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# **From legalist to Dirty-Harry: Police recruits' attitudes towards non-legalistic police practice**

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## **Abstract**

This study provides a test of the presumption that police recruits with a diverse background, undertaking comparatively long academic training, will refrain from non-legalistic practices. This is tested by longitudinal survey data, covering two cohorts of Swedish police recruits. The results show stable support for the legalistic perspective during academy training. However, during on-the-job training, the recruits become more positive towards non-legalistic practices. This reorientation takes place quite irrespective of the type of duty to which they are assigned. Additionally, neither the recruits' nor their parents' level of education seems to matter. There is some effect of age and gender; young male recruits are somewhat more prone to adopt Dirty Harry-inspired measures—that is, achieving essential ends by tarnished means.

## **Keywords**

Police education, socialization, police culture, legalism, autonomy.

## Introduction

In this study, the effect of in-school training and subsequent on-the-job training on police recruits' attitudes towards non-legalistic police work is explored. In addition, we examine whether background characteristics, type of duty, and the population size of the police precinct matter. We explore these questions based on longitudinal survey data covering two cohorts of Swedish recruits, graduating from the academy in 2010 and 2013.

From previous research, we know that the in-school training at the academy is well in line with the instructions and directives given by the legislator (Moskos, 2008; Petersson, 2011). In other words, the purpose of police education is to instil a legalistic perspective. The rationale for this goes back to Weber's thoughts about state legitimacy. According to Weber, the law, and not least how rules and regulations are implemented by state officials, forms the very basis from which the state derives its legitimacy (Weber, 1921). These principles are particularly important in the case of the police, because wide discretionary powers and a limited degree of supervision characterize law enforcement. Hence, a legalistic perspective on police work is important to ensure both the rule of law and a means for democratic control.

However, numerous studies from the seminal work of Skolnick (1966) and Rubenstein (1973) to more recent studies (Alain and Grégoire, 2008; Loftus, 2010) report that officers often take an autonomous perspective on police work, emphasizing outcome rather than process. Such a perspective is justified by the need for an effective police force, stressing values such as concrete results and the maintenance of authority. According to this perspective, a good end justifies the means (Granér, 2004). Dirty Harry Callahan, the well-known cop character played by Clint Eastwood, is the archetype of an officer with such an outlook on the police role (Klockars, 1980). Hence, the values cherished by the autonomous perspective do not sit easily with the legalistic perspective.

The tension between the two perspectives is a classic theme in police sociology. As early as 1966, Skolnick noted the widespread scepticism felt by officers towards politicians, courts, and the higher echelons of the police organization. While 'management cops' must embrace and implement policy directives and project a legalistic face to the public, 'street cops' are primarily concerned with what officers perceive as their *raison d'être*—catching criminals and preserving the peace (Ianni and Ianni, 1983). Manning (1978: 78-83) illustrates the conflict by pointing to the regulations guiding police work.

According to patrol officers, even routine work will unavoidably lead to the violation of rules as a result of their scope and inherent contradictions. From this follows rank-and-file solidarity aimed at concealing minor violations from the attention of supervisors, referred to by Cain (1973: 37) as 'easing behaviour'. These aspects are all central to what is referred to as *the police culture*. However, Fielding (1988: 54) points to the fact that the choice to become an officer is not equated with accepting all norms and values cherished by large parts of the police collective; officers decide whether or not they will reject elements of this cultural battery.

To our knowledge, no previous study constructs and utilizes a robust measure that captures how young police recruits are potentially torn between the legalistic and autonomous perspectives. Such a measure would enable us not only to detect and map movement along the legalistic–autonomous axis, but also to provide important leads as to when and why movement (or lack of movement) along this dimension occurs. Nevertheless, although clear explanatory factors are yet to be disclosed, scholarly efforts have generated interesting findings on related topics.

