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The Implementation and Evaluation of Community Policing in Spain: Results and Future Prospects¹

This article offers an overview of the implementation and evaluation of community policing programs in Spain today through the analysis of two particularly illustrative practical experiences. The controversial results of the *Policía 2000* project – Spain’s most consummate nationwide community policing program – pleads for a local implementation of the community policing model. Indeed, as shown by another pioneering reform in Sant Boi de Llobregat (a big town near Barcelona) – which today offers many lessons in matters of evaluation and management of community policing – it is mainly at this level that experiences have been most conclusive.

1. INTRODUCTION

Interest in community policing first appeared in Spain during the democratic transition period of the 1980s. The choice of such a model of police activity was justified by the need for the Spanish police forces to acquire new values and a new legitimacy. The community policing model was then very much idealised, and constantly referred to at all levels of the country’s police forces to the point where national, regional, and local police forces were more or less in open competition to see which one of them was doing the most proximity work. Such an infatuation for the model has come to obstruct

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any comprehensive analysis of community policing in Spain, any form of criticism being considered as heretical or participating in an anti-democratic and reactionary conspiracy. Consequently, the very idea of community policing and the evaluation of its implementation in Spain have only been superficially studied so far. Although community policing is the dominant model, it has never really been questioned.

Today, Spanish participation in a research project on the definition of a common methodology of evaluation of community policing programs is thus hampered by a genuine lack of existing formal studies and bibliographical references. That is the reason why some qualitative research, assessing the impact of proximity work within the police institution, had to be undertaken for the project, in the form of interviews with those in charge of implementing community policing and the representatives of several institutions affected by existing programs.²

Furthermore, community policing in Spain is also intimately linked to two larger problems. The first concerns the prerogatives and the coordination of the different corps of the Spanish police force, each corps depending on a different level of government. The second is the competition between Spain's political organisations, which all have a different vision of public security.

The particular historical background of the Spanish police force, the reforms initiated since the democratic transition and the coexistence of three independent levels of administration must thus be seriously taken into account when assessing community policing in Spain. In order to fully grasp the whole scope of the situation in Spain, it is therefore necessary to assess community policing at three levels of government: national, regional and municipal.

Although Spain's autonomous (regional) police forces³ have always distanced themselves from traditional policing models by offering themselves as substitute police corps and as novel models for serving society, it seems that these relatively young corps have not really implemented any proximity police programs. This article, wishing to take into account both present data on community policing and its evaluation in Spain, is consequently limited to the analysis of proximity strategies and their evaluation at solely national and local levels.

2. Twelve interviews were done between February and March 2003, with representatives of the different police bodies (national, autonomous and local), of police union, of those who elaborate the public victimisation polls of Catalonia, and of politicians in charge of building up security policies of Catalonia.

3. I am referring here only to the *Ertzaintza* of the Basque Country and the *Mossos d'Esquadra* of Catalonia. The third regional police force: the *Policía Foral* of Navarra only has administrative and traffic duties. All three, however, were born with the decentralisation process.

2. *POLICÍA 2000*, OR THE RENEWAL OF COMMUNITY POLICING?

The most significant experience of community policing on a national scale is the *Policía 2000* project. It was initiated in 1996, gradually developed after 1998 and officially launched in 1999.⁴ The then newly appointed director of the national police force, Juan Gabriel Cotino Ferrer,⁵ considered that public service was not directly proportionate to human and financial means. He thus set, as his own, personal objective, the reorganisation and rationalisation of Spain's police administration, in order to improve the service rendered to the public and decrease any feeling of insecurity (fear of crime). His objective was to transform the image of the police, the mentality and skills of Spanish police officers and, at the same time, take into account the fact that a context of budget cuts did not allow any substantial increase in numbers.⁶

Such a project, the conception of which was entirely delegated to a group of experts from Spain's private and state firms, recycled the techniques of modern *management*, such as management by objectives, salary bonuses for efficiency and considering citizens as 'clients'.

The strategic objectives of *Policía 2000* were threefold: the improvement of the quality of the services already provided, the increase of the levels of satisfaction of both citizens and policemen and the reduction of crime.

