

POLICE, ORDER, SECURITY AND COMUNITY RELATIONS

**Findings and recommendations for policies that
improve performance of the Albanian State Police on
community policing – April 2014**

TIRANA, APRIL 2014



ABBREVIATIONS

ASP Albanian State Police

CBTL Center for Business, Technology and Leadership

CSO Civil Society Organization

EU European Union

ICLA Institute for Change and Leadership in Albania

IDRA Institute for Research and Development Alternatives

IPLS Institute for Public and Legal Studies

MOI Ministry of Internal Affairs

PMT Programme Management Team

SACP Swedish Assistance to MOI/SP on Community Policing

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to provide to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and to the Albanian State Police recommendations that can be considered during the ongoing process of reforms to improve the performance of ASP in general and in particular Community Policing.

In order to provide recommendations based on impartial and comprehensive information, the report was based on a series of studies that provide expectations of different institutions and groups of citizens on the work of State Police. During March - April 2014, seven new studies were conducted by IDRA and ICLA that brought the experiences of different social groups and institutions from their interaction with the staff of the Albanian State Police, and their perception on security, order and ASP's work.

Analyses of all findings have in focus the basic priorities of ASP reforms.¹

1. Institutional–organizational transformation² refers to internal change management of the State Police, as well as to the establishment of a modern management culture based on a more advanced infrastructure³.

2. Community policing and community partnerships⁴

The findings provide the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Police qualitative and quantitative data on the strengths and weaknesses and the opportunities police in the field has to improve its work and to better serve the citizens. To provide a more complete picture, the study makes an analysis of the strategic environment where the State Police interacts, as well as of the existing strategies and policies.

This report is based on:

a. The results of the evaluation and perception of the work of the state police by society groups and institutions that interact with the police obtained during the period March - April 2014. Specifically there were surveyed: i) 48 public institutions and 16 non-public institutions at local and central levels; ii) 28 representatives of local and national media, iii) 8 focus groups with a total of 56 participants, representatives of different social groups and

¹ State Police Strategy 2007 - 2013

² <http://www.punetebrendshme.gov.al/al/prioritetet/artikuj>

³ http://www.asp.gov.al/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=182&Itemid=125&lang=sq

⁴ http://www.asp.gov.al/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=182&Itemid=125&lang=sq

iv) 179 citizens who have filed denunciations to the police. These perceptions are not nationally representative, but are important to recognize the opinions of the groups that have interacted with ASP at the time of the survey.

b. The inventory of findings from studies supported by the SACP program and conducted by non-governmental organizations during 2012-2013.

c. The review of the published official strategic documents⁵ – such as the strategies and the action plans related to the police and community policing.

d. The opinion and feedback provided by representatives of the MOI, ASP, line ministries, and representatives of international institutions and civil society organizations, during the consultative meeting held in Tirana on May 2, 2014.

During the analysis of the strategic documents, but also in meetings with various public and private institutions resulted that the institutionalization of the reforms related to community policing and implementation of changes, so that they are sustainable, remains a challenge to MOI and ASP. Until now there have been implemented some reforms and action plans related to community policing, but they were not part of a concrete strategy. *The report recommends the development of a specific strategy for community policing with concrete objectives and actions for the implementation of this philosophy in the police services.*

The study finds that almost all groups that were surveyed had a positive perception on the improvement of ASP performance during the four-month period of January - April 2014. Some of the aspects for the good evaluation from these groups of ASP performance include: improved communication of police officers toward citizens⁶, inclusion of a greater number of women with professional communication skills, better distribution of police staff in the field, the professional appearance and behaviour of the traffic police, the overall good work performed by the Border Police, the eased convenience to contact the police when citizens needed to file denunciations, as well as tracking of issues and access to information related to cases of denunciations.

According to various studies that were reviewed, trust in the state police is different in various groupings, for example a) IDRA March 2014 survey on contacting the police (129) shows that 63% of the respondents have confidence in the SP in general, b) 40% of respondents (vehicle drivers - IDRA March 2014 survey) have confidence in ASP, c) participants in focus groups (IDRA March 2014 survey) stated they did not have fully trust

⁵ See {References} section”

⁶ IDRA Focus Groups March 2014 & ICLA Interviews with various institutions March - April 2013

in the ASP and d) representatives of Roma and Egyptian communities in focus groups (IDRA March 2014) - claimed police officers behave unprofessionally towards them and for this reason their trust in the ASP is at minimal levels.