Starting with a qualitative study, Loftus (2009) indicates that Dirty Harry inspired attitudes still exist. For example, Loftus underscores the importance assigned to the maintenance of authority. People with whom the police initiate contact will be put to the 'attitude test'. In order to pass, the person subject to the test is required to acknowledge the officers' mandate as well as admitting his or her personal guilt. Failing to comply will invoke a repertoire of reactions, ranging from receiving an ear bashing to being arrested. Similarly, using an anthropologist design, Moskos (2008) reports a widespread skepticism towards the brass on behalf of the rank-and-file, and describes how officers express their disaffection with a justice system that ascribe criminals to many rights. Moskos' findings represent core characteristics of a Dirty Harry outlook on policing. Lastly, in a quantitative study of the Dutch police, Terpstra and Schaap (2013) report that internal solidarity and pragmatism are still present, although to a lesser degree than in the classical Anglo-Saxon studies.

Recent studies also indicate changes in the officers' attitudes during their career. Utilizing longitudinal survey data, Petersson (2011) shows that officers score significantly lower on personal morale and ability to handle conflicts after two years of service, while Catlin and Maupin (2004) report the same effect on officers' idealism. Using a similar design, Alain and Grégoire (2008) find a drop in officers' ethical standard when they are followed up after graduation. However, neither of these studies

explores the effect of background characteristics such as sex and level of education, or that of contextual variables such as type of duty or precinct size. All in all, this leads Sun et al. (2009) to underscore the need for longitudinal studies focusing on factors influencing officers' occupational attitudes.

Connected to this research lacuna are two trends that have marked European police education for the last decade. First, in a number of countries, a prolongation of the police education programme has been implemented or is planned, and the programmes may be placed in an academic setting (Jashke, 2010; Paterson, 2011; SOU, 2008: 39). An underlying assumption driving this development is the idea that higher education will encourage reflective critical thinking, thereby mitigating non-legalistic practices (MacVean and Cox, 2012; Paterson, 2011). Punch (2007: 110) claims that the police culture has changed considerably in recent years, and that "educating officers at university has undoubtedly made a major difference" in this development.

The robustness of this assumption is called into question by MacVean and Cox (2012) who highlight the importance of group cohesion. The bond between members is reinforced as recruits come to realize that being a member of the group is necessary to tackle the hazards and emotional uncertainty that marks everyday police work. The resulting contract between members grants supremacy over individuals to the extent that faulty behavior displayed by an established member is not only accepted, but in many cases even adopted by others. MacVean and Cox conclude that there is little evidence to demonstrate that the placement of various police education programs within an academic setting has been able to challenge some of the negative aspects of police culture that was expected of it.

The second trend revolves around recruitment policy. A shift has been observed towards an increasing proportion of women and youth from middle-class backgrounds among the recruits (Van Ewijk, 2012). Such changes are thought to bring additional competences to the force, and thereby a more enhanced and multifaceted outlook on policing (Egge et al., 2008). This belief is supported by studies of Paoline and Terrill (2007) and Paterson (2011), who report that American officers with a higher educational level are less authoritarian and less likely to use verbal or physical force. The effect of gender is less clear. Poteyeva and Sun (2009) report that attitudinal differences between male and female police officers may be small.

Taken together, these trends is thought to eventuate in a more diverse police corpus with respect to competence and reflectiveness, thereby reducing the risk that officers adopt an autonomous perspective on the police role. This makes Sweden a particularly interesting case, since the Swedish police education epitomizes these two trends. First, the Swedish police education programme is relatively long and occurs in an academic setting, with two years of classroom study at post-secondary level followed by six months of supervised field training.<sup>1</sup> Second, The Swedish police force has a comparatively large proportion of women and a considerable proportion of recruits with previous university education from middle-class backgrounds (Fekjær, Forthcoming). In sum, the Swedish case provides a critical test of the hypothesis that a comprehensive program, combined with a diverse recruitment policy, will make recruits less susceptible to adopting non-legalistic attitudes.