2.1. Technological help

In order to reach these set goals, computerising the management and the sharing of information became a priority. More than 9,000 work stations were computerised and, in parallel, the *Sistema de Información Geográfico* was created. The latter is

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4. When the Partido Popular came to power in 1996, the 'Community Policing Program' became the flagship of the national police force. It was presented as the ideological basis the necessary reform to modernise and optimise Spain's national police force. The program was introduced in the broader context of the neo-liberal modernisation of Spain's public administration. However, the idea of a reform towards community policing was not new, the previous socialist governments having already attempted, on several occasions, to bring the police and the population closer. The earliest attempt to put into practice the community policing model on a national scale was first launched in 1982, then again in 1985, followed by yet another attempt in 1994. All achieved mixed results. J.M. Perez Perez, 'La policía de proximidad en España', 12 *Revista de Documentación del Ministerio de Interior* (2001) pp. 39-76.
 5. The professional background of the former Head of Security of the city of Valencia, Juan Cotino Ferrer, is very much with the private sector.
 6. S. Cantero, 'La policía de proximidad ya camina', 159 *Policía* (1997) pp. 20-25.

Spain's answer to N.Y.P.D.'s Compstat.⁷ Until recently, many peripheral areas of the territory had no computer infrastructure at all; and bad data coordination left existing files hardly ever updated.

Introducing novel means of locomotion for proximity policemen was another aspect of this same program. Motorbikes were bought and, by resorting to car rental services, 60% of the automobile pool of the national police force was renewed and nearly 750,000 pesetas (€ 4,570) were saved off every vehicle.⁸

Furthermore, a Citizen's Advice Bureau was created. It was designed to forge permanent contacts between the police and citizens (and their associations) and initiate a genuine dialogue.

Finally, in order to shorten the lengthy queues outside police stations, a system for filing a complaint through internet or over the telephone was implemented.

2.2. New management techniques

The two most innovative instruments of the program are, however, the management by objectives method and a system of financial incentives.

In order to reduce crime on a national scale, the new program imposes clearly defined targets and determines the efficiency indicators designed to quickly check that the said targets have been reached. This is known as the 6X6 program: six towns⁹, six crimes,¹⁰ the rates of which must go down. This program concerned the most frequently committed crimes in Spain: those which contribute most to the national feeling of insecurity. The six towns, totalling 50% of the Spanish population, were used in 1999 as pilot-samples and, by 2001, the program was progressively spread to the whole country.

Furthermore, a system of financial and career incentives has been implemented. Coming as an extra to their wages, police officers can receive productivity bonuses every three months. These bonuses can add an extra 15% to an officer's basic salary,

7. Corresponding to the abbreviation 'Compare statistics', Compstat was created after meetings in the New York Police Department, from 1994. It is a system of capture and treatment of information, which allows having daily data on delinquency in order to use it strategically, especially for the distribution of the policemen at the 'hot' points of the city. The meetings between all of the NY Police department senior officers allow as well the monitoring of these strategies. E.B. Silverman, 'El programa Compstat y la policía de distrito en Nueva York', 10 *Revista Catalana de Seguretat publica* (2002), pp. 39-44.

8. Instituto de Estudios de la Policía, Dirección General de la Policía, *La policía auditada*, internal document (1999).

9. Madrid, Barcelona, Sevilla, Valencia, Alicante, Malaga.

10. Drug dealing, bag-snatching, house-breaking, car-breaking, car theft and street-mugging.

but depend both on the reduction of the national crime rate and on the officer's personal professional evaluation for the term.

Finally, the implementation of the program has also been accompanied by extensive media coverage, where the new motorbikes and visiting British police constables – the very symbols of community-oriented and democratic policing in Spain's social representations – were flaunted.

The first official results of the *Policía 2000* program seem to demonstrate its unmitigated success.¹¹ In 1999, a large percentage of police stations had fulfilled 100% of the objectives concerning the reduction of crime and, all units taken together, the national rate of objective completion was 76%. Moreover, public opinion polls revealed that 42.1% of all Spaniards considered that public security had improved, with only 12.8% thinking differently;¹² accordingly, the crime rate diminished by 6% in the six towns where the 6X6 program was initially launched.

2.3. Inadequate evaluation tools

However, both with the *Policía 2000* program and as is more generally the case in Spain, there is a definite absence of evaluation tools in matters of community policing. The main instruments of evaluation are the traditional scales of police activity, i.e. police crime rate statistics. These figures, however, are poorly adapted to measuring the realities of proximity police work. Indeed, the efficiency of proximity police work is largely based on the quality of police relations with the local population, a criterion usually only considered as secondary when fighting crime.¹³

It is thus necessary to position the evaluation of proximity police experiences within its broader political context and to analyse the main faults of the system: the absence of a genuine method of evaluation and the fear of making public any possible failure.

In the *Policía 2000* program, the criteria for determining targets and assessing success are threefold: 30% of the evaluation depends on the reduction of the number of crimes committed in any one of the six crimes over a period of three months; 40% on

11. Instituto de Estudios de la Policía, *op. cit.*

12. For those 12.8% matters had worsened. By 1995, 20% of all people polled considered that the criminal situation had improved while 43% thought it was getting worse. P. Díaz Pintado-Moradela, 'Policía 2000: ventana al futuro', 144 *Policía* (2000).

