



DAUGAVPILS UNIVERSITY

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**EVALUATING POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY AND CITIZEN RIGHTS
IN WAR CONTEXTS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LATVIA,
LITHUANIA AND UKRAINE**

Doctoral Thesis

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Šis promocijas darbs „*Policijas atbildība un pilsoņu tiesības karadarbības apstākļos: salīdzinoša analīze Latvijā, Lietuvā un Ukrainā*” ir visaptveroša izpēte par policijas atbildības nodrošināšanu un cilvēktiesību ievērošanu bruņota konflikta laikā. Pētījums analizē trīs bijušās Padomju Savienības valstīs – Latvijā, Lietuvā un Ukrainā – policijas sistēmas atbildes uz mūsdienu drošības izaicinājumiem, sabiedrības nestabilitāti un demokrātiskās pārvaldes izaicinājumiem.

Pētījuma aktualitāte ir saistīta ar steidzamu nepieciešamību nodrošināt tiesiskumu izņēmuma apstākļos, piemēram, bruņotā agresijā un hibrīdkara situācijās. Promocijas darbs aplūko institucionālās pārmaiņas policijas struktūrās, reaģējot uz valsts drošības apdraudējumu, koncentrējoties uz strukturālajām reformām, krīzes reakcijas stratēģijām un sabiedrības līdzdalību policijas pārvaldībā. Šīs trīs valstis piedāvā vērtīgu un dažādu pieredzi, lai līdzsvarotu drošības prasības ar cilvēktiesību ievērošanu.

Galvenie pētījuma fokuspunkti ir policijas darbības caurspīdīgums, iekšējo un ārējo uzraudzības mehānismu efektivitāte, digitālās uzraudzības rīku izmantošana un pilsoniskās sabiedrības līdzdalība policijas atbildībā. Īpaša uzmanība tiek pievērsta tiesisko reformu potenciālam kā sabiedrības uzticības atjaunošanas instrumentiem un policijas darbības saskaņošanai ar demokrātiskajiem un cilvēktiesību standartiem.

Pētījuma metodoloģiskajā pamatā ir filozofijas, vispārējo zinātnisko un speciālo juridisko pieeju apvienojums, piemēram, salīdzinošā tiesību analīze, tiesību hermeneitika un sistēmiski funkcionālā metode. Tas ļauj objektīvi un pamatoti izvērtēt nacionālās prakses un to reformu potenciālu.

Pētījuma pirmajā daļā tiek aplūkotas policijas pārvaldības sistēmas izmaiņas laikā, kad valsts saskaras ar paaugstinātu drošības apdraudējumu. Lai arī katrai valstij ir raksturīgas īpašas atbildes, pētījumā tiek identificētas kopīgas tendences, piemēram, organizatoriskās adaptācijas, pārskatītas funkcionālās atbildības un uzlabota sabiedrības komunikācija. Pētījums norāda, kā šīs pārmaiņas ietekmē sabiedrības uzticību un gaidas no policijas, īpaši reģionos, kas piedzīvo krīzes situācijas.

Turpmākajās nodaļās tiek analizēti policijas atbildības mehānismi gan iekšējā (disiplinārās komisijas, inspekcijas, auditi), gan ārējā (parlamentārā uzraudzība, ombuda institūcijas, pilsoniskās sabiedrības līdzdalība, mediji) dimensijās. Pētījums uzsver neatkarīgu izmeklēšanu, tiesisko aizsardzību un piekļuvi tiesām, īpaši izņēmuma stāvoklī.

Attiecības starp sabiedrības uzticību un tiesisko reformu veikšanu tiek izskatītas caur policijas likumīguma un caurspīdīguma prizmu. Pētījums atklāj, kā reformas, piemēram, cīņa

pret korupciju, policijas profesionalizācija, digitalizācija un pilsoņu atgriezeniskās saites sistēmas ieviešana, ir pozitīvi saistītas ar sabiedrības uzticību. Šie atklājumi tiek izvērtēti, ņemot vērā plašāku sociāli ekonomisko fonu un postpadomju policijas mantojumu.

Pēdējā pētījuma daļā tiek aplūkoti sabiedrības policijas stratēģijas īstenošanas modernie pieejas, īpaši veiksmīgas komunikācijas platformas, izglītības iniciatīvas un sadarbība ar vietējām organizācijām. Tiek analizēta mediju loma sabiedrības viedokļa veidošanā un demokrātiskās uzraudzības nodrošināšanā, īpaši situācijās, kad informācijas manipulācija un dezinformācija rada papildu izaicinājumus.

Salīdzinot Latvijas, Lietuvas un Ukrainas pieredzi, promocijas darbs uzsver adaptīvas, caurspīdīgas un atbildīgas policijas nozīmi trauslās drošības vidēs. Tā piedāvā institucionālās izturības modeļus, kas ievēro cilvēktiesības, vienlaikus efektīvi reaģējot uz jauniem apdraudējumiem. Pētījuma secinājumi piedāvā praktiskas vadlīnijas pēckara reformu stratēģijām un ir vērtīgs resurss politiķiem, pilsoniskajai sabiedrībai un tiesību sargājošo iestāžu pārstāvjiem.

Promocijas darbs sastāv no 182 lapaspusēm un ietver 187 atsauces un informatīvos avotus angļu, lietuviešu, latviešu un ukraiņu valodās.

Atslēgvārdi: policijas atbildība, sabiedrības uzticība, cilvēktiesības, bruņots konflikts, institucionālas reformas, caurspīdīgums, pilsoniskā sabiedrība, demokrātiskā uzraudzība.

“Evaluating police accountability and citizen rights in war contexts: a comparative analysis of Latvia, Lithuania, and Ukraine” presents a comprehensive study of police accountability and

The first part of the research examines institutional and managerial changes in police structures during times of heightened national threat. While each country exhibits unique responses, common patterns – such as organizational adaptation, revised functional responsibilities, and enhanced public communication – are identified. The study highlights how

The relationship between public trust and legal reform is explored through the lens of police legitimacy and transparency. The study identifies reforms – such as anti-corruption measures, professionalization of the force, digitalization, and citizen feedback systems – that

The final part of the dissertation focuses on the development of community policing strategies, highlighting successful communication platforms, education initiatives, and partnerships with local actors. The influence of media – both in shaping public perception and ensuring democratic control – is addressed, particularly in situations where information

The doctoral thesis consists of 182 pages and includes 187 references and informational sources in English, Lithuanian, Latvian, and Ukrainian.

USED ABBREVIATIONS

- (ACJ) – Administrative and Criminal Justice;
- (AI) – Artificial Intelligence;
- (CE) – Council of Europe;
- (CEPOL) – European Police Academy;
- (COP) – Community-Oriented Policing
- (ECHR) – European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;
- (ECtHR) – European Court of Human Rights;
- (EU) – European Union;
- (HR) – Human Resources;
- (IREX) – International Research & Exchanges Board;
- (KIIS) – Kyiv International Institute of Sociology;
- (KNAB) – Bureau for Prevention and Combating Corruption;
- (MOCP) – Modern Operations and Crime Prevention division of Interpol;
- (NATO) – North Atlantic Treaty Organization;
- (NGO) – Non-Governmental Organization;
- (OSCE) – Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe;
- (PB) – Public Relations;
- (PCOP) – Police Community-Oriented Policing;
- (TI) – Transparency International;
- (UN) – United Nations;
- (AFU) – Armed Forces of Ukraine;
- (ATO) – Anti-Terrorist Operation;
- (EUCPN) – European Crime Prevention Network;
- (PHARE) – Programme for Financial and Technical Assistance;
- (SBU) – Security Service of Ukraine;
- (SBI) – State Bureau of Investigation;
- (USSR) – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

ies while ensuring compliance with international human rights standards. Their experiences of rebuilding democratic institutions after the disintegration of the USSR and integrating into the EU offer valuable lessons – both positive and negative – in comparison to Ukraine’s practices.

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T Methods used in the Doctoral Thesis. This dissertation is based on analytical methods and the examination of legal acts, policy planning documents, and academic literature. It investigates the concept of public order and police accountability in the context of military operations and crises, addressing both theoretical and practical aspects of security, public trust, and human rights. Particular attention is paid to the influence of globalization, institutional reforms, and transparency on the security environment of civil society and the mechanisms of democratic oversight. The choice of research methods reflects the interdisciplinary nature of the topic and the need to analyze both legal and socio-political processes within the context of armed conflict and post-war reconstruction. The integration of general scientific, specialized legal, comparative, and sociological approaches ensures analytical depth and objectivity.

The *comparative method* was employed to analyze changes in legal frameworks and policy planning documents, as well as to evaluate different scientific perspectives and practical

experiences from several countries. This comparative analysis enabled the development of policy recommendations aimed at improving the legal framework.

The ***systemic document analysis method*** was used to examine various sources that directly or indirectly regulate public safety and police activities, including Lithuanian, Latvian, and Ukrainian legal documents, foreign academic literature, statistical data, and other relevant sources. This method allowed for a comprehensive assessment of the research problem by linking doctrinal ideas, legal norms, and law enforcement trends. It also facilitated the identification of how public safety is regulated by police during crises and martial law, what problems are highlighted in the literature, and how statistical data reflect the social reality addressed in this study.

The ***grammatical method of interpretation*** helped clarify the meaning of legal norms by analyzing their syntactic structure, terminology, and internal relationships. Following this, a ***systematic method of interpretation*** was used to evaluate the interdependence between legal norms and their context within the broader legal system.

The ***historical method of interpretation*** was applied to determine the original legislative intent behind certain legal norms and to trace the evolution of socio-legal relations that led to the need for order and public safety. This method was also used to assess changes in public trust toward police and state institutions during crisis situations and martial law, as well as the evolving roles of national and local authorities in ensuring security and public order.

The ***teleological method*** was used to interpret legal acts by revealing the objectives behind their adoption and evaluating the significance and intended outcomes of specific legal norms.

Overall, the use of both ***quantitative and qualitative research methods*** provided a comprehensive understanding of the role and functioning of the police during wartime, as well as the key factors influencing police accountability and public trust in Latvia, Lithuania, and Ukraine.

(**Structure of the Doctoral Thesis.** The doctoral thesis structure has been chosen with allowance for the object of the dissertation work, its objective, and tasks. The main parts of the work include introduction, a survey of the research and methodology, presentational part consisting of four chapters. At the end of the dissertation the formulated conclusions and practical findings and a list of references.

Chapter 1 explores how police agencies, particularly in Ukraine, have adjusted their structures and management strategies in response to military aggression. It analyzes how these transformations – such as revisions to organizational responsibilities, crisis response tactics,

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and enhanced coordination with military units – affect public trust. Comparative insights from Latvia and Lithuania provide context for how different systems address similar challenges, with emphasis on the legal and ethical obligations under international human rights law.

Chapter 2 focusing on mechanisms for ensuring police accountability during armed conflict, this chapter examines internal and external oversight systems. It evaluates how wartime conditions complicate democratic control over law enforcement, and how Latvia and Lithuania’s models of transparency, legal safeguards, and civil society engagement may offer adaptive solutions for Ukraine. It also addresses the critical balance between national security imperatives and fundamental citizen rights.

Chapter 3 investigates how legal and institutional reforms influence public confidence in law enforcement. It examines regulatory changes, anti-corruption efforts, digitalization, and staffing practices in Ukraine, Latvia, and Lithuania. The chapter also considers how socio-economic factors – such as education levels, regional disparities, and access to legal aid – affect public attitudes toward police, especially during and after conflict.

Chapter 4 analyzes the role of community-oriented policing in fostering trust, particularly in conflict and post-conflict environments. It explores communication strategies, media influence, and civil society partnerships in shaping public perception. Successful models from the Baltic States are compared with evolving practices in Ukraine, emphasizing transparency, participatory governance, and the importance of proactive police communication.

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“Social Science for Regional Development 2020”, October 9-10, 2020. Daugavpils (Latvia).

Presentation “*Trust in the police of Lithuania: current trends in the context of globalization*”.

International Scientific Conference “Digital future of central and Eastern European societies and economies”, June 21-23, 2021. Lublin (Poland). Presentation “*Trust at the police in*

Lithuania: new current trends in the context of Covid-19”.

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“Social Sciences for Regional Development” of Daugavpils University,” October 14-15, 2022.

Daugavpils (Latvia). Presentations “*Evolution of police management strategies in the context of military crisis and their impact on public trust.*”

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(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14961789>

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1. ADAPTATION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES TO THE CONDITIONS OF MILITARY CONFLICT AND ANALYSIS OF THEIR IMPACT ON PUBLIC TRUST

Law enforcement agencies form a fundamental part of state authority and serve as a crucial component of public safety mechanisms. Academic discussions often define law enforcement as a distinct form of state social activity that arises from human needs and exhibits specific characteristics¹:

- it is defined by legislative regulations;
- it is driven by the essential requirement to manage social interactions;
- it is manifested through the operation of law enforcement bodies, which are responsible for preventing and responding to offenses, as well as exercising state authority or social pressure on individuals who disrupt the legal order within society.

The police serve as both a *state* and *social* institution within the framework of state law enforcement agencies. This dual role arises from their obligation to fulfill the responsibilities and duties designated by the state, while also prioritizing the protection of citizens' rights and interests. In this regard, O. Kobzar effectively differentiates between law enforcement and policing, viewing them as a relationship between the whole and its components².

The nature of police activity is fundamentally shaped by the type of government and the specific challenges confronting both the state and its political system³. This is why, during a military conflict in a specific region of a country, or when martial law is declared across the entire nation, police operations are vital for not just upholding law and order but also for defending against the aggressor. The strategies, methods, and resources used by the police are influenced by the state's priorities at any given time. Consequently, a shift in the political regime will inevitably result in significant organizational and legal alterations in police operations and strategies, as law enforcement agencies are commonly integrated into the state's enforcement framework that supports governmental authority⁴.

¹ Kobzar, O. (2015). Police activity in Ukraine: Administrative and legal aspect. Panov. <https://er.dduvs.in.ua/bitstream/123456789/433/1/Монографія%20Кобзаря%20О.Ф.%20ПОЛІЦЕЙСЬКА%20ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ%20В%20УКРАЇНІ.pdf>

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

The adaptation of law enforcement agencies to the state of martial law is governed by various laws and regulations that address different elements of the law enforcement framework during such periods. The current phase of reforming Ukraine's law enforcement began in 2015 with the enactment of the National Police Law, which set the stage for ongoing reforms in the country's law enforcement structure.

In the socio-political landscape of 2015, the primary objectives of the Ukrainian law enforcement system included a thorough transformation of the police force to align with international standards, modifications to the legal framework to facilitate European integration, reinforcement of territorial integrity and state sovereignty amid the Anti-Terrorist Operation in eastern Ukraine, as well as the safeguarding of national security and border protection.

The current phase of law enforcement reform in Ukraine began in 2015 with the adoption of the Law on the National Police, which marked a significant change in the country's police system. The law was aimed at transforming the police in line with international standards, supporting European integration and overcoming the challenges posed by the ongoing conflicts, including the Anti-Terrorist Operation in eastern Ukraine. The main objectives were to strengthen territorial integrity, state sovereignty, national security and border protection⁵.

The Law on the National Police includes reforms in several key areas:

- The National Police replaced the old police system, introducing a modern, transparent structure aimed at fighting corruption and increasing public trust.
- The law emphasized community policing to foster better relations between the police and the public, promoting trust and cooperation.
- New standards for recruitment, training, and behavior in the police, aligned with European best practices, were introduced.
- The transformation into a community-oriented police force has begun to restore public confidence, although challenges remain due to the ongoing conflict and the imposition of martial law.
- The introduction of new control mechanisms and anti-corruption measures aims to make law enforcement more transparent and accountable to the public.
- The restructuring has resulted in a more efficient and professional police force that is better equipped to deal with the complexities of martial law and conflict situations.

⁵ Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. (2015). Law of Ukraine No. 580-VIII on the National Police, July 2, 2015. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/580-19#top>

To implement the reforms envisaged by the law and to align legislation with European standards and the requirements of Ukraine's European integration processes, several regulatory acts were adopted:

- The Law on Prevention and Combating Corruption (2014) strengthened measures to combat corruption in law enforcement agencies⁶.
- The Law on the State Bureau of Investigation (2015) established the State Bureau of Investigation to investigate serious crimes committed by law enforcement officials and further strengthen accountability⁷.
- The Law on the Security Service of Ukraine (2018) reformed the Security Service to better coordinate with the National Police and counter threats to national security⁸.
- Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code (2017) improved the legal framework for criminal investigations, ensuring compliance with international human rights standards⁹.

These reforms were aimed at modernizing Ukraine's law enforcement agencies, making them more resilient, transparent and in line with international standards, which is especially important under martial law.

Considering the full-scale invasion by Russian forces on February 24, 2022, the establishment of martial law, along with several new laws and regulations enacted during this period, expanded the responsibilities and duties of the police. In addressing the challenges arising from the invasion, Ukrainian lawmakers made amendments to the Law of Ukraine "On the National Police"¹⁰, which expanded the powers of police officers for the period of martial law in Ukraine and 60 days after its termination or cancellation. At the same time, the legislator supplemented the Disciplinary Statute of the National Police of Ukraine¹¹ with a new provision that outlines the procedure for conducting internal investigations during martial law.

⁶ Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. (2014). Law of Ukraine No. 1700-VII on prevention of corruption, July 2, 2014. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/en/1700-18#Text>

⁷ Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. (2015). Law of Ukraine No. 794-VIII on the State Bureau of Investigation, November 12, 2015. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/794-19#Text>

⁸ Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. (1992). Law of Ukraine No. 2229-XII on the Security Service of Ukraine, March 25, 1992. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2229-12#Text>

⁹ Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. (2017). Law of Ukraine No. 1950-VIII on amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine on improving the mechanisms for ensuring the tasks of criminal proceedings, March 16, 2017. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1950-19#Text>

¹⁰ Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. (2022). Law of Ukraine No. 2123-IX on amendments to the laws of Ukraine "On the National Police" and "On the Disciplinary Statute of the National Police of Ukraine" in order to optimize police activities, including during martial law, March 15, 2022. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2123-20#Text>

¹¹ Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. (2018). Law of Ukraine No. 2337-VIII on the Disciplinary Statute of the National Police of Ukraine, March 15, 2018. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2337-19#Text>

In recent years, policing in various countries has evolved from traditional reactive strategies to a more community-based approach. Community-oriented policing, or community policing, is a model of policing that is grounded in a unique set of motivations and behaviors.

Community policing is a philosophy that shapes the management approaches and operational tactics of law enforcement agencies¹². Additionally, community policing emphasizes establishing collaborations between law enforcement and the community while implementing a problem-solving strategy that addresses the specific needs of the community¹³. This approach to law enforcement enables collaboration between the police and the community in tackling crime and security challenges, while also upholding human rights and safeguarding against their infringement. O'Reilly introduces an innovative viewpoint on the police's function within the community, arguing that effective policing strategies ought to prioritize local concerns over national objectives, as the credibility of police actions is largely influenced by the community's dynamics¹⁴. Efforts must be made to collaborate with local residents in order to identify police priorities, and this should be a continual process. Additionally, community policing initiatives should be actively supported, with adequate resources allocated to ensure their effectiveness¹⁵.

This segment of the thesis focuses on the application of the Community Policing strategy among law enforcement officials in Ukraine, particularly in the context of martial law. It also explores how both Community Policing and martial law influence public trust in the police. In light of the challenges posed by martial law and ongoing conflict, the necessity for communities to adapt has intensified the establishment of collaborative practices between police and community members, grounded in the principles of Community Policing, as elaborated in Section 1.1. It is clear that Ukraine's approach to implementing police strategies under conditions of martial law and ongoing conflict is distinct and certainly merits investigation. The significance of police forces in upholding law enforcement and human rights rises notably during periods of active conflict. D. Zinchenko and O. Jafarova (2024) outline several roles that law enforcement agencies undertake during martial law:

- Law enforcement agencies perform preventive functions aimed at deterring offenses and crimes.
- They engage in reactive functions, responding to crimes that have already occurred.

¹² Dlamini, S. (2023). Community police forums' future and legitimacy: Redefining good community policing. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2288019>

¹³ O'Reilly, C. (2022). Doing the right thing? Value conflicts and community policing. *Policing and Society*, 33(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2022.2071423>

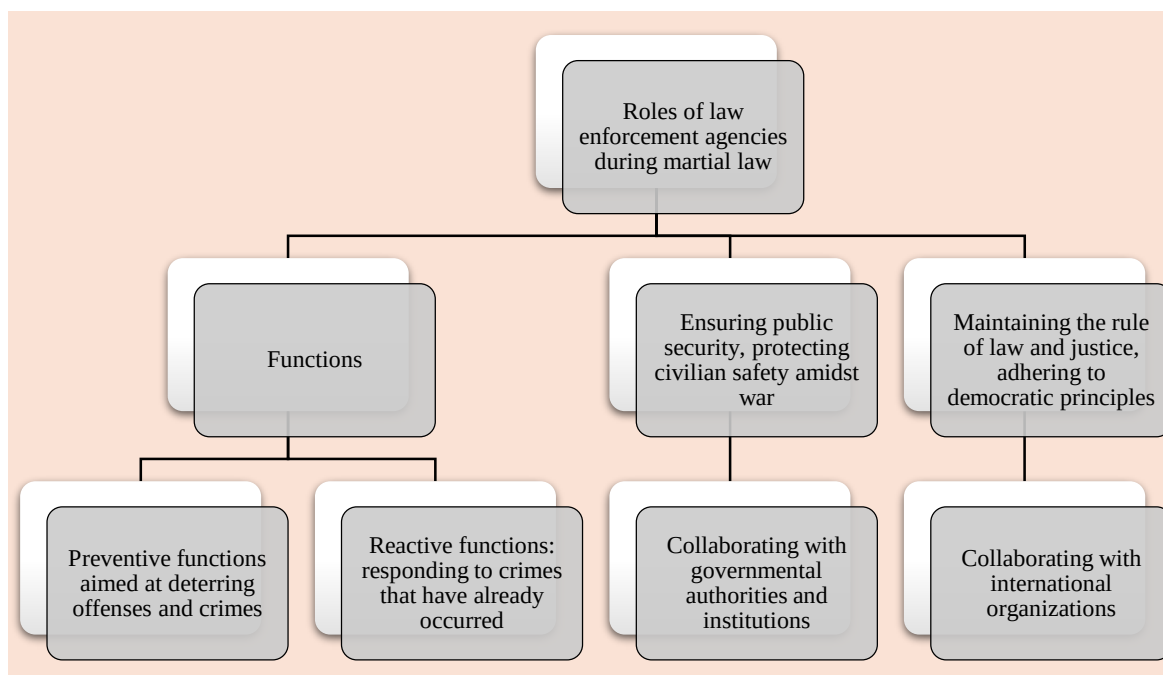
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¹⁵ *Ibid.*

- The police ensure public security, serving as protectors of civilian safety amidst war.
- They maintain the rule of law and justice, adhering to democratic principles.

Law enforcement agencies collaborate with governmental authorities and institutions, as well as international organizations, to address national security issues and combat international and transnational crime. They also collaborate with global law enforcement agencies for experience sharing, training, and addressing challenges related to cybersecurity and counter-terrorism, as seen with Europol, Interpol, and others.)¹⁶.

Figure 1. Law enforcement agencies during martial law



*Source: author's development based on the article*¹⁷

Due to the heightened likelihood of criminal activity during martial law, governments typically implement swift actions to enhance oversight of public safety and deter crime, primarily relying on police forces for execution. These actions may involve the deployment of law enforcement personnel, the establishment of extra limitations on individual movement, and the use of specialized monitoring and control measures¹⁸.

Prior to 24 February 2022, police reforms were implemented in alignment with the broader goals of European integration, including the introduction of Community Policing aimed at enhancing community cooperation. Following the onset of the full-scale invasion, the police strategy underwent a shift in focus, although it was not entirely overhauled. While new priorities

were incorporated that captured much of the leadership's attention, the reform process continued. Goldsmith points out that many police reforms are initiated in developing and post-authoritarian nations primarily due to the prevalent lack of public trust in the police, which shapes the dynamics between law enforcement and the community in these areas¹⁹. In essence, the existing low public confidence in law enforcement serves as a foundation for exploring new management strategies aimed at enhancing this trust. The safeguarding of citizens' rights becomes challenging, if not unfeasible, if the public does not have faith in the police, leading to inadequate public safety.

The level and quality of trust in law enforcement are influenced by several factors, some of which are beyond the police control. For instance, a study conducted by Goldsmith highlights various reasons for the mistrust towards the police, such as the structural dynamics between law enforcement and other community groups, the conventional roles and functions of the police and how these roles are perceived by the public, the instruments and technologies employed by the police, the officers' attitudes and behaviors, and the nature of the interactions between the police and citizens²⁰. Trust can be particularly difficult to establish in contexts where law enforcement chooses to uphold or is directed by laws that lack widespread public backing. Consequently, fostering community engagement becomes crucial.

The initial chapter of this thesis explores the shift in policing strategies following the implementation of martial law due to the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine and the resultant effects on public trust in the police.

Specifically, the first section addresses the following questions:

1. What are the impacts of martial law on policing strategies and public trust in the police?
2. How does martial law affect public trust in the police, and what are the key correlations?
3. How is Ukrainian policing adapting to international human rights standards, and how does this compare to Lithuania and Latvia?

¹⁹

²⁰ *Ibid.*
(4), 443–470. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480605057727>

1.1. Evolution of police management strategies in the context of military crisis and their impact on public trust

Setting goals and objectives is essential for the effective management of any organization, as it provides a roadmap for future actions. G. Cordner notes that police management faces two primary priorities: managing internal responsibilities within the police force and executing policies and programs aimed at reducing crime and enhancing public safety²¹.

Police management should prioritize the organizational structure both within the force and in relation to community issues. In their pursuit of efficiency and effectiveness, police officers are required to comply with a range of legal and ethical standards. They must also demonstrate transparency and accountability in their actions and decisions while striving to gain legitimacy from the public. As outlined by D. Stojković et al., police management encompasses a comprehensive approach to management, evaluation, control, and forecasting, which includes several core functions: assessing performance and efficiency; ensuring accountability and transparency in budget allocation; creating a long-term connection between the organization's current activities and its established goals and objectives²².

These indicators enable law enforcement to maintain focus on upcoming assignments and adapt to societal needs to enhance their operations. To achieve this, various management strategies and plans have been established, such as balanced scorecards, planning, programming, budgeting and execution, and performance management.

M. Dantzker identifies seven key components that define the strategy of police organization and management²³:

1. Authorization pertains to the foundation upon which powers and resources are allocated to police agencies.
2. Function relates to the core values, missions, and objectives of the law enforcement body.
3. Organization encompasses the agency's structure, staffing, management processes, and cultural aspects.
4. Demand for police services emerges from diverse sources.
5. Environment describes the external factors influencing the organization.
6. Tactics involve the methods utilized by police agencies to accomplish their goals.

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²² Stojković, D., Saković, R., & Mitić, V. (2019). Measuring the performance of the police. *Archibald Reiss Days*,

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7. Results refer to the outcomes of the organization's activities, whether anticipated or unanticipated, and whether desirable or undesirable.

An additional key element in developing policing strategy is performance management within the police force. This involves a comprehensive method of employing evidence-based decision-making to enhance results, fostering ongoing organizational learning, and emphasizing financial accountability to boost overall performance²⁴.

Given that, the primary role of the police as a public authority is to safeguard the public interest, the models and methods for organizing police activities should be aligned with the needs of citizens and demonstrate effectiveness by enhancing public trust in law enforcement. Since the 1950s, the predominant frameworks for establishing and operating democratic policing have been Community-Oriented Policing (commonly referred to as community policing) and New Public Management. Bonner defines democratic policing as the capacity of elected political leaders to effectively utilize the police to uphold the rule of law, encompassing both crime prevention and maintaining public order. Furthermore, as public servants, the police are required to address citizen complaints, maintain accountability, minimize coercion, and uphold human rights alongside the principles of justice and equality²⁵.

In recent years, many nations with elevated living standards have shown a trend toward adopting community policing as a framework for conducting democratic law enforcement that prioritizes community needs. This model was first implemented in Norway during 1978-1979 and involved the decentralization of police operations, allowing law enforcement to place greater emphasis on prevention and ensuring public safety²⁶.

New Public Management, which emerged in the 1950s and 1960s, is characterized as a governance movement that prioritizes transparency, performance management, and the accountability of public sector employees and managers²⁷. In the police force, this strategy is marked by a centralized management approach that focuses on overseeing police objectives. In contrast, community policing emphasizes decentralization²⁸.

New public management reform concepts, emphasizing resource utilization and goal accomplishment, are driving a transformation in managerial roles towards that of business managers, aligning with the organization's new ideals²⁹. Delivering police services and

²⁴ Stojković, D., Saković, R., & Mitić, V. (2019). Measuring the performance of the police. *Archibald Reiss Days*, (2), 149–161. <https://eskup.kpu.edu.rs/dar/article/view/47/55>

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²⁷ Dandekar, G. (2011). New public management: A strategy for democratic police reform in transition and developing countries. *Policing: An International Journal*, 34(3), 421. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13639511111157492>

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(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0731129X.2020.1746106>

achieving government objectives necessitate a careful balance between addressing community needs and maintaining the organizational flexibility to respond to emerging incidents. Law enforcement must accomplish the government's specified outcomes within their designated budget while being accountable for their actions and adhering to established standards of efficiency and effectiveness³⁰.

Hartley et al. propose the thesis that the core of the New Public Management strategy views policing as a service that should be delivered by organizations that adhere to efficient management practices inspired by established private sector principles. This perspective advocates for public institutions to operate in alignment with private sector activities, emphasizing market-driven incentives, customer orientation, and performance management³¹.

Den Heyer views the New Public Management approach as the key strategy for democratic police reform in transitional, developing, and post-conflict nations. He emphasizes that New Public Management can function both independently as a policing strategy and alongside other management methods, like Community Policing. Nonetheless, he believes that the implementation of New Public Management must be culturally tailored and should be adapted to fit the specific societal context³².

In opposition to this assertion, C. Wathne highlights a significant and foundational distinction between Community policing and the New public management model when comparing the two models of police management. He argues that these models cannot create new "laws" or combine into a unified, closed system³³.