By drawing on Swedish quantitative longitudinal data, we can present and utilize a robust measure that maps officers' position on, and potential movement along, the legalistic–autonomous axis. We thus first provide a critical answer to the question of whether police recruits change their attitudes towards Dirty Harry-inspired practices. In this study, this presumption is tested in the context of both in-school training as well as on-the-job training. Secondly, we provide a seminal test of the importance of background and contextual variables with respect to attitudes towards non-legalistic practices.

### **Moulding the recruits' perception of police work**

A legalistic and autonomous perspective may be utilized to characterize the outer boundaries of officers' perception of non-legalistic police work. Central to the legalistic perspective are two legal principles, both derived from Weber's legal bureaucratic model (Weber, 1921). The first—*Nullum crimen sine lege, nulla poene sine lege*—states that there can be no crime without a law, nor punishment without a law. This means that the police can only intervene against actions and behaviours prohibited under the law. The legalistic perspective is also clear on the potential trade-off between due process and efficiency. In cases where the value of the rule of law stands against that of efficiency, supremacy is granted to the former. The second principle—*Sine ira ac studio* (without anger or affection; i.e. neutral)—refers to police conduct, emphasizing the importance of impartiality and equal treatment of all citizens. From this follows the norm that people who have served their sentences should be given new chances. In the event that an officer learns about another police officer's transgression, he or she has no choice but to report the information.

Turning to the autonomous perspective, the pursuit of quick and concrete results is found at the forefront (Skolnick, 1966: 44). From this stems the practice of street justice and practical police work. The latter term refers to resolving situations smoothly to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy, albeit at the price of stretching or bending rules (Ekman, 1999: 33; Granér, 2004: 142). Autonomous officers' inclination towards practical police work is mirrored in their belief in common sense and the value ascribed to personal experience (Fielding, 1984: 574). In the case of street justice, the police decide to rectify the situation themselves by imposing punishment without proper legal grounds (Van Maanen, 1978a: 224). The reason is typically that the law is deemed inadequate or that the perpetrator is likely to get away with little or no sentence.

Another central aspect of the autonomous perspective is the moral mandate, implying that officers see themselves as agents with a mission to strike against acts or values that run counter to norms cherished by the vast majority. Hence, when measures are taken in order to reprove a member of the public, this is sometimes done without reference to formal regulations (Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2003: 94; Van Maanen, 1978a: 227). Another characteristic is willingness to defend police authority, implying that the values of objectivity and impartiality will weigh lightly if officers are not shown proper respect (Muir, 1977). By the same logic, the principle of equality before the law is given special interpretation. According to autonomous officers, respectable citizens may very well be given a break, while the police should seize any opportunity to punish those who regularly commit crimes (Holmberg, 1999: 88).

Previous research has shown that the socialization process, especially in periods of in-school and on-the-job training, is important in shaping professionals' outlook on work-related issues. This is found in various professions, such as medicine (Becker et al., 1961), therapy and counselling (Rønnestad and Skovholt, 2003), as well as law enforcement (Manning and Van Maanen, 1978). According to Van Maanen (1973), this process consists of four distinct phases. The first phase is pre-socialization and takes place prior to admittance into the organization. This holds especially true when the future employer is involved in the process of recruiting and educating future colleagues. The pre-socialization is influenced by various sources, including the portrayal of the profession by the media and popular culture, insiders' descriptions of their jobs, and the organization's presentation of itself (Van Maanen, 1976: 81).

The second phase coincides with the period of in-school training. This period aims at imbuing the recruits with an outlook on the police role that, in all essentials, corresponds with the legalistic perspective described above. The education is distinguished by a focus on formal rules and officially stated goals (Van Maanen, 1978b: 296). During the second phase, an *esprit de corps* emerges among the recruits. This is mirrored in what Fielding (1988) considers to be one of the most important transitions undertaken by recruits: from being an individual to becoming part of a group.

