may be addressed through improving the legal framework regulating the cooperation and partnering with local actors – above all, with the local government authorities. From the policy perspective, this would additionally require space for empowering and enhancing the role (influence, involvement and support) of “consumers” of the state police’s services at the local level and for strengthening a citizens-oriented approach.

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