Strategies in community policing focus on fostering connections between law enforcement and the community, ensuring that policing practices resonate with local values. This approach includes efforts to diversify the demographics within police organizations to better mirror the populations they serve. Additionally, it promotes collaborative safety models that engage various sectors – including government, businesses, and non-profits to tackle issues such as poverty, gender-based violence, intergroup tensions, and other security-related challenge³⁴. The European Commission's Horizon 2020 initiative has established six

(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0731129X.2020.1746106>.

³⁰ Den Heyer, G. (2011). New public management: A strategy for democratic police reform in transitioning and developing countries, *Policing: An International Journal*, 34(3), 426. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13639511111157492>

³¹ Den Heyer, G. (2011). New public management: A strategy for democratic police reform in transition and developing countries, *Policing: An International Journal*, 34(3), p. 422. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13639511111157492>

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(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0731129X.2020.1746106>

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foundational pillars that create a solid and comprehensive framework for Community Policing, while also allowing for adjustments based on local community requirements.

These interconnected pillars support and enhance one another by building trust and confidence, ensuring accountability, facilitating information sharing and communication, responding to local needs, promoting cooperation, and focusing on crime prevention³⁵.

Evaluating the positive aspects of the Community policing concept, it can be concluded that it meets the needs of citizens who are interested in transparent work of police authorities, opportunities for cooperation with the police, and increased police efficiency. The state also benefits from the implementation of this concept, since the efficiency of the police is improved, and the public perceives the functioning of this institution and contributes to the fulfilment of its mission and functions. An essential part of this concept is regular citizen Assessing the advantages of the Community policing approach reveals that it addresses the desires of citizens for transparent police operations, collaboration with law enforcement, and enhanced police effectiveness. Additionally, the government gains from adopting this model, as it led to greater police efficiency and foster a positive public perception of law enforcement, thereby aiding the achievement of its roles and responsibilities. A crucial component of this approach involves conducting regular surveys among citizens, ensuring public oversight of police operations, and addressing citizens' grievances, all of which demonstrate the police's commitment to meeting community needs³⁶.

Unlike the two policing management models previously discussed, Thibault E. emphasizes the idea of Proactive police management. This approach integrates elements from both Community policing and the New public management model. Proactive police management focuses on strategic planning, collaborative leadership, problem-solving, advanced information technology, data management units, crime prevention efforts, and community involvement in shaping the police agenda³⁷. Proactive police management, a strategic method employed by law enforcement agencies to deter crime, emerged in response to a crisis of confidence in the police during the 1960s. This crisis stemmed from social unrest, increasing crime rates, and mounting skepticism regarding the effectiveness of traditional policing methods³⁸.

Ukrainian scholars view this concept as a form of police activity. O. Reznik and colleagues categorize police activities into two categories: "active" and "proactive". Active policing refers to actions prompted by the public, such as reporting a crime. In contrast,

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proactive policing involves actions taken by police officers, including vehicle stops, identification checks, and area patrolling³⁹. O. Mazurik & O. Strelchenko highlight that the reactive policing model focuses on responding to and investigating crimes as well as punishing offenders. In contrast, the proactive model emphasizes crime prevention through community service and collaboration between the police and the public, adhering to the principle of “police – people – partners”⁴⁰.

As a result, police operations are complex and varied, allowing for a range of theoretical and methodological advancements, which in turn leads to diverse perspectives on the organization and implementation of police work. In terms of fostering public trust in law enforcement, the Community policing approach is particularly beneficial for sociological assessments of trust levels, as it explicitly addresses the need to evaluate public confidence for effective planning and future action within distinct communities. Since gaining independence, Ukraine has been transitioning its police system away from the centralized post-Soviet model towards a democratic framework rooted in community partnerships – Community policing.

K. Chyshko & R. Pinchuk highlight that the ongoing phase of police reform is characterized by several key developments that significantly influence police strategies⁴¹:

1) The counter-terrorism operation in eastern Ukraine subsequently referred to as the “Joint Forces Operation”, which resulted in the establishment of several volunteer Special Forces within Ukraine’s Ministry of Internal Affairs.

2) The formation of the National Police of Ukraine, which included the creation of special units tasked with operations during emergencies and martial law (e.g., the Rapid Action Corps, Special Police Patrol Service, and Tactical Response Unit).

3) The extensive Russian invasion of Ukraine, which prompted the formation of paramilitary units, such as the National Police’s United Assault Brigade “Rage” and the assault regiment “Safari”.

Overall, the strategies for police operations and development in Ukraine can be classified into two distinct phases: “before and after” the onset of the full-scale invasion. Prior to February 24, 2022, police activities were primarily aimed at fostering a secure environment conducive to the growth of a free society, building public trust in law enforcement agencies, particularly the police, and advancing Ukraine’s progress towards European integration while prioritizing the needs of its citizens. Since 2016, special police units have not participated in

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(92), 123–132. <https://doi.org/10.32631/pb.2024.1.11>

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combat but instead have focused solely on their policing duties in the ATO zone and frontline areas, which include tasks such as manning checkpoints, patrolling, maintaining order in buffer zones, verifying identities, and conducting internal operations⁴².

Before the large-scale invasion by Russian forces, the concept of police development was outlined in 2017 within the “Strategy for the Development of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the period up to 2020”⁴³.

The strategy specifically outlines the primary approaches for law enforcement agencies, including the police. These approaches include community service, which prioritizes respect for human rights and freedoms, ensuring that functions align with human needs; accountability and democratic oversight, emphasizing the importance of openness and transparency in operations while enhancing democratic control mechanisms; community engagement, actively involving local communities to foster a safe environment through partnerships; modern public administration, adopting successful international practices and implementing innovative strategies; and information technology integration, maximizing the use of information technology to boost operational efficiency⁴⁴.

These strategies are reflected in the priorities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which focus on fighting crime, fostering a secure environment, upholding and guaranteeing human rights and freedoms, promoting good governance, and ensuring transparency and accountability. The active military aggression from the Russian Federation led to the implementation of martial law on February 24, 2022, in line with Ukrainian legislation⁴⁵. This event triggered a significant transformation in the operations of the entire law enforcement system, including the police, which had to quickly adjust its strategies and methods to align with the martial law regime and the active defense of Ukraine’s territory against the invading forces. A key objective was to maintain internal stability, counter the spread of panic and misinformation, and collaborate effectively with the military to safeguard national security⁴⁶.

Amendments to the key regulatory acts governing police activities were implemented swiftly, enabling law enforcement to adjust their strategies to the newly arisen circumstances⁴⁷. The list of police powers outlined in Article 23 of the Law on the National Police has been

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⁴⁴ Ibid. 23–132. <https://doi.org/10.32631/pb.2024.1.11>

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broadened to enhance police operations during martial law. This includes the authorities granted to the police to locate individuals, offer first aid, and manage weapons and ammunition by receiving, storing, and disposing of them as necessary⁴⁸.

A. Bezpalova et al. highlight that the police have taken on an unprecedented role in maintaining order and security during martial law. Within the context of the Community Policing strategy, the police function not only as agents of crime prevention and public safety but also as providers of essential public services to citizens within their jurisdiction⁴⁹.

As a result, the police's powers were not fundamentally altered but were adjusted to fit the martial law framework, with additional responsibilities assigned to ensure national security and safeguard citizens during wartime. It is important to highlight that the implementation of various community policing initiatives initiated by the police reform in 2015 persisted throughout the period of martial law, although some initiatives were delayed. Consequently, the management of police operations during martial law can be categorized into two forms: legal and organizational. The legal aspect involves the normative development of police management through regulations, while the organizational aspect encompasses⁵⁰:

- 1) preventive actions, which consist of a range of measures that vary in nature, including stabilization efforts;
- 2) the coordination of services at checkpoints, focused on preventing and addressing specific offenses).

Expanding on the previous thesis, S. Medvedenko & N. Medvedenko argue that the martial law regime necessitates that the leadership of the Ukrainian police implement tactical techniques and strategic plans adapted to the prevailing circumstances, with the aim of optimizing police organization and operations. In this context, the scholars define the optimization of police activities as a comprehensive set of measures designed to enhance both the efficiency and effectiveness of police work. This involves the integration and application of cutting-edge technological advancements, the enhancement of computer and technical literacy, and the continuous improvement and development of personnel's professional skills to meet current demands⁵¹.

The Community Policing strategy emphasizes the importance of partnership, trust, communication, and dialogue between law enforcement and the public to ensure safety and maintain order. During peacetime, this partnership is fostered through various programs and

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initiatives aimed at building public confidence in the police and motivating community involvement in crime prevention and investigation efforts. Under martial law, the responsibilities of both the police and the community in maintaining security become even more critical. With the rise of criminal activities such as looting, sabotage, and the actions of criminal organizations during conflict and martial law, effective crime management can only be achieved through strong collaboration between law enforcement and the community⁵².

War conditions complicate police work due to several factors, including the temporary occupation of specific territories, the destruction of critical infrastructure, the increasing prevalence of weapons among civilians, the significant displacement of refugees, the disruption of logistical channels, and heightened societal tensions⁵³.

C. Friesendorf highlights a crucial factor in overseeing police operations during and following martial law, specifically the essential need to differentiate between police and military roles in a post-conflict setting, particularly in areas that have been liberated. Citing the Balkan nations as a case study, the researcher observes that wartime conditions can obscure the line between internal and external security as well as the functions of police and military personnel. The trajectory of a state's democratic development following a military conflict necessitates a clear division between the responsibilities of the military and those of law enforcement⁵⁴. The approach to law enforcement during wartime involves operations in recently liberated areas, fostering strong communication with the local community to enhance the investigation of crimes and deter potential offenses. These efforts play a crucial role in stabilization initiatives, which include identifying collaborators and supporters of the aggressor nation, locating weapons and ammunition, as well as uncovering explosive devices and other tasks within the police's jurisdiction⁵⁵.

The amendments to the Law on the National Police empower the police to effectively hold accountable those who collaborate with the occupier and those who exploit martial law for personal gain⁵⁶.

In summary, following the implementation of martial law, Ukraine's law enforcement agencies, including the police, have demonstrated their capacity to adapt by prioritizing the

⁵² Bondar, V. V. (2024). Cooperation of The National Police of Ukraine with civil society on the basis of partnership under the conditions of the state of martial law. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod National University*, 81(2), 63–69. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2307-3322.2024.81.2.10>

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prevention of terrorist threats and maintaining order in the regions most impacted by the conflict⁵⁷.

1.2. Structural transformations in law enforcement agencies of Ukraine and study of their impact on social trust in the context of changing security challenges

The foundations of policing are crucial for constructing strategies and outlining the primary responsibilities of law enforcement agencies. A key tenet highlighted in the Law on the National Police is the emphasis on collaborative engagement between the police and the community, which serves as the cornerstone for implementing the Community Policing model. This principle also necessitates the evaluation of public trust in law enforcement. Article 11 of the Law elaborates on this concept, stating that the police must work closely with the community, and that the effectiveness of their operations is largely determined by the public's confidence in them⁵⁸.

The process for evaluating the level of public trust in the police is outlined in the Procedure for Assessing Public Trust in the National Police⁵⁹. This outlines the process for carrying out a sociological survey by a designated service hired by the police to address inquiries. The sociological service is responsible for conducting the survey, compiling and analyzing the findings, and evaluating the public's trust in the police. They then deliver a report to the police detailing the results of this trust assessment. In this regard, H. Shevchuk points out that the independent sociological service does not have the capacity to create a representative sample or to select the questions for the survey⁶⁰.

It is important to highlight that the Procedure allows for the suspension of the assessment at the national level in the case of martial law being declared across Ukraine⁶¹, no research has been carried out since 2022, and the information available was gathered at the request of private companies. The Community Policing strategy outlines the following anticipated outcomes⁶²:

- a decrease in crime or misconduct;

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, 268–274. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8365544>

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- a reduction in public anxiety about criminal activity;
- an enhancement of public trust in the police;
- increased community involvement in policing efforts.

It is evident that for the police to effectively fulfill their responsibilities, they must earn the public's trust. In this context, fostering a dialogue between law enforcement and the community is crucial for building that trust. Moreover, the strategies for trust-building are shaped by a complex and ever-evolving interplay of various social and institutional factors⁶³. Assessing public trust in the police is crucial because trust serves as a fundamental principle of partnership. Establishing this trust not only enhances the effectiveness of police officers in maintaining public order but also fosters a greater sense of security within the community⁶⁴. It is crucial for society to be aware of the findings from the trust assessment regarding the police, as this fosters greater opportunities for collaboration and partnership between the community and law enforcement⁶⁵.

Furthermore, some researchers suggest that implementing a community partnership strategy, enhancing organizational transformation, and tackling social issues may help restore trust in the police, as individuals start to perceive policing within its true context⁶⁶.

O. Mazurik & O. Strelchenko define community policing as a socially defined and coordinated effort involving collaboration between law enforcement agencies and societal institutions. This approach employs suitable strategies and methods to address issues related to crime, public order, and safety, ultimately aiming to enhance the overall quality of life within the community⁶⁷.

The content of this interaction model consists of questions⁶⁸:

- Formulating and executing a strategy for enhancing public trust in the National Police of Ukraine.
- Performing public opinion monitoring surveys regarding the actions of the National Police of Ukraine.
- Creating and implementing legal frameworks to restore the rights and legitimate interests of citizens infringed upon by police officers, as well as to provide compensation for material damages.

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(3), 304–320. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2020.1726345>

⁶⁶(pp. 24–26). Dnipro. <https://er.dduvs.in.ua/handle/123456789/10462>

⁶⁷, 268–274. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8365544>

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

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- Increasing accessibility for citizens to engage with the National Police, both at their facilities and in local communities, through working groups and public reception centers.
- Establishing a system of financial and non-financial incentives to encourage the broadest possible citizen participation in maintaining public order and preventing crime.

Considering that the level of public trust in the police serves as the primary criterion for evaluating the effectiveness of law enforcement activities⁶⁹, following the implementation of martial law, private sociological firms conducted studies to assess public trust levels. Research by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, a well-regarded research organization, provides a clear overview of the changes in public trust in the police from December 2021 (after the onset of the war) to December 2023⁷⁰. At the end of 2021, prior to the full-scale invasion, public trust in the police stood at 30 proc., with 44 proc. expressing distrust. A similar trend was evident regarding trust in the Security Service of Ukraine. In contrast, the Armed Forces of Ukraine enjoyed a relatively high level of trust, recorded at 72 proc., with only 12 proc. indicating distrust (see Fig. 2).

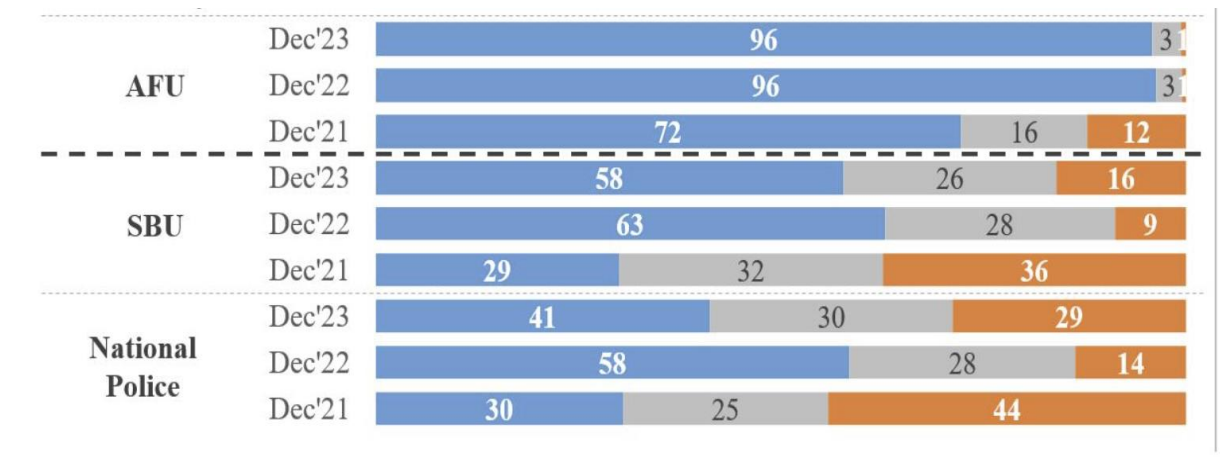
In December 2022, after 10 months of war, the level of trust in law enforcement agencies increased significantly, reaching 58 proc. of the population's trust in the police compared to 14 proc. of distrust. This elevated trust level reflects the societal mood during the initial year following the full-scale invasion, characterized by unity among citizens and robust support from state institutions. However, by the end of 2023, trust in the police had plummeted from 58 proc. in December 2022 to 41 proc. in December 2023, while distrust rose significantly from 14 proc. to 29 proc. Over the same timeframe, trust in the Security Service of Ukraine also declined, dropping 5 points from 63 proc. to 58 proc. In contrast, the level of public trust in the Armed Forces of Ukraine remained notably high at 96 proc. The rise in criticism and decrease in trust towards the police are attributed to a surge of citizen complaints regarding the police's effectiveness and transparency⁷¹.

Figure 2. Analysis of the trust and distrust dynamics within the Armed Forces, Security Service of Ukraine, and National Police from 2021 to 2023.

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⁷¹ *Ibid*



Source: Kyiv International Institute of Sociology's survey "Omnibus"⁷²

In a separate analysis from the sociological survey mentioned above, the regional aspect of trust in public authorities is highlighted. Specifically, Figure 3 illustrates that in 2022, trust in the police was notably higher in the southern and central regions of Ukraine compared to the western and eastern regions. However, by 2023, trust in the police had decreased to approximately 40 proc. across all regions of Ukraine.

Figure 3. Trust in Institutions by Region (2022-2023).

Proc. in a row	West		Centre		South		East	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
▪ <i>President of Ukraine</i>	85	58	86	68	84	60	78	54
▪ <i>Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine</i>	34	13	40	17	34	15	25	13
▪ <i>Government of Ukraine</i>	50	22	55	29	50	27	49	26
▪ <i>Armed forces of Ukraine</i>	98	98	97	97	95	92	94	96
▪ <i>National police</i>	57	42	60	44	61	38	52	41
▪ <i>Courts</i>	26	14	28	10	24	15	16	12

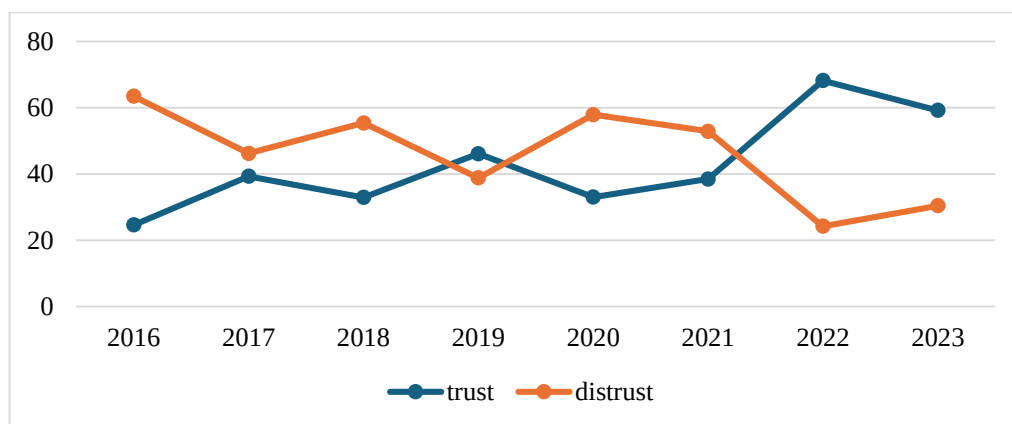
Source: Kyiv International Institute of Sociology's survey "Omnibus"⁷³.

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⁷³ *Ibid.*

Simultaneously, an additional sociological study conducted by the analytical portal “Slovo i Dilo” assesses the levels of trust and distrust in the police from 2016 to 2023. This study reveals that public trust in the police during the pre-war years of 2016 to 2021 averaged between 33 proc. and 35 proc. Notably, the level of distrust peaked in 2020 at 59.7 proc., with a significant figure of 63 proc. recorded in 2016, as illustrated in Figure 4:

Figure 4. How public trust in the police has changed in 2016-2023



Source: Author's own analysis based on the evolving trust levels of Ukrainians in law enforcement agencies⁷⁴.

Based on data from two independent opinion polls, a noticeable trend emerges indicating a significant increase in public trust in the police following the initiation of the full-scale invasion. Although this trust saw a slight decline in 2023, it remained considerably higher than levels recorded in the pre-war years. Consequently, it is reasonable to conclude that the crisis situation in Ukraine, characterized by the full-scale invasion and the implementation of martial law, has served to unify society around state authorities, instilling a considerable degree of trust in them.

1.3. Transformation of policing in response to national and international human rights requirements in Ukraine in comparison with Latvia and Lithuania

The Strategic Plan for Reforming Law Enforcement Agencies in Ukraine for 2023-2027 emphasizes that a primary focus of reforming the law enforcement system is the protection of the rights and freedoms of individuals in a democratic society. Consequently, Ukraine is steadily progressing towards prioritizing human rights as a fundamental value in its state policies.

Police activity serves as a cornerstone for reinforcing and promoting European values, as well as upholding human rights, the rule of law, and democracy. Accordingly, Y. Bakutin asserts that a pivotal criterion for evaluating the alignment of a national legal system with international legal standards is the establishment of a high-quality law enforcement service anchored in the fundamental principle of “serving and protecting”⁷⁵.

Common European standards in police activity are reflected in the prevention and detection of crime, the maintenance and restoration of public order, and the provision of timely assistance to individuals in distress. These principles are widely upheld across many European countries, aligning with the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights⁷⁶. The Convention, an international treaty signed by European nations in 1950, is essential for the safeguarding of human rights. It has established a legal framework for the protection of human rights and freedoms across Europe, under the auspices of the Council of Europe. The European Court of Human Rights plays a key role in ensuring compliance with these rights by overseeing the actions of the state’s party to the Convention. This legal framework enables the monitoring of human rights practices and guarantees within European countries, including Ukraine, Latvia and Lithuania.

The core human rights established by the Convention are obligatory for state authorities and institutions, including law enforcement agencies. The activities of the police have a direct impact on the enforcement of numerous rights protected by the Convention, such as the right to life, the prohibition of torture, the right to liberty and personal security, and the prohibition against arbitrary punishment, among others.

In their day-to-day operations, police officers in Ukraine are responsible for upholding human rights and freedoms as part of their essential duties. *For example*, when individuals contact the police, they are exercising their right to an effective remedy as outlined in Article 13 of the Convention. The police also safeguard the right to peaceful assembly, as stated in Article 11, by maintaining public order during gatherings, protests, and demonstrations. Conversely, certain preventive measures stipulated by Ukrainian laws can lead to state encroachments on citizens’ rights and freedoms under the Convention. An instance of this is house arrest as a criminal procedure, which interferes with the right to freedom of movement as guaranteed by Article 2 of Protocol No. 7 to the Convention⁷⁷.

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⁷⁷ Zinchenko, D. A., & Dzhaferova, O. V. (2023). The main challenges for human rights during martial law: The experience of the National Police of Ukraine. In *Protection and observation of citizens’ rights by the National Police of Ukraine in conditions of martial law: Theses additional* (pp. 48–49). Vinnytsia. <https://dspace.univd.edu.ua/handle/123456789/19702>

When imposing restrictions on human rights during martial law, law enforcement must prioritize non-violent approaches and adhere to the principle of using force minimally and only when necessary, as outlined by legal frameworks. Professional standards call for a careful, proportionate, and appropriate application of force⁷⁸.

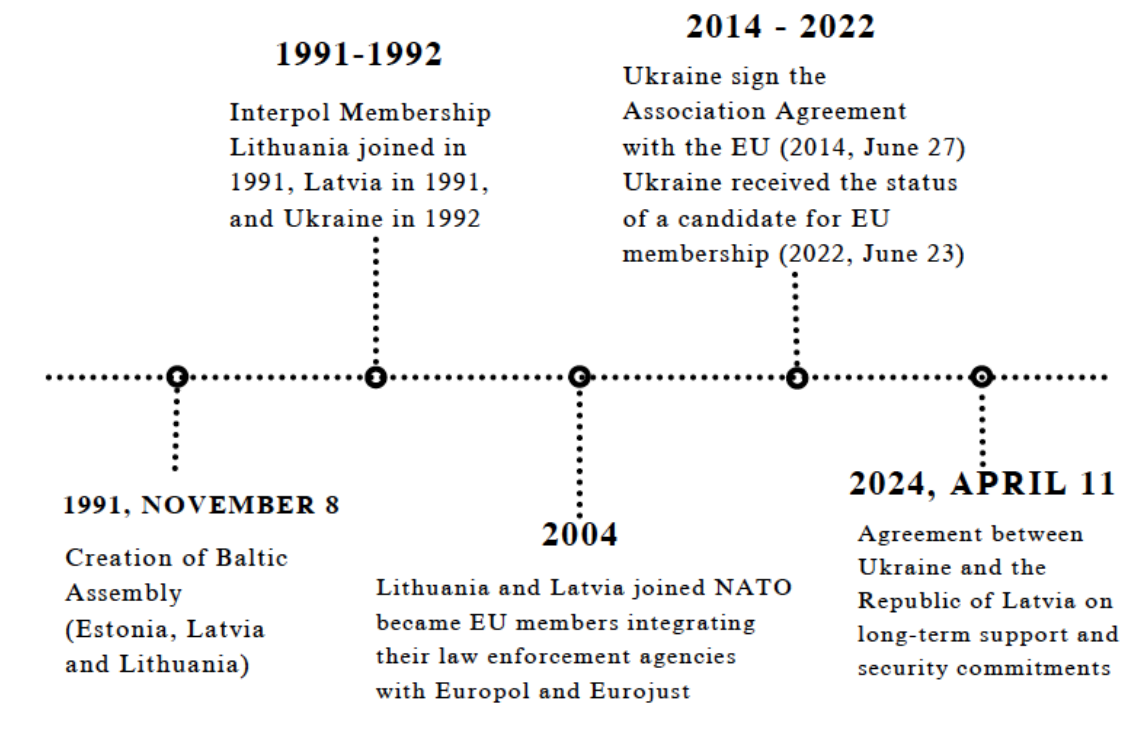
The roles and responsibilities of the Ukrainian police during martial law are crucial for protecting the rights and freedoms of its citizens. Legal frameworks establish the boundaries and authorities of law enforcement agencies, prioritizing the rights and safety of individuals, as human rights are universally acknowledged fundamental values. During martial law, significant human rights challenges arise, including limitations on freedom of speech and the ability to gather information, infringements on the right to personal security, such as unlawful detention, torture, and other types of mistreatment, restrictions on freedom of movement that can prevent individuals from leaving conflict areas, and violations of socio-economic rights, including access to employment, education, housing, and healthcare⁷⁹.

After gaining independence with the collapse of the USSR, all three countries – Ukraine, Lithuania and Latvia – chose a democratic vector of development with the integration of universal values into political and social life. The countries that had long been dominated by the Soviet regime needed the support of the international community, especially the united Europe, to achieve the goals of democratic development, particularly in the law enforcement sector. The key steps in the integration of Ukraine, Lithuania and Latvia into international law enforcement institutions are shown in the Figure, which shows that the Baltic states were more successful and joined forces to join the EU and NATO, while the Ukrainian political elites lacked the political will to express their strong intentions to integrate into the EU, which happened ten years later and is still ongoing.

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Figure 5. Historical events of cooperation between Lithuania, Latvia, and Ukraine.



Source: author's development.

To effectively compare the adherence to national norms regarding human rights protection in police activities in Latvia, Lithuania, and Ukraine with international standards, it is beneficial to focus on the principles of police conduct outlined in their respective police regulations. For instance, both the Latvian and Ukrainian police are mandated to align their operations with international human rights standards. In Latvia, the law “On Police” specifies several key principles of police activity in Article 5, which include:

- Legitimacy.
- Humanism.
- Respect for human rights.
- Social justice.
- Transparency and the separation of powers.
- Public involvement.

This article provides an in-depth exploration of the principle of human rights, highlighting the obligation of the police to safeguard the rights and legitimate interests of individuals, irrespective of their origin, gender, age, social or financial status, occupation,

citizenship, race, nationality, beliefs, political views, education, language, place of residence, and other relevant factors⁸⁰, i.e. ensuring compliance with the principle of non-discrimination.

The Latvian Police is committed to upholding individuals' rights and freedoms through its operations, allowing for any limitations on those rights and freedoms only when legally justified and in line with established legal protocols. When enforcing such restrictions, police officers are required to provide a rationale for each specific case. These guidelines reflect a strong commitment to human rights and emphasize a more humane approach to policing. The State Police of Latvia aims to safeguard the interests of individuals, society, and the state while engaging with individuals and organizations, consistently following the principles of the rule of law and maintaining neutrality.

Twenty years after the reform of the Latvian police, the community policing movement is gaining momentum, gaining support from politicians, reformers and society⁸¹. According to I. Boluža, some of the biggest obstacles that police organizations face when implementing community policing programmes are the initial introduction and understanding of the concept of community policing, the ability to change and adapt to the new format of policing, and the adoption of new rules⁸².

Some authors share the opinion that district inspectors in Latvia (about 12 proc. of the total state police apparatus) are “community police inspectors”, but this does not correspond to the job descriptions. Some elements of the community policing philosophy are contained in the job descriptions of juvenile affairs inspectors, illegal hunting and fishing inspectors, licensing and permit inspectors, road safety inspectors, and patrol officers⁸³.

The Law of the Republic of Lithuania “On Police Activity” outlines the fundamental principles guiding police operations in Article 4. These principles include⁸⁴:

- Impartiality and non-discrimination.
- Professional ethics.
- Respect for human rights.
- Humanism.
- Public morality.
- Legitimacy.
- Political neutrality.

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⁸² *Ibid.*

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⁸⁴ Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania. (2000, October 27). *Law on Police of the Republic of Lithuania*. *Official Gazette*, No. 90-2777. <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.CA89372D00AA/SwRaEIxNrHu>

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- Integration of public and confidential activities.
- Official subordination.
- Subsidiarity.
- Use of coercion only when necessary, ensuring proportionality in its application.

The law designates the protection and defense of human rights and freedoms as the key responsibility of the Lithuanian police. The mission of the Lithuanian police is to effectively utilize available resources to safeguard the rights and freedoms of the Lithuanian people.

The principles guiding police operations, as established in the Law of Ukraine “On the National Police,” align with international standards and are consistent with the principles found in the legislation of both Latvia and Lithuania. These principles encompass⁸⁵:

- Rule of law.
- Respect for human rights and freedoms.
- Legitimacy.
- Openness and transparency.
- Political neutrality.
- Collaboration with the public based on partnership.
- Continuity.