13. According to D. Montjardet, there are three police apparatus, whose missions, means and therefore, evaluation criteria are deeply different: the order police, or sovereignty police, the specialised criminal police, and the daily police, which has to deal with public tranquillity and urgent assistance, on limited territories, and whose mission is mainly social and therefore a lot more hazy. D. Montjardet, 'Evaluer, certes, mais quelle police?', *Colloque sur l'évaluation de la performance policière* (Montréal 1995).

the supposed degree of contact with the local population and the quantity of information collected; and the last 30%, on the 'quality' of the service rendered. The aim is to avoid giving too much weight to local crime rates, which are only a partial view of national statistics and which artificially link crime rates to the number of crimes committed, forgetting that the two other independent indicators also offer pertinent information and largely determine the public's level of satisfaction. The three evaluation categories also serve to readjust police action. If one of the three categories is doing well, overshooting set targets for example, at least 30% of the officer's activity must still be allocated to improving the two other categories as well. Finally, because the idea of emulation remains fundamental to the system, the final bonus allocated is determined by the results in all three criteria.

In order to objectively measure the success rate of each category, the project plans to take into account sub-indicators of performance and shared evaluation (such as personal initiative, availability and team-work) which help to determine the causes of variations within the three main categories.

It must also be stressed that this system of management by objectives affects all the hierarchical levels of the national police and all the territorial echelons. It is not only the lower levels who are accountable to the higher ones. Requirements being the same for all, all must apply, with the same intensity, at all levels and everywhere in the country, the clearly defined short term orientations.¹⁴

Though the evaluation criteria announced for the project are numerous and backed up by a series of correctors, it seems that, in practice, the *Policía 2000* program only really takes into account the usual police crime rate statistics. Indeed, the designers of the project have not provided the necessary evaluation tools for measuring the 'quality' of the service rendered. As to the citizen's cum client's rate of satisfaction, the same shortcomings have prevented any possible audit. This has brought police trade-unions to claim that *Policía 2000* is, in fact, just more political propaganda, and the data gathered by the Sociological Research Centre (CIS) confirmed that insecurity was still (in 2001 and 2002) one of the problems which most preoccupied the Spanish population.¹⁵ Only the third goal, the decrease of crime, seems to be measurable with police statistics. These, however, only reflect the reported proportion of all the crimes committed in Spain. There are many reasons for this.

14. J. Ferret, P. Maffré, 'L'usage de la notion de police de proximité en Espagne: indice d'une mutation inachevée', 39 *Les Cahiers de la Sécurité Intérieure* (2000).

15. 'Insecurity' was one of the most frequent answers to the question: 'Which are, in your opinion, the three main problems that Spain must face today?', Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, Barometers 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002. <<http://www.cis.es>>.

First, the system used for gathering data on criminal offences in Spain suffers from technical difficulties linked to a general lack of information in certain fields and to the use of generic codes in others. Secondly, Spanish official statistics do not reflect the territorial distribution of crime, as the Ministry of the Interior only makes public national statistics or those concerning the autonomous regions and provinces. This not only prevents any in-depth analysis of the territorial distribution of crime, but also dissuades any evaluation of the efficiency of local police work. Third, there is no coordination whatsoever between the measurement instruments used by the State, the different Regions and, in certain cases, those of the big cities. Fourth, crime rate statistics furnished by the police have been devised by and for the police, according to what interests them most.¹⁶ The different ways of measuring the increase or the decrease of crime thus have the uncanny tendency of coinciding with political desires.

Finally, it also seems necessary to doubt the police's ability to measure crime objectively, being the very instance responsible for fighting it. Any instruments of control and evaluation of the results of the *Policía 2000* program are unreliable as these are left in the hands of police statistics. That this should be the case is all the more surprising since, as has already been mentioned, part of the salary of the police personnel depends on the decrease, or, at least, on the absence of increase of crime in their sector. Because of this method of evaluation and remuneration the figures for the first two years of the program's functioning were manipulated, until it became so obvious that it had to be revealed, whereby all the directors and trade unionists of the national police force were interviewed. The only genuinely 'solid' conclusion that the financial incentive scheme can show for itself is that criminal data for the years 1999 and 2000 most definitely need to be reappraised.

2.4. An unfinished implementation of the reform

Several reasons can be forwarded to explain why the *Policía 2000* program never reached the goals it set out for.

First of all, it seems that only 60% of the necessary personnel have been working for the national police over the past six years. This has been implicitly recognised by the *Fight Against Crime Program*, a national security program devised in 2002, which predicts an increase of 20,000 constables¹⁷ between 2002-2004 to complement today's insufficient national police force.

