

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE
FACULTY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT
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SHORT THESIS
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Tünde PESTI:

**Applicability of intercultural knowledge
in the context of law enforcement services**

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Contents

Relevance and justification of the topic selection	3
Research hypotheses	3
Research methods.....	4
Summary of conclusions	6
Scientific results	11
Practical use of scientific and research results, recommendations.....	12
List of publications by the author in the topic.....	14
Professional-scientific curriculum vitae of the author	15

Relevance and justification of the topic selection

After EU membership of Hungary, international police cooperation has been strengthened, strategic and operational cooperation with the other EU Member States is becoming closer every year. Not just the exchange of information, but also the importance of personal working relationships and interactions has increased through joint international operations, investigation teams, international joint patrols (e.g. international joint operations carried out with foreign law enforcement specialists and experts in inland or in the territory of another state).

The composition of Hungarian society is also changing as a result of globalisation, nowadays, you no longer need to work in an international field or travel abroad to interact with citizens of other countries, because foreigners in Hungary can potentially come into contact with members of the Hungarian police, including both professionals and persons working for the police under a contract of employment or police administrative service.

The relevance and importance of the research has been confirmed by several important phenomena and incidences over the years. Illegal migration pressure on our country, the migration crisis, refugees from the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, the Black Lives Matter movement as a change in society's attitude towards violence, measures to fill domestic labour shortages in the form of temporary agency work from third countries, and the rise of tourism all point to the need for intercultural knowledge today.

The main aim of this research was to support professional members – police officers – of the Hungarian police force in their daily work, in particular to contribute to the education of future police officers.

Research hypotheses

I have studied following hypotheses:

- H1: I assumed that the EU police forces – I have studied – recognised the necessity of intercultural education.
- H2: I assumed that in the case of the Hungarian police we cannot talk about institutional/institutionalised prejudice.

The definition is not the same as institutional discrimination in the legal sense. I have studied the possible causes of prejudice in the police context, is there a regulatory or

(higher)educational gap, an organisational solution that contributes to the development of prejudice, can intercultural education fill any gap in this area? I linked the concept of institutionalised prejudice – by separating police and cop culture – to the police culture.

- H3: I assumed that the Hungarian police were open to cooperation (H3a) and I have assumed that the cooperative skills of police officer candidates allow the introduction of intercultural skills education (H3b).
- H4: I assumed that there is a correlation between the level of immigration in a given country and the development of intercultural competences of the police (H4a), and I have assumed that not just general but specific knowledge was incorporated into the education, some of the results of basic research in this field can be found in the higher police education (H4b).

Research methods

I have conducted the following research to confirm or refute my hypothesis.

- (1) I reviewed the available literature and the results in relation to intercultural knowledge and the police (H1). The knowledge I acquired provided the basis for my empirical research.
- (2) I studied the anti-prejudice activities of the Hungarian police force. I decided to use my own method to study whether we can talk about institutional prejudice, whether intercultural education can contribute to reducing prejudice? To confirm or refute the hypothesis (H2), I studied the issue of prejudice, and then I analysed it from the point of view of both the organisation and the police profession. I have analysed and evaluated the knowledge I acquired by my own criteria – police and cop culture, contact hypothesis, morale –. In terms of the content of police culture, my thesis includes not only the rules and regulations that apply to police officers, but also the organizational arrangements (eg. organisational structure, uniform identifiers, personnel system, recruitment procedure, screening, reporting procedures, etc.) I have also included the field of education to police culture.
- (3) I studied the issue of cooperation in relation to the Hungarian police. Considering, that the individual-individual interactions are most important from intercultural perspective, whose measurement in a cooperative situation among active police

officers for me was not realisable, I have limited the target group to police officer candidates. In the frame of empirical research I conducted the cooperative skills of police officer candidates in a cooperative situation at the Faculty of Law Enforcement, National University of Public Service (H3). The aim of research was to establish, whether intercultural knowledge can be integrated into higher police education from the point of view how the student's cooperative skills are developed during the education (do they want to cooperate in carrying out the tasks and therefore in subsequent interactions?).

- (4) I studied the development of intercultural competencies and its teaching methods in the police organisations in the following Member States: Republic of Estonia, Czech Republic, Republic of Lithuania, Republic of Slovenia, the Federal Republic of Germany (Free State of Saxony, Free State of Bavaria, Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, North Rhine-Westphalia), Republic of Austria. In my research, I did not aim to find statistical data, but (deeper) correlations.