The law identifies the protection and promotion of human rights and freedoms as a primary duty of the Lithuanian police. Their role is to efficiently use existing resources to ensure the rights and freedoms of the citizens of Lithuania are maintained. One of the options for monitoring the observance of human rights in the context of community policing is the practice of joint patrols by representatives of several agencies (environmental, veterinary) accompanied by municipal police officers, if they operate in the municipality. Other members of the patrols may be people from community volunteer associations⁸⁶.

According to G. Buciunas, an important element of every reform is to change people’s mindsets by involving them in the construction of the reform framework and pillars, informing them about the changes and giving them time to adapt to the changes. Before launching a reform in civilian security policing, those responsible for creating the framework for the reform should launch information campaigns to communicate the purpose of the reform in simple terms to the target audience, as was done in Lithuania⁸⁷.

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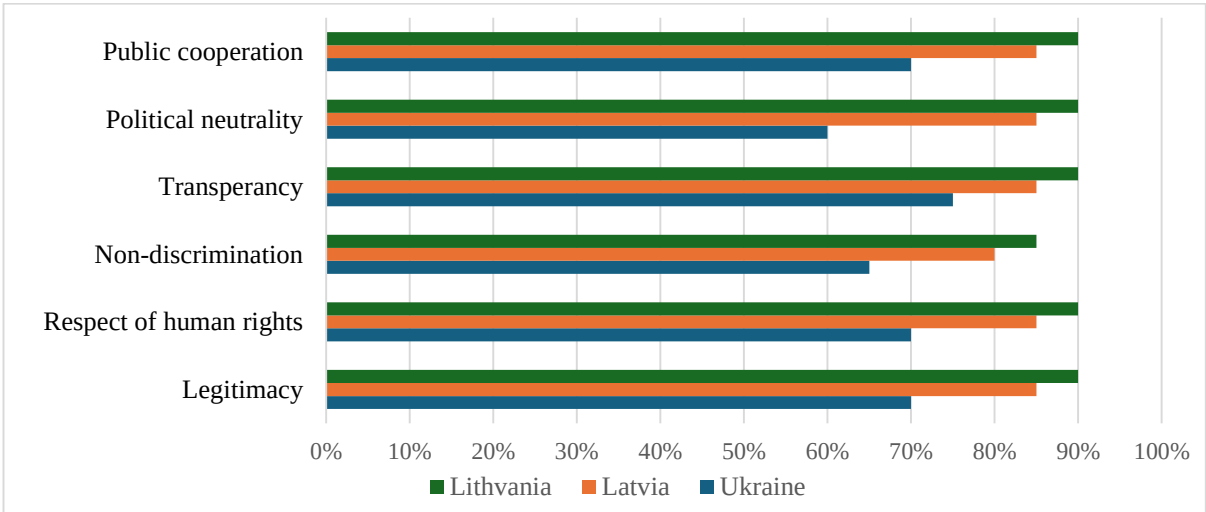
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The guiding principles for police activities, as defined in Ukraine’s “On the National Police” law, adhere to international benchmarks and are in harmony with the legal frameworks of Latvia and Lithuania. These guiding principles include⁸⁸:

- Upholding the rule of law.
- Commitment to human rights and freedoms.
- Legitimacy.
- Transparency and openness.
- Political impartiality.
- Cooperation with the community based on partnership.
- Continuity.

Figure 6. The guiding principles of police activities in Ukraine, Latvia, and Lithuania.



Source: author’s own development.

These estimates are based on a synthesis of available reports⁸⁹ and data⁹⁰ that reflect the relative strengths and areas for improvement in each country’s compliance with these key policing principles.

Figure 7. The guiding principles of police activities in Ukraine, Latvia, and Lithuania.

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Source: author's own development

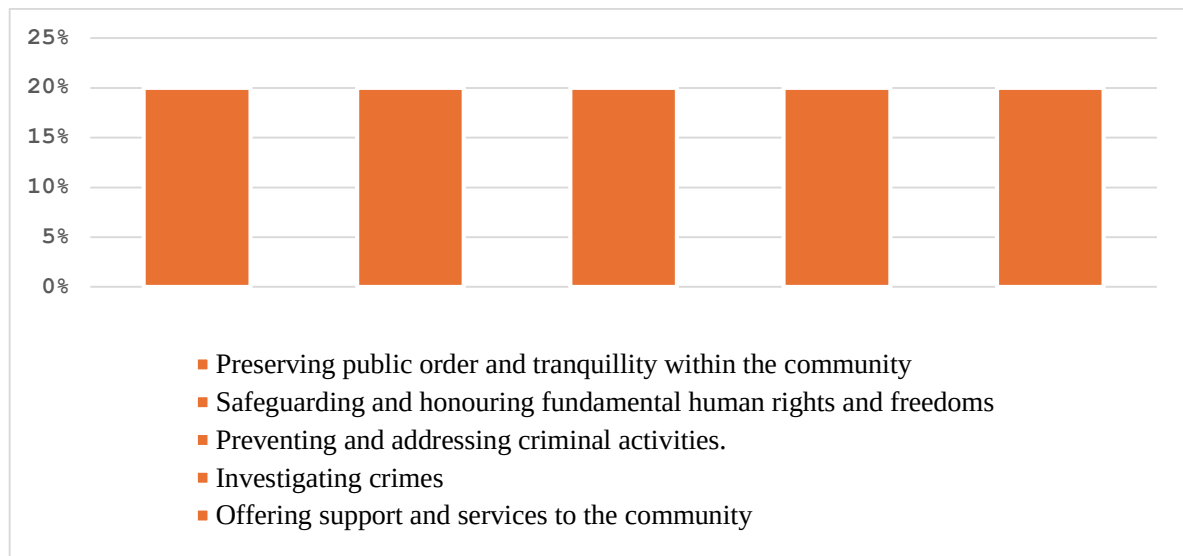
Thus, both Lithuania and Latvia are firmly on the path of integrating community policing into their law enforcement strategies. In Latvia, efforts are focused on addressing the challenges of policing in a multicultural society in order to improve the legal framework and build trust in different communities. Lithuania, on the other hand, emphasizes social inclusion and the role of community policing in maintaining public safety, addressing specific challenges in building community trust. Both countries continue to develop their approaches, but face persistent challenges in fully implementing effective community policing strategies⁹¹.

The Code of Police Ethics established by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe outlines the primary goals of law enforcement agencies in a democratic society that adheres to the rule of law. These goals include as illustrated in the Figure 8:

- Preserving public order and tranquility within the community.
- Safeguarding and honoring fundamental human rights and freedoms, especially those recognized in the European Convention on Human Rights.
- Preventing and addressing criminal activities.
- Investigating crimes.
- Offering support and services to the community.

⁹¹ Bayerl, P. S., Karlović, R., Akhgar, B., & Markarian, G. (2017). *Community policing – A European perspective*:

Figure 8. The ideal democratic European police model⁹².



Source: author's development.

Law enforcement officers are granted specific powers, including the potential use of force, to temporarily restrict individuals' freedom and limit the exercise of certain rights. This includes actions such as stopping, questioning, arresting, detaining individuals, confiscating belongings, taking fingerprints and photographs, and conducting searches. In critical situations, they may also have the authority to use lethal force. Furthermore, police personnel often have the discretion to determine the manner in which they execute these powers. In fulfilling their responsibilities, law enforcement officials are required to respect human dignity while promoting and safeguarding fundamental human, civil, and political rights⁹³.

Consequently, the modern citizens of Lithuania, Latvia, and Ukraine inherit distinct traditions, despite sharing common historical developments and instances of cooperation⁹⁴. Currently, all three states are members of the Council of Europe. Latvia and Lithuania are members of the EU, while Ukraine is a candidate for EU accession. As a result, the unification of legislation is not merely a natural progression; it is essential for aligning with international standards of human rights and freedoms.

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, p. 31, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2022/703590/IPOL_STU\(2022\)703590_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2022/703590/IPOL_STU(2022)703590_EN.pdf)

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(5), 46–70. <https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0012.7586>

1.4. Interim research results

The police play a crucial role in maintaining public safety and order during both peaceful times and under martial law, a responsibility inherent in their function and outlined in their legal obligations. In Ukraine, police reform began in 2015 following the enactment of the Law on the National Police, which established standards for police operations. This reform was prompted by a significant lack of public confidence in law enforcement and the ongoing transition from post-Soviet centralized management methods to a more decentralized approach, emphasizing collaboration between the police and the community. As a result, Ukraine's police reform has been influenced by the Community Policing strategy, which is favored in many democratic nations.

The core principle of Community Policing involves fostering communication and partnership between the police and the public, based on mutual collaboration and grounded in universally accepted democratic ideals such as legality, equality, openness, transparency, the prohibition of discrimination, and respect for human rights and freedoms. Although the imposition of martial law on February 24, 2022, hindered the progress of police reform toward Community Policing, it did not completely halt the initiative.

In Ukraine, the ongoing period that allows for the evaluation of police operations under martial law or during military actions began in 2014 and persists today. This phase is characterized by the involvement of police forces in armed conflicts, their work in regions that have been reclaimed, areas experiencing combat, and other parts of the nation where martial law is enforced.

The main difficulties that law enforcement agencies currently face amid the ongoing war are closely tied to their responsibilities in safeguarding citizens and society, effectively combating crime, and delivering transparent, high-quality services. However, these challenges have significantly broadened.

Following the enforcement of martial law in Ukraine, the police strategy was revised to address evolving needs, while legislative updates expanded the scope of police authority. Overall, Ukraine's approach to organizing police operations during martial law is distinctive in the 21st century, making it essential to analyze and document both successes and failures.

The enforcement of martial law has become a fundamental element in fostering public confidence in governmental institutions. The degree of trust in police forces serves as a measure of their efficacy. Research conducted on public faith in government agencies indicates that trust in the police nearly doubled in 2022 compared to the pre-war year of 2021. This pattern has

emerged across almost all sectors of society, with the large-scale invasion prompting a unification of the populace around state authorities.

Central to police operations is the principle of upholding human rights and freedoms, which involves treating individuals with respect and ensuring that rights are only curtailed in circumstances explicitly outlined by law. The legislation governing police conduct in Lithuania, Latvia, and Ukraine includes a mandatory clause requiring law enforcement personnel to adhere to and protect human rights, in line with widely accepted international standards.

2. STRENGTHENING POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY AND CITIZEN RIGHTS IN WAR CONTEXTS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF UKRAINE, LITHUANIA AND LATVIA

Since ancient times, the police have been an element of the mechanism for ensuring state security, the basis of the state system. It was constantly in the process of reformation and improvement. The very word “police” has a long and changing history. Thus, all researchers of the history of the concept of “police” point to it’s, at first glance, strange etymological connection with the concepts of “polis” and “politics”, which is not well understood in the mass human consciousness.

The semantic series πόλις – πολιτεία – πολικά, which arose within the framework of the Greek language and ancient history through the Latinized form of *politia*, penetrated

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e The term “police” was first used by Melchior von Osse, who served as chancellor to the Elector of Saxony around 1550. For him, as well as for Nicolas de Lamar, who published “Treatise on the Police” (volume 1, 1705), this word meant “public order”⁹⁷.

O. F. Kobzar provides an obvious definition today. As a rule, he understands the police as an apparatus of state power, which is a universal tool of coercion aimed at protecting public order, public safety, life, health, and property of citizens in all countries of the world⁹⁸.

n Establishing universally binding rules and standards that define the limits of acceptable behavior for individuals, in order to ensure peace and security in society, has been and remains one of the most critical areas of research for both scientists and practitioners.

a Recently, legal review or control over the performance of tasks and functions of the police (is considered one of the main ways to ensure the legality of the police’s activities.

e Control of the legality of police bodies and officials’ actions should be understood as checking the compliance of police institutions and their officials’ actions (inaction) with the requirements of the Constitution, laws, and other legal acts.

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⁹⁶ Ibid.

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<https://er.dduvs.in.ua/bitstream/123456789/433/1/Монографія%20Кобзаря%20О.Ф.%20ПОЛІЦЕЙСЬКА%20ПІЯЛЬНІСТЬ%20В%20УКРАЇНІ.pdf>

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The essence of controlling the legality of police actions lies in ensuring that the state, its authorized institutions, and society – through organizational and legal measures – verify whether the actions of police bodies and officers comply with legal requirements. This control process examines whether specific actions taken by a police institution or officer – such as the application of administrative or criminal procedural measures, preventive actions, or decisions made in an investigation – are in accordance with the Constitution, laws, and other legal acts. It can be assumed that certain aspects of this issue have not been thoroughly examined, and it is unlikely that they can be addressed solely through administrative or legal means. One of the key issues requiring analysis is the substance of oversight of police activities and the ambiguity surrounding it. Police accountability means that their actions are subject to scrutiny by various oversight bodies, and in a democratic society, the powers of the police must remain transparent and open to public evaluation.

According to the legislation of Ukraine, according to the Police Code, the main tasks of the police are to ensure the personal safety of citizens, protect the rights and freedoms of citizens, prevent and combat crime, protect public order and arrest criminals. Protect public and private property and implement criminal judgments and administrative sanctions. Police officers can use physical force, special means and firearms to arrest, detain suspects, and conduct searches on special orders of investigators. The process of prosecution and justice concerns the rights of the accused and the procedures for bringing suspects to justice⁹⁹.

The legal framework of Latvia serves as the cornerstone of its democratic development, securing the principles of equality, protection of human rights, and the rule of law. The Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, adopted in 1922, remains the highest legal authority, defining the structure of governance and guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of its citizens. Article 89 explicitly states that “the State recognizes and protects fundamental human rights in accordance with this Constitution, laws, and international agreements binding on Latvia.”¹⁰⁰ This enshrines the nation’s commitment to universal human rights and ensures the integration of national laws with international standards.

The proclamation of Latvia’s independence on November 18, 1918, was a defining moment that unified its historical territories and laid the foundation for a sovereign state. Emerging from centuries of foreign domination, including rule by the German Order, Polish-Lithuanian Common wealth, and Russian Empire, Latvia’s independence symbolized a return

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¹⁰⁰ Treļs, Ē. (2023). Improving policing in a multicultural society in the Republic of Latvia: Theoretical legal

to national self-determination. The declaration aimed to secure the existence and development of the Latvian nation, its language, and its culture while integrating into the broader European framework. The independence movement was strongly tied to the idea of cultural preservation, as reflected in the official recognition of Latvian as the sole state language, which underscores the importance of national identity¹⁰¹.

Following the Soviet occupation during World War II, Latvia endured decades of authoritarian rule under the USSR, during which its legal and administrative systems were subordinated to the Soviet model. The restoration of independence in 1991 marked the beginning of comprehensive reforms aimed at dismantling Soviet institutions and re-establishing democratic governance¹⁰². This transformation was particularly evident in the reorganization of law enforcement. The Soviet-style militia, which had operated primarily as a tool of repression, was replaced with a modern police force aligned with democratic principles and international human rights standards¹⁰³.

The Law on the Police, adopted in 1991 and subsequently amended numerous times, established the foundational principles of law enforcement in Latvia. The State Police is defined as a paramilitary institution responsible for protecting life, health, human rights, and property, as well as ensuring public order¹⁰⁴. Importantly, the law incorporates stringent guidelines for the use of force, requiring that all actions comply with the Constitution and relevant legal standards. Article 27 of the Constitution guarantees the inalienable right to life, mandating that the state safeguard human life under all circumstances. Similarly, Article 28 ensures the right to dignity and prohibits torture, inhuman treatment, or degrading punishment, providing a robust legal framework for the oversight of police actions¹⁰⁵.

The Ministry of the Interior oversees Latvia's law enforcement and internal security functions, including the State Police, border protection, fire safety, and migration services. Municipal police forces operate under local governments, addressing region-specific needs and engaging directly with communities. This decentralized approach enhances the responsiveness

¹⁰¹ Danovska, E., & Kūtra, G. (Eds.). (2020). *Administratīvo pārkāpumu tiesības: Administratīvās atbildības*. Rīga: Tiesu namu aģentūra.

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Kuzņecova, K. (2022). *Theoretical and practical aspects of public order and security in the context of*

¹⁰³ Treļš, Ē. (Ed.). (2022). *Policijas tiesības: Kolektīvā monogrāfija*. Rīga: Latvijas Universitāte.

Valsts reģionālās attīstības aģentūra. (n.d.). <https://www.latvija.lv/>

¹⁰⁴ Valsts reģionālās attīstības aģentūra. (n.d.). <https://www.latvija.lv/>

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of law enforcement, particularly in urban areas like Riga, where municipal police collaborate with residents on crime prevention initiatives and public safety campaigns¹⁰⁶.

Ethics and professionalism are central to the Latvian police. The Code of Professional Ethics mandates impartiality, honesty, and respect for equality. Police officers are required to act solely in the public interest, basing their decisions on verified evidence and adhering strictly to legal standards¹⁰⁷. This ethical framework fosters trust between law enforcement and the public, which is crucial in a multicultural society¹⁰⁸. Latvia's population includes significant ethnic minorities, such as Russians, Belarusians, and Roma, whose integration and equitable treatment remain national priorities¹⁰⁹.

Historically, Latvia's law enforcement system has evolved to balance public safety with individual freedoms. During the interwar period, the police were instrumental in maintaining order and supporting social cohesion. Officers actively participated in community life, organizing educational programs and providing assistance to vulnerable populations. This tradition has been revitalized in the modern era, with the police adopting a service-oriented approach that prioritizes public engagement and collaboration.

One of the challenges faced by the Latvian police is addressing historical mistrust among minority communities. *For example*, the Roma population has traditionally been reluctant to engage with law enforcement due to perceptions of bias and discrimination¹¹⁰. To counter this, the police have implemented targeted initiatives, such as cultural awareness training for officers and outreach programs designed to build trust and encourage reporting of crimes. These efforts align with Latvia's broader commitment to social integration and equal treatment for all citizens.

Latvia has also embraced technological innovation to enhance the efficiency and transparency of its law enforcement. Advanced information systems have been introduced to monitor crime trends and manage incidents in real-time. These technologies enable data-driven decision-making and improve coordination among various law enforcement agencies.

¹⁰⁶ Bērziņa-Rukere, I., Avota, I., Grūbis, N., & Tošovskis, M. (2012). *Uz sabiedrību vērstis policijas darbs Latvijā 2009.–2012. Pieredze un nākamie soļi*. Rīga: Valsts policija.

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¹⁰⁹ Kārkliņš, S., & Kārkliņš, K. (2012). Sabiedriskā kārtība kā sabiedrības drošības priekšnoteikums sociāli ekonomisko pārmaiņu apstākļos. In *Eiropas integrācijas sociālā un ekonomiskā dimensija: problēmas, risinājumi, perspektīvas* (pp. 123–134). Daugavpils Universitātes Akadēmiskais apgāds „Saule”.

¹¹⁰ Treļs, Ē. (2023). Improving policing in a multicultural society in the Republic of Latvia: Theoretical legal

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Moreover, the digitalization of police services has streamlined administrative processes, making them more accessible to the public¹¹¹.

International cooperation plays a vital role in Latvia's law enforcement strategy. The country actively collaborates with neighboring nations, such as Lithuania and Estonia, as well as with EU partners, to address transnational challenges like cybercrime, human trafficking, and organized crime. Joint training programs, information-sharing mechanisms, and coordinated operations have strengthened Latvia's capacity to combat complex threats. Additionally, partnerships with organizations like Europol and Interpol ensure that Latvia remains integrated into global efforts to promote security and justice. The legislative framework supporting law enforcement continues to evolve in response to emerging challenges. Recent amendments to the Law on the Police have focused on enhancing accountability and transparency, including stricter oversight of the use of force and expanded mechanisms for public feedback. These reforms aim to ensure that the police remain a trusted institution capable of upholding democratic values while adapting to the changing needs of society¹¹².

Latvia's approach to law enforcement exemplifies the successful integration of historical traditions, modern governance practices, and international cooperation. By prioritizing human rights, transparency, and community engagement, Latvia has established a law enforcement system that not only ensures public safety but also strengthens the social fabric of the nation. As the country continues to develop, its commitment to these principles positions it as a model for other states undergoing democratic transitions.

Ēriks Treļš (2023) raises the question of trust in a multicultural society, namely minorities. Victims often do not report incidents to the police due to a lack of confidence in the willingness or ability of law enforcement to effectively investigate these cases. In addition, Roma citizens traditionally do not report crimes to the police; this fact undoubtedly makes it difficult to ascertain the real strength of the current problem. Article 19 of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania (as amended) expressly guarantees the right to life, stating that: "The human right to life is protected by law".

The Police of the Republic of Lithuania is a key executive body tasked with ensuring law and order, public safety, and the protection of citizens' rights. This institution operates under the internal affairs system and plays a central role in the Lithuanian state's security framework. The main responsibilities of the police include crime prevention, investigation of offenses,

¹¹¹ Dišlers, K. (2002). *Ievads Latvijas administratīvo tiesību zinātnē*. Rīga.

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maintaining public order, safeguarding civil rights and freedoms, and environmental protection within their jurisdiction. Additionally, the police are entrusted with road safety monitoring, emergency response, and providing social assistance.

The modern Lithuanian police system is governed by the “Law on Police Activity” (originally adopted in 2000 and revised multiple times), which defines the structure, functions, and responsibilities of law enforcement bodies. This law emphasizes the principles of legality, transparency, proportionality, and respect for human rights in all police activities. It also outlines clear guidelines for the use of force, ensuring that police actions remain consistent with democratic principles and the rule of law¹¹³.

Historically, law enforcement in Lithuania has evolved through various phases, reflecting the country’s shifting political and legal landscape. During the interwar period (1918 – 1940), Lithuania established its first national police force following the declaration of independence. This period saw the introduction of modern policing principles, with an emphasis on public service and the protection of individual rights. The police were organized into national, regional, and local divisions, creating a cohesive system that could address both urban and rural security challenges¹¹⁴.

The Soviet occupation (1940 – 1990) marked a drastic shift in the role of law enforcement, as the police became an instrument of state control, subordinated to the KGB and the Communist Party. During this period, the primary function of the police was to enforce ideological conformity and suppress dissent rather than protect civil liberties. This legacy left deep mistrust toward law enforcement among the Lithuanian population, a challenge that had to be addressed during the post-independence reforms.

With the restoration of independence in 1990, Lithuania initiated comprehensive reforms to rebuild its policing system. The “Law on Police Activity” was among the first legislative acts adopted to reestablish the police as a service-oriented institution. These reforms prioritized professionalization, transparency, and public accountability, aiming to restore public trust. The structure of the police was reorganized to include the Police Department under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, specialized institutions, regional police headquarters, and vocational training centers. The vocational training institutions, in particular, have been crucial in ensuring that police officers are well-equipped to handle the complexities of modern law enforcement.

¹¹³ Feldhūne, G., Kučs, A., & Skujeniece, V. (2004). *Cilvēktiesību rokasgrāmata tiesnešiem*. Rīga: Latvijas Universitāte.

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The Police Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs remains the central coordinating institution, overseeing 15 subordinate bodies, including 10 regional police departments and 5 specialized institutions. These specialized institutions include units focused on cybercrime, organized crime, and anti-terrorism, reflecting Lithuania's commitment to addressing contemporary security challenges¹¹⁵.

In addition to national reforms, Lithuania's integration into the European Union in 2004 significantly influenced its policing practices. As an EU member, Lithuania adopted European standards for law enforcement, including those related to human rights, data protection, and cross-border cooperation. The country actively participates in EU initiatives such as Europol and Schengen Information System operations, enhancing its ability to combat transnational crime.

The police also engage in international cooperation with neighboring countries, particularly through Baltic regional partnerships with Latvia and Estonia. This collaboration focuses on joint operations against organized crime, human trafficking, and terrorism, as well as sharing expertise and resources.

Lithuania has also embraced technological advancements in its law enforcement activities. The introduction of digital systems for crime mapping, predictive policing, and real-time data sharing has improved efficiency and transparency. Moreover, the development of e-policing platforms allows citizens to report incidents and access police services online, further strengthening public trust.

Despite these advancements, challenges remain. The integration of minority communities into the national security framework and addressing historical mistrust are ongoing priorities. Efforts to enhance diversity within the police force and promote cultural sensitivity are part of broader initiatives to build a more inclusive and equitable law enforcement system.

The future of Lithuania's policing system lies in its ability to balance tradition with innovation. By upholding democratic values, investing in advanced technologies, and fostering regional and international partnerships, the Lithuanian police continue to play a pivotal role in ensuring the safety and stability of the nation¹¹⁶.

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(2015). Noziedzīgu nodarījumu prevencija kā kriminālsoda mērķis. Valsts policijas darba efektivitātes vērtēšanas kritēriji. In *Tiesību efektivitāte postmodernā sabiedrībā: Latvijas Universitātes 73. zinātniskās konferences rakstu krājums* (pp. 185–191). Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds.

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The National Police of Ukraine is the central body of the executive power, which serves society by ensuring the protection of human rights and freedoms, combating crime, maintaining public order and public safety¹¹⁷.

The Constitution of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine “On the National Police” of 07.02.2015 form the basis of the activity of the Ukrainian police.

The key act of our state is the Constitution of Ukraine dated 28.06.1996 № 254k/96-BP, a single normative legal act of the highest legal force, which is the Basic Law of society and the state, regulates the most important social relations, contains norms of direct effect, has a special procedure for adoption, introduction amendments and additions to it and its protection, guarantee. The Constitution of Ukraine, as the main system-forming source of the constitutional law of Ukraine, has a number of characteristic features, namely:

- The Constitution, in its essence, is the Basic Law expressing the will of the Ukrainian people and state policy;
- The content of the Constitution has the highest legal force; thirdly, the norms of the Constitution are norms of direct effect;
- The Constitution is adopted and put into effect in accordance with the special procedure provided by law.

According to Article 27 of the Constitution of Ukraine, every person has an inalienable right to life. That is, no one can be arbitrarily deprived of life. The duty of the state is to protect human life. Every person has the right to protect his life and health and the life and health of others from unlawful encroachments. Article 28 states that every person has the right to respect his dignity. No one shall be subjected to torture or cruel, in human or degrading treatment or punishment. In Article 29, every person has the right to freedom and personal integrity¹¹⁸.

The National Police of Ukraine is the central body of the executive power, which serves society by ensuring the protection of human rights and freedoms, combating crime, maintaining public order and public safety¹¹⁹.

The modern challenges facing the National Police of Ukraine extend beyond traditional law enforcement responsibilities. As Ukraine adapts to dynamic social, political, and technological changes, its police force is increasingly tasked with addressing complex security issues. Cyber-crime, for instance, has emerged as a critical threat, prompting the creation of

¹¹⁷ About the National Police: Law dated 02.07.2015 No. 580-УІІІ. (2015). *Bulletin of the Verkhovna Rada of*

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¹¹⁹ About the National Police: Law dated 02.07.2015 No. 580-УІІІ. (2015). *Bulletin of the Verkhovna Rada of*

specialized cyber-crime units equipped with advanced digital forensics tools. These units collaborate with international organizations, including Europol, to counteract global cyber threats and ensure data security.

Another significant focus area is countering human trafficking, an issue exacerbated by regional instability and cross-border criminal networks. The National Police has collaborated with NGOs and international bodies to enhance investigative techniques, victim support services, and public awareness campaigns. These efforts underscore a broader commitment to human rights within Ukraine's law enforcement framework.

The ongoing war in Ukraine has also profoundly affected police operations. The National Police now plays a dual role, managing both traditional law enforcement tasks and responsibilities associated with wartime conditions. This includes coordinating the evacuation of civilians, maintaining order in occupied or recently liberated territories, and ensuring the safe delivery of humanitarian aid. The police have also established crisis response teams to address the psychological needs of displaced individuals and other vulnerable groups, demonstrating their adaptability in addressing the humanitarian consequences of the war.

Reforms within the National Police have prioritized professional development and ethical standards. Continuous training programs, often developed in partnership with international experts, focus on enhancing investigative skills, leadership qualities, and adherence to human rights norms. These initiatives aim to foster a culture of integrity and professionalism that aligns with European standards.

Looking ahead, the sustainability of these reforms will depend on continued international support and domestic political stability. Key areas for future development include the digitalization of police operations, strengthening mechanisms for public oversight, and expanding community-policing initiatives. By addressing these priorities, Ukraine's National Police can further solidify its role as a pillar of democratic governance and public safety.

Accordingly, Bezus Y. O. points out that the conditions established by the Latvian and Lithuanian police prevent the growth of corruption within the police environment. Immediately after the formation of their national police forces, the leadership in both Latvia and Lithuania abandoned the performance indicators that had been used in the Soviet-era "militia." These countries reached a well-founded conclusion that the existing system for evaluating the work of police bodies both as a whole and in individual units – was detrimental to the authority and effective functioning of the police. This system encouraged imitation of work and the manipulation of performance statistics, replacing genuine efforts with the pursuit of favorable numbers¹²⁰.

As of 2022, the heads of the police of Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have signed a letter of cooperation. It is about the exchange of experience and advanced methods of work in the field of ensuring public safety and order, protecting human rights and freedoms, combating crime, etc. The signing of the document took place today, August 23, during a working meeting of the leaders of the police departments of the four countries¹²¹.

In this way, the question of forming public trust in the police in the state based on the example of Lithuania and Latvia, as well as determining the criteria for the effectiveness of trust in the state in Ukraine, arises.

The most important issue of the police of Lithuania and Latvia is to ensure the rights and legitimate interests of citizens. During its existence, the psychology of police officers and the philosophy of the police service have changed significantly. The police have turned from a body that carries out punitive activities into a body that provides a kind of service to the population and society - law enforcement services. This contributed to a significant increase in the public's trust in their police and the inclusion of various forms of public participation in the maintenance of law and order in the state into the law enforcement mechanism. An important condition for the effective activity of the Lithuanian and Latvian police is the personnel policy related to the appointment of police officers on a competitive basis, the creation of appropriate conditions for the activities of police officers, appropriate material and technical support, social protection as one of the most important prerequisites for the effective work of the police, a significant reduction level of corruption in the police environment. The intra-system administrative activity of the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian police ensures the formation and functioning of the police itself, covers the relations between various links of the police management apparatus, its structural units and officials. The external administrative activity of the police is aimed at the performance of tasks and functions that determine the social purpose of the police, and is related to the protection of public order, public safety, and the fight against crimes¹²².