16. For example, *Policía 2000* statistics are based on the number of 'solved cases'. A 'solved case' is one that has been so declared by the police and in no way depends on a legal decision or a prison sentence. As soon as a 'guilty party' is arrested or (at least) identified the case is declared 'solved'.

17. 12,825 agents for the National Police and 7,175 for the *Guardia Civil*.

Furthermore, it seems that such an ambitious project has not been backed by adequate resources: the budgets allocated to the police have dwindled from 0.63 % of the Gross Domestic Product in 1996 to 0.56 % in 2002.¹⁸ In addition, police trade unions have never been consulted; neither during the elaboration of the project nor during its implementation. This may explain their feeble support for the program and their present lack of dynamism.

It also seems that only senior ranking police officers systematically received the necessary training enabling them to nurture close professional relationships with the citizenship. For on-the-beat constables close professional relationships with the citizenship has been left to luck.

Most probably, the *Policía 2000* program also ‘sinned’ by not sufficiently marking the fundamental difference between general prevention work and specific attitudes adapted to specific terrains. If the project (that was viewed as promising by all the members of the national police questioned) did not fulfil all that was hoped for, this is partially due to its inherent lack of adaptability and flexibility. This was true from the start of the management by objectives system (the 6X6 program) which proved to be far too inclusive and incapable of adapting itself to local particularities when generalised to the whole of the Spanish territory.

The broadening of the traditional police mandate also generated new budgetary needs. The implementation of a community policing program called for more investments. Since the information crucial to ‘problem-solving’¹⁹ needs to be gathered and efficiently processed, more staff needed to be recruited and had to be equipped with the necessary technology. The community policing program applied in Spain has, however, been essentially thought out to save money.²⁰ Consequently, in a context of budget cuts, of lack in personnel and equipment, it has not been to translate the philosophy of proximity into facts. The final result is, indeed, a return to the good old-fashioned system of ‘priorities first’.

18. Observatorio de la seguridad pública, ‘Programa Policía 2000: El final de un invento o el fracaso de una operación’, 9 *Boletín del Instituto de Estudios de Seguridad y Policía* (2002).

19. According to H. Goldstein, the policing activity refers firstly to the solving of problems whose field is a lot larger than the criminal offenses categories: The improvement of the Police depends therefore on the identification of the problems the citizens expect to be solved and calls for more initiatives for their resolution. The transformations in terms of management and services organisation need to be done in a perspective dominated by the results obtained *in fine*. H. Goldstein in J.P. Brodeur and D. Montjardet, eds., *Connaître la Police, Grands textes de la recherche anglo-saxonne*, Les Cahiers de la Sécurité Intérieure (2003).

20. Summarized by one of the designers of *Policía 2000* in the slogan ‘More Services, Less Expenditures’. J.R. Pin Arboledas, *How is a change process organised? Leadership The Spanish ‘Cuerpo Nacional de la Policía Case’*, IESE (Madrid 1999).

Indeed, at the end of the day, the bonus system and career promotions linked to the *Policía 2000* program barely promotes community policing at all. Paradoxically, the bonuses, the promotions promised within the police hierarchy or the awarding of resources or equipment to high performing police stations, are only linked to the reduction of crime rates through the arresting or identifying of criminals. Prevention missions, which try to minimise the risk of crime, are far less spectacular and more difficult to quantify. And though prevention missions are necessary to provide citizens with the desired feeling of security, they are not rewarded by today's system of motivation.

During the year 2002, after many a long debate on the efficiency of the *Policía 2000* program, the General Director of the Police resigned during a ministerial reshuffle.²¹ Today, though there has never been any publicised auto-criticism as to the shortcomings or failure of the project, it is being less and less referred to. Indeed, there is no reference whatsoever to *Policía 2000* in the new *Fight against Crime Program*, a distinct policing strategy where special reference is made to community policing and to the neighbourhood police constable, now viewed as highly linked to local police forces.

Another program is to replace *Policía 2000*. Yet, officially, the *Policía 2000* program, under its present official structure and name, is still in operation and still maintains its management by objectives and its financial motivation techniques.

The mixed results of the *Policía 2000* program seem to be due to a community policing goaded from above, and thus incapable of adapting itself to local policies of crime prevention. The real objective pursued has always been the fight against crime, but because the expression 'community policing' has been overburdened with meaning, it has become a source of confusion, both for the Spanish population and the Spanish police force itself. Indeed, if the priorities for the implementation of the first community policing projects, in the 1980s, were the improvement of the quality of life, of the relations between the police and the population and of the 'problem-solving' of local difficulties; in *Policía 2000*, the main declared objective and the means of measuring the results of the program were centred on the fight against crime.