Throughout the third phase, the newcomer experiences the complexities of the profession as he or she enters the working milieu. It is during this period of on-the-job training that the newcomer is likely to experience a reality shock, as he or she comprehends all the expectations for the professional role (Van Maanen, 1978b: 299). Hence, the newcomer will often feel inadequate and insecure. As a consequence, the attitudes and *modus operandi* adopted by colleagues will serve as a model and source of know-how for the recruit. The propensity to see and learn is proportional to the occupation's degree of craftsmanship. Everything else being equal, if the professional is dependent on skills that come with experience, the inclination to follow the lead of colleagues is stronger. By having behaviours that are internalized by the group rewarded and by having other behaviours punished, the newcomer quickly learns and conforms to the group's norms (Ekman, 1999: 18-19; Van Maanen, 1978b: 269). If the work of the profession is characterized by unpredictable situations and/or hostility from the outer world, this will strengthen solidarity and unity among colleagues.

Van Maanen (1973) calls the fourth and final phase 'metamorphosis', while Becker et al. (1961) refer to this stage of the socialization process as 'the final perspective'. The final phase concerns the professional's relation with the role and its tasks, and their application in practice. By this phase, the individual has gained sufficient experience to realize that it is not possible to meet all the expectations for the role. Hence, the individual has developed strategies to cope with conflicting expectations (Ekman, 1999; Lipsky, 1980: 83). This phase also involves a change in the perception of the rules guiding professional behaviour. While the second and third phases are marked by an instrumental and dependent perspective on the rules, the final phase is characterized by a modified outlook—the rules are seen as a means to obtain desired ends (Rønnestad and Skovholt, 2003: 21).

The periods of interest in this article coincide with the second and third phases described above. While the effect of in-school training is captured on data collected as the recruits enter and graduate



from the academy, the boundaries that define the third phase are less clearly defined. In this article, the period of on-the-job training is defined as the initial 15 months of service following graduation. In the next section, we discuss the details of our dataset as well as the autonomy index developed to map any movement along the legalistic–autonomous axis.

## Data and measurements

The data in this paper are part of the quantitative research project entitled *Recruitment, Education and Careers in the Police: A European Longitudinal Study (RECPOL)*.<sup>ii</sup> The longitudinal data cover two cohorts of Swedish recruits who graduated from the academy in 2010 and 2013. The entire population of recruits belonging to these cohorts were asked to participate in the study.

The first research question posed in this paper concern the effect of in-school and on-the-job training on recruits' attitudes to non-legalistic police work. By following Cohort 1 during their academy years, we were able to measure the effect of in-school training. The surveys conducted during the period of in-school training were distributed by staff affiliated with the RECPOL-project. The recruits filled out a paper-based questionnaire in class after scheduled hours. In a similar manner, the effect of on-the-job training was explored by following the recruits of Cohort 2. By comparing their stated attitudes after 15 months of service with those stated at graduation, we measured the effect of on-the-job training.<sup>iii</sup> The survey conducted during on-the-job training was a postal questionnaire. The details of the dataset, such as measurement points and corresponding response rates, are presented in Table 1.

(Table 1 about here)

To create a robust measure that captures any movement along the legalist–autonomous axis, we constructed an index. The index is used as a proxy for the dependent variable, which is recruits' attitude towards non-legalistic police work. The statements in the index are based on a comprehensive qualitative fieldwork (Pettersson, 2012). The first step involved qualitative interviews with five experienced officers combined with participant observation (control room observation and riding in patrol cars). This was done in order to construct ten mundane police dilemmas, e.g. witnessing a colleague assaulting an alcoholic, or the mildly intoxicated youngster who deliberately challenges the authority of the police. In the next step, these dilemmas were presented to 24 recruits who were

followed during a three-year period through annual qualitative in-depth interviews. The answers provided were then used to construct a number of statements included in the questionnaires referred to above. Our index is based on 14 statements listed in Table 2. All statements included in the index, henceforth referred to as the autonomy index, correspond to the definitions of the legalistic and autonomous perspectives discussed above. The response alternatives range from 0 to 4. The autonomy index has been rescaled to range from 0 (legalistic to the maximum extent) to 100 (autonomous to the maximum extent). Cronbach's alpha for the autonomy index is 0.72.