According to the above mentioned facts it is obvious that while there is a positive trend toward an improved perception of ASP performance, there is still work to be done to enhance the confidence of special groups in particular.

In its findings, the report makes reference to the results of various surveys on perceptions, beliefs, and opinions different groupings have on the work of ASP. Given that these surveys were conducted with different methodologies, they are not comparable and therefore they need to be repeated periodically with the same methodology. *Considering this, the report recommends the implementation of a detailed system (periodic) of performance and public perception measurement, which needs to be part of the overall ASP strategy.*

The study refers to quantitative and qualitative data over the period 2013 - 2014, and indicates that there are a number of issues that remain to be improved in relation to:

- a) a new approach to community services and to the citizens to improve safety, order, relations, services, and communication of ASP with the community and particular social groups,**
- b) improving the internal organization, human, financial, and material resources within the ASP, as well as,**
- c) improving and coordinating the work between ASP, the community and other partners of civil society, and**
- d) new forms and approaches of communication and implementation of a communication strategy that will increase public awareness on the real role of police and its efficiency, and improve the whole image of the ASP.**

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are prepared based not only on matters arising from the IDRA and ICLA surveys during 2014, but reflecting a wider spectrum of findings and recommendations arising from previous studies conducted since 2012 until 2014. This is because the findings of these studies continue to be valid and actual to improve ASP performance and its public image.

RECOMENDATION 1 - *Establishment and implementation of a comprehensive and concrete strategy on community policing.*

1.1. *Implementation of the strategy should include concrete measures to reform the internal ASP system in all its management and implementing structures. These measures will ensure that the expected change reform becomes a natural part of daily efforts of police itself.*

RECOMMENDATION II - *Improved inter- institutional cooperation and coordination work and improved cooperation between police and civil society partners.*

RECOMMENDATION III - *Improve the working conditions of the police and its infrastructure.*

RECOMENDATION 1 - Establishment and implementation of a comprehensive and concrete strategy on community policing.

1.1. Implementation of the strategy should include concrete measures to reform the internal ASP system in all its management and implementing structures. These measures will ensure that the expected change reform becomes a natural part of daily efforts of police itself.

To ensure this, the ASP should review the systems of recruitment, performance measurement, training, qualifications, awards and communication strategists to reflect best community-oriented policing.

This can be accomplished through the implementation of some concrete steps:

- First, the prioritization of issues rising from proposed reforms that are simultaneously most important and urgent to ensure security and order in the country, and crime prevention and reduction,
- Establishment of an internal communication system with all institutions and police units with regard to the reform and its implementation measures in order to inform and get their opinions,
- Increased delegation and acceptance of responsibilities for lower levels of the hierarchy (insured by improving human capacity of ASP staff and enable other levels of organization to participate in the decision-making process rather than limit this to the top management only)
- Creating and strengthening police staff capacities on community policing approach. This can be achieved by strengthening crime prevention and public order structures, as well as by improving ASP staff skills on community policing approach by:
 - ❖ Including community policing skills in the recruitment criteria for the newly recruited police staff,
 - ❖ Including criteria for measuring the level of knowledge and forms of behaviour of police officers in accordance to the community policing philosophy to the performance measurement and individual reward systems (at the individual and unit levels).
 - ❖ Establishing a training program focused on community policing

1.2. The strategy should provide concrete measures for the inclusion and interaction of the community as the main participants, contributors and beneficiaries of the community policing.

For this, concrete measures should be taken for the:

- **Socialization and communication of community policing concept at the local/community levels. It is important that information is communicated and conveyed in a simple, clear manner, and is accessible by all citizens in their communities.**
- **Consultation with the community through a well-defined plan with deadlines and methodologies with different existing structures.**
- **Enhancing the active role of the community to prevent crime, ensure order and peace - Community policing means that police is actively assisted by the community to perform its function for crime prevention, ensuring peace and order. Important in this context is the improvement of the partnership with the general public by creating a responsible structure of the ASP at the centre with the following tasks:**
 - ❖ **methodological guidance to the regional directorates in developing action plans for community policing,**
 - ❖ **centralized monitoring of the implementation of action plans by responsible structures,**
 - ❖ **periodic public reporting on the implementation of integrated action plan,**
 - ❖ **coordination of actions for the decentralized implementation of the action plan by the police directorates in the districts,**
 - ❖ **development and use of methods for monitoring the implementation of activities and periodic monitoring of public perception on the effectiveness of police interaction with the wider community**
 - ❖ **Assigning focal points in each police station for community policing issues.**

1.3. Establishment and implementation of a detailed (periodic) system of measuring perceptions on police performance by the public as an integral part of the new community policing strategy.