The scientist Bergius and the chamberlain von Justi viewed the functions of the police primarily as ensuring public order, security, and the welfare of the people. During the era of enlightened absolutism, police power – *ius polittiae* – was seen as a centralized and legally unrestricted authority of the state, intended to promote public welfare, maintain security and order, and improve people's living conditions. Using this “police power“ the absolute monarch

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sought to implement economic and socio-political programs, as well as to establish a stable social order¹²³.

Protection of the rights and freedoms of a person and a citizen is not just a separate function of police activity but a target goal, a general direction of activity, which should be embodied in ensuring the rights and freedoms of a person and a citizen, improving the content and nature of the guarantees of these rights. Police activity, as a public service, is one of the fundamental aspects of the functioning of public authority. Moreover, in the conditions of martial law, the Police play an important and decisive role as the only actor in society, together with the military, who has the legal right and even the duty to use violence to check and restore law and order¹²⁴.

The second chapter of this thesis examines the change in the effectiveness of monitoring police activities after the introduction of martial law due to the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine and the corresponding ways of establishing public trust and control of the police during and after the war.

The following questions are posed in this section:

- How can you determine the effectiveness of control over police activity?
- How can we ensure a balance between human rights and the needs of the country's security?

Possibilities and prospects of establishing trust in the police during and after the war.

2.1. Adapting police oversight mechanisms for effective functioning during war

In a legal democratic state, the activity of the police occupies a central place in the mechanism of ensuring the rights and freedoms of citizens in the legal field. Today's global democratic society needs a police force that embodies the highest professional standards and respects human rights and the law in all its actions and intentions. This is what helps protect and maintain public confidence in the police and the rule of law and contributes to public safety.

It is, therefore, imperative that the police are held accountable to citizens for any illegal or offensive behavior and that citizen complaints and complaints are effectively addressed and investigated¹²⁵.

Within the limits of their competence, police structures play an important role in ensuring public interest in resolving various situations and conflicts. At the same time, on the

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¹²⁵ 46, 31–42.

one hand, unlimited freedom of action of institutions is not allowed, and on the other hand, independence is considered one of the prerequisites for the effective functioning of police institutions¹²⁶.

Police activity is based on the concept of public good and was initially perceived from a philosophical and historical point of view. M. M. Moskalenko in defines police activity as a specific form of implementation of the police function of the state, that is, the purposeful influence of relevant state institutions on social relations¹²⁷.

M. M. Pendyura notes that under police activity, one must understand state, legitimate, socially useful activity, which consists in the influence (legal and non-legal (organizational)) on the behaviour of a person or a group of people on the part of a competent official authorized by the state, through protection and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, termination or consideration of the violated right, its detection or investigation with mandatory observance of the procedures established by law, restoration of the violated right, and the application of state coercion to violators in a legal manner¹²⁸. State coercion and armed forces are the basis of the definition of police activity, which is provided according to O. S. Pronevich¹²⁹.

Y. M. Kogut expresses the opinion that police activity is a type of law enforcement activity of state-authorized subjects of public administration, which is aimed at establishing and ensuring law and order, with the possibility of applying measures of administrative coercion in cases provided for by law. At the same time, he divides police activity into general (administrative), which includes preventive and protective activities of authorized subjects, and special (operational, investigative and criminal procedural activities)¹³⁰ (Table 1):

Table 1. Comparative Analysis of the Signs of Police Activity According to O. F. Kobzar and O. S. Pronevich

O. F. Kobzar’s signs of Police Activity	O. S. Pronevich’s signs of Police Activity
1. The police act as a service providing a number of services to the population.	1. Belonging to types of social activity.
2. Close relationship with the public.	2. Implementation in the form of a conscious and purposeful influence of the subject on the object, without subordination relations.

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3. Increasing the social mission of police structures, primarily in ‘serving the population’.	3. The fundamental meaning of the ‘protection’ category, which involves protecting society fm threats (dangers).
4. Focus on ensuring the implementation and protection of basic human and citizen rights and freedoms.	4. Supervisory and coercive orientation, enabling the use of specific methods (means) of administrative supervision and coercion.
5. Formal determination and inadmissibility of violation of legal procedures.	--

Source: compiled by the author

I. M. Kovalev and V. A. Yevtushok define police administrative supervision as a systematic control over compliance with the legislation of Ukraine in the fields of economy, public administration and public life and the application of coercive measures to perpetrators with the aim of stopping crimes and bringing them to justice. The features of administrative control of the police are determined as regularity, legality, officialdom and propaganda¹³¹.

At the same time, a logical question arises about the possibility of abuse of the functions of control and coercion by the police.

Therefore, in our opinion, the question of ensuring state control and supervision by the public arises.

The State Police of the Republic of Latvia, functioning under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, is the primary law enforcement agency responsible for maintaining public safety, combating crime, and ensuring the protection of citizens' rights and freedoms¹³². Established under the Law on the Police, the State Police is a centralized body tasked with addressing both criminal activities and broader societal threats. This legislative framework provides a detailed structure for police operations, focusing on transparency, accountability, and efficiency.

The State Police is organized into multiple levels, including central and regional departments, allowing for both strategic oversight and localized implementation of public safety measures. At the central level, specialized units such as the Criminal Police Department and the Public Order Police Department address specific aspects of law enforcement. Regional police units are tasked with managing localized issues, ensuring that police operations are responsive to community needs.

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, 81(2), 72–78. <https://doi.org/10.32631/pb.2021.2.09>
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The Latvian police system emphasizes coordination between different levels of government and sectors. *For example*, the Municipal Police operates alongside the State Police to address local-level security concerns, particularly in urban areas like Riga. These municipal units focus on issues such as traffic management, community engagement, and minor public order offenses, allowing the State Police to concentrate on more complex criminal cases.

One of the cornerstones of Latvia's law enforcement strategy is combating corruption. The Bureau for Prevention and Combating Corruption (KNAB) serves as Latvia's leading anti-corruption body, working in tandem with the State Police to prevent, investigate, and prosecute corruption-related offenses. KNAB operates independently of the State Police, which ensures that its activities remain impartial and free from undue influence. Educational initiatives and public awareness campaigns are integral to KNAB's efforts, fostering a culture of integrity across Latvian society¹³³.

Over the years, Latvia has undertaken significant reforms to modernize its police force. Amendments to the Law on the Police have focused on enhancing police professionalism, improving training standards, and aligning law enforcement practices with European Union norms. One notable aspect of these reforms is the increased emphasis on community-oriented policing, which seeks to build trust between the police and the public. This approach encourages active citizen participation in maintaining public safety and provides mechanisms for feedback on police activities.

The introduction of digital tools has also transformed police operations in Latvia. Real-time data analysis systems and electronic crime reporting platforms have streamlined workflows and improved responsiveness. These technologies are particularly valuable in addressing modern challenges such as cybercrime and transnational organized crime.

Despite its successes, the Latvian police face several challenges. The integration of minority communities, including the Russian-speaking population, remains an ongoing issue. Building trust with these communities requires sustained effort and targeted programs, including cultural sensitivity training for police officers. Additionally, ensuring adequate funding for police operations and infrastructure is a persistent concern, particularly in rural areas where resources are often limited.

At the same time, Latvia's participation in international law enforcement networks provides opportunities for growth and innovation. Collaborative efforts with Europol, Interpol, and neighboring Baltic states have strengthened Latvia's ability to address cross-border crime, human trafficking, and cyber threats. These partnerships also facilitate the exchange of best

practices and advanced training programs, contributing to the professional development of Latvian police officers.

Public trust is a critical component of effective policing, and the Latvian police have implemented several initiatives to strengthen their relationship with society. Community policing programs, which emphasize collaboration between law enforcement and residents, are at the forefront of these efforts. Educational campaigns in schools and community centers aim to raise awareness about public safety issues and encourage mutual cooperation.

The State Police also prioritize transparency in their operations. Regular public reporting on crime statistics, police activities, and internal investigations ensures accountability and fosters confidence in law enforcement institutions. The use of body cameras and other recording devices further enhances this transparency, providing objective documentation of police interactions with the public.

Looking ahead, the Latvian police are focused on further enhancing their operational capabilities and public engagement strategies. Key priorities include expanding the use of artificial intelligence and predictive analytics to combat emerging threats, such as cybercrime and terrorism. Additionally, continued investment in officer training and infrastructure will be essential to maintaining high standards of professionalism and efficiency.

International cooperation will remain a cornerstone of Latvia's law enforcement strategy. By leveraging partnerships with EU institutions and neighboring countries, the Latvian police can continue to adapt to the complex security challenges of the modern era while upholding their commitment to protecting the rights and freedoms of all citizens.

The activities of the Lithuanian Police are governed by the Law on Police Activities (2000, revised in 2016), the Internal Service Regulations (2003, revised in 2015) and other laws. The police system consists of the Police Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, headed by the Commissioner General, and other police agencies (they may be established on a regional or non-regional basis)¹³⁴.

The Police Administration was established by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. The units of the administration cooperate with foreign countries and public organizations, prepare joint programs, exchange delegations, analyze and forecast the criminal situation, exchange practical experience, study trends, conditions and causes of crime growth, ensure the protection of public order, and implement preventive programs.

In the Police Administration, an office can be established as a structural unit consisting of at least two councils. The Police Administration consists of departments (maintenance,

central internal audit, document management, information support, communications, immigration, international cooperation, law, public procurement), councils (accounting, finance and investment, immunity, organizational development and planning, force management, personnel management, police information, activity analysis and control, community policing, human resources)¹³⁵.

The principles of police activity are guiding ideas that are reflected in national legislation taking into account international standards, as stated in the recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to the members of the Council of Europe State “European Code of Police Ethics”, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on September 19, 2001 at the 765th meeting of deputy ministers, according to which the goals of the police are defined as follows: maintaining public order, ensuring law and order in society; protection and observance of basic human rights and freedoms, enshrined, in particular, in the European Convention on Human Rights. Preventing and fighting crime is important, as well as providing assistance and services to the population.

The ongoing integration processes in Lithuania contribute to active socio-economic and political changes, including in the sphere of state border protection. The problem of methods of protecting the internal borders of the European Union is important. With the application of the provisions of the Schengen acquis, the internal security of the state can not be only a national problem it must be solved at the level of the European Union. After the reduction of security, the control of internal borders should be strengthened with the help of effective cooperation measures.

It is important from the experience of Lithuania and Latvia that the European police, performing the specified functions, use the newest model of public order protection organization called “community policing”, which means the rejection of the police as a punitive body and the transition to the police as an organization that provides a kind of law enforcement services to the population. The main result of the implementation of this model is a change in the philosophy of the police officer’s personality and his activities.

In general, conditions have been created to minimize state intervention, including that of the police, in society’s life. The reorientation of its activities, combining purely administrative functions with the provision of high-quality administrative (management) services, has been achieved and favorably received and supported by society.

¹³⁵ Lietuvos policija. (n.d.). *Lietuvos policija*. <https://www.vle.lt/straipsnis/lietuvos-policija/>

In the process of reforming the internal affairs bodies of Ukraine, it is necessary to improve, specify and adjust certain provisions of the current Law of Ukraine “On the National Police”, to clearly define the competence of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and the National Police of Ukraine. At the stage of reform, it is necessary to clearly define the functions of individual structural divisions of the police, improve their professional activities, improve material and technical support, approach the population, which will contribute to a change in the philosophy of police services and the personality of a police officer¹³⁶.

Several circumstances determine the importance of control in the activities of the police: *firstly*, the activity of the police includes the widest infrastructure for ensuring public safety (protection of human rights and freedoms, maintenance of public order, prevention of various crimes), *secondly*, police bodies and officials carry out law enforcement activities within the framework of the exercise of power, *thirdly*, police bodies and officials have broad powers to apply measures of administrative influence to citizens¹³⁷.

Ensuring public order and security is one of the most important tasks of law enforcement agencies. Although municipal institutions play an important role in providing it (currently, municipal police is one of the most important partners of the state police in performing police functions), in practice many problems can be observed. State and municipal police bodies often do not have sufficient material, technical and human resources to ensure public order during mass events (including high-risk events)¹³⁸.

Although there is some degree of convergence between the unification and supervision models, sovereignty and tradition remain dominant factors in the structure of police supervision mechanisms. Historical, cultural and national police structures require a tailored approach in countries with transitional economies. Oversight should also extend to international police agencies and bodies such as Interpol and Europol and international law enforcement databases. However, in wartime, military and civilian authorities (police and courts of general jurisdiction) must cooperate in the arrest, detention and transfer of persons under military or civilian jurisdiction. They must also coordinate their actions on legal issues.

However, mutual distrust, which in some cases characterizes the relationship between the military and civilian systems.

In our opinion, international police control institutions are gaining great importance.

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¹³⁷ (2016) Ruska, B. (2005). *Police in States: control and supervision of the police in (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia)*; 7

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¹³⁸ Treļš, Ē. (2023). Improving policing in a multicultural society in the Republic of Latvia: Theoretical legal

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Europol, an EU agency with its legal personality based in The Hague, makes a significant contribution to cooperation between the police and law enforcement agencies of the EU Member States. Europol aims to support and strengthen the work of the Member States' competent authorities and their cooperation. It concerns the prevention and combating of serious crime, terrorism and forms of crime affecting two or more Member States affecting the interests of the Union. To this end, Europol stores and analyzes information from Member States and thus facilitates the exchange of information between them. The data comparison shows the cross-references of investigations carried out in individual Member States. Through so-called analytical projects, Europol primarily explores the links between criminal offenses and provides member states with access to operational, strategic and thematic analysis. In addition, Europol also supports Member States in other areas of police cooperation, including participation in joint investigation teams, coordination of joint action days, and training and criminal science research. Thanks to the Europol Regulation, which entered into force on 1 May 2017, Europol's qualifications and competences have been further strengthened, taking into account improved data protection¹³⁹.

In the Treaty on European Union context, Europol's mandate encompasses all serious forms of international crime, including international terrorism. This article examines the organization of Europol's counter-terrorism operations within the framework of the history and dynamics of international police cooperation. More specifically, based on the theory of the bureaucratization of police activity, Europol is seen as an example of the dual forces at play: political control exercised through the regulatory bodies of the European Union on the one hand, and the institutional autonomy and professional expertise of law enforcement authorities on the other¹⁴⁰.

The international police organization Interpol unites police officers of 190 countries in a joint network for cooperation in international crime cases. Since 1923, Interpol has steadily expanded its membership and broadened its mandate in international police tasks. The events of September 11 and the increased awareness of the problem of international crime and the urgency of responding to it led to significant changes in the structure and activities of Interpol and expanded the scope of its activities¹⁴¹.

Then, at the regional level, there are two or three-party Agreements in security and police activities. Police cooperation to fight criminal offenses is also needed outside the EU in an international context¹⁴². *For example*, the Treaty of Prüm is an international treaty originally

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¹⁴²23(3), 336–359. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07418820600869111>

concluded outside the European legal field. On August 26, 2008, the Prüm decision of the Council of the EU entered into force. As a result, the essential content of the Treaty of Prüm was transferred to the legal framework of the EU¹⁴³.

Accordingly, NATO is directly involved in solving one of the most important tasks for Ukrainian society – the reform of Ukraine.

In the long term, deepened non-military cooperation with NATO will bring Ukraine closer to the Alliance's standards¹⁴⁴.

Another important factor in police supervision is the implementation of international legislation in this area.

International treaties are a necessary element of the world's legal order. According to the Law of Ukraine "On International Treaties of Ukraine" dated June 29, 2004, already in Article 2 of the mentioned act of legislation, an international treaty of Ukraine is concluded in writing with a foreign state or another subject of international law, which is governed by international law, regardless of moreover, the contract is contained in one or more inter connected documents, and regardless of its specific name (contract, agreement, convention, pact, protocol, etc.). The role and importance of such contracts are steadily growing in the Ukrainian police sphere of activity. In particular, in the system of international relations, international treaties perform a number of important legal functions, primarily the regulation of international relations and the formation of their legal basis. They also contribute to the stability of the international legal order, the maintenance of international peace and security, and the development of international cooperation on the basis of equality and partnership¹⁴⁵.

Based on various criteria, the following types of international agreements in the field of police activity can be distinguished. According to the spatial scope of international agreements can be:

- universal (general) (*for example*, the UN Convention on Combating Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of December 20, 1988);
- regional (Inter-American Convention on Extradition dated February 25, 1981);
- local ones (the EU Convention on Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters dated May 29, 2000, or the Agreement on Cooperation of States – Participants of the Commonwealth of Independent States in the Fight against Crimes in the Field of Computer Information dated June 1, 2001);

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

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¹⁴⁵ Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. (2004). *On international treaties of Ukraine: Law of Ukraine dated 29.06.2004 No. 1906-IV. Information of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine*, (50), Art. 540.

- private (Agreement on cooperation in the field of crime prevention and law enforcement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the State of Israel dated June 16, 1994) in 1992, according to Resolution No. 220 adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, Ukraine became a member of Interpol.

According to the terms of validity, international agreements can be divided into fixed-term and open-ended agreements.

One of the main documents in Europe that protects human rights is the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10, 1948, the “European Convention on Human Rights” of 1950, the Law “On Human Rights” of 1998, and others.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 is one of the main international legal acts that form the basis of police activity.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration, which is the first and universal expression of the inalienable rights enjoyed by all human beings. It is proclaimed on the basis of recognition of the dignity of all people and the equality of their rights, which is a necessary condition for freedom, justice and peace in the whole world.

The Declaration declares that human rights and freedoms cannot be limited by gender, race, skin-color, language, religion, political beliefs, national or social origin, or property status. Among the declared rights, the most important are equality of all before the law, the presumption of innocence, inviolability of the person, and the inadmissibility of illegal interference in personal and family life, housing, honor, and reputation. The provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights became the legal basis for the standards adopted by the Council of Europe and for the improvement of national legal systems that ensure consistent and consistent observance of human rights¹⁴⁶.

The 1950 Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Protocols is a binding international legal treaty that introduced a system of supranational control over the observance of human rights at the domestic level. The rights and freedoms provided for by the Convention cover the most important aspects of a person’s life and have a civil, political, economic and social orientation. The main ones are the right to life, liberty, personal integrity, free movement, freedom of thought, conscience, religion, expression of views, peaceful assembly and association, the right to create a family, respect for personal and family life, the right to a fair trial consideration, peaceful possession of property, prohibition of discrimination, torture, slavery and forced labor, in admissibility of punishment without law.

At the same time, the Convention establishes that in order to protect the interests of the state, national security, economic well-being, health and morals of society, the rights and freedoms of other people or to prevent crimes or riots, the participating countries may limit the human rights proclaimed by the Convention.

However, such a right of states is also not absolute, and under no circumstances can the state's obligations to respect a person's right to life, obligations regarding the prohibition of torture, slavery, non-retroactivity of the law be violated¹⁴⁷.

Police activity, like any other activity, must be regulated by relevant international treaties and legal acts; that is, the procedure and specifics of its implementation must be clearly defined at the legislative level¹⁴⁸.

The Law of Ukraine, "On the National Police", dated July 2, 2015, defines that the activities of the police are directed and coordinated by the Council of Ministers of Ukraine through the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. The main powers of the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in relations with the police are ensuring the formation of state policy in the sphere of ensuring public safety and order, protection and protection of human rights and freedoms, and interests of society and the state. Accordingly, also the provision of police services and control over their performance by the police; ensuring organizational and legal regulation of police activities, approval of draft laws developed by the police and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and laws of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on police activities and their submission to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine for consideration; approval of strategic activity programs, determination of priority areas of police activity, methods of performing the tasks assigned to it, approval of its work plans; ensuring the implementation of international agreements of Ukraine that belong to the sphere of police activity; ensuring the maintenance and use of databases (banks), determining the order of information exchange between the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, the police and other central bodies of executive power, the activities of which are directed and coordinated by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine through the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, etc.¹⁴⁹

This Law defines the legal principles of police activity, the status of police officers¹⁵⁰ (Table 2):

Table 2. Principles of Civil Service According to the Law of Ukraine
"On Civil Service" (December 10, 2015, No. 889-VIII)

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¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

Since the service in the police is equal to the civil service, it is necessary to indicate the principles of the civil service enshrined in the Law of Ukraine “On Civil Service” dated December 10, 2015 No. 889-VIII:	- rule of law;
	- legality;
	- professionalism;
	- patriotism;
	- integrity;
	- efficiency;
	- ensuring equal access to public service;
	- political impartiality;
	- transparency;
	- stability ¹⁵¹ .

Source: compiled by the author

Article 20 of the Law of Ukraine “On the National Police” has undergone changes concerning the wearing of a special badge (before the changes were made, it was a breast badge).

As a general rule, a police officer performing official duties in civilian clothes is required to carry a special badge. However, the range of cases in which wearing a token is not mandatory has been expanded: when it prevents the implementation of operational and investigative measures, covert investigative (detective) actions, the performance of secret tasks, the implementation of measures to ensure the safety of participants in criminal proceedings, special measures to ensure the safety of court employees and law enforcement agencies and their close relatives, or during the exercise of powers during martial law.

Accordingly, during the period of martial law, a police officer performing official duties in civilian clothes is not required to carry a special badge.

In addition, during martial law on the territory of Ukraine, it is not mandatory to place identification numbers or special tokens on individual protective equipment of police officers in the event that they perform their duties using such equipment.

The largest number of changes were added to Article 23 of the Law of Ukraine “On the National Police”, as a result, the range of powers of police officers has significantly expanded (Table 3):

Table 3. New Powers Added to Article 23 of the Law of Ukraine “On the National Police”

New powers:	- make emergency calls using the abbreviated telephone number 102;
	- upon written request, in accordance with the procedure established by law, to receive free of charge from state bodies and territorial communities, state-owned legal entities, information necessary for the performance of the powers and tasks of the police, including regarding prisoners of war, in the form and in the form specified in the request. Subjects to whom such a

	request is addressed are obliged within 3 days, or in case of impossibility - within 10 days, to provide an answer to the request or to notify the reasons that prevent such an answer;
	- escort persons detained on suspicion of committing a criminal offense, taken into custody, accused or sentenced to imprisonment, as well as guard them in the courtroom. The list of institutions to which escorting is carried out is determined by the Ministry of Internal Affairs;
	- in the cases provided for by law, to detain persons detained for committing criminal or administrative offenses in temporary detention centers; persons subject to preventive detention; persons subject to administrative arrest; accused and convicted;
	- within the scope of competence to carry out demining of an operational nature (detection, neutralization and destruction of explosive objects,
	regarding which there are grounds to believe that they are objects, tools or means of committing administrative or criminal offenses);
	- organizing the work of granting, canceling and confirming the admission of police officers to carry out special explosive actions;
	- conducting technical and forensic inspection of the scene of the event, including those related to fires and special explosive actions based on the facts of explosions, receiving reports on the discovery of explosive objects, the threat of explosion;
	- to cooperate with Europol and act as the National Contact Point between the competent authorities of Ukraine and Europol;
	- to organize the interaction of law enforcement agencies and other state bodies of Ukraine with Interpol and Europol, as well as competent bodies of other states on issues related to the sphere of activity of Interpol and Europol;
	- collect biometric data of persons;
	- carry out administrative supervision.

Source: compiled by the author

In addition, it is allowed to refuse to involve the police in carrying out executive actions on the grounds of involving personnel of the territorial police body to stop a group violation of public safety and order or mass riots during martial law, as well as overcoming the consequences of emergency situations, dangerous events, including accident, epidemic¹⁵².

Instructions on the procedure for sending representatives of the National Central Bureau of Interpol to the International Criminal Police Organization - Interpol, approved by order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine dated November 29, 2018, No. 968. This legislative act defines the legal basis for the procedure for sending employees of the National Police of

Ukraine to the General Secretariat International criminal police organization Interpol. The approval of the specified instruction on the procedure for sending representatives of the National Central Bureau of Interpol to the International Criminal Police Organization – Interpol is related to the fulfilment of the task – of establishing coordination of the interaction of law enforcement agencies of Ukraine with the competent authorities of foreign countries on issues that belong to the competence of the Interpol MOCP.

Instructions on the organization of service as part of international operations to maintain peace and security by national personnel from the number of police officers and military personnel of the National Guard of Ukraine, approved by the order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine dated July 31, 2019 No. 639¹⁵³.

The procedure for sending liaison officers to the European Police Office, approved by the order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine dated October 29, 2019 No. 905 and some others.

That is, it can be stated that legal police activity is carried out with the help of national and international legal acts, as well as departmental contracts, instructions and agreements. However, despite numerous international legal documents, in some places certain issues of international cooperation of bodies and units of the National Police of Ukraine remain unsettled at the national level, which currently needs improvement.

Police bodies acting on behalf of society may use coercive measures during the implementation of their human rights functions. However, police activity should not be limited exclusively to the use of force, as the police can also use other means of influence. However, the use of coercion is the characteristic feature that distinguishes police activity from other types of activities that may be carried out by other state authorities. In addition, police activity can be presented as a type of state activity aimed at protecting public order and ensuring public security, both domestically and outside the state, relying on international treaties.

For the first time at the international level, attention was drawn to the activities and behavior of police officers after the publication of the “Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials” adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979, which stated that law enforcement officials “must perform their duties in accordance with the law, to serve society and protect any person from wrong doing in accordance with the high level of responsibility that is necessary for their profession.” At the same time, it is necessary to “respect and protect human dignity and support and protect human rights in relation to all persons” during the performance of their functions¹⁵⁴.

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Therefore, with the adoption in 1979 by the Assembly of the Council of Europe of the “Declaration on the Police”, the legal status and basic principles of police work were established. The corresponding Codes of Ethics have become unique tools for modeling the activities and behavior of employees.

Therefore, the Declaration on the Police established key provisions not only regarding the external and internal functions of the police but also concerning the internal labor sphere, which remains relevant for modern police units.

The fundamental principles of the use of force and firearms by law enforcement officials adopted in 1990 determine the important points of the organization of domestic regulation of the use of force and firearms, as well as requirements for the legality of this type of activity, in particular in the context of the work of the security police, inclusive. Thus, the general provisions state that governments and law enforcement agencies must adopt and implement rules and regulations on the use of force and firearms against individuals by law enforcement officers. When developing such norms and rules, the Government and law enforcement agencies must constantly keep in mind ethical issues related to the use of force and firearms. Governments and law enforcement agencies should develop as wide a range of tools as possible and equip law enforcement officials with different types of weapons and equipment that would differentiate between the use of force and firearms¹⁵⁵.

The European Code of Police Ethics was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 19 September 2001. The aim of developing and adopting the Code was to define comprehensive European guidelines in the field of the common objectives, functions and responsibilities of the police to ensure security and respect for human rights in democratic societies governed by the rule of law. In addition, the Code contains provisions on the selection and training of police personnel. It should be noted that police officers, regardless of their level, should be recruited on the basis of their professional competence and experience, which should be oriented towards the objectives of the police. Recruitment procedures should be based on objective and non-discriminatory criteria, and recruitment should be carried out after the necessary verification of applications. In addition, there should be a policy of recruiting men and women from different walks of life, including ethnic minorities, as the ultimate goal is to have a police force that reflects the society it serves.

Article 59 of the European Code of Police Ethics, Recommendation Rec (2001)10 confirms that: “The police are accountable to the state, citizens and their representatives. They are subject to effective external control”. That is, in an open democratic society, the control of

the police by the state should be supplemented by the accountability of the police to society, that is, to citizens and their representatives, with the help of a mechanism of external control¹⁵⁶.

Police accountability means that police actions can be scrutinized by various oversight bodies. The powers of democratically established police forces are scrutinized by the public through certain procedures. Procedural justice is considered one of the most important basic elements in ensuring the legitimacy of the police. Police organizations are usually overseen by several oversight mechanisms, which may include an independent police watchdog with formal powers to investigate complaints about the police, regularly publishing their findings.

So, with the adoption in 1979 by the Assembly of the Council of Europe of the “Declaration on the Police”, the legal status and basic principles of police work were established. The relevant Codes of Ethics have become unique tools for modeling the activities and behavior of police officers.

Another document that should be highlighted is “Community Policing”, where the police and the community jointly solve pressing issues at the local level.

For example, the police establish a partnership between the police and law-abiding members of the community, with the help of non-enforcement measures, adopt a policy and plan for relations with the community, create programs of information and explanatory work and inform the public, involve the community in identifying problems and concerns, and others.

The maintenance of public order and the fight against crime are clearly among the main goals of global law enforcement, and they are mainly responsible for the country’s police services. To fulfil this role effectively, the police must understand why people obey the law and cooperate with law enforcement. In order for the policy to fight crime to be successful, it must correspond to the morality and nationality of the people¹⁵⁷.

That is, public control over police activity is becoming important. In our opinion, a collision may occur here during hostilities in the country.

Studies conducted in the USA have shown that the effectiveness of preventive car patrols, despite the significant expenditure of resources and time, have become ineffective from the point of view of fighting crime. Research from the 1970s showed that even rapid response to citizen appeals had little effect on crime prevention or apprehension and that alternative approaches should be sought to increase public confidence¹⁵⁸.

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An analysis of the state of crime among police officers, a number of shortcomings in the system of crime prevention by police personnel, and an unacceptably low level of public trust in law enforcement officers demonstrate a need, the solution of which requires significant functional changes in the activities of internal affairs bodies.

The issue of reforming the system of internal affairs bodies is not only urgent but also vitally necessary in the context of the country's social, political, and economic crisis. The traditionally wary attitude of the Ukrainian population toward law enforcement agencies is historically rooted and can only be changed through a radical transformation of the police—from an instrument of state power enforcement to an institution that provides service and assistance to citizens, supported by an appropriate regulatory and legal framework¹⁵⁹.

The implementation of international standards of work of internal affairs bodies also requires radical reformation of the financial and material support of the police, their employees, as well as the bodies that control the observance of legality in the activities of law enforcement agencies. The successful implementation of world standards in Ukraine is impossible without rebuilding relations with the population and strengthening citizens' trust.

2.2. Balancing security needs with upholding fundamental citizen rights

Maintaining a balance between security needs and respect for the fundamental rights of citizens is an important and difficult task, especially in times of crisis, war or other emergency situations. Ensuring the safety of the population is always a priority for the state, but it is important that this safety does not violate the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. In democratic societies, this balance forms the basis of trust in state institutions, especially law enforcement agencies. In general, security measures must be proportionate to the threat. This means that restrictions on rights must be minimal and justified only in cases where it is truly necessary to prevent serious threats.