Consequently, the program has proven fruitless on the short term and, in the long run, because no one has fixed any time frame for the program or defined it precisely, there is a risk that the whole idea of a more 'democratic' form of policing will be dropped altogether.

Today, there exists an alternative form of community policing. Its policy is pragmatically focalised on the sharing of community work and on the creation of genuine long-term partnerships with all local institutions struggling against urban disorder. It

21. The actual director, Agustin Díaz de Mera y García Consuegra was nominated in June 2002.

is thus at the level of the municipal police that the most conclusive experiences have been achieved in this matter.

3. THE REFORM OF SANT BOI DE LLOBREGAT, OR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TERRITORIAL AND CONCEPTUAL COMMUNITY POLICING

Sant Boi de Llobregat is a town situated near Barcelona. With a population of 85,000, it is the eleventh city of Catalonia, and it is there that a reform encouraging an alternative community policing project began six years ago. Jordi Samsó, the Director of City Services and Head of the Municipal Police Force, wished to transform his municipal police force so as to enable it to come into greater contact with the local population.²² The reform began with the redefinition of the term 'community policing' as a philosophy affecting the whole of the police corps and one more especially centred on the municipal police constable. According to Jordi Samsó, it would have been a mistake to insist on the idea of 'community policing' when speaking to the citizenry, as the latter was not interested in the technicalities of policing nor in its various theories, but definitely did want a public service that it could understand and already knew: the 'neighbourhood police constable' (*policía de barrio*).

The application of the Town Hall's desire (to see implemented a local police program), the definition of all concrete objectives, priorities and the modalities of reform were left in the hands of the police. The latter have taken into account previous experiences of community policing and the debates born from the infatuation for this model after the democratic transition. In the 1980s, the 'sprinkling' of a few police constables over a zone adapted to foot patrols would have been enough to call 'new community policing'. Today, it has become obvious that such a procedure is limited by the lack of human means and that of the technology to process the information gathered.

Moreover, it was also necessary to take into account the fact that though the town's local population, in theory, desired to see 'more constables on the beat' agreement on the disciplinary function of these same constables was not so unanimous.

Finally, increasing the number of police constables without a prior reorganisation of the police institution would have led to even more public and police dissatisfaction. The right balance had to be stricken between a sufficient number of police constables and the need for technological support. What was necessary was a new, practical system of information management and not just the delegation of the responsibility for a territory to a larger team of constables.

22. Interviews were made with Jordi Samsó and Albert Vilatarsana, sub-inspector and coordinator of the department 'Public Security and Civil Protection' of Sant Boi de Llobregat between February and September 2003.

Consequently, the officers of Sant Boi's municipal police force have elaborated a system of codification and classification of all the criminal offences they have to deal with on their territory, but also of all the other forms of police intervention. Until recently, all the interventions of the police had been listed but had never been indexed.

It took two years to find an adequate indexing system and a third year to consolidate it. Quickly enough though, it proved to be a useful means for answering the demands of the local population concerning certain types of intervention and a speedy means of transmitting, when necessary, gathered information to other city services.

The system then took two more years to become fully trustworthy. At the start of the experiment, there was a lot of trial and error, and it was obvious that many constables were not inputting the required information. At first, only approximately 300 files on interventions were gathered. Little by little, however, the system received more and more input and, after two years, 16,000 files have been accumulated. This now allows the police to assess the number of offences uncovered, their increase or decrease, and, what is more, to calculate the number of police operations initiated either by the police or by the citizens. In fact, it has been noted that a majority of all interventions were initiated by the police, which suggests that the municipal police force carries out a lot of preventive work.

Moreover, for the reform to be accepted by the local police constables, priority was given to communicating and explaining all decisions taken, especially in matters concerning the service distribution of personnel.

Training police constables to community relations was also given top priority. According to Jordi Samsó, 80% of the problems between the police and the local population were not due to bad procedures but to bad communication. The personnel were thus informed of the problem, and especially the neighbourhood police constables. In order to homogenise the basic training given, during the first year, a basic course of 120 hours was imposed on all agents not having been trained by the Police School of Catalonia. Afterwards, advanced training sessions of about 40 hours were given to all. These tackled the different aspects of community relations. By this stage, most difficulties came from the higher echelons of the local police force, those who had not necessarily received the basic training needed to lead a team along the lines of the reform. They were thus grouped together for a 120-hour basic training scheme.