This system of measuring perceptions should be supported by the ASP as well as by various actors of CSOs in order to bring external evaluations that inform MoI and ASP on measures to be taken for improvement of performance. Data should be disaggregated into as much details as possible so that to address issues arising from different demographic groups such as gender, age, region, education level, ethnicity, etc.

1.4. A new communication strategy and involvement of concrete measures for strategic communication within the new strategy of community policing.

The new communication approach should include new forms of communication with the wider community as well as with other stakeholders of the society. These forms must be concrete, easy to be implemented and to be measured.

Recommendations of the ASP Communication Strategy proposed by COMPORT and those presented by various donors (OSCE, ICITAP, PAMECA, SACP) and other civil society reports, to be translated into actions that can be implemented and measured within the new strategy, such as:

- Designing and approval of a handbook for the introduction of community policing to the media. The manual may include formats and communication methods to develop awareness campaigns, campaigns for public safety, traffic safety, to inform the citizens on the ways to file complaints to the police, etc.
- Improving the public image of the police by strengthening relations with the community, emphasizing the positive aspects, readiness and services the ASP provides for the community in general and for cases of domestic violence in particular, professionalism, impartiality and respecting of ethics by its employees. To achieve this, improvement of reception facilities in police stations, which should reflect high standard service, will be a great help. *These reception structures will create a significant impact on the public image of the police.* A citizen keeps in memory a good service, rather than the problem that led there.
- Increase awareness of the role of the police and its current efficiency through:
 - ❖ Increasing the number of police activities in the media (television and radio programs, articles in newspapers and magazines). In this way, the role of the police in response to security issues, law enforcement, prevention and halting of crimes, domestic violence, etc, will ensure delivery of the right, accurate and complete information to the audience. Given that television remains the most preferred form of media and the main source information, it is most favourable to set agreements with national and local televisions in order to create TV space from time to time for police work and other above mentioned issues.
 - ❖ Developing a specific information page within the ASP web site. This page will provide real, detailed, and practical information; tips on crime prevention, law enforcement, domestic violence, etc.; will present the role of the police and other necessary information about availability of services, focusing in particularly on the youth, as the main user of internet and a very good source for information dissemination.
 - ❖ Organizing events within the premises of police stations where the community and other representatives of various institutions and organizations that work in

those areas are invited to introduce the role, innovations and achievements of police work.

- ❖ Encouraging TV and radio spots in the audiovisual media against domestic violence and victim protection forms.
- ❖ Encouraging discussions in the audiovisual media on themes regarding social issues, relations in the contemporary families, as well as family and community solidarity.
- ❖ Revising textbooks at all levels of education system and introducing special programs and curricula that deal with issues of living in the community, issues of safety and order, crime and violence prevention, causes that bring these phenomena in the community and in family, issues related to road and traffic safety, as well as those showing the role of police and community relations with the police.

1.5. The strategy should include not only the priorities and key areas of intervention, but also a detailed action plan with:

- concrete and measurable objectives,
- baseline data for reference as a starting point for intervention,
- concrete responsibilities by institutions at both central and local levels,
- concrete deadlines,
- budget to support operations,
- means of verification to show how the results will be monitored and measured

Action plans at the regional level to be chapters of the overall integrated plan, and departments' action plans to be connected respectively.

RECOMMENDATION II - *Improved inter- institutional cooperation and coordination work and improved cooperation between police and civil society partners.*

Although ASP is perceived to have a relatively good interaction and coordination with various state institutions, in the context of community policing, the potential for such cooperation should be considered at a much broader spectrum. To enable full exploitation of this potential, two lines of actions are recommended:

1. *Encourage interest of state partners for new forms of cooperation with the police;*
2. *Legally formalize obligations of state partners to be actively involved in important community policing planning and monitoring processes*