The second research question concerns the effect of contextual and background variables on the recruit's attitudes towards police work. The contextual variables are: *location of duty* (0 = rural/small town, 1 = medium-sized town, 2 = metropolitan suburb, 3 = metropolitan centre, 4 = unknown) and *type of duty* (0 = criminal investigation, 1 = emergency unit, 2 = community policing, 3 = alternating service (including working with administrative tasks, at an emergency unit, and criminal investigation), 4 = other). The five background variables are the following:

- Sex (0 = female, 1 = male)
- Age (ranging from 20 to 44 years)
- *Location of origin* (from 0 = very rural area to 4 = very urban area)
- *Parents' education* (the educational level of the parent with the higher level of education, or the one for whom we have this information, 0 = compulsory/upper secondary, 1 = higher education)
- *Own previous education* (0 = compulsory/upper secondary, 1 = higher education).

(Table 2 about here)

## Results

In this section, we first address the question of whether recruits' attitudes towards non-legalistic police work change during the periods of in-school and on-the-job training.

Table 3 shows that on a scale from maximally legalistic (0) to maximally autonomous attitudes (100), the recruits scored between 34.4 and 46.9 on the autonomy index. Initially, this may be interpreted as if the recruits are quite positive towards legalistic police practice. However, as the theory

section explains, the police should be completely on the legalistic side of this scale to meet the criteria of a state governed by democratic principles.

(Table 3 about here)

Regarding the effect of in-school training, there are no significant differences between recruits who have just started their education programme and those about to graduate. This implies that there are no changes in the recruits' attitudes towards non-legalistic practices during the period that they spend at the academy.<sup>iv</sup>

Turning to the effect of on-the-job training, we can see that after gaining work experience, the recruits score significantly higher on the autonomy index (8.8 higher on a scale from 0 to 100). This means that the recruits display more autonomous attitudes after they have been working for 15 months.<sup>v</sup> We should also note the standard deviations, indicating considerable dispersion in the recruits' attitudes towards non-legalistic police work.

We now turn to our second research question. First, we explore the potential impact of contextual variables on the recruit's degree of non-legalistic attitudes. The impact of location and type of duty are addressed in model 1, Table 4. In model 2, we take the analysis a step further as we examine the importance of background variables in the recruits' willingness to embrace Dirty Harry-inspired measures. In addition, we explore whether possible effects of the contextual variables reported in model 1 are due to differences in the recruits' background characteristics; for example, if an apparent effect of working in an emergency unit is actually the result of there being a larger proportion of male officers in these units.

(Table 4 about here)

Model 1 in Table 4 shows that recruits who have worked in metropolitan centres are more autonomous than those who have work experience from rural areas and small towns. They score 5.3 higher on the 100-point autonomy index. We also note that those who have worked in an emergency unit tend to score higher than those working in criminal investigation (a difference of 4.2 on the scale). Apart from this, there are no significant effects of type of work and work location. Adjusted  $r^2$  reveals

that contextual variables only explain 2% of the total variation in the recruits' attitudes towards non-legalistic police work.

In model 2 of Table 4, we note that the effect of location and type of work is no longer significant when we control for background variables. However, the size of these effects is not very different when the two models are compared. This means that the differences between the attitudes of recruits in various forms of employment are slightly reduced when we compare those with similar backgrounds.