3.1. 'Reinserting' the neighbourhood police constable within the community

By the time the reform was implemented, it became obvious that the district police force was working more or less independently of the neighbourhood constable. In order to place the officer who best knows the local territory (i.e. the neighbourhood police constable) at the heart of the new system, the prerogatives of all levels of police had to be reorganised. According to Jordi Samsó's allegory, the neighbourhood

police constable is like a General Practitioner and the other units of the police are the specialist doctors. The neighbourhood police constable, on his own initiative or following a call from the Town Council or a member of the Neighbourhood Council, alerts the other police forces as soon as a local security problem is detected.

It was also necessary to introduce the new neighbourhood police constable to the local community so that he or she could be clearly identified as the population's local contact with the police.

For each of the six districts of Sant Boi, a Town Counsellor responsible for security (whose immediate superior is the Mayor) is assisted by a technician (*Técnico dinamizador de barrio*) working in the local Community House (where the different local associations are represented). He or she receives the complaints of the population and meets everyday with the neighbourhood police constable. In turn, the neighbourhood police constable keeps his own hierarchy informed of local affairs, thus coordinating, not only the different services of the Town Hall but also the action of his fellow constables.

The Town Counsellors responsible for security also meet with the representatives of the citizen associations of their area (resident, shop-keeper, parent associations, etc.) during monthly Neighbourhood Council meetings. The neighbourhood police constable, having been presented during one of these meetings, is systematically invited when a problem concerning security is on the agenda. The communication plan of the reform has equally anticipated that the neighbourhood police constable should be present in person at least once every three months at the Local Council Meetings so as to appraise local security. The result has been an increase in the satisfaction of all those present during these meetings: the representatives of the neighbourhood groups see their opinions taken into account and the police constables are shown at their best advantage.

The Local Security Council (*Junta Local de Seguridad*), composed of national and local police officers and chaired by the Mayor, is an instance which gathers and discusses statistics on security. The work accomplished by this Council is used to present and explain the city's wider security situation during the Local Council meetings.

As those who first thought out the program wished to make clear, the Neighbourhood Council and Local Council meetings were designed to show how police action participates in the improvement of the quality of life of a neighbourhood or city, while at the same time attracting attention to the limits of police intervention. According to Jordi Samsó, it is necessary to 'protect' the local police constable by defending his or her position during the Neighbourhood Council meetings, since the introduction of a neighbourhood police constable can indeed generate very strong expectations which cannot be met by the police. There is a risk of misunderstanding and frustration, on the part of the population and within the police force, if what the police can and cannot do is not clearly defined.

3.2. The tools of reform: technological support

Implementing the reform has brought about a redeployment and a slight increase in the number of police personnel. Moreover, new technological tools have been introduced.

Staff has increased by 20% (from 85 to 100 local police constables). This increase, however, in part compensates the recent decrease in the working hours of on-the-beat constables. This increase in personnel and a further rise in salary (in exchange for the organisational changes necessary for the reform) have been signed with the trade unions.

Certain administrative tasks have also been externalised. For example, since 2001, central communication is managed by a private company trained under the supervision of the local police force.

The local police force has also been divided into two separate units, each made up of 12 constables and 2 commanding officers: the neighbourhood police unit; and the special force units (also 12 constables and 2 officers), who manage the radars, the towage vehicles, the protection of buildings and who do the bookings. The neighbourhood unit have a daily schedule corresponding to the opening hours of local shops and to the time of day when many people are out and about the streets (from 8.00 am to 1.00 pm and from 2.30 pm to 8.00 pm).

Furthermore, in the near future, a GPS system tracking local units on the territory will also be implemented. This system will not only be a means of control of the routes and the areas covered by the policemen, it will also check that their presence in an area is adequate to the needs and desires expressed locally. Of course, the system will also improve the security of police agents by guaranteeing immediate reinforcements if need be.

Third, the neighbourhood police constables must handle a large quantity of information in order to answer the demands of the population. Since 2002, they have been equipped with a palm-held computer which gives them ready access to a data bank and a detailed program of all their interventions for the day.

Thus, for Jordi Samsó, technological help is not only compatible with the philosophy of community policing, but is a condition for its implementation.

Over the past two years, the reform of the municipal police force of Sant Boi has reached the whole town maintenance system. Today, a 'neighbourhood maintenance team' also works according to the 'broken window' theory. Because many problems tackled by proximity police forces are due to an insufficient maintenance of the town, its parks, street lighting, etc., a 'Maintenance Committee' has been created. This committee, composed of all the Town Counsellors, the Head of Police and the person in charge of City Maintenance, process collectively, within the Town Hall, problems affecting security.

3.3. An evaluation system calling for greater 'subjectivity'

The monitoring body of the reform is the political branch of the system : the *Comisión de gobierno*, formed by the Mayor and the town counsellors.