The law must clearly define any restrictions on citizens' rights. In a state of emergency or martial law, there must be clear systems and mechanisms to monitor the actions of law enforcement agencies to prevent abuse and protect citizens from arbitrariness.

Compliance with the rights of citizens must be constantly checked in court. Citizens should be able to challenge the actions of law enforcement agencies or the state if they believe their rights have been violated. In this context, the independence of the judiciary is a key element.

It is important for the state to ensure maximum transparency in security measures. This includes informing the public about the measures taken and explaining their necessity. Lack of information or lack of transparency in decisions can lead to a lack of trust among citizens.

Under all circumstances, even in times of war or emergency, some rights remain inviolable. For example, the right to life, the prohibition of torture and the right to a fair trial cannot be restricted in any way.

The active involvement of civil society in resolving security issues can help the state take into account the rights and needs of citizens. Consultations with human rights organizations, monitoring of compliance with human rights and public discussion of security measures contribute to a balanced approach.

It is important that police, military and other law enforcement officers are well trained in the principles of human rights protection. This will help reduce the risk of their rights being violated when they perform their duties in difficult or harsh conditions. The security needs and rights of citizens may change depending on the situation. It is therefore important that legislation and policy are flexible. After the threat has passed, the state must quickly restore the normal legal regime and remove the restrictions that apply in emergency situations.

Countering terrorism or other threats to national security often involves measures that may limit privacy, freedom of movement, or freedom of expression. It is important that these measures are temporary and do not become a permanent practice.

With the development of technology, the state has more opportunities to monitor and collect information. This may violate the right to privacy. Therefore, it is necessary to clearly regulate how and when tracking technologies are used.

At the same time, in times of war, restrictions on rights can be particularly severe. For example, the imposition of martial law may involve restrictions on freedom of movement, expression or assembly. However, even in such conditions, it is important that institutions work according to international standards and do not exceed the necessary limits.

To ensure a balance between security and the observance of the fundamental rights of citizens, constant attention and a responsible approach on the part of the state is necessary. Maintaining this balance is the basis for maintaining trust in state institutions, which is especially important during crises and emergencies. Achieving this balance depends on transparency, accountability, respect for human rights and active participation in society¹⁶⁰.

Building and maintaining public trust in the police is a strategic process that requires community engagement, reform advocacy and participation.

Establishing universally binding rules and standards that define the limits of acceptable behavior for each person in order to ensure peace and security in society has been and remains one of the most important aspects of research conducted by scholars and lawyers. One of the most important manifestations of the distinctive features of the effectiveness of law in society is the appropriate legal system that regulates social relations. Police activity is one of the basic categories that represent those components that aim to implement the system. Among the structural elements of the legal system, which regulate the rules of human behavior, legal regulation has an important place. The problem of police is how to manage police officers and their departments to protect individual freedoms and reduce the social costs of police work while allowing them to do what is necessary to achieve the goals of the police: reduce fear, promote civil order, and pursue criminal justice¹⁶¹.

On the one hand, the police cannot prevent crime and perform their functions without the help of the public, and increased communication between the police and the public causes a potential increase in the level of satisfaction of citizens with their work¹⁶². On the other hand, the need for constant communication with the public may have a negative impact on the direct performance of police officers' duties.

Accordingly, the question arises about the need for public supervision and control over police activities. Social control over police activity is a multifaceted and complex concept, which is considered by representatives of philosophy, sociology, political science, economics and law from different angles as a process of resolving the contradiction between the real state of social phenomena and a universally binding norm, as an integral attribute functioning of social systems, as a mandatory sign of power, as one of the main functions of management, as one of the most important means of crime prevention, strengthening public order¹⁶³. Improving the mechanism of state administration in the direction of its greater democratization leads to a change in the vector of control: if the bearer of sovereignty and the source of power is the people, then their control over the state should not be considered as control from below, but as control from above. O. F. Kobzar points out that the forms of organization of public order protection by national police systems of foreign countries are determined by the historical, economic, political and other features of each specific country. In a number of countries, crime-fighting

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functions are performed not by one but by several police units subordinated to both central state services and local self-government bodies and, in some cases, also to private police units¹⁶⁴.

According to the above, we can state that all democratic states, through reforms and improvements, constantly raise the level of the police, in accordance with the requirements of the population of each state separately and the states as a whole.

The value of the police lies in its focus on the protection of individuals and citizens, as safeguarding human rights and freedoms is a fundamental duty of the state. The individual, along with their honor, dignity, and safety, is considered the highest value. Moreover, as the police serve as the primary link in protecting people in all forms and situations, the importance of police work is indisputable and remains a priority for every state. Given that police activity influences society, it can be regarded as a state-managed public service, operating on the basis of legality, aimed at maintaining public order and law, and incorporating elements of coercion.

For most European countries and Ukraine as a whole, police activity is based on principles. The list of principles differs in each country, depending on the political situation. In general, we can highlight the following: the rule of law, respect for human rights and freedoms, accountability and transparency in work, legality, continuity, and interaction with the population and local citizens on the basis of partnership. According to this, the activities of the police are aimed at the protection of the individual and society, as well as the detection and disclosure of crimes, sometimes with elements of coercion. Experience shows that the actions of the police are recognized as legitimate and do not raise questions among the population if the police explain and prove that they used violence in order to ensure the safety of citizens. Reasonableness and comprehensibility of the actions of the police officers means compliance with the motives for taking actions within the limits of the granted powers with the requirements of the current legislation and public proof of these motives to a specific citizen or the public¹⁶⁵.

The Law of Ukraine “On the National Police” was supplemented by Art. 90-1, according to which public control over police activities is not carried out during martial law. That is, during martial law, there cannot be an annual report on police activities, adoption of a resolution of no confidence in police leaders, meetings with local self-government bodies and the population, and involvement of the public in consideration of complaints about the actions or inaction of police officers¹⁶⁶.

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¹⁶⁵<https://er.dduvs.in.ua/bitstream/123456789/433/1/Монографія%20Кобзаря%20О.Ф.%20ПОЛІЦЕЙСЬКА%20ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ%20В%20УКРАЇНІ.pdf>

, 104–110. <https://doi.org/10.23939/law2019.24.104>

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Regarding the analysis of European principles, it should be noted that it started in the 50s and continues into the 20th century. The principles of law in the legal systems of European countries developed under the influence of the integration processes that took place within the framework of the European Communities, and later the European Union, created on their basis. The modern practice of determining the principles of police activity in the member states of the European Union is characterized by the normative legal support of police activity, where the principles of such activity are fixed in the main legislative acts regulating police activity.

All these laws are intended to ensure general and effective recognition and observance of the rights proclaimed therein, to protect people from a number of abuses by state authorities, in the event that human rights have been violated by the police, the immigration service, the National Health Service, the prison service, army or any other government body.

Accordingly, during martial law, Ukraine imposed a number of restrictions, in particular on freedom of movement, freedom of speech, and freedom of assembly, and it also tightened control over the mass media. These measures are necessary to prevent enemy propaganda, coordinate enemy forces and protect against possible sabotage, but they must be proportionate and justified. In conclusion, it can be stated that achieving a balance between security and the observance of the rights of citizens in war-torn Ukraine is a difficult task, but it is important to maintain transparency, accountability and respect for human rights at all levels. Along with the protection of national security, it is necessary to minimize restrictions on rights and freedoms as much as possible, as well as support for affected categories of the population. In times of war, it is important that authorities respect the principles of proportionality and preserve the legal order and institutions that protect the rights of citizens, even in emergency situations.

2.3. Building and maintaining public trust in the police during and after war

Building and maintaining public trust in the police during and after the conflict is essential to restoring order and ensuring national security. This is a process that requires a comprehensive approach from state authorities and civil society. Trust in the police is based on its transparent and direct actions, and during and after war, these requirements are even greater.

The modern stage in the mechanism of regulation of police activity necessitates the creation of an effective state policy in this area. One of the most important prerequisites for the effectiveness of the mechanism of legal regulation of police activity is the guarantee of comprehensive and coordinated legal support of the police administration, namely the development of an appropriate regulatory and legal framework. It is at the level of normative legal acts and international treaties that the priority areas of the police regulation mechanism

should be created, the circle of subjects responsible for its implementation should be determined, the ways of interaction of police bodies and units should be established, problematic issues related to police activities should be outlined, and proposed ways of solving them.

The level of public trust in such a social institution as the police is an important indicator of the legality and effectiveness of law enforcement agencies. Today, its research is of particular importance from the point of view of reforming society. The main prerequisite for the partnership between the police and the public is a rapid increase in the level of public participation in the process of ensuring security and public order¹⁶⁷.

Confidence in the police is divided into:

- confidence in its competence (*for example*, regarding catching and deterring offenders and quick response to emergency situations);
- belief in their procedural justice (use of their power in a fair way);
- confidence in the fairness of distribution (equal treatment of all groups in society).

Israel, the Russian Federation, and Bulgaria have the least positive ratings of how the police treat people, while Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Spain have the most positive ratings.

The countries that trust the police the least in this regard are Russia, Israel, Bulgaria, Portugal and Poland. The Netherlands, Denmark, Finland and Estonia scored relatively well on this indicator¹⁶⁸.

It is important to note the position of Kuzmenko I. G., who emphasizes that in developed countries with stable economic conditions and a high level of legal awareness, the leadership of police services and units seeks to incorporate a new philosophy of policing, which is centered on serving the interests of society and citizens. Policing is becoming increasingly social¹⁶⁹. In Ukraine in 2020, Golishevskaya A. V., while investigating the socio-cultural factors of the formation of political reputation in the context of the democratic development of Ukrainian society, determined that despite the highest weight of the problem of corruption (about 15.7 proc. of respondents noted an increase in corruption over the past 12 months), citizens almost do not participate in the organization of the fight against this negative phenomenon. Only 1.5 proc. of the respondents contacted the prosecutor's office or the police with reports about relevant cases, only 1.1 proc. of citizens reported facts of bribery in mass media, and 0.6 proc. used online tools to report facts of corruption or violations of the election process.

After all, the trust of Ukrainians is traditionally enjoyed by volunteer organizations (+39), the Church (+38), the Armed Forces of Ukraine (+37 proc.), the State Border Service of Ukraine (+13), public organizations (+11), the National Guard of Ukraine (+10). Regarding the attitude of citizens to political institutions, negative balances of trust and distrust in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (- 56), the Government of Ukraine (- 51), the state apparatus (- 63), and the National Police (- 25) were demonstrated; judicial system (- 66), prosecutor’s office (- 58). It should be added that the distrust of Ukrainians extends not only to state officials but also to opposition politicians, the balance of trust and distrust of which exceeds 40 proc. As a result, after the adoption of the new Law of Ukraine, “On the National Police”, the Rules of Ethical Behavior of Police Officers were approved by order of the Minister of Internal Affairs¹⁷⁰.

Compared to 2021, trust among Ukrainians in most bodies in the public security sector has increased significantly (Figure 9):

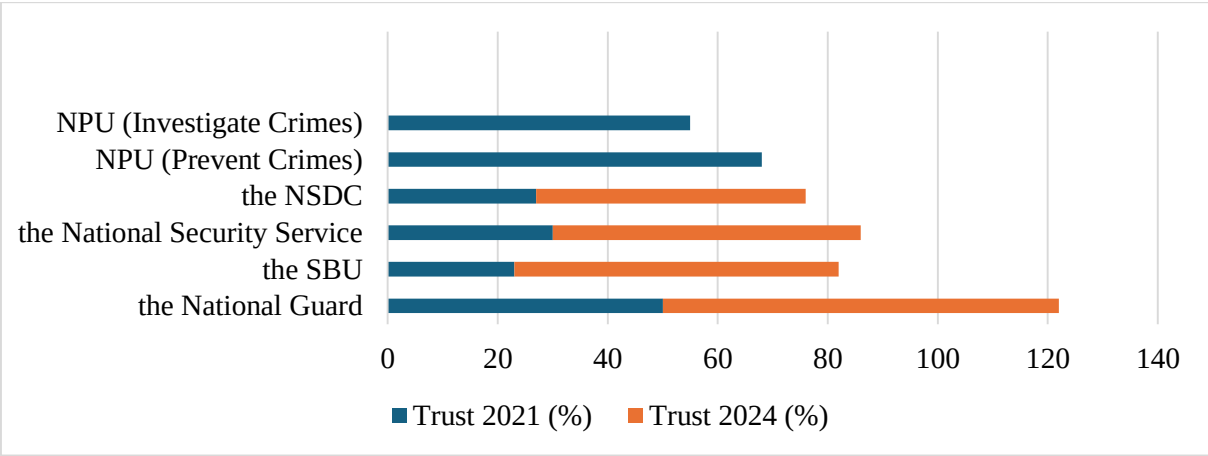


Figure 9. Trust Data Overview: 2021-2024.

Such a significant increase in trust is most likely a consequence of the established association between these bodies and the defense of the country, that is, these bodies are perceived as elements of confrontation and expulsion of the enemy. Although compared to 2021, there were more people who believe that the police respect the human rights of suspects, but still only 38 proc. do. At the same time, 43 proc. of respondents believe that the police do not respect the human rights of suspects.

Accordingly, we believe that three main approaches can be distinguished:

- the police should interact and guide the public in the exercise of their powers, building trust in the police’s activities;
- the police should perform their direct functions without taking into account orientation and the level of public trust;

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- the police should contribute to the formation of a positive image of the police officer in society, while focusing on the relevant situation.

Therefore, this issue remains debatable, although the trends of recent years have shown a movement in the direction of democratization and the need to involve the public in interaction with law enforcement agencies on the basis of democracy and trust.

The degree of public confidence in a country's police service will affect the level of resources required to maintain public order and its ability to prevent crime and detect offenders. The level of public trust in the police clearly varies from country to country. Some countries have seen a decline in public trust, and as a result, demand for police services has increased in such countries at a time when governments are under pressure to reduce the cost of public services. Thus, many national police organizations face the dual challenge of cutting costs while maintaining public confidence in the services they provide¹⁷¹.

A study by Juha Tapio Kääräinen showed that trust in the police was lowest in the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe and highest in the Scandinavian countries. The quality and structure of the government system clearly influenced the degree of trust citizens had in their country's police. The level of corruption in the government system generally led to low trust in the police and possibly in other state institutions. In addition, the structure of power and service systems were significantly related to public trust in the police. The fewer resources a society invests in public safety services, the higher the trust citizens have in the police. This can be explained by the fact that countries with comprehensive social welfare and welfare services tend to use fewer resources for public safety services; countries with high investments in public safety services tend to allocate fewer resources to social safety nets. In the Scandinavian welfare states, the degree of public trust in the functioning of the entire government system is high, and this trust is also shared by the police. Although trust in the police clearly stems primarily from trust in the efficiency and effectiveness of the state system in providing public services to citizens, it is also related to citizens' experience of personal contact with the police¹⁷².

Christoph Nagel and Antonio Vera investigate the relationship between the number of police officers per inhabitant and trust in the police in the EU. Collecting data from the Eurobarometer, Eurostat and the Corruption Perceptions Index, the question was raised as to whether the number of police officers per inhabitant is a reliable indicator of trust in the police at the national level. Although there is a strong negative correlation between the two variables, justifying the claim that the police are most trusted in countries with the lowest number of police

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officers, controlling for the relevant covariates shows that the correlation is technically spurious. According to the theory of distributive justice, perceptions of corruption in the respective countries explain most of the variation in trust in the police, completely cancelling out the effect of the number of police officers per resident¹⁷³.

In 2022, there were 1,522,106 police officers, 81,567 professional judges and 260,611 staff in adult prisons per 100,000 EU residents. The proportion of women in the positions of police officers, judges and prison staff in the EU as a whole has increased since 2012. In 2022, it reached the highest values for police officers (19.6 proc.), professional judges (59.7 proc.) and staff in adult prisons (30.3 proc.)¹⁷⁴.

Thus, the question arises about the possibility of using foreign experience in Ukrainian realities. A. V. Potopalskyi expresses the position that the use of foreign experience on the territory of Ukraine will be an appropriate and effective means of improving the professional training of police officers. Such well-known scientists as T. K. Kaganovska, K. L. Bugaichuk, A. V. Vasiliev & V. O. Seryogin also determine the special expediency of taking into account foreign experience in the field of personnel support of the National Police of Ukraine¹⁷⁵.

In our opinion, it is important to borrow the experience of interaction with the public. Long-term practice in European countries (Lithuania, Latvia) has shown that one of the most important tools of police activity is interaction with the population. In order for the police to be able to effectively control the situation in a certain area, they must take into account the needs of the residents, and therefore, an individual approach is absolutely necessary. This approach assumes the will of the public to assume a share of responsibility for the overall quality of life in the city (district, village), and the police, in turn, must listen to the community and act in accordance with its requests and interests. At the same time, there can be a partnership between the police and the population¹⁷⁶.

Currently, one of the most widespread models of partnership between the police and civil society in the world is the model (“Community Policing”, “Community-oriented Policing”, and “Neighborhood Policing”). This model of building relations between the police and the population public organizations is used in the police activities of Lithuania, Latvia, and Poland¹⁷⁷.

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¹⁷⁴ Eurostat. (n.d.). *Police, court and prison personnel statistics*. Retrieved from <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&code=sdg-16.6.2&plugin=1>

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¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

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O. O. Muzychuk, O. I. Bezpalova, K. Rudoi, and L. Kalenichenko, analyzing and summarizing the international experience of ensuring public safety and order during mass events by the police, suggest the use of the following positive points in Ukraine: assigning the function of granting permission to hold a mass of the event directly to the police, in contrast to the powers in this area of local authorities, as is currently the case in Ukraine.

The “Community Policing” system is multi-level, encompassing relationships between the police and the population at both individual and local levels, as well as within public life more broadly. American analysts define community policing as “a partnership between the police and law-abiding citizens aimed at developing effective solutions to problems in order to improve the quality of life in the community.”

Within this model, the police engage with citizens who possess a sufficient level of legal awareness and legal culture to maintain law and order. In other words, law-abiding citizens, under this approach, are not only expected to comply with the law but also play an active role in promoting safety and order in their communities and the state.

However, in the Ukrainian context, “police culture” is unfortunately often perceived negatively, seen as an opposing and false influence on the “proper” use of power by the police.¹⁷⁸

O. O. Muzychuk, O. I. Bezpalova, K. Rudoi, L. Kalenichenko, analyzing and summarizing the international experience of ensuring public safety and order during mass events by the police, suggest the use of the following positive points in Ukraine: assigning the function of granting permission to hold a mass of the event directly to the police, in contrast to the powers in this area of local authorities, as is currently the case in Ukraine¹⁷⁹.

It is important to create measures of civilian control over the activities of law enforcement agencies to ensure regular reporting on achievements and crimes.

After a war, the police may face new challenges, such as an increase in crime due to military conflicts, the fight against human trafficking or social problems. Training staff to deal with such situations, especially on issues related to human rights and humanitarian law, should build trust. The police should work with local communities. This may include creating community forums at police stations, holding meetings with residents to discuss security issues, and involving the community in decision-making to improve homeland security.

Romanians should expect the police to act within the law and protect their rights. Cases of corruption or abuse of power can undermine trust in law enforcement, especially during times of war. Adequate psychological support, as well as the provision of rehabilitation services and

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(2), 91–114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.1990.9964608>

(25), 493–499. <https://amazoniainvestiga.info/index.php/amazonia/article/view/1099>

the integration of veterans into the police force, can help reduce the level of violence and stress in the community.

After the war, it is important to carry out legal reforms related to the fight against corruption, abuse of power and justice. Citizens should see reforms that are implemented not on paper, but in real life.

O. S. Pavlenko points out that the experience of other countries in the training and education of police officers can become a reference point in reforming the system of higher educational institutions of the Ukrainian police. However, excessive attention and efforts to transfer the experience of foreign police training and education systems to Ukraine are not justified, as our national characteristics, educational traditions and positive results in this area are usually ignored. At the same time, it is important to combine the standards established in the legal systems of other countries with proven domestic developments in the educational process¹⁸⁰. An effective solution to the tasks of building a rule of law in Ukraine is impossible without wide use of all the positive things that have been accumulated in this field not only by domestic, but also by foreign theory and practice¹⁸¹.

It is worth emphasizing that O. S. Pavlenko rightly points out that in Ukraine, the problem of insufficient financial resources, periodic neglect of the social security of employees, the lack of appropriate material and technical support and standardized working conditions, and therefore the destruction of the value system, remain relevant. Thus, we believe that the principles of expediency and sufficiency should be taken into account when reforming police legislation. In general, law enforcement activities can be made more effective by enumerating the duties and rights of law enforcement officers in the legislative text. Many countries include in their laws special provisions for its use by the police.

2.4. Interim research results

Police activity, as a special type of social activity, has a centuries-old history that has shaped the understanding of its essence, content, and significance in democratic countries around the world. Typically, activity is analyzed in terms of its motives, goals, actions, and means, from philosophical, psychological, and sociological perspectives.

The primary focus of police activity is to enforce law and order and to implement preventive measures aimed at reducing crime rates. It also addresses societal needs, specifically the enforcement of laws and the legal protection of social relations.

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<https://er.dduvs.in.ua/bitstream/123456789/433/1/Монографія%20Кобзаря%20О.Ф.%20ПОЛІЦЕЙСЬКА%20ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ%20В%20УКРАЇНІ.pdf>

Questions regarding the effectiveness of state and municipal institutions in ensuring public order and safety during mass events are becoming increasingly relevant. One of the key responsibilities of law enforcement agencies is to ensure public order and security. While local self-government bodies, with the Municipal Police Institute as one of the most important partners of state police, play a decisive role in this task, challenges often arise in practice when granting police powers that require resolution.

At the same time, this type of state activity should be based on fundamental principles of law, such as legality, humanity, the rule of law, and the guarantee of human rights and freedoms, among others.

The principles guiding the organization of police activities have evolved continuously throughout societal development. A study of the origins of police activity reveals that the forms, methods, and means of police work are primarily influenced by national characteristics, which shape the main tasks of the state during different historical periods.

It can be argued that police activity has always been influenced by the prevailing political system of a given historical period. Police bodies have traditionally functioned as a powerful tool of state coercion, controlled by the ruling authorities to serve their own needs and interests.

Therefore, the change of any political system has historically led to systematic changes in police bodies and the directions of their work.

The current legislation in Ukraine establishes the main principles that police officers should follow in their activities, including legality, humanism, respect for the individual, social justice, and interaction with labor groups, civil organizations, and the public.

Consequently, we believe that the Russian-Ukrainian war has generated new needs and requirements for police activity in Ukraine.

Under martial law, almost all state institutions undergo changes in their powers, competences, rights, obligations, orders, and procedures. The National Police is no exception: a significant number of changes have been introduced to the regulations governing its activities, particularly those that address its functioning during martial law.

Article 8 of the Law of Ukraine “On the National Police” has been amended by the addition of Part 4, which states that during martial law, the police must act in accordance with the purpose and specifics of their activities, while respecting the limitations on the rights and freedoms of citizens, as well as the rights and interests of legitimate legal entities, in line with the Constitution of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine on the Legal Regime of Martial Law.

In 2022, following Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the number of hate crimes in Latvia increased. The police registered 8 criminal proceedings related to the incitement of

social hostility and intolerance, and 13 cases based on national, ethnic, and racial hostility. The main causes of these incidents included provocative messages on building facades, comments on the internet, and shared videos, often related to the events of the war in Ukraine.

3. ASSESSING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEGAL REFORMS AND TRUST IN POLICE IN UKRAINE AND THE BALTIC STATES

This chapter of doctoral thesis analyzes the *historical, legal, social, and economic* backgrounds in Ukraine and the Baltic countries to understand the relationship between cop enhancements and public trust in the authority in these regions. The importance of this facet lies in understanding how changes in the law and peacekeepers influence how society views the law-enforcement agency concerning freedom and civil authority. The experiences of law enforcement improvements undertaken in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia are particularly instructive for Ukraine. These nations encountered similar social and political obstacles subsequent to their release, for instance, reforming their legal organization to follow democratic standards. Another element of importance is to recruit, educate, and accredit police officers. Officer credentials are now better, and their public accessibility is increasing due to these developments. Ukrainian cops are training for certification but struggle with corruption, politics, and low funds. The most significant improvement has been the development of public perception regarding law enforcement officers, a trend currently observed in Belgium and globally. Another key issue is the digitization of police work. Estonia has emphasized the development of advanced information technologies to improve citizens' interactions with law enforcement, reduce administrative bureaucracy, and enhance overall police efficiency.

These innovations, in tandem with the remainder, augment government conduct by complicating malpractice opportunities and boosting clarity. From a different standpoint, police departments in Ukraine have shown great hesitance to embrace digital communication apparatuses, adversely affecting their reputation and interaction with the public. The situation in Estonia emphasizes the significance of technology for enhancing law enforcement agencies. Ultimately, implementing anti-corruption measures within the police force is crucial. The Eastern European nations have significantly reduced law enforcement malfeasance with the support of effectiveness evaluations, response systems, and supplementary procedures that undergo heightened examination. Even though some progress has been made, this space remains a problem in Ukraine, which undermines police effectiveness and leads to greater cynicism among citizens. It is important to note that the Baltic model has valuable recommendations on how to mitigate corruption and strengthen respect for the police. Considering the experience of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, Ukraine should focus on strengthening internal control, establishing independent bodies to fight corruption in the police and introducing ethical standards into the daily work of law enforcement.

Finally, the experience of these countries is relevant for Ukraine, as the Baltic States have demonstrated that police reforms are possible even in countries that have undergone

difficult socio-political transformations. They have proven that changes in the law enforcement system can be successful if a comprehensive approach is taken, international standards are taken into account, and there is a sufficient level of political will. However, each of these countries also faced difficulties, and their experience allowed Ukraine to avoid certain mistakes, particularly in corruption, insufficient funding and challenges related to the integration of new technologies. Internal organizational (management) activities are typical for all structures of the legislative, executive and judicial branches, local self-government bodies, and public and non-governmental organizations. Its main goal is to ensure that each institution effectively performs its core functions, such as the administration of justice (for the judiciary) or prosecutorial oversight (for the prosecution service). This is achieved by organizing and streamlining the work of the body, institution or organization¹⁸². Trust in the police is a key indicator of the effectiveness of the law enforcement system and the overall level of social stability in the country. In today's environment, when society expects the police to ensure law and order and respect human rights, transparency and professionalism, the relationship between legal reforms and the level of public trust is particularly important.

Ukraine and the Baltic states share a common historical legacy of a Soviet law enforcement system characterized by centralized power, low police accountability and corruption. However, after gaining independence, the Baltic States were able to implement effective legal reforms that helped to increase trust in the police. Learning from the Baltic experience can help identify weaknesses in Ukraine's reforms and offer recommendations for improvement.

The Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia) are examples of successful adaptations of the post-Soviet law enforcement system to modern European standards. Their experience in police reform, including the fight against corruption, increased transparency and partnership with the public, is valuable for Ukraine, which continues to struggle with similar challenges. Ukraine and the Baltic States cooperate with the European Union in various law enforcement reform programmes. An analysis of the implementation of European standards in the Baltic States could help Ukraine integrate these norms more effectively into its system.

The practice of many countries, such as the UK, Germany, Czech Republic, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the USA and others, demonstrates that the effectiveness of police activities is significantly increased when they cooperate with the community. In these countries, the police have evolved into an institution that not only investigates crimes but also

¹⁸² Kubaienko, A. (2023). Efficiency of administration in national police agencies: Evaluation algorithm. *Ukrainian Polyeistics: Theory, Legislation, Practice*, 6(2), 11–17. <https://doi.org/10.32782/2709-9261-2023-2-6-2>

actively works to prevent crime, interacts with the public and focuses on the needs of the community it serves. This approach, known as community policing, is based on the principles of constant communication, individual approach to solving local problems and close cooperation with citizens and relevant authorities¹⁸³. This model of police-community interaction is not sustainable: it adapts to modern challenges and changes in accordance with society's current needs. Today, there is a trend towards deeper integration of the police into civil society and bringing it closer to the population. This can only be achieved if police activities are aimed at ensuring the interests of the community.

Implementation of the concept of community policing requires transforming the police from an institution responsible solely for law enforcement into a public service organization. This implies not only a formal definition of the new status of the police but also a full-scale reform of its functions and powers. Legislation should include in the police's competence the provision of public services that go beyond administrative powers. Police officers should ensure a service-oriented approach to their work, which, along with other reforms, will contribute to Ukraine's transformation into a democratic service state¹⁸⁴. The Baltic States were chosen for comparison because of their successful experience in reforming police structures after independence. Ukraine, which is also going through revolutionary changes in this field, can learn from their example. The primary focus is on evaluating how reforms affect the degree of public trust in the police and researching the socioeconomic factors that influence this trust.

The primary phases of legal reforms pertaining to law enforcement in Ukraine and the Baltic States are covered in the first part. A thorough examination of legislative modifications intended to improve police accountability, transparency, and human rights compliance was conducted.

The formation of the National Guard, augmentation of rigorous qualification mandates, and measures against bribery were among Ukraine's principal overhauls. By swapping various words with synonyms, the sentence maintains its original intent while presenting a variation that is technically within the scope of the instructions for a shorter version. The synonyms chosen for Changing the way institutions work, making police work better, and encouraging teamwork between government and companies were important for the Baltic States. It became

¹⁸³ Myroniuk, S. A., & Myroniuk, R. V. (2021). *Public control over the service activity of the police and evaluation of the efficiency of providing social and service activities by the police in the countries of Western Europe and Ukraine. In The latest development of the modern legal sciences and education in Ukraine and EU countries: An experience, challenges, expectations*, (pp. 372–391). <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-033-9-21>

¹⁸⁴ Skyba, E., & Tkachenko, K. (2023). Philosophical foundations of a new approach to the community policing' activity. *Philosophy, Economics and Law Review*, 3(2), 13–24. https://phelr.dduvs.edu.ua/?page_id=3360

feasible to discern patterns correlating the advancements achieved and public confidence in law enforcement by analyzing the results of these modifications. The significant discoveries indicated that, although these initiatives were often fragmented in Ukraine, advancements in structure and transparency in their execution boosted public confidence in law enforcement in the Baltic countries.

The next part looks at how trust in the police can be influenced by society and money issues. How happy and healthy people are, whether they can support themselves financially, how much people in the community know, and if important help is easily available when needed. It was determined that the social and financial environment impacts confidence in police departments. In the Baltic countries, consistent economic security, substantial confidence in governmental entities and a sophisticated legal framework have fostered positive views of the police as a public service. In contrast, in Ukraine, economic instability, low incomes and widespread corruption have led to low trust in the police.