Model 2 also shows the effect of the background variables. We note that men and younger recruits tend to hold attitudes that are slightly more autonomous. The differences are significant, although not very large. On a scale from 0 to 100, men score about 4.5 higher on the autonomy index. Correspondingly, if we compare a 23-year-old recruit to one 10 years older, the older recruit scores 5.0 lower. The effects of place of origin, parental education, and own previous education are small and insignificant. This means that among police recruits undertaking on-the-job training, educational and geographical background do not seem to affect the degree of non-legalistic attitudes.<sup>vi</sup>

Another interesting question is whether there will be interaction effects between the background variables and phase of socialization, for example whether the effect of education on the amount of non-legalistic attitudes is dependent on sex. To ascertain whether the effect of the background variables changes during the socialization process, we have tested the effect of background variables when the recruits enter the education and when they finish (not shown here). The results show that the effect of the background variables is quite similar at the beginning and end of the education programme, as well as after 15 months of work.<sup>vii</sup> This suggests that the periods of in-school and on-the-job training have similar effects on the degree of non-legalistic attitudes in all groups. For example, changes are similar among older and younger recruits.

## **Discussion and conclusion**

The first research question addressed in this paper was the effect of in-school and on-the-job training on recruits' attitudes towards non-legalistic police work. We have tested this with a large quantitative dataset from a country with a long period of formal police education and recruits from diverse backgrounds. Our results show that Swedish recruits become more positive towards non-legalistic police practice as they gain field experience.

Studies from other countries report changes in recruits' attitudes during the training period at academies (Conti, 2011; Ford, 2003). We do not find this effect of in-school training. On the contrary, the attitudes towards non-legalistic police practice are remarkably stable. The change that we find takes place *after* the recruits have graduated from the academy. The Swedish police education programme is relatively long and conducted in an academic setting where legal conduct and ethics are emphasized. This may explain why the recruits' attitudes do not change while they attend the academy. Although the recruits encounter future colleagues and practical situations, which may lead them in a more autonomous direction, the legalistic perspective taught at the academy prevents them from becoming more autonomous at this stage.

The change in attitudes coincides with the transition from in-school to on-the-job training. This is logical because the transition between phases is characterized by the introduction of expectations, norms, and tasks previously unknown to the recruits. This provides newcomers with an incentive to reduce insecurity by expeditiously adhering to functional and social aspects of their new setting (Van Maanen and Schein, 1979).

Several scholars have noted that norms located within the police organization are just as powerful as the regulations and the legalistic perspective expounded by the academy (MacVean and Cox, 2012; Reiner, 2010; Van Maanen, 1973). Our data show a significant change towards the autonomous perspective once the recruits have worked for 15 months. This indicates that many young officers are prepared to downplay the importance of legalistic principles because non-legalistic measures are perceived as a means to achieve concrete results and to maintain authority. In other words, norms that were identified as central by the classical studies of police culture still hold today (cf. Loftus, 2010).

Turning to the second research question, we find that although the recruits' attitudes towards non-legalistic police practice depend on their background characteristics, the size of the effects is limited. The most positive attitudes towards non-legalistic police practice are held by young, male recruits. Earlier studies have found that female and/or more experienced officers have a different view of police work. These groups were oriented towards service and crime prevention, with an emphasis on communication skills rather than physical measures (Finstad, 2000: 104; Granér, 2004: 82). This is in line with our finding that female and older recruits are oriented towards a legalistic, less confrontational form of police work.

Although we find that women and older recruits hold somewhat less autonomous attitudes, our main result is that the differences attributable to background characteristics are relatively small. This could be explained by self-selection. Today the police strive to recruit officers from a wide range of applicants. Nonetheless, there may be certain types of women and highly educated middle-class youths who are drawn to police work. This implies that individuals who choose the police profession may have attitudes similar to those of traditional officers, although the recruits are now drawn from a wider selection (Fekjær, Forthcoming). This may also explain why we find no effect of own previous education. Other studies have reported that highly educated officers have a different view of police work, although the results from these studies are rather mixed (Paoline and Terrill, 2007; Paterson, 2011). In contrast, the highly educated recruits in our study are no more legalistically oriented than the others.