Short description of the research by chapter

In the **introductory part** of my thesis, I discussed the justification for my decision, the relevance of the topic, the scientific problem and my hypotheses. According to the hypotheses I have decided the main research methods, the structure of the thesis and the disciplinary classification of my research topic.

In the first chapter I identified the relevant literature and contextualised my research topic within the police professional context. I have defined the term of intercultural, explored the different national approaches and the history of the police focus on intercultural knowledge, and described the research carried out so far.

The focus of my research is the concept I have defined that *the term „intercultural” refers to the interaction between individuals from different cultures and backgrounds in an international sense*, the aim of educations is learning about other cultures, facilitating intercultural interactions by improving cooperation and overcoming prejudices.

In the second and third chapters, I studied the situation of the Hungarian police, its efforts and the training/education of its personnel in the areas of prejudice and cooperation, closely related to the aim of intercultural knowledge.

On the topic of prejudice, I have studied the police profession and the Hungarian police and its situation from several perspectives. In the chapter I have separated the police

and the cop culture, I have considered the contact hypothesis and its four key conditions and last but not least I also assessed the findings from a moral point of view.

Within the cooperation topic, I have studied the relevant literature, the results of previous research and I have done an empirical research in the frame of Joint Public Service Practice at the National University of Public Service.

In the chapter four I have studied the way of developing intercultural competences in the police organisations and in the field of higher police education by empirical research. The research was carried out by creating my own questionnaire, which I sent to higher police educational institutions in the EU Member States and also by interviews with experts in my research topic. In this chapter I have analysed and evaluated the main areas and methods of the training.

In the last – fifth – chapter of my thesis, I summarised the results of my research, examined the fulfilment of the hypothesis and formulated the new scientific results, their practical applicability and areas of application, I have also formed a proposal for the Hungarian police.

Summary of conclusions

In the research, I found that the literature has shown that the attention of police forces in Europe has been focused towards the need for intercultural knowledge during the social changes of the 1990s – e.g. the birth of new nation states, the development of the European Union, the acceleration of integration processes, the increase of internal migration, the „opening” of borders –. In the process, a new type of racism, the ethnocentric xenophobia, has emerged, which is based on cultural differences. Changing social and economic trends have seen a rise in racial – ethnocentric – conflicts and incidents, to different degrees in different Member States, sometimes also involving the police. A possible solution for police forces recommendations were formulated (in Rotterdam Charter). The literature, cases and research I have identified, and also my own research have confirmed my theory and proved my hypothesis that the police forces have recognised the need for intercultural skills (H1) and the findings of the main cultural researchers need to be incorporated into the education of police officers. However, my hypothesis (H4a) that there is a correlation between a country's immigration involvement and the development of intercultural competences of a police force, I refute because it was not confirmed by the literature reviewed and it was also not confirmed by my research. The need for training in intercultural skills of police officers is more linked to

the basic tasks performed by police forces, the timely recognition and adequate management of conflicts and/or the combat of ethnocentric prejudices in society and within the organisation.

By adopting the contact hypothesis approach in the field of prejudice, I have demonstrated that the four basic conditions for the effective application of the hypothesis – (1) common purpose, (2) cooperative situation, (3) equal status and (4) supportive social norms and institutions – are currently only partially present in the case of the Hungarian police. In the case of the Hungarian police today, it's despite the presence of supporting institutional and social norms (field of legislation), there is a lack of a supportive social environment, and in the measures implemented by the police – mainly executive – officers in most cases neither equal status nor common purpose or mutual interest in cooperation are fulfilled. All these are countervailing factors to the police's efforts to combat prejudice.

In the analysis of prejudice, I have separated the organisational culture into police and cop culture. Through my own conceptualisation and approach, I have studied the area of police prejudice in Hungary. My main research question was, is it any shortcomings in police culture (institutionalised) or it is linked to the cop culture (non-institutionalised). I have therefore also linked the concept of institutionalised prejudice to the police culture, which includes not only the rules and regulations that refer to police officers but also the organizational arrangements (e.g. identification on uniforms, unified personnel system, recruitment criteria, aptitude test, organisational structure, reporting obligations, etc.).

In my thesis, I also linked the field of education, which in my opinion situated between the two cultures, into the police culture, and compared it with the knowledge I have discovered in the field of cop culture. I proved that in the case of the Hungarian police – in the sense of the police and cop culture approach – we cannot talk about institutional/institutionalised prejudices. Based on the findings in the police culture chapter, the Hungarian police pay particular attention to combating prejudice. The organisation applies strict regulations that include privacy standards, internal rules and regulations, organisational structure are also designed to prevent the spread of prejudice, police officers learn during their training about prejudice from several perspectives.