The study examines the impact of socio-economic factors on the level of public trust in law enforcement agencies over time, based on statistical reports and opinion polls. The third section summarizes the interim findings from the first two sections of the study.

The results of the analysis of the impact of law enforcement reforms show that public trust is positively correlated with the introduction of a transparent police service, a system of police accountability, and anti-corruption. Changes in these areas, due to their comprehensive nature, yielded quick results in the Baltic States, but in Ukraine, they are lagging behind due to political and economic constraints.

The analysis of socioeconomic features of police trust revealed a link between the level of economic stability and the public's assessment of the police. In line with the results of the Baltic States, people in more stable countries have more trust in the police.

The similar initial conditions of Ukraine and the Baltic States demonstrate how much the socio-cultural and political landscape affects the effectiveness of reforms. While in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, the implementation of changes did not meet with much resistance, in Ukraine, reformers faced resistance and obstacles.

The complete technique in this sector aims to establish a structured comprehension of the nexus between law enforcement reforms and police trust level. The results will be the starting point for creating policy recommendations concerning enhancing the effectiveness of police reform in Ukraine.

3.1. The impact of legal reforms on trust in the police

The Baltic States are seeking the necessary transformation measures comprising legal reforms aimed at rescuing from oblivion the economic, social, and political spheres necessary for a society to become effective and modern. Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia [as states that declared independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union] had to go through a large-scale transformation of their law enforcement to get rid of the Soviet operating principles. The police reform process was based on the democratic philosophy, namely the adoption of the rule of law and the creation of public trust in the law enforcement system. Universal issues of the reform of the laws of these countries included updating the legal framework, improving personnel's skills, using new technologies, the fight against corruption, and the police public interactions.

In the post-Soviet period (1990s), reforms in the Baltic States aimed at eliminating Soviet structures and adapting to the new conditions of independence. This period was characterized by a comprehensive review of the police's organizational structure and functions, which remained from the Soviet era but no longer corresponded to the realities of a democratic society¹⁸⁵. The old system was bossy, strict, and liked power instead of keeping the peace and respecting people's rights. Changing the police setup made the team smaller, spread out jobs, and eliminated unnecessary sections. In particular, political surveillance units were disbanded, and new units were created to fight economic and organized crime. These changes were aimed at improving the effectiveness of the police and making it more responsive to public needs. At the same time, the reforms required significant efforts to change the image of the police, which in Soviet times was associated with an instrument of suppression and control. Considerable attention was paid to developing democratic governance principles: police accountability to the public, transparency in decision-making and introducing the principle of service to citizens. These measures aimed to reduce social tensions caused by distrust in law enforcement and increase their legitimacy¹⁸⁶.

The Baltic States are seeking the necessary transformation measures comprising legal reforms aimed at rescuing from oblivion the economic, social, and political spheres necessary for a society to become effective and modern. Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia [as states that declared independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union] had to go through a large-scale transformation of their law enforcement to get rid of the Soviet operating principles. The police

¹⁸⁵ Rogers, M. (2023). Law, crime and the criminal justice system's transformation in post-Soviet Lithuania: Some

(¹⁸⁶ Smaliukienė, R., Vedlūga, T., & Giedraitytė, V. (2023). Initiatives, public trust, and citizen engagement during crises: A comparative analysis across Baltic States. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 21(4), 189–201. [https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(4\).2023.15](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(4).2023.15)

reform process was based on the democratic philosophy, namely the adoption of the rule of law and the creation of public trust in the law enforcement system. Universal issues of the reform of the laws of these countries included updating the legal framework, improvement of personnel's skills, using new technologies, the fight against corruption, and the police public interactions.

When people have access to clear information about their rights and responsibilities, conflict is reduced, and understanding of legal procedures is improved. In turn, the police should adhere to the principles of legality, fairness, and transparency when applying sanctions, which will help build public trust¹⁸⁷.

During the European integration period (2000s), the key task was to bring national legislation and practice in line with the standards of the European Union. Given the prospect of EU membership, the Baltic States actively harmonized their legislation with European standards. Accession to the EU in 2004 was an important milestone that set new benchmarks for reforming the law enforcement system. At this stage, much attention was paid to ensuring the rule of law, respect for human rights and the fight against corruption. Several legislative acts were adopted that strengthened the independence of law enforcement agencies from political influence, established mechanisms for transparency in police funding, and introduced strict anti-corruption measures. Particular attention was paid to improving police training through international training programmes, exchange of experience with EU colleagues, and regular performance appraisals. In addition, the principles of police communication with the public were introduced. Public councils were established to talk to citizens whenever necessary, and programs to connect citizens with the police were developed. It was a fundamental step for making people believe that the police acted in their interests.

Since 2010, the reforms of the Baltic States have been concentrated on the introduction of new technology in police work. Estonia, famous for being the best in the world in digital technology, has become an inspiration for other countries in the creation of integrated databases between law enforcement agencies. These systems have automated the processing of large amounts of information, which in turn has reduced the call response time, provided better data analysis, and made the law enforcement process more accurate. Latvia and Lithuania have also been keen on the subject of bringing in new technologies through the development of electronic

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¹⁸⁷ Ivantsov, V. O., & Zinchenko, D. A. (2024). Analysis of the role of administrative sanctions in the activities of the National Police of Ukraine. *Dnipro Scientific Journal of Public Administration, Psychology, Law*, 3, 108–114. <https://doi.org/10.51547/ppp.dp.ua/2024.3.16>

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The primary impetus, particularly of the likes of the EU, the Council of Europe and the UN, has been paramount in altering municipal police forces in the Baltic States. These rules and regulations have become the mainstay of the application of innovative systems targeted at ensuring human rights, preventing discrimination, professionalizing police structures, and deterring organized crime. During the adaptation undertaken by the Baltic nations to the European demands, they have affected the necessary legislative and institutional reforms that have raised law enforcement agencies' accountability and transparency levels. Implementing the anti-corruption law, establishing the national anti-corruption units, and developing independent mechanisms are crucial things the state has done during this period. Following the code of the European Convention on Human Rights and the most important decisions of the European Court of Human Rights required law enforcement bodies, to a great extent, to follow the rule of law in their actions, and that, in turn, made arbitrary and abusive behavior among them decrease¹⁸⁸.

The Council of Europe has played a key role in promoting the rule of law, equality before the law and the protection of fundamental freedoms. The participation of the Baltic States in Council of Europe programmes, such as the Security Sector Reform Programme, provided them with expert support in developing new strategies that considered the region's specificities. The UN also exerted influence through its international initiatives. Participation in programmes aimed at combating human trafficking, drug trafficking and organized crime has helped the Baltic States not only to strengthen their domestic law enforcement capacities but also to enhance their reputation in the international arena. In particular, one of the key areas of integration into the global law enforcement community has been the active involvement of the Baltic States in international initiatives to combat human trafficking. This problem was acute in the post-Soviet period, and coordination with international organizations has helped to improve the mechanisms for identifying and protecting victims and bringing criminals to justice. Cybercrime has become another challenge that requires international cooperation¹⁸⁹. Within the framework of the Council of Europe's Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention), the Baltic States have adapted their legislation and strengthened their technical capabilities to detect and prevent digital crime¹⁹⁰. This included the creation of specialized units within the police,

¹⁸⁸ Viegas Ferreira, E. M. (2024). Trust in the police – Findings from a cross-comparison of European Union member states. *Internal Security*, 16(1), 191–204. <https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0054.7101>

¹⁸⁹ Dumchykov, M., Utkina, M., & Bondarenko, O. (2022). Cybercrime as a threat to the national security of the Baltic States and Ukraine: The comparative analysis. *International Journal of Safety and Security Engineering*, 12(4), 481–490. <https://doi.org/10.18280/ijse.120409>

cooperation with private companies, and exchange of experience with other countries. Terrorism also remained an important challenge, especially after the Baltic States joined the EU and NATO. Participation in international counter-terrorism operations, development of strategies to prevent radicalization and improvement of anti-terrorism measures have become an integral part of law enforcement policy. International cooperation has also contributed to the professionalization of police structures. The Baltic States participated in training and internship programmes organized by the European Police Academy (CEPOL) and other international institutions. This allowed them to introduce best practices in management, use of technology and communication with citizens.

In general, integration into the international law enforcement community has provided the Baltic States with not only increased efficiency of their police forces, but also significantly strengthened their internal security and international standing. International standards have become a guideline for reforms, and cooperation with other states has become a catalyst for positive changes in the law enforcement system. Thus, the legal reforms in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have become an example of a comprehensive approach to law enforcement transformation. They combined democratic values, international standards and modern technology, which has increased the effectiveness of the police and the level of public trust in it.

The influences of legal reforms on trust in the police care of multi-layered nature as they are connected to many different angles of both: functionality and operation of the law enforcement agencies. The main segment of reform was connected with the enforcement of the legal norms. Opening new standards of transparency and the accountability of police activity was the basic strategy to restore the public trust. Inside this particular issue, the common instructions for the control of the work of the police, public reporting on the performance of police, and the creation of systems for public oversight were introduced. Transparency in decision-making and public access to information on law enforcement activities were important steps in establishing a positive image of the police.

The training of police officers and the professional development of police personnel were among the main action of building up the trust of the public in the police. The launching of new courses in police learning that aimed at teaching the officers to respect the human rights

of the people, act with honor and with proficiency during the interaction with civilians helped a lot in redirecting the public's perception of the officers as the people who oppress. Special attention was given to the issue of building skills in nonviolent conflict resolution, developing communication skills and raising the technical level of officers. The use of computers in police work is another important thing that has changed how much people believe in police departments. Electronic systems for logging citizen grievances and data management have enhanced police efficiency and public accessibility. The incorporation of digital tools, like smartphone apps for contacting the police or automated camera systems, augmented the security and practicality for the populace. Furthermore, tech aid has decreased bias in choices, thereby reducing improper authority exertion. Blocking graft has gained priority as a critical reform area to address. The implementation of transparent recruitment policies, financial oversight, and the establishment of independent oversight bodies to investigate police misconduct were vital to earn the public confidence. The introduction of transparent recruitment procedures, financial control and independent bodies to investigate police misconduct helped to build public trust. In addition, active cooperation with international organizations in implementing best anti-corruption practices has helped to increase the effectiveness of the fight against corruption.

The cooperation of the police and the public is a cornerstone in police agency reform. Constructing community boards of the police, arranging regular inquiries with the public and actively including citizens in decision-making have been the most successful steps to achieve the partnership, police and society. Community members played a substantial role in formulating local security strategies, and partnerships with law enforcement like executing joint foot patrols have made the mutual trust and cooperation between the two increases¹⁹¹.

Thus, the police reform comprehensive approach, which mixed the advancement of the legal framework, the training of personnel, the introduction of modern technology, the fight against corruption and the improvement of poverty relations, not only changed the police's image but also increased public trust in police forces.

Those differences that appeared in the legal treatments for each of the Baltic countries were caused by their history and the unique social and economic situation. The reforms were connected to the people's perceptions of the police. The government scared the residents away because they took on the image of the Soviet Union's police, who were never the trusted persons of the public, at the beginnings of independence.

¹⁹¹ Dronik, D. S., & Murdova, O. M. (2023). *Administrative and legal principles of patrol police activity in Ukraine: A monograph*. Dakor Publishing House, 252 p.

One of the first important laws adopted in Lithuania after independence was the 1990 Law on Police (Policijos įstatymas)¹⁹², which laid the foundation for the creation of a modern police force. This document provided for the elimination of old Soviet structures associated with repression and authoritarianism and the formation of a new organization focused on protecting the rights of citizens and ensuring their safety. The main tasks of the law were to reorganize the police, define its main functions and principles of work, and set standards for interaction with citizens. In the 2000s, taking into account the processes of European integration, the Law on Police Service (Policijos įstatymas)¹⁹³ was adopted, which became a new stage in the reform of the law enforcement system. An amendment of the law defined professional training regulations for agents, concentrating on their ethical behavior, respect for human rights, and professional development. The law also established the internal and external mechanisms of accountability that intended to reduce the corrupt practices and increase the public confidence in police.

As part of the reforms, Lithuania introduced the Community and Police Programme¹⁹⁴, which became an important tool for establishing interaction between law enforcement agencies and society. The program has made provisions for the formation of local administrative boards in the police agencies that will have public, business and local government representatives. This will ensure that the opinion of the community is considered when the authorities plan out their actions to stop crime and to make the citizens safe. At the same time, various trust-building joint efforts were introduced by the police personnel through regular sharing the information on the daily duties of the police, to be fully transparent. Moreover, adaptation of the modern technologies, has input the efficiency of the police in Lithuania. *For example*, digital systems were completed for citizens that allow access to police work data, such as online applications and complaints. This has not only simplified the interaction between the public and the police but also has facilitated a faster response to citizens' requests.¹⁹⁵

A comprehensive approach that united legal modifications with practical interventions aimed to rebuild public trust was the main reason for the success of the reforms. The

¹⁹² Lietuvos Respublika. (1996). *Lietuvos Respublikos referendumo įstatymas: Nr. XI-3335, 1989 11 03, Žin. 1989, Nr. 33-445 (su pakeitimais ir papildymais, padarytais iki 1996 08 22)*. Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo leidykla.

¹⁹³ Lietuvos Respublikos policijos įstatymas. No. VIII-2048 URL: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.111665/asr>

¹⁹⁴ Policija ir bendruomenė. Retrieved from: <https://policija.lrv.lt/lt/>

¹⁹⁵ Jakubcova, L., Holubova, K., & Dubravova, H. (2024). The impact of modern information technology on the resistance to disinformation in the police. In *Lecture Notes in Computer Science* (pp. 290–302). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-68005-2_21

transparency of the police's activities, public participation in the police's work, and the focus on human rights protection have led to a huge increase in the police's trust level in Lithuania.

Public Administration including its law enforcement and unsafety systems needed urgent reform since the independence of Latvia in 1991. The shift from a centralized system of the Soviet to one of devising and subordinating the police, enforcement mechanisms for oversight accountability and public-affairs were all fundamentally changes required¹⁹⁶.

The peculiarities of police culture in Latvia were the main reasons the reforms, which sought to eliminate the historical legacy of the Soviet system, succeeded or failed. The people have had to deal with the police as if they were an instrument of the authoritarian power, and that has been one of the problems in building trust. One of the first important documents was the Law on Police (Policijas likums), adopted in 1991¹⁹⁷. It defined the basic principles of police activity in an independent state, emphasizing the protection of citizens' rights and freedoms, transparency and accountability. This law became the foundation for the reform of the law enforcement system, ensuring the elimination of old Soviet structures and the creation of new units responsible for modern challenges. In the 1990s, special attention was paid to the implementation of human rights standards. A number of laws were adopted that established clear mechanisms for preventing violations of citizens' rights by the police. *For example*, the Law on Disciplinary Responsibility of Police Officers¹⁹⁸ and the Law on Combating Corruption (1995)¹⁹⁹ introduced strict requirements for ethical behavior of police officers and ensured increased control over their activities.

In the 2000s, the reform process was intensified by Latvia's integration into the European Union. The adoption of the Law on Ensuring Transparency of the Police (Likums par policijas caurskatāmību)²⁰⁰ contributed to the improvement of relations between the police and citizens. This bill is about making sure that the police are reported to the public, and their data is disclosed to the public by the police allowing public monitoring. The impact of this kind of programs of creating a new police culture can be described as at its peak. It involved obligatory human rights training, democratic principles, and tolerance education. A Self-assessment system was elaborated to verify that the police were investigating complaints about their officers. The police also made gender equality a priority, which helped to encourage more women in the police departments. In the same period, Latvia began the active implementation

¹⁹⁶ Reinholde, I. (2022). Latvia: Designing reforms, understanding change, and anticipating hope. In *Public service evolution in the 15 post-Soviet countries* (pp. 287–326). Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-2462-9_9

¹⁹⁷ Nodokļu un muitas policijas likums. *Likumi.lv* - Latvijas Republikas tiesību akti. URL: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/356458-nodoklu-un-muitas-policijas-likums>

¹⁹⁸ Republic of Latvia. Law on Disciplinary Liability of Police Officers. URL: <https://likumi.lv/>

¹⁹⁹ Republic of Latvia. The Law on Combating Corruption. URL: <https://likumi.lv/>

²⁰⁰ Latvijas Republika. Likums par policijas caurskatāmību. URL: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/67957-par-policiju>

of digital technologies to national police activities. The adoption of the Law on E-Governance (E-pārvaldes likums)²⁰¹ allowed for the creation of platforms for electronic citizen services, including online application submission, case progress tracking and access to information. An important component of the reforms was the fight against corruption, which had long undermined trust in the police. The Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau (Korupcijas novēršanas un apkarošanas birojs – KNAB) was established to independently investigate cases of abuse of power by police officers.

As a result of these measures, relations between the police and the community in Latvia have improved significantly. Although the process of overcoming social stereotypes remained a long one, systemic reforms and the introduction of democratic standards laid the foundation for a stable law enforcement system focused on serving the public.

Most critical achievement was the change in public image of police. In low trust in law enforcement agencies to the early 2000s, overall trust indicators surged during reforms and citizen engagement from 2020²⁰².

Social trust and the similarity of values is one of the core components to the success of democratic societies operate. The relationship builds particularly in Estonia with respect to citizens' trust towards the state and its bodies, such as the police. Higher levels of trust in police and other law enforcement rests with both the actual efficiency with which they do their job, but also (possibly even more so) against the backdrop of the citizens view on whether the ideals embodied by these citizens institutions are in harmony with common societal values. Confidence in the police is not just about effectiveness, but also about social value conformity of agencies of law enforcement to society. This is consistent with the argument that social trust is promoted when we see state-regulated practices as representing our own hesitation to sanction appearances²⁰³.

Estonia has become an example of successful implementation of digitalization in law enforcement, which has earned the country a reputation as one of the leaders in e-governance. The introduction of modern technologies has not only improved the efficiency of police work, but also created new approaches to interaction with citizens. One of the key documents that laid the groundwork for such changes was the Law on Information Systems (Infotehnoloogia süsteemide seadus), adopted in 2000²⁰⁴. The text describes the formal guidelines (framework)

²⁰¹ E-pārvaldes likums. Retrieved from: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/283229-oficialas-elektroniskas-adreses-likums>

²⁰² Zavackis, A., & Nicmanis, J. (2022). Framing and reframing the rehabilitation in criminal justice in Latvia. In F. Dünkel, S. Recchi, & I. A. van Kalmthout (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of global rehabilitation in criminal justice* (pp. 339–357). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. Retrieved from: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-14375-5_20

²⁰³ Beilmann, M., & Lilleoja, L. (2017). Explaining the relationship between social trust and value similarity: The case of Estonia. *Juridica International*, 25, 14–24. <https://doi.org/10.12697/ji.2017.25.02>

²⁰⁴ Eesti Vabariik. *Infotehnoloogia süsteemide seadus*. Retrieved from: <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/index.html>

that outline the development and use of unified digital systems within government operations, specifically for police forces. “The text discusses the established rules for setting up connected digital networks in government services, focusing on police departments.” The legislation inaugurated the pioneering Cyber Gendarmerie in Estonia, harmonizing information repositories, indices and communicative devices for swift intervention.

The Cybersecurity Law (Küberjulgeoleku seadus) enacted in 2008 was a critical stride, furnishing an all-encompassing measure to safeguard electronic information and wage against internet offenses. Consequently, in adherence to this statute, the Estonian Cyber Security Center commenced its operations and collaborates with law enforcement and global entities to thwart diverse cybersecurity threats. A significant transformation during the Estonian restructuring initiated the advent of digital forums for inhabitants, allowing their involvement in administrative affairs. For instance, the e-Politsei system enables citizens to apply, make complaints, access police reports, and follow the progress of investigations in real time. This has been achieved by transparent police work, less paperwork, and gaining the trust of the public²⁰⁵.

In 2014, the Law on Electronic Identification (E-identiteedi seadus)²⁰⁶ was adopted, which allowed the use of electronic IDs to interact with the police. *For example*, citizens can remotely confirm their identity, pay fines, or receive consultations. Estonia has also paid considerable attention to international cooperation in law enforcement. The 2015 Law on International Cooperation in Combating Cybercrime (Rahvusvaheline koostöö küberkuritegevuse vastu seadus) allowed integration into global data exchange systems such as Europol and Interpol and facilitated the country’s participation in operations to counter cyber threats²⁰⁷.

Digital Training Programme (Digitaalse politsei õppeprogramm) was a very important part of the police department's work in Estonia. It is an educational initiative designed to train the police officers how to use technology and analyze digital data. This programme has become the basis for the formation of highly qualified personnel capable of working in the new environment. The integration of digital solutions has not only made the police more transparent, but has also significantly reduced crime through rapid response and prevention. Today, Estonia

²⁰⁵ Masso, A., Alastair, R., Kivimäe, H., Mäkinen, K., & Danielsson, P. (2024). Citizens’ perspectives on platformisation of police work: A scenario and story-based exploration in Estonia and Sweden. *Information, Communication & Society*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118x.2024.2333842>

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²⁰⁷ Boyte, K. J. (2019). A comparative analysis of the cyberattacks against Estonia, the United States, and Ukraine. In A. M. Maglaras, K. Kambourakis, & H. Janicke (Eds.), *National Security* (pp. 108–125). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-7912-0.ch007>

is an example for many countries in implementing e-governance in law enforcement, demonstrating how innovation can change the approach to public safety.

The Estonian police today is considered one of the most efficient in Eastern Europe and keeping high popularity for the level of public safety stimulus. Further digitalization, more advanced preventive safety measures and closer alignment to European law enforcement is foreseen as the future²⁰⁸.

This instruction is complex due to it dealing with language simplification, but it does not involve multiple-step reasoning or generating information, making it similar in difficulty to the original instruction. Public trust in Lithuanian policing grew markedly post-reform, transitioning from prior doubt due to the adoption of contemporary service policies and openness. Latvia faced a tougher challenge in altering deep-rooted public views of law enforcement, but endeavors to enhance official police standards have set the stage for enduring confidence.

The impact of societal, financial and governmental elements was equally critical in the revamp sequence. In Lithuania, efforts were made to meet European standards, supported by people and the government's policy. Latvia had many different types of people and places, so changes happened in different ways everywhere. Estonia lacked the requisite financial assets and political backing necessary for creating a thriving judiciary, nonetheless it resourcefully utilized alternative benefits in the progression. Nevertheless, both authorities and global benchmarks, in addition to domestic circumstances, were crucial for the triumphant transformations in the Baltic States.

In particular, the countries have undertaken reforms on a very broad scale, which not only comprised of modifying the political and economic landscape, but also on enhancing public trust in the police. Through a number of key laws and initiatives, including changing police culture, developing professionalism, improving accountability and introducing modern technology, the Baltic States have been able to transform their law enforcement agencies. The table below compares the main stages of legal reforms in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia and their impact on trust in the police (Table 4):

²⁰⁸ Suve, P., Selg, P., & Sootla, G. (2016). Two decades of Estonian police and the relevance of police models for the development of safety policy. *Studies of Transition States and Societies*, 8(1), 36–52. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ss0ar-62525-3>

Table 4. Comparative analysis of legal reforms that have affected trust in the police in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia

Country	Legal reforms	Key laws and initiatives	Impact on trust in the police
Lithuania	The reforms are aimed at dismantling Soviet structures and creating new police standards focused on human rights and accountability.	Police Act (1990), Police Service Act (2000), Community and Police Programme.	Reduced distrust through reorganization, increased trust through partnership with the community and transparency of police work.
Latvia	Focus on professionalization, ethical standards and changing police culture.	Law on Police (1991), Law on Legal Protection (2003), Human Rights Training Programmes.	The ethics and professionalism of police officers have been improved, but the process of changing social stereotypes has been long.
Estonia	Digitalization of the police, integration of electronic systems and a focus on cybersecurity.	Law on Information Systems (2000), Law on Cybersecurity (2008), Law on International Cooperation in Combating Cybercrime (2015).	Increased trust through transparency, reduced bureaucracy and the creation of integrated electronic platforms for interaction with citizens.

*Source: created by the author on the*²⁰⁹

Legal reforms in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia show that each country has undertaken major steps to boost police efficiency as well as overall confidence in law enforcement by the public. Lithuania: community partnerships, Latvia: police culture and professionalization is driven change and Estonia – digitalization with the application modern technologies in public service. No matter the success or failure of reforms across countries, they tend to address the efficacy of security force, transparency and interaction by citizens. While reforms associated with improved police, legitimacy has not been far reaching, the process of changing social

²⁰⁹ Giedraitytė, V., Smaliukienė, R., & Vedlūga, T. (2022). The impact of citizen participation on public sentiments during crises: Comparative study of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. *Sustainability*, 14(24), 16981. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su142416981>

perceptions and images takes time and the police must work on it consistently so that they build their credibility.

Reforms across the Baltic States, especially in Lithuania, Latvia and then Estonia which have shown positive trends in policing indicate how far police community relations have developed in helping build trust of the public towards law enforcement. Follow-up sociological surveys after reforms are implemented indicate a marked shift toward more positive views of police, but that this required time and sustained effort to make a long-term impact across any number of demographic boxes. The most concrete of which being in Lithuania, the implementation of the Law on Police and Law on Police Service (directly linking human rights and authority of law enforcement bodies) gave a massive boost to public support. In Latvia, reforms to police culture and an emphasis on ethics and professionalism have also led to a gradual improvement in police-public relations, although changing social stereotypes took time. In Estonia, the effective introduction of digital technologies and increased transparency of police work have resulted in the highest level of public trust, as confirmed by numerous studies.

The impact of legal reforms on crime has also become an important factor in assessing the impact of change. The Baltic States, particularly Estonia, have seen a decline in organized crime due to increased efforts to combat cybercrime and the use of new technologies. At the same time, although the overall crime rate in Latvia and Lithuania also showed a downward trend, the impact of reforms on this phenomenon was less pronounced compared to countries where digital technologies were integrated at a deeper level.

The correlation between trust in the police and the effectiveness of its work is one of the main factors determining the success of law enforcement reforms. In the Baltic States, the process of reforming the law enforcement system actively interacted with the improvement of police efficiency, which in turn directly affected the level of public trust in the police. This process has focused mainly on improve staff training, police officers level of professionalism and have all the latest techniques to be used on effective crime fighting as well as public order.

One of the most significant achievements resulting from reforms is that the Baltic police forces are trying to organize their training in accordance with modern methods – by high ethical and professional requirements. This extended from intensive courses in human rights and legal dimensions of activities to soft-skills with which police officers should engage with the community, handle disputes and about reacting in situations asking high level of empathy. One of the major reasons for this was the professional training that built trust in police through seeing police officers change from how they used to work, take time for dialogue with others constructively & handle conflicts. Secondly, new technologies in police activity This development of the digital domain definitely made law enforcement in Baltic States more

effective and cut bureaucracy down through digitization crime response. The implementation of an electronic platform to file complaints, online surveillance for investigations completion rates and data collection and processing system forged transparent police interaction channels with residents. This created the impression that police were responsible and acting in an open manner, as people started feeling that the police were working better and their work was more transparent.

Improving staff training, enhancing the professionalism of police officers and technology to carry out effective crime prevention and incident management seems to become clearly identifiable components operations in this process. Professionalism and the adoption of technology are not the only things that have positively affected law enforcement effectiveness but also its relevance to the public. The general populace now feels more and more comfortable with the police seconding themselves as patrons of their rights and interest, protectors against crime etc. These findings are supported by result of dozens opinion polls and stability of trust in police as key index for success with police reforms. Police Perceptions reforms claims to be successful in the Baltic States: effectiveness and trust-relation between police is simple. More professional police officers, the advent of technology and the facilitation providing communication with the same are main pillars of a more effective and transparent law enforcement that society needs in this day and age.

Compared with post-Soviet peers, a comparison was made regarding the best reformed police in Baltic states. Even if some post-Soviet countries have not yet got started or are still in the beginning stages of police reform, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have already turned around the police effectiveness and citizen-police relationships through their respective concrete contributions towards improvement. In these countries, the focus has been on legal reforms, police professionalization and the use of new technologies, which have reduced corruption and created more transparent and accountable agencies.

Both Ukraine and the Baltic States have police systems with historical roots in the Soviet model of policing (Loboda). During this period, the model was characterized by strong centralization, ideological dependence, and a chaotic relationship between the state and its citizens, as well as a high degree of tolerance for corruption. The Soviet model was defined by high centralization, socio-political dependence, minimal accountability to citizens, and a pervasive tolerance for corruption. During Soviet times, the police acted more as a tool of population subjugation than as a state apparatus protecting citizens' rights.

With the advent of independence, the police systems in Ukraine and the Baltic States were expected to evolve into independent entities, shedding their Soviet-era influences. However, the transition was far from smooth. Police systems in Ukraine, at the time of

independence, were almost identical to the Soviet model, retaining centralized management, bureaucracy, and an extremely low demand for police accountability. These structures remained entrenched despite the country's newfound independence.

The features of corruption, abuse of power and human rights violations were the main aspects that defined the police system. The legacy of this in places and years that were experiencing worsening living conditions has had a profound effect on long-term public attitudes to police, especially when combined with the political/ economic crises of the 1990s. Unlike Ukraine, the Baltic States opted for an explicit path towards European integration and the development of democratic institutions in the early 1990s. This meant comprehensive reform of law enforcement (including tandem with international standards), anti-corruption. Baltic States immediately broke the link between Soviet law enforcement and public trust in police in the same law enforcement.

Demand for reform was largely shaped by the socio-economic setting during the time of perestroika. The rapid disintegration of the USSR brought severe economic problems for any post-Soviet state. In the economic crisis of 1990s Ukraine led us an order of all categories: distrust towards police and state institutions (by a point) Since corruption transformed into systemic corrupt, it did not only exist in law enforcement but also thrived within judiciary/politicians. This made any reform effort nigh impossible. The police from this era were regarded by the people not a savior but rather a tool of political pressure.

Today, the main obstacle for reform in Ukraine and the Baltic States has been corruption and making law enforcement agencies professional accountable. Deeply entrenched corruption in the law enforcement system was “the norm” for post-Soviet societies. It was therefore especially critical to not alter the legal aspect, but to build a new culture of police-community reciprocal relations.