Likewise, our results show that recruits' attitudes are quite similar, irrespective of their type of duty or whether they work in a big city or in the country-side. This is slightly surprising given that certain structural features of police work may invite non-legalistic police practices. For example, emergency responders are involved more often in situations where police authority is challenged than other officers. Similarly, working in big city centres provides an opportunity to engage in more offensive policing as officers know that back-up will arrive rapidly if called for. As expected, our data show that recruits working in emergency units in big city centres display slightly more non-legalistic attitudes. However, these differences are small and no longer significant when we compare recruits with similar background characteristics.

An important question then is: why do we find such limited effects of contextual and background factors? In this article, we have illustrated that on a group level, recruits display a gradual slide towards more autonomous practices. Because we have shown that this development is primarily a result of on-the-job training, we argue that the influence of colleagues on recruits' attitudes is an important explanatory factor. There are two major reasons for this. First, police work entails the risk of being the target of violence. Because officers must depend on one another, the norm of loyalty to the peer group is a powerful imperative (Kääriäinen and Sirén, 2012: 355; MacVean and Cox, 2012: 19). By displaying loyalty to established norms, the newcomer will be defined as a member of the group, and as such, he or she will receive the protection of co-workers. A second incentive to follow the lead of colleagues is attributable to the perception of the police profession as a trade of craftsmen (Finstad, 2000: 146). This

perception is founded on the idea that the skills possessed by a fully fledged officer cannot be learned through study, because regulations seldom provide a specific solution to a particular situation. Hence, personal experience is highly valued within the police collective, and from this follows the norm that recruits are expected to follow the example of more experienced officers (Ekman, 1999: 167).

These basic features of police work apply to *all* recruits regardless of type of duty or the work-place to which they are assigned. Therefore, structural features such as the view of the profession as a craft or the perils that accompany police work are important factors in explaining both the pervasiveness and the persistence of police culture. In summary, this study disproves the claim that a more diverse recruitment policy, even when combined with a relatively long and academicized programme of education, will hinder recruits from gradually becoming more positive towards adopting Dirty-Harry measures as they gain field experience.

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**Table 1.** Measurement points and response rates

<b>Data</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> measurement point</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> measurement point</b>	<b>Examination period explores</b>
Cohort 1	Entering the academy (Jan. 2011), <i>N</i> = 350, response rate 96%	Graduation (Jan. 2013), <i>N</i> = 320, response rate 89%	Effect of in-school training
Cohort 2	Graduation (Jan. 2010), <i>N</i> = 572, response rate 70%	After 15 months of service (Apr. 2011), <i>N</i> = 482, response rate 59%	Effect of on-the-job training

**Table 2.** Autonomy index

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**Statement**

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- a) Those who pick a quarrel and are unpleasant when they are checked by the police should be judged more sternly than those who co-operate.
- b) Those who behave in a disrespectful manner towards the police should be treated correspondingly.
- c) In cases where the law is inadequate, it is acceptable that the police punish those who are obviously guilty.
- d) The police should discipline individuals who misbehave, even if they do not commit a specific crime.
- e) In policing, it is more important to achieve results than to follow the rules in every detail.
- f) Everyone should be treated equally, no matter whether they are ordinary citizens or known criminals.
- g) To direct your attention towards certain persons on the basis of their appearance or origin is an inherent part of police work.
- h) Interpretations and enforcement of laws and regulations should be guided by common sense.
- i) Individuals who regularly commit criminal offences should get another chance.
- j) An individual who has opted for a criminal lifestyle will probably always remain a criminal.
- k) If police officers break the rules, then it should be dealt with by colleagues rather than by having charges brought against them.
- l) The police should first and foremost make sure that criminals get the punishment they deserve.

m) High-ranking police chiefs have a proper understanding of how it is to work as a police officer.

n) Police work is to a large extent based on experience; you learn the job in the field rather than through training or education.