However, the results of several researches have shown that within the organisation we can find prejudiced behaviours that are (also) considered deviant by the police organisation.

In extreme cases, these take the form of excesses or omissions and in the specific context of the police profession; they involve a greater risk of being committed than in the case of an economic organisation, company or a civilian citizen. These phenomena belong to the area of inappropriate cop culture – on the basis of the criteria of my research and analysis.

Examining the issue from a moral perspective I used the police culture, so the organisational framework defined by the Hungarian police, as the moral basis. I have revealed that members who follow deviant, prejudiced behaviour have clearly lower morality than the organisation itself. I have demonstrated that the transmission of an inappropriate cop culture – in a case of prejudice or deviant behaviours – most often begins through the verbal transmission of values, norms, beliefs (canteen culture, testing phase) which may later be followed by deviant behaviour; transmission is achieved when the behaviour is masked by the silence (code of silence) of the members.

A detection is further hindered by the fact that members with lower morale also often use a kind of "imprinting" technique, so in relation to the incident or the personality traits of the new – higher moral – member, they are the first to inform (misinform) the superior.

However I do not consider my findings in the field of moral as a new scientific result, because other researchers have already pointed out before me that the Hungarian police consider prejudiced behaviour to be deviant behaviour, so my statement applies to the same from a different perspective.

In conclusion, I have concluded, that in the light of the bureaucratically structured and pyramidal organisation of the Hungarian police and of the cases – ways of thinking and behaving – presented in the field of inappropriate cop culture, I consider it of high importance to integrate both intercultural knowledge and the knowledge revealed in the field of cop culture in the training/education of future police officers (before their first professional practice). I also consider this very important in order to ensure that the training is effective in moving police officer candidates out of their cultural and professional ethnocentrism.

In my study of cooperation from a contact hypothesis perspective, I found that cooperation between police personnel and collaborating – international police – organisations and their members is significantly simplified by the existence of all four conditions of the contact

hypothesis, so the cooperation has a common goal, given the cooperation situation, the equal status and the supporting institutional norm, environment.

Their existence may even allow the cooperation in the absence of a supportive social environment, e.g. there are conflicts/differences based on history between the participating countries (members), or the individual involved in the cooperation has prejudices or negative stereotypes about individuals from the other nation's culture. These factors – although they can be an obstacle to effective and rapid cooperation – will take a back seat to the common goal – by respecting the institutional framework.

In the field of cooperation, I concluded, that the introduction and acquisition of intercultural knowledge should not be hindered by a lack of willingness to cooperate of Hungarian police officer candidates.

However, the goal-orientation and the decrease of cooperation (and courtesy) in the implementation of tasks – based on my empirical research – future police officers will be more likely to aim for effectiveness in interactions with groups from different culture as to focus on the impact on future cooperation of their work. I also consider it necessary to introduce intercultural education to prevent this and I find very important that police officers should be able to recognise cultural differences and handle situations with respect for the law but with cultural flexibility in case of interactions with people from different cultures and backgrounds.

Through my empirical research, I have explored the ways of developing intercultural (between two cultures), nowadays transcultural (between more cultures) competences in police organisations and in the training/education of police candidates, with a special focus on the higher police education. In the course of research I confirmed my hypotheses (H1 and H4b) that police forces have recognised the need of intercultural knowledge in the police profession and findings of cultural researchers have partly incorporated into higher police education. The most commonly used research is Hofstede's research, but the way it is applied has changed.

I have also identified by my research the way of (dynamic) development of the teaching methods and context of inter/transcultural knowledge in the field of police education. Its starting point is the recognition of the need for intercultural education. This section is followed by the teaching of knowledge about specific cultures. When more and more

knowledge about different cultures are required, the direction of education turns to inter-/transcultural knowledge that allows the relativisation of cultures. Thus the method of knowledge transfer is initially focused on the education of specific and later of more general knowledge revealed by cultural researchers and its most advanced level – as I have discovered – on the deconstruction of knowledge revealed by cultural dimensions. The aim of the education is to learn about the underlying processes and to gain and analyse personal experience. By this method they can move out police candidates of their cultural ethnocentrism and develop fields such as tolerance of ambiguity, change of perspectives, increase individual's perceptive, increase the range of reaction and action strategies of the candidates; thus all contributing to the success of inter/transcultural (police) interactions.

