Becoming a police officer
A research into the selection and socialisation of inspectors, chief inspectors and commissioners in the Belgian police force

Dra. Stevens Anse & promotor Prof. dr. Antoinette Verhage

Research aim:
The goal is to study how police inspectors, chief inspectors, and commissioners can be achieved that have the desired competences, values and norms.

Why selection and socialisation?
• Low success rates in the selection procedure (more or less 10% - Federale politie, 2018).
• Extremely high success rates at the police schools (pass marks are as high as 98 % - De Kimpe, 2014).
• Research has pointed out the socialisation process seems to impact more upon the further development of police officers than the academy training (Chaim & De Kimpe, 2012; Van Maanen, 1975).

Research questions:
1. What is the competence model that is put forth in the selection of inspectors, chief inspectors, and commissioners?
2. Selection:
   2.1 How are candidates for the base, middle and officer level selected?
   2.2 What are the reasons for selecting or excluding candidates?
   2.3 How can the selecting in principle be implemented to select candidates that have the potential to comply with the competence model?
3. Socialisation:
   3.1 To what extent are competences, attitudes, values, and norms internalised by police officers during the training period and the first year on the job in the base, middle and officer level?
   3.2 Is there a difference regarding the socialisation process between the three levels and if so, how can that difference be interpreted?
   3.3 What is the influence of individual and organisational characteristics on the socialisation process?
   3.4 How can the socialisation process be utilised to stimulate the development of recruits on the three levels, so they comply with the respective competence model that is put forward in the selection?

References:

Research methods
- Scoping review
- Policy analysis
- Panel study:
  - conducted with Belgian police recruits
  - conducted with respondents from the survey and employees at police schools and selection services
  - conducted during apprenticeships from respondents in the survey and during selection tests

Panelstudy

2020-2021
- T1
  • After being selected and at the start of the academy training
  • * introduction phase of police socialisation (Van Maanen, 1975)
  • Aim: 500 respondents
- At the end of the academy training
  • * encounter stage of police socialisation (Van Maanen, 1975)
- T2
  • After 1 year on the job
  • * metamorphosis phase of police socialisation (Van Maanen, 1975)
  • Aim: 250 respondents

2021-2022
- T3
  • T2
  • T1