At first, no evaluation program had been planned. Then, an index system of crimes and police interventions was developed in Sant Boi. This system lists by genre²³ the number of each officer's interventions and certain other personal data (such as overtime). The individual 'performance' of a specific officer and the general intervention rate of the municipal police of Sant Boi in each field of intervention can thus be compared.²⁴ Consequently, promotions are based not only on the number of an officer's bookings but on all the officer's interventions as they are reported by his immediate superior.

According to Jordi Samsó, it would be necessary to modify today's individual evaluation system of officers by also taking into account a series of more subjective factors: How does the officer do his work? What is his attitude? How does he represent the service? etc. These factors would be part of a further evaluation²⁵ of the officer by all commanding officers he or she has come into contact with. Other parties could also take part in this general appraisal, namely the political heads of each district. A good sign is when the *Regidor de Barrio* insists on keeping 'his' neighbourhood constable. This should be written down and taken into consideration during evaluation.

A *carta de servicio* (service charter) has also been proposed. This charter commits police constables, and allows their evaluation through opinion polls which verify whether the Sant Boi police is fulfilling their duties. A general evaluation system of the services of the municipal police have thus been devised in the form of a questionnaire²⁶ which, by 2004, will be presented over the phone to the institutions who have been in contact with municipal police forces. The grid includes questions on the speed of responses and the way 'users' were treated. It also covers the whole time span between a user's first call to the town's central call centre all the way to the actual police intervention. Each step is marked on a scale of five colours, in order to facilitate processing.

23. See Table I.

24. See Table II.

25. This system is already used in another town of Catalonia: Mataro, in the *Plan General d'Avaluació* (General Evaluation Plan) of the *Mossos d'Esquadra*.

According to the 1998 results of the citizen satisfaction poll (carried out by the Mayor every four years),²⁷ the police get a ‘pass’, with a mark of 5.4 out of 10.²⁸ According to Jordi Samsó, this shows that there remains much to do, namely in matters of attitude, efficiency and the use of modern technology. However, the reform cannot be accelerated, each of the changes brought about by this structural and technological reform having first to be assimilated, ‘digested’, by the neighbourhood police constables.

Table I: The municipal police of Sant Boi de Llobregat, March 2003, Criteria used in the individual evaluation of police constables.

Number of interventions
Number of interventions followed by arrests
Number of bookings concerning vehicles requiring towage
Number of bookings sent to the sub-delegation of the government*
Number of bookings for traffic offences
Traffic Control Department bookings
Number of incidents during work
Number of hours of overtime

* Central Government authority competent in sanctioning breaches to the State Security Law (*Ley estatal de Seguridad*), for offences such as drug use.

26. Table III.

27. Because of a recent political change within Sant Boi’s Town Hall, the results of the 2002 opinion polls have not been officially released.

28. AYUNTAMENT DE SANT BOI, Enquestes de satisfacció, Metra Seis, 1998.

Table II: Agent interventions 18/12/03

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Traffic accidents	62	73	41	26	39
Backup work	74	120	117	126	143
Threats	5	5		1	2
Assistance to citizens*	21	17	22	11	19
Citizen resistance	1		1		1
Auxiliary work**	61	56	34	33	38
Damage on public highway	40	48	49	75	181
Domestic strife	14	7	6	8	4
Destruction and/or degradation of public property	26	31	28	41	25
Traffic violations	6	15	33	33	23
Complaints	214	216	493	812	242
Violations of drug laws	3	1			
Fraud			1	1	
Thefts	4	4	3	8	5
Subdel gouv. bookings	93	59	60	36	18
Petty assault		2	2	2	1
Vice case				1	
Incivilities	100	143	70	108	120
Aid to person in danger	23	5	10	3	1
Traffic security prevention work	36	41	33	65	23
Infringement of a sentence					1

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Traffic regulation	19	47	225	257	299
Burglaries	10	16	16	17	13
Non coded			4	3	2
Transit work	54	92	87	113	98
Suspect behaviours	69	68	63	74	62
Total	935	1066	1397	1854	1359

* For instance, for a car breakdown on the public highway

** For instance, after an accident

Table III: Sub-delegate of the government bookings (Statistics for 2001)

<i>Bookings sent to the sub-delegate of the government 2001</i>	<i>Total no. of bookings</i>	<i>No. of agents</i>	<i>Maximum no. of bookings per agent</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Agent's bookings</i>
Cocaine possession/use	101	27	12	3.7407	12
Cannabis possession/use	440	53	69	8.3019	41
Hard drugs possession or use	8	8	1	1	1
Possession/use, other	10	9	2	1.1111	1
Civil disobedience or public disorder	42	22	5	1.9091	3
Insult to officer	55	26	8	2.1154	5
Non coded	10	9	2	1.1111	1
Possession of a lethal weapon	126	39	11	3.2308	8
Simulating possession of a lethal weapon	18	14	3	1.2857	1
Possession of a fire arm, others	57	30	6	1.9	6
Lost and found	2	2	1	1	1