My research has not only identified the development stages in the method of (police) education but also confirmed my hypothesis that nowadays it is not enough to integrate inter/transcultural knowledge in the police education but also the prejudicial phenomena and the way it is delivered in the field of cop culture. Based on my research and a review of the literature, I refuted the part of my hypothesis (H4a) that there is a correlation between the immigration involvement of a country and the development of intercultural competences of police. The introduction of intercultural knowledge is much more linked to recognition, that globalisation processes often involve conflicts between groups, or the appearance of prejudice based on ethnocentrism in society and/or within police organisations.

Bennett's observations in the ethnocentrism stages on police organisations – that police forces, because of organisational ethnocentrism, do not recruit people of different ethnicities, or recruit only "good" members or symbolic representatives, search for universal, cross-cultural methods – based on my research I refuted in the case of population with immigrant. Based on my research I found, there are more objective obstacles by police forces e.g. legal background (possibility of recruiting a person of a different citizenship to the police), the way or the need (interest) to acquire citizenship, attitudes of members of immigrant groups towards the police and the police profession, etc. The recruitment regulations of the police forces I examined are standardised, regardless of the applicant's background, both negative and positive discrimination is prohibited.

Bennett's "minimalisation" phase, when police forces are looking for universally applicable, cross-cultural methods, I consider it as a stage of development, which is a part of a learning process and it is not linked to the ethnocentrism of a police organisation. In this

context, I consider that it is a part of the way how police forces operate, first collect information on the problems they have identified, or cultures that come to their attention, than they use this information to develop a strategy, which is later continuously adapted according to internal and external feedback.

Scientific results

In this dissertation I consider the following to be new scientific findings:

- 1) In the context of my research, I first identified the introduction and development of intercultural - nowadays transcultural - knowledge in the police context. I have proven that development of inter/transcultural competences of police forces is not linked to the country's immigration status, but to the appearance of ethnocentric prejudices and conflicts in the society.**
- 2) Using scientific methods I have studied, identified and proven that the development of inter/transcultural knowledge and competences is a management instrument in the context of the police profession, which is necessary to develop cooperation and combat prejudice, and an approach, which protects the interest of the organisation, its staff and the public.**
- 3) I have proven that – in the police and cop culture sense – there is no institutionalised prejudice in the Hungarian police; prejudicial phenomena that have been identified are related to the field of inappropriate cop culture.**
- 4) In the case of the Hungarian police, my research has shown that currently given the supporting institutional and social norm, but we can only partly talk about a supportive social background. The conflictual encounters in police profession and lack of equal status and cooperation situation in interactions are countervailing factors against efforts of the Hungarian police to combat prejudice.**
- 5) I have proved by questionnaire survey on the content and methods of higher police education abroad and in Hungary and by interviews and analyses, that the need for intercultural skills in the police profession has been recognised abroad and in our country partly recognised the need for more intensive training in this field.**

6) I have identified, there are objective obstacles to the development of intercultural competences linked to the human resources policies of police organisations I have studied.

Practical use of scientific and research results, recommendations

The literature, cases, phenomena and research explored in this dissertation provide an opportunity:

- to understand inter/transcultural knowledge in the context of the police profession.
- to introduce inter/transcultural education and to consciously develop education not only in the higher police education, but also in the field of further training, the literatures explored and the method of teaching are suitable for establishing the knowledge base and developing a training strategy.
- to introduce education in the field of cop culture, however, in my opinion, the literature and cases needed to be extended with further phenomena and findings in the field of cop culture.
- to develop a strategy for the Hungarian police and its staff to improve their intercultural competences.
- to provide the basis for further research.

Based on my research, I think that today intercultural (between two cultures) interactions have been replaced by transcultural interactions. This means that intercultural knowledge can more be seen as transcultural knowledge.

Development of inter/transcultural competencies is a management instrument in the context of the police profession, which is necessary to develop cooperation and combat prejudice, and an approach, which protects the interest of the organisation, its staff and the public. It establishes a three-way win-win situation.

I recommend the integration of the intercultural approach to protect the public, the Hungarian police as an organisation and its members.

In the case of police officers should take into account that the intercultural perspective of the individual is not develop spontaneously, it develops through training and individual practical experiences and we also should take into consideration, that we are talking about a development process. With other words, moving the individual out of ethocentrism is a part of

a process of development, which can be achieved by training – and by methods I have identified – but (development) processes within the individual depends on individual factors, so in my opinion it is not possible to determine – timely – its positive impact.

Consequently, it cannot be determined, when an individual reaches an appropriate level of ethnorelativism as a result of training, and when the result will be shown in the practice. This actually also means, if the training of police officer candidates were to be started now, the earliest it will have an impact on practice is app. 4 years.