The history and socio-economic background behind the different reform pathways in the Baltic States and Ukraine are clearly distinct. However, all these countries face similar challenges: reducing corruption, increasing professionalism in law enforcement, and building public trust in the police. National ownership and commitment in the Baltic States suggest that rapid structural reforms, aligned with international standards and accompanied by improved transparency, have had a highly positive impact on successful police reform.

Ukraine started from a similar point but faces its own challenges that hinder more effective reforms – much like Moldova.

The phases of legal reforms in the area of police in Ukraine point at not only to a complexity but also a highly ambiguous nature of the shift happening in police system which has been anchored for decades into Soviet legal and organizational patters. One of those key

moments in the reform is the establishment of the National Police of Ukraine that will replace the old police system which was founded in a new Ukrainian Constitution for 2015. This reform was triggered by social and political demands following the Revolution of Dignity, when key problems in law enforcement were revealed; from corruption to the lack of people's trust and deprivation society from right standards of human rights.

The establishment of the National Police was a fundamental change that involved not only a name change but also a restart of the key principles of law enforcement. A new Law of Ukraine "On the National Police" was adopted²¹⁰, which regulated the accountability of the police to citizens, its focus on providing quality services, and ensuring transparency and professionalism in its work. The introduction of new approaches was aimed at changing public perception of the police and making it a modern institution that would meet European standards²¹¹.

Institutional and mechanism-building in Ukraine oblige due to legislation reform which has provided for several transparency aspirations and introduce trust-promoting for the police. For instance, the creation of the National Internal Security Department of the National Police (to supervise police bodies and police members against corruption) represented a critical piece of purging bad elements from amongst police and strengthening public oversight. The 2011 Law on Openness (on getting information from public bodies, including police) also proved to be a key weapon in transparency and openness of law enforcement authorities increasing their legitimacy. Another key stage of the reform was the adoption of the Law of Ukraine "On the Certification of Police Officers" (2015), which provided for mandatory certification of police officers for compliance with new professionalism and ethics requirements. The attestation was aimed at eliminating corrupt or incompetent officers, which was also intended to increase public trust in law enforcement. However, practice has shown that this process has not always been effective, as corrupt ties and old schemes have sometimes hindered successful vetting and police reform. The vetting process has helped to purge the police of corrupt, incompetent or discredited officers. It has become an important part of the renewal of the system aimed at building a transparent and accountable institution that respects human rights principles. While the process has been met with criticism as some officers that failed vet were court appointed back; such are court decisions called into question the force of the reform and have decreased confidence in the police lustration itself.

²¹⁰ Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. (2024). *On the National Police: Law of Ukraine of 02.07.2015 No. 580-VIII (as of August 16, 2024)*. <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/580-19#Text>

²¹¹ Lupalo, O. A. (2019). Evaluation of the effectiveness of the National Police of Ukraine: Administrative and legal aspects. *Legal Regulation of the Economy*, 18, 73–85.

Moreover, one other corner of the reforms was about taking on police training. Law enforcement officer's curriculums were changed for reformation to new approach and the newly issued legal acts on curriculum that had been mandatory education about human rights, ethics, communication and conflict de-escalation have formed the basis for the new culture of serving public by police. For instance, the Law of Ukraine "On Education" (2017) laid down new requirements for law enforcement education and training including the involvement of external experts in developing a new curriculum for police training. The other critical element of building trust in the police from the public that was facilitated via the ways we created a transparent interaction between police and citizens. Laws on civil society and organizations (2012) urged law enforcement agencies to work more closely with civil society organizations, which was helpful in the development of dialogue and public-police confidence. The creation of police council 2.0 inside the police force as a new layer for public control and transparency were other major pillars. Reforms also included transformations of the police training system.

Therefore, in summary these laws have become the source of creating of a new law enforcement system in Ukraine that is based on the principles of modern democracy and accessibility to citizens. Although the reforms started to work in a positive way, their execution were hard and hard with not only corruption from corrupt persons involved in, but also lack of finance and absenteeism in applying certain legislative acts. However, taken individually they have been an important step of strengthening public trust in police and law enforcement effectiveness in Ukraine – as such the laws together.

Nevertheless, meanwhile somewhat momentous, reforms in themselves have run into a variety of obstacles which seriously limited their effectiveness. A big difficulty remained unresolved after the launch of the National Police – corruption. Old chains of corruption and connections have not been broken down long enough to root out today, in some cases police officers are still being bribed and confidence in this honest is constantly being shaken. This has affected somewhat the outcome of reform, as citizens did not immediately receive tangible changes on the level of law enforcement. The main issue was a total shortage of money for these reforms. As a result, many important aspects of the reform were not implemented to their full potential, reducing the effectiveness of the reform as a whole. Police officers often lacked the necessary resources and technical support, which made it difficult for them to perform their functions (Table 5):

Table 5. Key challenges to police reform in Ukraine

Challenge	Description	Impact on the reform process
Corruption in the police	Corruption schemes within law enforcement agencies, including bribery and abuse of power.	It reduces the effectiveness of reforms, impedes the implementation of changes and undermines trust in the police.
Political instability	Frequent changes in governments and political forces that change reform priorities.	Lack of sustained political will to implement reforms, which slows down the process.
Low qualification of staff	Insufficient professional training of police officers, lack of motivation to work.	It limits the effectiveness of the police and reduces the level of public trust.
Social tension and mistrust	High levels of social inequality, conflicts between the police and certain groups of the population (especially in areas with high crime rates).	Worsens police interaction with citizens, which reduces the effectiveness of reforms.

Source: created by the author

Summing up the above challenges, we can conclude that police reform in Ukraine requires a comprehensive approach that takes into account both internal and external factors. More particularly, the issue of corruption must be tackled and introducing a normal political environment which enables reforms to be saved from such a danger of frequent changes in the plans. Staff upskilling, equipment modernization and judicial independence are essential pillars for good reform. But only when we get rid of those obstacles, can lasting results be achieved and public confidence in the police improves.

Overall, while police reforms in Ukraine have demonstrated considerable potential for positive change, they have not been entirely successful due to fragmentation and inconsistency in their implementation. They have demonstrated that in order to achieve sustainable results, it is necessary not only to initiate reforms, but also to ensure their consistency, transparency and long-term support. The obstacles faced by the police in Ukraine, such as corruption, underfunding and insufficient public support, indicate that deeper and more comprehensive changes are needed to make reforms truly effective and deliver the desired results for citizens (Table 6):

Table 6. Legal reforms that have influenced trust in the police in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia and their benefits for Ukraine

Country	Key legal reforms	Impact on trust in the police	Recommendations for Ukraine
Lithuania	The Law on Police (1990), which established a new human rights-oriented structure of the police. The Law on Police Service (2000), which established standards for police training and ethics. The Community and Police programme (involving the public in law enforcement).	Increase police transparency and openness in interaction with the public through the establishment of an ombudsman. Reducing corruption and improving ethical standards among police officers.	Ukraine could introduce an ombudsman system for the police, which would help ensure transparency and protect the rights of citizens. Modernizing the HR policy and programme to improve police ethics.
Latvia	Establishment of certification commissions consisting of independent experts and representatives. Creating a new police culture based on democratic principles.	Increasing the level of professionalism and ethics among police officers. Improved relations between the police and the community, increased trust in law enforcement.	Establishment of independent attestation commissions, including civil society, to help cleanse the police of corrupt elements.
Estonia	Establishment of an interactive security management system. Introduce online platforms for filing grievance and tracking incidents and monitoring investigations. Emphasizing cybersecurity and fighting of cybercrime.	Transparency of police work thanks to technologies that allow citizens to control processes. Improving the efficiency of police work through digital tools.	Ukraine could introduce electronic platforms to improve citizens' access to information on police activities and monitor investigations.

Source: created by the author based on ²¹²

A study comparing legal changes in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia shows that each country has taken important steps to make policing better and boost its trust among the people. Lithuania has worked on building partnerships with local communities, Latvia has focused on shifting police culture and making police work more professional, while Estonia has aimed at

²¹² Smaliukienė, R., Vedlūga, T., & Giedraitytė, V. (2023). Initiatives, public trust, and citizen engagement during crises: A comparative analysis across Baltic States. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 21(4), 189–201. [https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(4\).2023.15](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(4).2023.15)

using digital tools and modern technology in law enforcement. Although the outcomes of these reforms differ by country, they all share a goal of enhancing police effectiveness, transparency, and engagement with the public. These efforts have slowly raised trust levels in the police, yet altering public views and stereotypes takes time and ongoing efforts to improve law enforcement. Evaluating how these reforms affect trust in the police is a key objective to judge their effectiveness and fine-tune the reform process.

Trust in police is a multi-dimensional indicator of the citizens' assessments of how efficient, honest and transparent in serving the interest of the public the police are. Sociological research methods and statistic data analysis is used for an elaborated approach in studies whether or not police reforms do have an influence on how much trust public has in its police.

Public opinion on the police is primarily measured through sociological research. Currently in Ukraine there are both state and independent institutions for this research: Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS), Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation etc. and international organizations like Transparency International and some research is done by national statistical offices of Baltic States (relevant research from European institutions, as Eurobarometer).

For example, according to KIIS, at the time of the creation of the National Police of Ukraine in 2015, there was a temporary increase in the level of trust in the police, which reached 40-50 proc. in large cities²¹³. However, in the following years, trust began to decline due to a number of factors, including dissatisfaction with the pace of reforms, persistent corruption and lack of efficiency of law enforcement.

In the Baltic States, according to Eurobarometer data, trust in the police has increased significantly since the implementation of reforms. In Lithuania, *for example*, in 2020, 70 proc. of citizens expressed trust in the police, which is significantly higher than the average in the European Union. In Estonia, this level reaches over 80 proc., which is the result of comprehensive reforms and transparent law enforcement²¹⁴.

Statistical data complement sociological surveys and allow us to assess the real impact of reforms on police performance. This is done using indicators such as the crime rate, the frequency of citizens' calls to the police, the number of cases solved, and the rate of corruption offences among police officers.

For example, data from the National Police of Ukraine show positive developments in the implementation of patrol police, including a reduction in traffic violations due to increased

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control. However, the high level of unsolved crimes and complaints against the police suggests that systemic changes have not yet reached the desired level²¹⁵.

In the Baltic States, statistics show a steady decline in crime and improved case solving. Estonia, *for example*, makes extensive use of digital tools to monitor police performance, allowing for rapid response to problems and accountability to citizens.

Thus, the use of public opinion polls and statistics allows us to assess the effectiveness of law enforcement reforms and their impact on public trust in the police. The analysis of these data helps to identify key problems and positive experiences that can be used to improve the situation in Ukraine.

Law enforcement reforms in the Baltic States have been clearly orientated towards European standards from the very beginning. Membership in the European Union and cooperation with international organizations have significantly accelerated the process of adapting best practices in law enforcement. The European Union played a key role in setting the standards that police services had to meet. The main requirements were related to human rights, transparency of law enforcement, anti-corruption and personal data protection. The EU has also contributed to financing reforms in the Baltic States through technical assistance programmes, such as the PHARE (Programme for Financial and Technical Assistance) mechanism and other instruments that supported police modernization.

International organizations (UN, OSCE, TI) were also pressing for reforms in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. They have given expert guidance police training and reform monitoring. The public trust in law enforcement agencies (to be specific, corruption problems are reduced greatly) increased substantially thanks to TI as an active anti-corruption programmes implementer.

For the Baltic States, their entry in the Schengen area especially had special significance since Schengen required compliance with stringent criteria in law enforcement and border security. The Schengen criteria necessitated the establishment of a police force that could cooperate with other police forces (in member states) as well as the authorities within the EU. This pushed Baltic States into better training police, e-introducing modern information system and more strengthening their international cooperation.

The impact of international standards is manifested by high trust in police of the Baltic States

As implementing these standards improves the work of law enforcement and makes it

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This is a good lesson for the Ukraine who also interacts in EU and international cooperation on law enforcement reforms. By following a similar methodology, Ukraine may be able strengthen the trust in police and deliver large scale changes of law enforcement system²¹⁶.

The slow movement in Ukraine is also tied to the fact that level of institutions-in-power trust circumstance is low. Social malaise and an economic crisis fuel public cynicism on reforms, needed or not – sometimes even if unjustified. The absence of reliable anti-corruption mechanisms throughout government and the fact that they do not seem to want to implement reforms in earnest casts doubt on the effectiveness of many initiatives.

The above-mentioned reform experience of Baltic States is a precious reference point for Ukraine, despite the common historical background these countries have been able to implement important reforms in economic, political and social institutions. The Baltic experience carries several important lessons for Ukraine, along with a number of recommendations for possible further reforms.

First, the Baltic States have a focus on European standards and institutions that can be taken from their experience. Baltic countries have been actively trying to join the EU, concentrating on the Western values such as democracy, rule of law and anti-corruption. This (for Ukraine) means that it must be taken whole milk into European legal family, not only the formal harmonization of legislation, but also real grounds-based in many aspects of effective supervision of the integration process and better education and training in legal matters for population. The root reform of state structures, state institutions including the law enforcement complexes and all courts. The Baltic police forces have been reformed substantially over the last few years, making their work more efficient and transparent with the help of new technologies, changing their perspective on citizen engaged in state activities and fighting corruption in the police. The police and prosecution reforms in Ukraine have to implement these approaches as well, especially the implementation of modern technologies in order to facilitate police work and improve public trust in them.

Additionally, central importance lies in political stability and achieving consensus among the main political forces. The Baltic States managed to achieve this largely due to broad societal support for reforms, including within political groups. In Ukraine, it is necessary to develop a mechanism that will facilitate political agreement on reforms, while also establishing a platform for political dialogue with civil society. Another crucial aspect of the reform process is addressing corruption, which, in the Baltic States, has evolved from being simply illegal to

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becoming a culture embedded in public administration. For Ukraine, combating corruption must be one of the foundational elements of reform, whether in the police, business, or judiciary. This requires not only controlling the state but also ensuring that it operates transparently and responsibly at every level of government.

These lessons lead to the following further reform recommendations for Ukraine. *First*, Ukraine must complete its European integration path by aligning its laws and legislation with European standards, ensuring that state institutions meet these standards. A key objective should be constructing a legal framework that protects citizens' rights and ensures justice. *Second*, corruption must continue to be addressed by establishing new anti-corruption institutions, reinforcing existing mechanisms, and advancing ongoing reforms in law enforcement agencies.

Ukraine also needs to foster innovation across all sectors of administration and the economy – ranging from justice administration to business – by leveraging modern technologies such as big data. A specific recommendation is to create an environment that supports the growth of small and medium enterprises, which can drive economic growth. This includes administrative streamlining, supporting startups and small businesses, reducing the tax burden, and facilitating access to financing.

The reform process should also include the establishment of a system to review and assess the impact of reforms, allowing for adjustments as needed in response to external and internal challenges. Thus, the experience of the Baltic States is crucial for Ukraine. Based on this experience, it is possible not only to improve existing reforms but also to develop strategies for further transformations that will lead to sustainable development and stability in the country. Summarizing the takeaways from the analysis, police reforms in Ukraine will be a long and hard process to cross structural and social barriers. Ukraine has tried to introduce police reforms over the last decade, but due to corruption and lack of professional training both inside the bureaucracy as well as political instability many of those attempts had been frustrated already. Considering the experience of the Baltic States that can be said to have undergone successful major changes to their law enforcement agencies during last few decades, it is clear that any reforms expected to be successful should have commitment from political leadership, a level of technical and human resources support, as well as an enabling legal/institutional environment for this transition.

The analysis is based on the assumption that reforms in Ukraine should be oriented toward European standards, particularly in the areas of law enforcement management, enhancing transparency, and combating corruption. Additionally, it is essential to establish the foundations for effective police-citizen interaction, which requires building trust in the police through innovation and professionalism, while also ensuring police accountability. A key factor

in increasing public trust in the police is the transparency of law enforcement institutions. When officers perform their duties openly and without corruption, trust from the public begins to build. Improving the qualifications of staff is another critical prerequisite for enabling the police to address the challenges posed by modern society. This requires investment in training and creating a professional environment for police officers. Reforms should be systemic, meaning that they should not only focus on symbolic changes, but also on enhancing the material and technical resources, including infrastructure for data collection and processing, and the development of tools that improve police efficiency through new technologies. Another essential condition for building trust is citizen engagement in the reform process. This can be achieved through mechanisms of citizen oversight in policing and maintaining continuous, open communication with the police. Any reform must prioritize maintaining the highest standards of professionalism within the police force, as this is the foundation for public confidence. If the police begin to show tangible results in combating crime and corruption, they will be able to earn the trust and support of the citizens.

Therefore, in order for police reform efforts to be legitimate and part of increasing the confidence of law enforcement agencies amongst law-abiding citizens – a holistic system of change (human, legal, organizational and technical) is needed. In the same vein however consistency and stability during the reforms along with citizens' involvement is also very crucial.

3.2. Socio-economic aspects of trust in the police

Socio-economic status is one of the crucial folksy elements that heavily influences public trust levels in police. The effectiveness of law enforcement agencies in many countries (including Ukraine is determined with not only structure and organizational performance, but also socio-economic context). The police are trusted for a multitude reasons, economic opportunity, and social justice, access to resources and citizens qualities in terms of education. When people are experiencing socio-economic hardship, their perception of the police often becomes negative, as they may perceive law enforcement as part of a structure that is not only unhelp full but may also be corrupt or unfair. The link between trust in the police and increased support for strong leadership, although somewhat weaker than the above institutions, is still present and remains within the scope of the analysis²¹⁷. At the same time, stable economic conditions, social guarantees for the population and high social mobility create the basis for

²¹⁷ Semeniuk, T. (2024). War and authoritarianism: The demand for a “strong hand” in Ukraine during the war. *Agora. Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(1), 21–59. <https://journals.oa.edu.ua/agora/article/view/4127/3774>

building trust in the police, as citizens feel that their interests will be protected in an equal and fair manner.

A number of sociological and political theories that focus on the interaction between social structures and state institutions provide theoretical approaches to the relationship between socio-economic conditions and the level of trust in law enforcement agencies. One of the main directions is the theory of social justice, according to which citizens are more likely to trust the police if they believe that its activities are fair and impartial. The level of trust is considerably affected by three dimensions namely fairness in the application of law, equality under the law and human rights preservation as well. Social capital theories also highlight citizen police interaction the role of social trust suspiciously prevalent in law enforcement agencies comes to light when we consider that social trust is driven by interaction through civic engagement and cooperation.

According to economic paradigms, trust in the police can be considered to be built on economic development and access to lowest common goods. The lack of trust in government institutions can start because of high corruption, inequality of the wealth distribution and weak economic stability that makes citizens see law enforcement agencies as enforcers of an unfair social order. In these grounds, it is important to provide equal chances for those segments of populations and economic security, which increase trust to the police. While in many countries the assessment of police performance is based on the level of public trust and satisfaction with police services, this does not exclude other forms of assessment. They depend on the specific police system and include a variety of police performance indicators²¹⁸.

Thus, socio-economic conditions not only shape the external perception of the police, but also directly affect its effectiveness. Citizens with a high level of economic and social security are more likely to trust law enforcement agencies, as they see them as a stable mechanism for protecting their rights and interests. Therefore, the study of the relationship between socio-economic conditions and trust in the police is an important aspect that allows formulating effective strategies to improve police performance and increase its legitimacy in the eyes of citizens.

Social factors are important components that affect public trust in the police, as they determine how people perceive the role of law enforcement in their lives, and how fair and effective they believe it to be. One of the most significant social factors is the crime rate in a

²¹⁸ Shyshkarova, O. G. (2024). Foreign experience of evaluating the effectiveness of police activity and the possibility of its implementation in Ukraine. *Analytical and Comparative Jurisprudence*, 5, 652–657. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2788-6018.2024.05.101>

region. A high crime rate can create a sense of insecurity and fear among citizens, which can lead to a negative perception of the police. At the same time, if the police are unable to respond effectively to criminal threats or fail to maintain order, this can reduce the level of trust in their activities²¹⁹. Also in some cases, rising crime might actually help generate trust in the police if people believe that the police are really at work making prevention and restoring safety.

One of the key social factors is social status of a citizen. Trust in the police may also vary a lot among social groups. For example, the police are often less trusted by the poor in the US, as (at least they believe that) their interests are not heard, or found more obsessed with maintaining law for the benefit of rich. Likewise in wealthier areas (where living standards have higher social stability), people will tend to trust their police more given that it can be pretty damn efficient. Differences between urban and rural setting are also important because in urban areas (more officers, more resources available) it may give a diffident population the sense that everyone is watching. More police officers in the city means it does feel to city folk like you are more protected and consequently unofficially trust you.

Education and awareness are paramount to a trust building relationship between the citizens and police. Education higher enable one to have a better knowledge about their rights and responsibilities, critique police performances. People educated become increasingly demanding of transparency from law enforcement agencies and are more active in the policy-making process regarding this activity. And they also can draw more conclusions based on having a wealth of information-visible performance evaluations by police. Similarly, a restriction on access to information or low levels of literacy can perpetuate an ignorance of the role of the police and what they do, therefore reducing trust and therefore leading unwarranted mistrust in police.

Cultural and historical factors are major contributors to trust in the police. Police forces in countries plagued by long-term political instability – such as authoritarian regimes or those marked by corruption in law enforcement – are generally perceived negatively by citizens. Moreover, in post-Soviet countries, this perception is even more pronounced, as citizens have direct experience of how the police once operated: through repression, violence, and corruption.

Here, public trust in the police is rooted in the empirical reality of past practices, where law enforcement was seen not so much as a defender of the people, but rather as a tool through which the state exerted control over its population. Therefore, rebuilding trust in the police in

²¹⁹ Beilmann, M., Lilleoja, L., & Realo, A. (2021). Learning to trust: Trends in generalized social trust in the three Baltic countries from 1990 to 2018. In *Social capital and subjective well-being* (pp. 19–43). Cham: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-75813-4_2

such countries requires large-scale reforms, increased transparency, visibility, and a committed fight against police corruption.

Additionally, crime rates, social status, educational attainment, and cultural influences shape an ordinary person's perception of, and trust in, the police. Addressing these factors through a combination of social, economic, and educational programs can significantly impact how police officers interact with the public, leading to a more stable and trustworthy environment for all segments of society.

Financial elements are crucial in determining public confidence in the police force, as they directly affect the effectiveness and capacity of law enforcement to uphold the law and societal norms. A country's level of economic development significantly influences police performance. In developed economies, police forces typically have access to essential equipment, comprehensive training programs, and competitive salaries.

In contrast, in regions with weak or struggling economies, the situation is very different. Police officers often face financial shortages, lack of equipment, and exposure to bribery, which makes it difficult to combat crime effectively. These challenges hinder their performance and diminish public trust.

When officers face financial hardship, earn low wages, and lack institutional support, they cannot perform their duties effectively. This leads the public to perceive them as ineffective, which erodes trust. Closing these financial gaps is essential to restoring faith in law enforcement and ensuring that police can fulfill their mandate to protect and serve.

Dishonesty and financial inequality are interlinked issues that heavily influence public trust in the police. When law enforcement is viewed as untrustworthy, it undermines citizens' belief in their ability to act justly and competently. This issue becomes especially critical in societies with wide economic disparities, where corruption often intersects with social and economic divides, further weakening trust.

This systemic incoherence creates a sense of imbalance between justice and law enforcement, reinforcing the perception of the police as adversaries rather than allies. They are then seen not as protectors, but as enforcers of an unjust system.

To overcome these challenges, substantial reforms are necessary – targeting both corruption and economic inequality. Only then can law enforcement institutions begin to rebuild their credibility and establish a foundation of trust, if not partnership, with the community.

Trust in the police is a complex and multidisciplinary issue, closely tied to various socio-economic factors. It does not rely solely on how well police officers perform their duties, but also on the broader socio-economic environment in which they operate. Elements such as visible security presence, crime rates, educational background, cultural norms, social status,

and the overall state of the economy are all interconnected and influence the level of trust individuals or communities have in law enforcement.

Trust in the police also varies depending on the socio-economic status of a country. Research shows that in countries with strong economies, low levels of corruption, and social stability – such as the Scandinavian nations – public trust in the police is significantly higher. This is largely because the police in these countries are well-equipped, professional, and maintain a positive public image. Moreover, they are visible, accessible, responsive, and carry out their duties with transparency and efficiency. In addition, communities in these societies actively contribute to building strong relationships with the police, fostering mutual trust and cooperation²²⁰.

Corruption of police for lack of the social inequalities and economic bases in police force is common to the countries described below, eroding the public trust in police for law and justice. Furthermore, low police rewards and inadequate budgets lead that police cannot deliver adequate security/ order, leading the public to lose trust in a state.

A nice case is Germany, where the cops often have a lot of trust because of their good work, openness and shared work with everyday people. High amounts of money growth, wealth, and aid for society make it easier to build public faith in safety workers. But in places like Italy, money gaps and cop wrongdoing have changed this trust. The power of crime groups and bad acts inside law enforcement has caused some folks to feel let down, hurting how people see the police's skill and honesty.

The times of places like Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary, which saw big changes in society and money after the end of communist rule offers many good ideas. In communities where incomes are higher and social inequality is lower, people tend to have more trust in law enforcement agencies. Thus, promoting economic and social stability is essential for creating a reliable and effective policing system. This is largely because, in such environments, the police are seen as an organization that carries out its duties fairly and competently, free from corruption or bias. Additionally, a strong economy enables governments to allocate sufficient resources to the police, enhance officer salaries, and improve their training²²¹. This, in turn, enhances the effectiveness and credibility of law enforcement agencies.

²²⁰ Kochel, T. R., & Skogan, W. G. (2021). Accountability and transparency as levers to promote public trust and police legitimacy: Findings from a natural experiment. *Policing: An International Journal*, ahead-of-print (ahead-of-print). <https://doi.org/10.1108/pijpsm-04-2021-0062>

²²¹ Kovaliv, M., Verbytska, A., Tkachuk, O., & Zayarnyuk, V. (2022). Legal bases of realization of the law enforcement function of the state in the sphere of economy of Ukraine. *Path of Science*, 8(2–3), 1001–1009. <https://doi.org/10.22178/pos.79-2>

In societies marked by significant social inequality or low-income levels, public trust in law enforcement often declines. In these situations, many people may view the police with skepticism, linking them to corruption or oppressive actions instead of safety and justice. Insufficient economic development worsens these issues, as a lack of funding for law enforcement agencies hampers their ability to perform their duties effectively.

Police reforms can only be effective if they are part of a broader context of economic and social change that reduces inequality and improves the overall living conditions of citizens.

Socio-economic conditions also determine the success of specific law enforcement reforms. *For example*, in countries with high levels of economic development and strong political will for change, police reforms can be successful due to growing public support and government efforts. In such countries, reforms usually focus on improving the professionalism, efficiency and transparency of the police, allowing citizens to feel more trust in law enforcement agencies²²².

In countries with low incomes and significant social inequality, reforms may have limited effect unless they are accompanied by reforms in other economic and social sectors. If citizens do not see improvements in their living conditions, they may be skeptical about changes in the police. Therefore, for law enforcement reforms to succeed, the broader socio-economic context must be taken into account to ensure that the police are able to operate effectively and build trust.

Dramatic shifts in socio-economic conditions can significantly enhance public trust in the police, as this trust is often rooted in the perception that law enforcement is effectively fulfilling its duties and ensuring public safety and fairness. Substantial changes are needed to improve police performance and restore the public image of law enforcement institutions.

One of the key steps toward gaining public trust is to ensure that police officers work in a better environment, starting with fair and adequate pay. Insufficient salaries can lead to frustration and increase the risk of misconduct and corruption, as financial insecurity may push officers toward unethical behavior. Proper remuneration not only boosts morale but also attracts experienced and capable individuals into leadership roles, thereby improving both efficiency and integrity within the force.

Furthermore, providing a comprehensive range of social support – such as health insurance, pension plans, family assistance programs, and other benefits – contributes to

²²² Schaap, D. (2020). Police trust-building strategies: A socio-institutional, comparative approach. *Policing and Society*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2020.1726345>

officers' sense of stability and well-being. When police officers feel secure and valued, they are more likely to carry out their responsibilities with rationality, dedication, and professionalism.

Police corruption must be eradicated in order to rebuild public trust. When corruption exists within law enforcement, it undermines public confidence and signals a breakdown in justice and the rule of law. To address this issue, several problem-solving initiatives can be implemented. *For example*, establishing an independent body to receive complaints about police misconduct can ensure impartiality and increase accountability. Additionally, transparent procedures in hiring, promotion, and evaluation processes are essential.

Regular anti-corruption capacity-building programs and comprehensive training at all levels can reinforce the principle that justice is rooted in fairness and accountability. Furthermore, it is crucial to equip police officers with modern tools and technology that enable them to carry out their duties effectively. Continuous on-the-job training, combined with access to up-to-date equipment, enhances operational capacity and demonstrates to the public that law enforcement is prepared and capable of serving and protecting society.

Implementing these reforms lays the foundation for a professional, well-respected, and accountable police force. Legal reforms of this nature can substantially improve police-community relations by establishing clear norms and standards, emphasizing that police officers are not only enforcers of the law but also protectors of human rights and active participants in society.

Strengthening police-community relations is equally important. This can be achieved by encouraging community engagement through regular meetings where police officers sit down with citizens to discuss local concerns. With proper training, police officers can fulfill their roles not only as guardians of the law but also as collaborative problem-solvers. As a result, public perceptions of law enforcement become more positive.

A crucial next step is to elevate the education and training of police officers. In addition to professional training, there should be a strong focus on ethics, communication, stress management, and interactions with diverse social groups. These skills are vital for helping officers understand the needs of different communities and foster mutual trust and respect between the police and the public.

Public confidence in law enforcement is closely linked to socio-economic factors. The police are not only one of the most visible state institutions with socio-economic impact, but also a mirror of how citizens perceive justice and fairness in their country. High levels of socio-economic development, stable job opportunities for officers, anti-corruption measures, and sufficient funding are fundamental preconditions for an effective and trustworthy police force.

Ensuring fair salaries and comprehensive social benefits for police officers not only improves their ability to perform their duties but also sends a strong message that society values and respects those who serve and protect. This recognition reinforces the bond between law enforcement and the community. However, public trust is deeply undermined when social inequality, economic insecurity, and police corruption rise. When citizens believe the police serve only certain interests or fail to prevent crime, their trust in law enforcement deteriorates.

Moreover, public attitudes toward human rights, education levels, and legal protections can shape how citizens interact with the police. An active and informed citizenry is more likely to engage constructively with law enforcement rather than react solely through criticism or sanctions. Therefore, building trust must be a multi-faceted effort that takes into account socio-economic factors contributing to police inefficiency and mistrust.