Table IV: Project for a general evaluation grid of municipal police work through telephone polling of institutions having been in contact with municipal police forces

Date:	Intervention:		Agents:		
Age:	- 25 yrs old	25-34 yrs old	35-44 yrs old	45-59 yrs old	+ 60 yrs old
When you called your local police station, the operator answered	In less than 20 seconds	20-30 seconds	Phone engaged on first call	Phone engaged twice	Phone engaged after more than two calls
The operators answered your call in a polite, cordial and proper manner	I totally agree	I agree		I don't agree	I don't at all agree
After your call, a constable came in (minutes)	Less than 6 mins	6-12 mins	12-18 mins	18-30 mins	More than 30 mins
You consider that the constable came	Very promptly	Promptly	Reasonably quickly	Late	Very late
The manners of the constable were polite and cordial	I totally agree	I agree		I disagree	I totally disagree
The constable showed an interest in your problem	I totally agree	I agree		I disagree	I totally disagree
The constable solved your problem or informed you of further action	I totally agree	I agree		I disagree	I totally disagree
Evaluate police action (between 1-10)					
Evaluate the services offered by your local police force (between 1-10)					
How do you think we could improve our service to the community?					

Colour code

- 5: Range of excellence
- 4: Range of quality
- 3: Range of criticism
- 2: Range of 'non quality'
- 1: Range of 'non quality' and further serious deficiencies

4. CONCLUSION: FOR A LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY POLICING

By comparing the components of the *Policía 2000* program to those of the reform implemented in Sant Boi de Llobregat, it appears that the two programs, in order to reach preset strategic goals, use similar means. Both encourage computerisation and data sharing, a greater use of modern technology, more training and public relations work, the organisation of regular meetings to analyse results and tighter links with the local representatives of neighbourhood groups (namely through Neighbourhood Councils) in order to narrow the division between the police and the local population. Far from being antagonistic, the two programs, except for the financial motivation specific to the *Policía 2000* program, have in fact very similar designs. This, of course, is not a coincidence but due to the fact that the former General Director of the National Police, Juan Cotino Ferrer, wished to translate on a nationwide scale the steps he had successfully implemented while Head of the Municipal Police of Valencia.²⁹

Today, the analysis of the results of existing community policing programs still can't offer any definite conclusions as to 'what works and what doesn't' in Spain. The question of scale, however, does appear to be one of the main factors affecting the implementation of community policing work. Indeed, the necessary de-centralisation and de-bureaucratisation which must accompany community policing programs are difficult to implement nationally.

On the other hand, scaling down community policing work to a very local level largely facilitates the collaboration between the municipal police teams and the other municipal services. Thanks to the daily contacts between the administrations of the Town Hall and the citizenry, the link between municipal policing and community policing becomes quite clear, motivating these administrations to promote community policing. Furthermore, the more thoughtful implementations of community policing at a municipal level seem to prove that evaluation by the population (and by the other services in relation with the population) becomes easier when direct 'feedback' is offered by the Town Hall and by the satisfaction polls easily implemented at such a small scale.

At the same time, the philosophy of community policing at a local level has also enabled a greater flexibility of the criteria of its implementation. Indeed, industrial towns are as different to tourist towns, as inner city neighbourhoods can be to suburban areas. The police are confronted with many diverse communities which are characterised by distinct cultural and socio-economic contexts and equally different conceptions of law and order. Applying a single and homogenous policy, even on the

29. J.R. Pin Arboledas, *op. cit.* p. 23.

scale of a single city, is thus difficult and general prevention strategies must be adapted to local contexts every time a local police constable responds to a local problem.

Public security in general has been improved by local police forces. Indeed, the first experience of community policing in Spain engaging municipal police forces³⁰ has now become Spain's official reference in matters of community policing. Thanks to the inherent ability of this form of community policing for organising itself, it has been possible to export it to a national level, as with the *Policía 2000* program.

Today, there is a tendency among Spanish policemen, be they municipal, national, or regional, to voice the desire for a division of labour between Spain's different police forces: local or municipal police forces should be responsible for missions linked to community work (which they can easily adapt to) and national or regional police forces should concentrate on managing missions of investigation and law enforcement. Such a division would enhance the efficiency of police work, while at the same time simplify the definition, on a local scale, of criteria adapted to the area.

The conception, implementation and evaluation of existing proximity police strategies reveal the crucial importance of taking into account local factors in matters of crime prevention policy.

30. By the town of Madrid in 1981.