Also in protection of the Hungarian police as an organisation I recommend the integration of an inter/transcultural approach and the development of strategy as soon as possible because the historical examples, the cases that have been found show it is also a development process in the life of the organisation, which often starts through failure(s)/fracture(s).

I think it is not recommended to wait with the training until appearances of this kind of fracture – a police overreaction or omission that shocks society – or of ethnocentric conflicts and incidents in the society. Globalisation processes are irreversible and are affecting – even if to vary degrees from county to county or town to town – our country too. Events and data demonstrate the topicality of it, which were presented at the beginning of my research. Not least it is Hungary's economic interest to be linked to globalisation processes and to adapt quickly to the changes.

Reassessment of (police) violence by society, the continuous (external) monitoring of police activities and the formulation of criticisms, these are also call for the incorporation of an intercultural/transcultural approach.

I think it is important to develop a strategy for the future in the interests of the Hungarian police and to take into account that this type of development process is not a quick one in the life of organisations, so it will take time, even several years, last but not least, it also requires tolerance of failure, facing criticism and patience.

List of publications by the author in the topic

- Pesti, Tünde: *Az interkulturális kompetenciák szükségessége a rendészeti munkában. (Need of intercultural competences in police activities)*. Hadtudományi Szemle 8. (4). Budapest, 2015. pp. 192-202.
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- Kovács, Gábor – Pesti, Tünde: *A rendőrségi és a rendőri kultúra megkülönböztetése – a „zsarukultúra” elmélet főbb elemei. (The difference between police and cop culture – main elements of the theory of cop culture)*. Rendőrségi Tanulmányok 4. (3). Budapest, 2021. pp. 48-60. DOI: 10.53304/RT.2021.3.2
- Pesti Tünde: *Measures against prejudice at the Hungarian Police – theoretical research on police culture and cop culture. (Előítéletek elleni intézkedések a magyar rendőrségnél – elméleti kutatás a rendőrségi és zsarukultúra területén)*. Belügyi Szemle, 69. (4). Special Issue. Budapest, 2021. p. 21-30. <https://doi.org/10.38146/BSZ.SPEC.2021.4.2>
- Kovács Gábor - Pesti Tünde: *A rendőri erőszakról, túlkapásokról – lehetséges magyarázatok. (Police violence, overreactions – possible explanations)*. Belügyi Szemle, 69. (11). Budapest, 2021. p 1981-1993. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.38146>
- Pesti, Tünde: *Interkulturális ismeretek rendőrségi kontextusa. (Intercultural knowledge in the context of police professional)*. Határrendészeti Tanulmányok, XIX. évfolyam, 3-4. szám. Budapest, 2023. p. 23-36. HU ISSN 2061-3997 (Online). https://rtk.uni-nke.hu/document/rtk-uni-nke-hu/Hatrend_Tan_2022_3_4_szam.pdf

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- Pesti, Tünde: *The development and importance of cooperation at the Hungarian Police. (Az együttműködés fejlődése és jelentősége a Magyar Rendőrségnél)*. *Belügyi Szemle*, 71(2.k.sz.). Budapest, 2023. pp. 109-118. <https://doi.org/10.38146/BSZ.SPEC.2023.2.8>

Professional-scientific curriculum vitae of the author

Qualification of the candidate is an economic engineer. She studied at the Budapest Business School, University of Applied Sciences where she graduated as a certified international relations expert.

She started her professional career at the International Training Centre as international desk officer. She was responsible for organizing postgraduate trainings and for contact holding in German language with foreign police partner institutions.

From 2008 she worked at the predecessor of the Faculty of Law Enforcement as responsible for projects and for the ERASMUS-programme at the Faculty. She has helped and worked abroad several times by partner institutions in Austria and Germany, she is very familiar not only with Austrian and German but also Czech, Slovak, Slovenian, Polish, Swiss working methods and police training systems.

She left the international area in 2018 and is currently a project manager at the Ministry of Interior.

She studied the scientific approach to her research topic since her university studies, since then she participated (as participant or trainer) on several national and international conferences, e.g. „Strengthening intercultural sensitivity for professionals working with immigrants” organised in 2017 and 2018 by Headquarters of Hungarian Police; CEPOL-Courses „Fundamental Rights and Police Ethics”; „Diversity Management”.

She speaks English and German at an advanced level, she has also used her foreign language skills in her research. It has published 3 English and 8 Hungarian publications related to her research topic.