Improving officer compensation, creating transparent and effective oversight mechanisms, and offering ongoing professional and personal support are essential. These steps enhance morale and ground-level efficiency, while also demonstrating a broader commitment to justice and equality. Furthermore, community outreach programs that promote mutual respect, education, and cooperation play a vital role. Trust is built not through intimidation, but through openness and respect.

Transparency must be embedded at all levels of law enforcement, from leadership to everyday interactions, allowing for genuine relationships between police and the communities they serve. This relational approach not only helps police respond more effectively to current societal challenges but also ensures that public safety is maintained through mutual trust.

In conclusion, addressing socio-economic disparities, enhancing transparency, and strengthening police-community presence are essential to building trust. These initiatives pave the way for deeper cooperation between citizens and law enforcement, ensuring that justice and public safety serve the true needs of society.

such as Ukraine and the Baltic States offers critical insights into the broader dynamics of democratic transition and governance. While each country has faced its own unique challenges, comparing Ukraine's reform process with that of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia allows for a recognizing how each country's circumstances – including Ukraine's ongoing conflict – have

rsal and country-specific factors that have shaped the reform process. The Baltic States, as members of the European Union and NATO, benefited from external pressures to align with Western legal and security standards. Meanwhile, Ukraine's path to reform has been shaped not

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3.4. Interim research results

Investments in professional development and the modernization of technical resources have further equipped law enforcement agencies with the necessary tools to address emerging challenges such as organized crime and restore public safety. These reforms highlight the transformative effects of well-executed policy changes and suggest that prioritizing transparency and modernization can yield significant benefits for society.

Police reform in Ukraine remains limited in scope. While substantial changes have occurred since the Revolution of Dignity, deep-rooted systemic issues and corruption continue to exacerbate existing problems, making the reform process more challenging. Although initiatives such as police patrols have increased citizen engagement, trust in law enforcement remains underdeveloped. Ukraine's experience underscores the necessity for comprehensive, transparent, and well-funded reforms to effectively address systemic issues. The promising progress seen in the Baltic States indicates that well-targeted reforms can yield significant improvements, offering valuable lessons for Ukraine's reform path.

European standards and international cooperation have been key drivers of progress in the Baltic States. In contrast, Ukraine faces additional challenges, including political instability, corruption, and weak intergovernmental coordination, all of which hinder reform efforts. Political stability, transparency, and adequate financial and institutional support are essential for successful reform in Ukraine. Socio-economic factors, including income levels and social inequality, also play a crucial role in shaping public trust in law enforcement. While economic stability generally fosters positive perceptions of the police, inequality and economic hardship tend to erode trust, disproportionately affecting the most disadvantaged segments of society.

Public mistrust of law enforcement is particularly prevalent in societies where marginalized communities feel that the police primarily serve the wealthy and ignore the voices of the less privileged. Inequality is often linked to higher levels of corruption and insecurity. In more stable economies, the police are generally perceived as fair and impartial, whereas in weaker states, corruption undermines public confidence. The experiences of Ukraine and the Baltic States reflect these tensions. Public trust in the Baltic States improved due to economic stability, higher police wages, and investments in education and financial transparency. Effective anti-corruption measures have also enhanced the legitimacy of the police. However, Ukraine continues to struggle with low wages, insufficient funding, and persistent corruption, all of which undermine public confidence. Economic deprivation, coupled with severe social inequalities, has led many Ukrainians to view law enforcement as ineffective in safeguarding their rights and needs.

For Ukraine to rebuild public trust in its police force, a strong foundation of economic stability, the reduction of social inequalities, and fair police wages are essential. Combating corruption within law enforcement is also critical, as it directly affects public trust. The Baltic States offer valuable recommendations for identifying reform strategies that foster stronger relationships between the police and the public. Police reform initiatives in both Ukraine and the Baltic States share two overarching objectives: increasing law enforcement effectiveness and enhancing public trust by combating corruption. Legislation concerning police professionalization, increased accountability, and alignment with citizens' needs is common to both regions. Measures promoting transparency and anti-corruption efforts in police-civilian interactions are also key priorities. Nevertheless, significant differences exist between the two cases. The Baltic States were able to implement successful police reforms due to their more developed economic conditions following independence. In contrast, Ukraine continues to struggle with chronic economic instability and political challenges, which hinder progress, particularly regarding police funding, wages, and working conditions.

Sustainable law enforcement policies in the Baltic States have been largely made possible through their integration into the European Union. In contrast, Ukraine's ongoing political instability and corruption complicate its reform efforts, reducing the likelihood of success. Historical factors also play a significant role in these differences. Ukraine's police system remains deeply constrained by Soviet-era structures, which are widely recognized as suffering from systemic issues that impede meaningful progress. In contrast, the Baltic States did not experience the same level of Soviet influence after independence, allowing them to dismantle institutional barriers more effectively and modernize their law enforcement institutions.

Ukraine's reform efforts continue to be hindered by endemic corruption, funding shortages, and socio-economic instability. However, lessons from the Baltic States can provide guidance on implementing effective strategies such as enhanced police training, modernization of equipment, and improved salaries. Political reform and economic development remain prerequisites for meaningful change. To effectively combat corruption, improve transparency, and enhance police welfare, Ukraine should consider adopting elements of the Baltic reform approach. Strengthening public participation through feedback mechanisms and integrating performance monitoring into decision-making processes will also be crucial to Ukraine's reform success.

This study has highlighted the key determinants influencing trust in Ukraine's police force, particularly in relation to legal and socio-economic factors. While legal reform is necessary, external conditions such as economic development, police salaries, and corruption

levels play a decisive role in shaping reform outcomes. Public confidence in law enforcement is heavily influenced by socio-economic determinants such as inequality and political instability. Excessive inequality and corruption obstruct meaningful change, making reform efforts more difficult to achieve.

For reforms to succeed, a comprehensive strategy must be pursued. Legal reforms should be closely linked to measures that promote economic stability, public support for law enforcement, improved working conditions, and higher salaries, while also prioritizing the fight against corruption. Additionally, citizen participation in the reform process is crucial, as it fosters confidence in law enforcement. Further research is required to examine the role of socio-economic factors and corruption in shaping reform efforts and to identify successful international models that can inform future policing strategies in Ukraine.

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between law enforcement agencies and the public. The comparative analysis will help identify promising development areas in Ukraine's police and develop recommendations for improving

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and provide a platform for discussing pressing issues related to law and order. Also, there are active educational programmes to foster a culture of legal responsibility and preventive measures among young people. Similarly, Latvia has a "Friendly Police" initiative, which

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Paimuratov, M. O., Kofman, B. Y., & Naumkina, S. M. (2022). Organisational-normative paradigm of juvenile prevention in the territorial community: The role of local self-government bodies in its formation and implementation in conditions of peace and martial law. *Juvenile policy as a component of supporting Ukraine's national security and defence*, 9-41. Retrieved from <http://baltijapublishing.lv/omp/index.php/bp/catalog/view/287/7880/16458-1> (accessed: March 6, 2025).

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²²⁴ Meershoek, G. (2023). Creating modern, community-oriented police: Some Dutch experiences. *Philosophy, Economics and Law Review*, 3(1), 210–217. <https://doi.org/10.31733/2786-491X-2023-1-210-217>

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²²⁵ Blair, G., Beaulieu, E., Houghton, R., Gertler, P. J., & Seitz, M. (2021). Community policing does not build citizen trust in police or reduce crime in the Global South. *Science*, 374(6571). <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.abd3446> (date of access: 15.03.2025).

²²⁶ Ruks, A. (2020). Viena no prioritātēm ir policista profesijas reputācija. LR1.

<https://lr1.lsm.lv/lv/raksts/krustpunkta/krustpunkta-liela-intervija-jaunais-valsts-policijas-prieksnieks.a135566>

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²²⁷ Andžāns, M. (2024). Societal perceptions in transition from a borderland to a frontline: Latvia's Latgale during the War in Ukraine. *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 29(SI), 53–70. <https://doi.org/10.54648/eerr2024021> (date of access: 16.03.2025).

²²⁸ Lushahina, T., Hromadska, N., & Matviienkiv, S. (2021). Formation of community security policy in the conditions of decentralization as a component of national security of Ukraine. *International Conference on Social Science, Psychology and Legal Regulation (SPL 2021)*, Kyiv, Ukraine, 22–23 December 2021. Paris, France. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.211218.013> (date of access: 16.03.2025).

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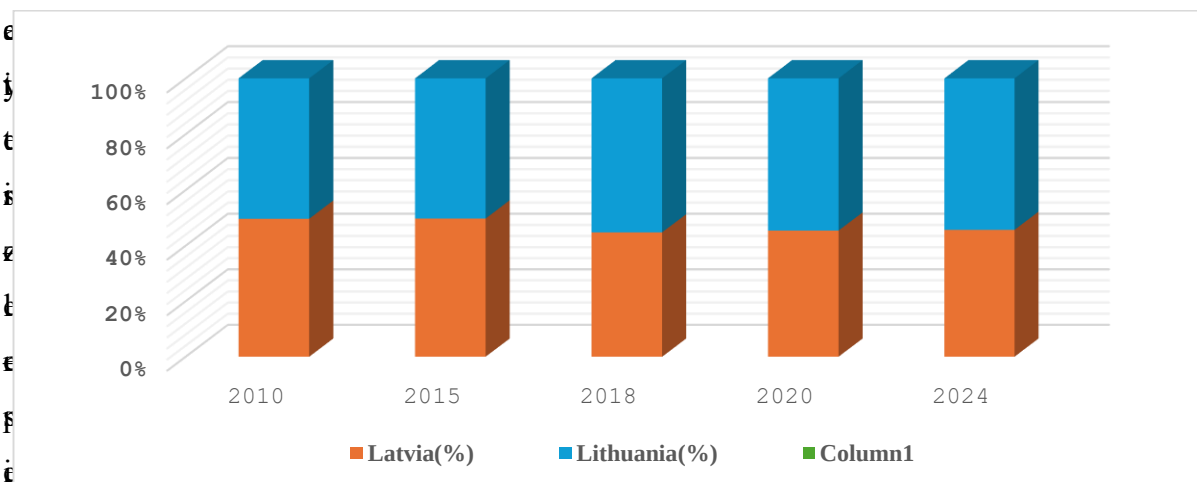
²²⁹ Beilmann, M., & Lilleoja, L. (2017). Explaining the relationship between social trust and value similarity: The case of Estonia. *Juridica International*, 25, 14. <https://doi.org/10.12697/ji.2017.25.02> (date of access: 16.03.2025).

²³⁰ Asquith, N. L., & Bartkowiak-Théron, I. (2021). Community engagement. In *Policing practices and vulnerable people* (pp. 69–84). Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-62870-3_5 (date of access: 06.03.2025).

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Aspect	Main
Defining performance criteria	▪ Transparency of governance processes, understand ability for citizens and employees, and availability of information on political and organisational changes. ▪ The speed and efficiency of decision-making are required to solve administrative problems or make decisions. ▪ Quality of service to citizens’ satisfaction with the work of the police. ▪ Innovations in management include the introduction of new technologies to improve police work.

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²³¹ Beilmann, M., Lilleoja, L., & Realo, A. (2021). Learning to trust: Trends in generalised social trust in the three Baltic countries from 1990 to 2018. In Social capital and subjective well-being (pp. 19–43). Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-75813-4_2 (date of access: 06.03.2025).

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²³² Kochel, T. R., & Skogan, W. G. (2021). Accountability and transparency as levers to promote public trust and police legitimacy: Findings from a natural experiment. *Policing an International Journal*, ahead-of-print, ahead-of-print. <https://doi.org/10.1108/pijpsm-04-2021-0062> (date of access: 16.03.2025).

²³³ Dzhuzha, O., Siuravchyk, V., & Shumeiko, T. (2024). Current trends in public involvement in crime prevention policing. *Naukovij Visnik Natsional'noi Akademii Vnutrishnih Sprav*, 29(1), 9–19. <https://doi.org/10.56215/naia-herald/1.2024.09> (date of access: 16.03.2025).

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²³⁴ Rudhanto, A. W. (2022). Predictors of citizens’ satisfaction and trust in police as a function of good governance and cooperative culture. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 9(3), 152–167. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ejecs/1279> (date of access: 16.03.2025).

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	▪ The effectiveness of internal control ensures proper supervision of police activities and the absence of corruption. ▪ The level of professionalism of the staff qualifications of police officers and their ability to effectively perform tasks.
Data collection and analysis	▪ Statistics on police performance, e.g. number of crimes, times responses to calls. ▪ Assessing public opinion through citizen or group surveys focuses on understanding how people perceive police work. ▪ Interviews with police officers to assess internal processes and management practices. ▪ Analysis of documents (e.g. police reports, financial statements, policies and procedures).
Use of performance indicators	▪ For transparency, the number of published reports and the availability of access to important information for citizens. ▪ For the speed of decision-making, the average time required to resolve administrative cases. ▪ The quality of service includes the level of citizens, the frequency of complaints, and the number of satisfaction cases without resolving the need to file complaints. ▪ For the effectiveness of internal control, the number of detected cases of corruption or violations is important.

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u- one that fosters public trust in law enforcement and enhances public safety in Ukraine.

²³⁵ Kubaienko, A. (2023). Efficiency of administration in national police agencies: Evaluation algorithm. *Ukrainian Polyceistics: Theory, Legislation, Practice*, 6(2), 11–17. <https://doi.org/10.32782/2709-9261-2023-2-6-2> (date of access: 16.03.2025).

he media can enhance the police’s image and increase public confidence.

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Criterion	Ukraine	Lithuania	Latvia
Level of trust in the police	Low or unstable due to corruption scandals, political influence and individual cases of abuse	High, due to effective reforms and transparent police activity	High, due to the emphasis on public partnerships and preventive measures
Media Focus	Sensational events, scandals, criticism of actions police	Transparency of activities police , crime prevention	Coverage of positive initiatives, interaction police with the community
The role of social media	Influential, but often used to spread negative content and manipulation	It is actively used by the police for direct communication, clarification of situations and combating fakes	The police actively cooperate with the public through social media and disseminate reliable information
Police communication with the media	Reactive, lack of a systematic approach to informing citizens	Proactive, regular press conferences, operational updates	Proactive, open communication channels, participation in public initiatives
The impact of politics on media coverage	High, media is often used to criticise or support the government	Minimal emphasis on police professionalism	Low, media focuses on socially important issues

²³⁶ Masso, A., Raud, M., Laanpere, M., & Luik, P. (2024). Citizens’ perspectives on platformisation of police work: A scenario and story-based exploration in Estonia and Sweden. *Information, Communication & Society*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118x.2024.2333842> (date of access: 06.03.2025).

²³⁷ Boyte, K. J. (2019). A comparative analysis of the cyberattacks against Estonia, the United States, and Ukraine. *In National Security* (pp. 108–125). <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-7912-0.ch007> (date of access: 06.03.2025).

Examples of information campaigns	Cases of police violence, corruption scandals, lack of effective investigations	Campaigns to raise public awareness of security, police cooperation with the public	Public programmes safety, initiatives to improve relations police and community
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Comparative media analysis of the work police in Ukraine | Lithuania | Latvia confirms large gaps in strategies – communication between conducting agencies, press and state (for more t public arrangements – to build trust.

The introduction of open communication and proper handling of social media could allow the Ukrainian police to not be seen as ‘too evil’ in the eyes of the public, and it can build

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²³⁸ Skyba, E., & Tkachenko, K. (2023). Philosophical foundations of a new approach to the community policing activity. *Philosophy, Economics and Law Review*, 3(2), 13–24. <https://doi.org/10.31733/2786-491x-2023-2-13-24> (date of access: 16.03.2025).

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²³⁹ Rijal, S. (2023). The importance of community involvement in public management planning and decision-making processes. *Journal of Contemporary Administration and Management (ADMAN)*, 1(2), 84–92. <https://doi.org/10.61100/adman.v1i2.27> (date of access: 16.03.2025).

²⁴⁰ Jõesaar, A., Rožukalne, A., & Jastramskis, D. (2022). Trust in public service media in the Baltic States. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01629778.2022.2127816> (date of access: 16.03.2025).

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monitoring. Ukraine: Here, these tools serve the function of a whistleblower, by primarily critical means, Lithuanian/Latvian – it's police-public partnership-problem-solving-platform. Centralised crime gangs or cyber-criminal organisations. The Baltic nations – Latvia and Lithuania

However, Ukraine – a nation under Russian aggression ever since 2014 is at the most

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the development of crisis communication strategies within law enforcement agencies accelerated following the Revolution of Dignity in 2013–2014 and in response to Russian military

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²⁴¹ Jakubcova, L., Holubova, K., & Dubravova, H. (2024). The impact of modern information technology on the resistance to disinformation in the police. In *Lecture Notes in Computer Science* (pp. 290–302). Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-68005-2_21 (date of access: 16.03.2025).

²⁴² Dumchykov, M., Utkina, M., & Bondarenko, O. (2022). Cybercrime as a threat to the national security of the Baltic States and Ukraine: The comparative analysis. *International Journal of Safety and Security Engineering*, 12(4), 481–490. <https://doi.org/10.18280/ijssse.120409> (date of access: 16.03.2025).

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nfluence of disinformation. Researchers have emphasised that in today's media and

A study of community engagement and public trust in the police in Ukraine, Lithuania, and Latvia highlights the importance of inclusive, transparent, and participatory approaches to policing. A comparative analysis shows that Community-Oriented Policing (COP) plays a crucial role in fostering mutual trust, strengthening public cooperation, and enhancing the overall legitimacy of police institutions.

The concept of Community-Oriented Policing (COP) has gained significant attention as an effective strategy for improving police-public relations. In Ukraine, the implementation of COP is still in its early stages, requiring ongoing reforms and alignment with European standards. The key components of this model include active dialogue with local communities, joint problem-solving, and the establishment of community policing initiatives. However, the practical application of COP in Ukraine remains inconsistent, as limited institutional capacity and a lack of public awareness hinder its full implementation.

Best practices in Lithuania and Latvia demonstrate the positive impact of community engagement on public trust and crime prevention. Both countries have successfully implemented programs such as neighborhood watch, community liaison officers, and community safety councils. These initiatives have not only improved communication between the police and citizens but also fostered a collective sense of responsibility for public safety.

Trust is a key factor in determining the effectiveness of police-community relations. The level of public trust in the police directly affects the willingness of citizens to cooperate with law enforcement agencies, report crimes, and participate in community safety initiatives. In Lithuania and Latvia, sustained efforts to increase transparency, accountability, and responsiveness have resulted in higher levels of trust compared to Ukraine. Integrating mechanisms for citizen feedback, independent oversight bodies, and regular public consultations has further contributed to building trust. R. Ruddell emphasizes that cross-

national comparisons show that trust in the police is strongly influenced by institutional transparency, procedural fairness, and the degree of community involvement²⁴³.

Examples from Ukraine, Lithuania, and Latvia illustrate the media's impact on the public image of law enforcement agencies. In Lithuania and Latvia, active media engagement and transparent communication have contributed to a more favorable perception of police activities. In contrast, the Ukrainian media landscape is often polarized, with conflicting narratives undermining trust in police institutions.

Social media and citizen journalism have become powerful tools for monitoring police activity and holding authorities accountable. Real-time reporting of police conduct through platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube has fostered greater openness and accountability from the police toward the public. However, the unbridled power of social media also carries risks, allowing fake news and skewed interpretations to proliferate rapidly. To counter disinformation and negative portrayals of the police in the media, multi-pronged strategies such as media literacy campaigns, fact-checking initiatives, and enhanced media relations at the local level by law enforcement are essential.

Working with independent media organizations and civil society will enhance the credibility of police messages. Crisis communication is crucial to maintaining public confidence, especially during crises (whether natural or man-made) or security incidents. A crisis is a situation where information needs to be transmitted quickly, accurately, and transparently to communities directly or indirectly affected. Ukraine is still in the process of developing a template for effective crisis communication.

A study on community-police engagement and trust in Ukraine, Lithuania, and Latvia suggests that participatory, transparent, and engagement-based measures are essential. Comparative research highlights that community-oriented policing (COP) plays a key role in building and maintaining public trust, cooperation, and the perceived legitimacy of police institutions.

Community-oriented policing (COP) has increasingly been recognized as a promising practice for improving relations between police and citizens worldwide. In Ukraine, however, the implementation of COP is still in its early stages, requiring continuous reform and alignment

²⁴³ Ruddell, R., & Trott, K. (2022). Perceptions of trust in the police: A cross-national comparison. *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01924036.2022.2071308> (date of access: 16.03.2025).

with European standards. The core of this model is collaboration with local communities, community problem-solving, and the establishment of peace police units. However, the practice of COP in Ukraine remains limited due to insufficient institutional capacity and low community awareness, which prevent its full implementation.

Lithuania and Latvia's best practices demonstrate how community involvement contributes to increased public trust and crime prevention. Both countries have implemented various programs, such as neighborhood watch initiatives, citizens' security councils, and community liaison officers. These efforts have not only improved communication between the police and citizens but also fostered the perception that the community shares responsibility for public safety.

Currently, trust is playing an increasingly significant role in shaping the effectiveness of police-community relations. The level of public trust in the police is a major factor in determining whether citizens will assist law enforcement agencies, report crimes, and engage in community safety initiatives. In Lithuania and Latvia, efforts to increase transparency, accountability, and responsiveness have resulted in higher levels of trust compared to Ukraine. The combination of citizen feedback channels, independent oversight bodies, and regular public consultations has contributed to this increased trust.

In the Baltic States, efforts to engage citizens in crisis response are focused on rebuilding public trust and improving perceptions of law enforcement. Public trust is crucial for maintaining public order, as effective police-community cooperation not only helps reduce crime but also promotes social stability and security, particularly during times of crisis. Volunteer initiatives are increasingly common in these countries, especially in response to crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic or heightened security threats like military conflicts. Citizens often organize volunteer groups that operate in parallel with the police and other state institutions to maintain public order. Volunteers assist with tasks such as spreading information, supporting evacuations, coordinating humanitarian and medical assistance, and restoring critical infrastructure after emergencies. A key aspect of this engagement is that it helps build trust between the police and citizens, as volunteering allows individuals to take direct responsibility for maintaining order in their communities.

During crises, the Baltic States make extensive use of social media to communicate with the public. Real-time updates about security measures, advice, and instructions are posted on official social media accounts of police and other relevant authorities. This method ensures the efficient dissemination of critical information and facilitates prompt feedback from the public.

This approach is also being adopted in Ukraine, where citizens can now directly reach the police to ask questions or submit complaints²⁴⁴.

Crisis management is a crucial component of social order and public safety in the Baltic States, and citizen involvement is essential. Stronger cooperation between the police, local authorities, and civil initiatives enhances public confidence in law enforcement agencies, which is a prerequisite for effective crisis response and national stability.

Institutional mechanisms that encourage community participation in law enforcement include the formation of advisory councils, problem-solving forums, and youth outreach programs. These initiatives allow citizens to voice their concerns, take an active role in governance, and contribute to the co-creation of security strategies. However, financial constraints, bureaucratic inertia, and weak institutional support in Ukraine significantly hinder the effective implementation of such mechanisms.

Challenges to effective community engagement in Ukraine include a historical distrust of law enforcement agencies, limited public awareness of participation opportunities, and the absence of a comprehensive legal framework to support community-oriented policing. Additionally, ongoing armed conflict and socio-economic instability have further weakened social cohesion, making it difficult to establish lasting partnerships between the police and local communities.

The impact of traditional and digital media on public trust in the police is significant. Media coverage plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions of law enforcement, especially in times of crisis. Positive portrayals of police-community cooperation can build trust, while sensationalist or biased coverage can reinforce negative stereotypes and undermine trust in the police.

Examples from Ukraine, Lithuania, and Latvia illustrate the media's impact on law enforcement agencies' public image. In Lithuania and Latvia, active media engagement and transparent communication have contributed to a more favorable perception of police activities. In contrast, the Ukrainian media landscape is often polarized, with conflicting narratives undermining trust in police institutions.

Social media and citizen journalism can be powerful tools for holding police accountable and ensuring transparency. Real-time reporting on police conduct through platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube allows communities to hold authorities socially accountable. However, the open nature of social media also comes with inherent risks, as

²⁴⁴ Smaliukienė, R., Vedlūga, T., & Giedraitytė, V. (2023). Initiatives, public trust, and citizen engagement during crises: A comparative analysis across Baltic States. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 21(4), 189–201. [https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(4\).2023.15](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(4).2023.15) (date of access: 16.03.2025).

misinformation and revisionist narratives can spread quickly. The solution to countering misinformation and stereotypes about the police involves media literacy campaigns, fact-checking initiatives, and strategic communications from law enforcement. Increased cooperation with local press and civil society can also enhance the credibility of police reporting.

Public trust must be protected during emergencies, and crisis communication strategies are essential in times of security incidents. Effective crisis communication involves the swift, accurate, and transparent sharing of information, fostering community connectedness. Ukraine is currently working on creating a set of standardized crisis communication protocols.

This doctoral thesis, *“Evaluating police accountability and citizen rights in war*

1. Evolution of Police Management Strategies and Public Trust

The study confirms that police institutions in Ukraine, Latvia, and Lithuania have undergone critical transformations in their management strategies in response to military crises. These changes – primarily technical and organizational – have allowed for basic continuity in policing functions. However, public trust is not achieved through structural shifts alone. It also depends on transparency, consistent communication, and demonstrable adherence to public service values. Effective management during war requires a dual focus: operational efficiency and legitimacy in the eyes of the population.

2. Structural Transformations in Ukraine

Ukrainian law enforcement has experienced substantial organizational restructuring due to security threats, including the establishment of decentralized units and collaboration with local volunteer groups. Positive outcomes are evident in regions where reforms were implemented locally and were community-oriented. These transformations, though uneven across the country, have increased public engagement and improved the image of police forces in affected areas. Nevertheless, challenges remain in terms of consistency and long-term sustainability.

3. Comparative Analysis of Reforms and Human Rights Standards

While all three countries have implemented police reforms, Latvia and Lithuania have been more consistent in aligning their practices with national and international human rights standards. These include institutional safeguards, legal protections, and citizen-oriented policies. In contrast, Ukraine’s efforts, although improving, are often hampered by wartime constraints, regional disparities, and political instability. A clear need remains to harmonize reform strategies with international norms and to ensure civilian oversight, particularly during emergency governance.

4. Oversight and Control Mechanisms

All three countries have introduced institutional oversight bodies; however, their development and effectiveness vary significantly. Latvia and Lithuania benefit from mature, independent mechanisms that facilitate accountability and enhance public trust. Ukraine’s oversight system, while evolving, lacks sufficient transparency and citizen involvement. Strengthening independent monitoring institutions, broadening civil society participation, and creating accessible complaint channels are essential for Ukraine to close the gap.

5. Balancing National Security and Individual Rights

A recurring theme in the study is the inherent tension between maintaining national security and upholding individual rights. This dilemma becomes particularly acute in conflict settings, where emergency powers may overshadow civil liberties. The research shows that excessive policing, without adequate legal safeguards, risks violating fundamental rights and eroding public confidence. Striking a balance requires continuous judicial oversight, a clear legal framework, and regular evaluations of police actions in wartime.

6. Public Trust and Legal Reform

Public trust in law enforcement during and after conflict is influenced by several factors, including legal clarity, socio-economic stability, and regional implementation of reforms. In Latvia and Lithuania, steady progress in legal reform and rights-based policing has yielded higher levels of trust. Ukraine, while making notable progress, must ensure that legislative efforts are not only well-intentioned but also effectively implemented at all administrative levels, especially in conflict-prone regions.

7. Impact of Media and Public Opinion

Media and public communication play a crucial role in shaping perceptions of the police. Latvia and Lithuania have leveraged traditional and digital media to portray law enforcement as transparent and accountable. Ukraine, meanwhile, has made increasing use of digital platforms and social media for real-time citizen engagement. However, public responsiveness, especially in terms of addressing feedback and complaints, must be strengthened to reinforce the credibility of these initiatives.

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The findings of this thesis lead to a set of practical recommendations aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the police accountability system, strengthening human rights guarantees, and improving law enforcement practices during states of emergency or martial law. These proposals focus on the legislative changes needed to ensure better transparency, human rights protection, and law enforcement effectiveness under extreme conditions.

“On the National Police” – Article 18.

“Outlines general rights and duties of police officers during normal and extraordinary

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t body would align with Ukraine’s commitment to transparency and accountability in law enforcement, as outlined in the Overarching Strategic Plan for Law Enforcement Reform (2023–2027).

“On Corruption Prevention” – Article 53.

“Establishes the rights and protection of whistleblowers who report corruption-related

(3) In cases where a whistleblower's report leads to the discovery of serious
forcement agencies shall not have the right to initiate disciplinary proceedings or investigative
actions against whistleblowers without prior review and authorization by the NACP or the
Prosecutor General's Office.

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"On Civil Protection" – Article 31.

"Outlines the duties of executive bodies and local authorities in managing civil

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"Law of the Republic of Latvia on the State Police" – Section 7.

*"The State Police shall perform investigative functions and cooperate with other
institutions in maintaining public order and security."*

(4) The ISB shall report its findings to the Prosecutor General's Office and to the

The ISB's role in investigating police misconduct has been recognized as a critical component

"Law of the Republic of Latvia on the State Police" – Article 8.

"Describes internal disciplinary and investigative procedures within the police structure.

(3) In all cases involving serious misconduct, the investigation shall be referred to the

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"Law of the Republic of Latvia on the State Police" – Article 6.

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"Outlines general duties and obligations of police officers".

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Draft Amendment to the Law on the Police of the Republic of Lithuania – Article 6.

“Defines police functions: public order protection, crime prevention, assistance to

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Justification: Public oversight is a fundamental aspect of democratic policing, ensuring that law enforcement agencies remain accountable to the communities they serve.

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“Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Police” – Article 14.

“Describes the duties of police officers when interacting with individuals, including use
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“Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Police” – Article 6

“Defines the general functions and principles of police activity.

These recommendations, along with the specific legislative amendments proposed for Ukraine, Latvia and Lithuania are aimed at enhancing police accountability, protecting human rights, and improving law enforcement practices during states of emergency or martial law. Implementing these changes will contribute to building public trust, ensuring effective policing, and aligning national practices with international standards, particularly in the context of wartime and crisis management.

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