- The establishment of coordination committee for community policing, is also recommended, according to the model established by the Council of Ministers decision no. 334, dated 07.02.2011 *"On the mechanism of coordination of work for the referral of domestic violence and procedures to deal with it."*
- Systematic organization of joint trainings with employees of various institutions that deal with inter-institutional issues can be considered another form of cooperation. For example in the case of domestic violence training among (police, municipal, courts, prosecution, enforcement office, schools, health centres, etc.) should be focused on the legal changes and new structures which will bring increased awareness on the role of each actor, an understanding of respective views and concerns, as well as a strengthening of inter-institutional relations.
- To improve cooperation between police and civil society partners it is recommended that:
 - ❖ *The ASP should be active in research and application of practical ways of interaction with CSOs through various forms such as cooperation agreements and memorandums related to specific tasks and objectives for each party.*
 - ❖ *Each district police directorate must build a comprehensive database with the names, addresses and contact points of non-governmental organizations active in areas such as those of domestic violence, women's and children's rights, trafficking and blood feuds, etc. Consultations with such actors needs to follow a well-defined annual calendar and made public;*
 - ❖ *Each district police directorate must develop simple and periodic consultations with business representatives in the district;*
 - ❖ *The police should periodically and publicly report on the progress of implementation of such memorandums.*

RECOMMENDATION III - *Improve the working conditions of the police and its infrastructure.*

Given that strategic documents with specific recommendations for improving the working conditions and infrastructure of police are available to the MOI and ASP, we do not want to repeat these recommendations. However, as shown by the findings of the study, the working conditions and the infrastructure are important factors that need to be considered as part of the new strategy. This is because these factors affect not only the performance and professionalism of police officers (in the implementation of their daily work and the morale and motivation of employees), but have a very tangible impact on the perception of citizens and community members on the work and services performed by the police.

In this context, we would recommend that MOI and ASP include in the action plan for community policing concrete measures and tools for verification and measuring the progress and achievements in connection to the improvement of facilities, infrastructure, equipment, financial plans for the reorganization and functioning of the ASP structures.

Summary table of demographic data of surveys, interviews, and focus groups (March - April 2014)

	SURVEY	ORGANIZATION	PERIOD	METODOLOGY	NO OF PARTICIPANTS	TYOLOGY	DISTRICTS
1	Interviews with representatives of public and non-public institutions	ICLA	March – April 2014	Semi-structured interviews	64 participants	Representatives of public and non public (NGOs) institutions Donors and Businesses, Line Ministries Mayor s Aldermen Regional Educational Directorates Regional Hospitals High schools Municipalities Prefectures Attorney Office Social Services regional directorates Family protection units Commissioner on Human Rights Ombudsman Office Regional directorates for coordination and development Civil Status Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tiranë, • Durrës • Shkodër, Korçë, • Fier, • Vlorë • Sarandë • Dibër • Elbasan • Gjirokaštër



	SURVEY	ORGANIZATION	PERIOD	METODOLOGY	NO OF PARTICIPANTS	TYOLOGY	DISTRICTS
2	Interviews with media representatives	ICLA	March – April 2014	Semi-structured interviews	28 participants	Journalists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Printed Media Television 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tiranë, Durrës Shkodër, Korçë, Fier, Vlorë Sarandë Dibër Elbasan Gjirokastrë
3	Crime Victim Survey	IDRA	March – April 2014	Survey	179 interviews	Citizens who had submitted denunciation to the police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tiranë, Shkodër, Korçë, Fier, Lushnjë, Lezhë
4	Survey of people who have had experience with traffic police	IDRA	March 2014	Survey	300 interviews	Drivers, about 78% of the respondents consist of auto-vehicles drivers (not taxi drivers)	12 districts in urban areas (cities)
5	Survey of people who have called ‘129’	IDRA	March 2014	Phone Survey	300 interviews	People who have contacted police by calling emergency lines (129) during the first quarter of 2014.	Tiranë
6	Survey of people who pass through border checkpoints	IDRA	March 2014	Survey	305 interviews	People passing through border checkpoints and who had interaction with the staff of State Police during the past 12 months Albanian and foreign nationals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rinas Airport; Durres Port; Kakavijë; Muriqan;

	SURVEY	ORGANIZATION	PERIOD	METODOLOGY	NO OF PARTICIPANTS	TPOLOGY	DISTRICTS
						(ratio ~ 2:1).	• Qafë Thanë.
7	Focus Groups	IDRA	March – April 2014	Focus Groups	8 meetings with 56 participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total population; Age group 18-56 years • Young; Age group 18-24 years • Young people from rural area • Teacher / Parent; Age group 18-56 years • Population Roma / Egyptian; Age group 18-56 years • Rural population age group 25-56 	Tiranë Kamzë- Bathore Tirana Rural Population