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**Table 3.** Changes over time in attitudes towards non-legalistic police practice

<b>Effect of training</b>	<b>Score on the autonomy index</b>	<b>(SD)</b>	<b>N</b>
<i>In-school training: Cohort 1</i>			
At the beginning of training	34.4	(11.5)	349
At the end of training	33.8	(12.4)	320
<i>On-the-job training: Cohort 2</i>			
At the end of training	38.1	(11.6)	572
After 15 months of work	46.9 <sup>*</sup>	(12.7)	479
Total	39.0	(13.1)	1720

Average values (standard deviation), on a scale from 0 to 100 (0 = Legalistic, 100 = Autonomous).

<sup>\*</sup> Significantly different at the 0.05% level (independent samples t test). Eta squared = 0.16.

**Table 4.** Effect of duty and background variables on attitudes towards non-legalistic police practice

	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>
	<b>b (SE)</b>	<b>b (SE)</b>
<i>Location of duty</i>		
Medium-sized town (0 = rural/small town)	2.9 (1.6)	2.5 (1.6)
Metropolitan suburb	1.5 (1.8)	1.4 (1.9)
Metropolitan centre	5.3* (2.0)	4.0 (2.1)
Other	-1.9 (2.2)	-2.8 (2.2)
<i>Type of duty</i>		
Emergency unit (0 = criminal investigation)	4.2* (2.0)	3.5 (2.0)
Community policing	0.7 (2.5)	0.6 (2.5)
Alternating service	0.5 (2.7)	0.7 (2.7)
Other	2.1 (4.6)	0.7 (4.5)
Sex (male = 1)		4.5* (1.3)
Age (23 = 0)		-0.5* (0.2)
Place of origin (very urban area = 4)		-0.2 (0.5)
Parents' education (higher education = 1)		1.9 (1.2)
Own previous education (higher education = 1)		-1.3 (1.2)
Constant	42.1* (2.3)	55.3* (5.1)
Adjusted $r^2$	0.02	0.08
<i>N</i>	462	432

Measured after 15 months of service. 0 = Legalist, 100 = Autonomous. \* = significant at 0.05% level.



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<sup>i</sup> The police education programme does not lead to a university degree. However, two out of three police academies are integrated into existing university campuses, and all recruits receive credit for some of their courses.

<sup>ii</sup> The RECPOL project—providing quantitative information on factors such as background characteristics, general values, opinions on police training, and attitudes towards police work—will eventually include the following participants: Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Scotland, Sweden, and Spain (Catalonia). The project will administer regular surveys to police recruits, starting when they enter the police education programme and ending six years into their professional careers. The research design is based on the StudData survey, which was developed by the Centre for the Study of Professions, Oslo University College (SPS, 2013).

<sup>iii</sup> Following one cohort from recruitment through the end of one the job training could have provided an even more solid empirical foundation. However, since the data was collected within the time limits of a Ph.D. project, this was not feasible.

<sup>iv</sup> Table 3 also shows an interesting difference between the two cohorts. The recruits in cohort 2 hold more autonomous attitudes at the end of their education programme, and the difference is significant although not large (38.1 versus 33.8). A reasonable explanation for this could be changes in the recruitment process. Cohort 2 was recruited during a period where the admission numbers were tripled, and hence a different group of recruits were likely to be admitted.

<sup>v</sup> A possible explanation of the change in attitudes is a selective non-response; the most legalistic recruits could be the ones who are least likely to respond in the third phase. However, additional analyses (not shown here) show that the demographic profile of the recruits in phase 2 and phase 3 is remarkably similar. The general turnover in the Swedish police is very low, especially only 15 months after graduation. Hence, we conclude that the increase in non-legalistic attitudes is probably not because of selective non-response.

<sup>vi</sup> We have also tested non-linear terms for age and location of origin, but they proved not to be significant.

<sup>vii</sup> There is one exception to this. The effect of sex is not present at the beginning of the education programme. This means that female and male recruits are quite similar when they enter the academy, but the male recruits hold more

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autonomous attitudes when measured at the end of their programme and after having worked for a while. However, the difference in the size of the effects is limited.