



COOPERATIVE POLICING IN THE CITY: VOLUNTARY CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND THE CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE



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Abstract: This paper originates from a comprehensive research programme which evaluates the context of different policing roles in organisations life of the police, public life, the citizens' perception of this presence, and the potential impact on subjective security. The aspect of voluntary policing is highlighted.

INTRODUCTION

German police forces are constantly confronted with political, economic, social, technological, and legal changes which they have to respond to despite clumsy administrative machinery (cf. Van den Born & Witteloostuijn, 2011; Van den Born et al., 2013). This coincides with a shifting security market in which the federal police forces ⁽¹⁾ and the state police forces are no longer exclusively in charge of maintaining and producing security and order. Additional stakeholders appear in conjunction with the police, becoming a complementary agent for security and order. One such agent is the 'voluntary police', by which members of the community are involved in police work. This paper originates from a comprehensive research programme which

evaluates the context of different policing roles in organisations life of the police, public life, the citizens' perception of this presence, and the potential impact on subjective security. In the following, the aspect of voluntary policing is highlighted ⁽²⁾.

COOPERATIVE SECURITY POLICY IN THE CITY

The research project 'Cooperative security policy in the city' ⁽³⁾ evaluated urban security ⁽⁴⁾ and crime prevention cooperation in 16 German municipalities in four specific areas: youth as delinquents and victims; domestic violence; drug abuse; and 'policing presence' (Polizierende Präsenz). The latter sub-project investigated

⁽¹⁾ The federal police (*Bundespolizei*) is a national available police force (in 2013: about 40 000 employees of which 32 000 are police officers (*Bundespolizei*, 2014) and was known before 2005 as the German border police.

⁽²⁾ This aspect of voluntary policing was presented at the international conference on 'Community-based urban violence prevention: strategies and experiences' organised by Globus — The Global Urban Studies Institute at the Freie Universität Berlin on 6 June 2014.

⁽³⁾ In German, *Kooperative Sicherheitspolitik in der Stadt* or 'KoSiPol' was a joint research project funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research between 2010 and 2012, and forms part of the larger research programme between five partner institutions: the Westphalian Wilhelms-University of Münster (WWU, North-Rhine Westphalia), the European Centre of Crime Prevention in Münster (EZK, North-Rhine Westphalia), the Ernst-Moritz-Arndt University of Greifswald (EMAU, Mecklenburg West Pomerania), the University of Applied Sciences in Wiesbaden (HfPV, North-Rhine Westphalia), and the University of Applied Sciences for Public Administration and Management of North Rhine-Westphalia (FHöV). For further project findings, see Frevel, 2012.

⁽⁴⁾ The German language does not differentiate between security and safety.



the effects of the abovementioned shifting constitution of the (German) security market — focusing in particular on policing presence, which is defined as the visual appearance, the concepts, and profiling effects of organisations and individuals in charge of producing and maintaining order and security in public, semi-public, and private space (Groß & Hirschmann, 2011: 1).

Relevant to this study is the state police whose responsibilities extend to the defence of threats, crime control and prevention as well as the insurance of road safety (cf. Frevel, 2008: 3). Police activity usually starts when there is a potential or actual threat to (public) safety, security, and order (cf. Singer, 2006: 3). The German state police forces (Landespolizei) represent a separate authority for each of the 16 German states (Länder). Hence, each of the 16 German states has its distinct police legislation ⁽⁵⁾. In addition,

municipal regulatory agencies are also in charge of producing and preserving security and order and act as independent authorities next to the federal and state police forces. Therefore, there are independent specifications with regard to administrative and police legislation which influence organisations, terminologies, jurisdictions, and forms of collaboration (cf. Hirschmann & Groß, 2012: 17).

Figure 1 illustrates the plurality of stakeholders producing security in Germany. It shows that public safety and security is no longer an exclusive responsibility for the police forces but also extends to the voluntary and commercial sectors. Even though the German state attempts to comply with its obligations to provide security and safety for its population, a shifting of power is determined due to the transfer of certain typical policing tasks to the abovementioned actors (cf. Hirschmann & Groß, 2012; Van den Brink & Kaiser 2007: 5).

Figure 1 — **Organisation Chart**

Private sector, commercial bias		Local level		Federal and regional level	
Private Security Sector	Public Order Office	‘Freiwilliger Polizeidienst’(*)		Police	German Federal Police
Security services (e.g. physical protection & plant security, mobile services such as mobile patrol, personal security, cash and valuable transport, observation and control/surveillance of the local public transport, etc.)	‘Ordnungspolizei’ (police for public order) or ‘Stadt-polizei’ (city police, Hessen), general or local government office for public order	Security guards (**)			Federal Criminal Police Office
		Voluntary order and security service (***)			State police forces
		Security partners (****)			‘Wachpolizei’ (Hessen)/ Centralised target protection’ (Berlin)
		(*) Hessen, Baden-Württemberg (**) Saxony, Bavaria (***) Lower Saxony (****) Brandenburg			

Source: Hirschmann & Groß 2012: 10; amendments by the author. Highlighted actors have been subjects of investigation.

⁽⁵⁾ For an overview of German police forces see Groß, Frevel & Dams, 2008.



Some argue there is reorganisation of the state's monopoly on the use of force since traditional police are complemented by further stakeholders (cf. Behr, 2002). Still, national and state protagonists are the main guarantors for keeping public space 'clean' and safe — even when the trend of increasing privatisation of public spaces and with it the natural separation of public and private control sectors has also become blurred. To complicate the situation further, the classic 'third sector' has also become involved. Publicly organised voluntary associations like the 'Voluntary Police Service' (*Freiwilliger Polizeidienst*) in Baden-Württemberg and Hessen have entered the scene and will be the main focus for the remainder of this paper.

There are further regulatory agencies such as the Hessian city police (*Stadtpolizei*) which is the executive field service of the municipal office of public order (*Ordnungsamt*) and, not least of all, commercial private security companies (cf. Hirschmann, 2013: 35; Hirschmann & Groß, 2012: 9; Mähler, 2009: 106; Behr, 2006: 54; Beste, 2000: 299). Thus, questions arise about a possible new separation of powers in society (cf. Gusy, 1999: 117), including also the privatisation of social control (cf. Beste, 2009: 183), the privatisation of certain tasks which have been originally executed by the police (cf. Obergfell-Fuchs, 2000), a commercialisation of security and order, as well as the professionalism and specialisation of police work (cf. Behr, 2002: 92). In the sense of Habermas' (1985) 'The new complexity' (*Die Neue Unübersichtlichkeit*) one can observe a new complexity with regard to security and safety (cf. Hirschmann & Groß, 2012: 133).

The common research questions for the sub-project 'policing presence' — which equally apply to the voluntary policing interest — were the following.

- Organisation: In which way did national, municipally, and commercially acting stakeholders cooperate and how did the stakeholders perceive and accept each other?
- Topography: Which stakeholder is operating in which space and under what circumstances?
- Semantics: What were denominations introduced for the different players and why?

- Iconography: What symbols and visual appearance were chosen for the protagonists (for instance service clothes and colouring)?
- State's monopoly on the use of force: What is the balance between the apparent withdrawal of state powers and of the uprising actors?

VOLUNTARY CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN POLICING: CITIZENS IN UNIFORMS

The voluntary police service (*Freiwilliger Polizeidienst*) has been available in Baden-Württemberg since 1963 and has existed in Hessen since 2001. It supports and complements the actions of police forces and is intended to strengthen internal security. The expectations in involving ordinary citizens in non-essential but similar policing tasks for public security include:

- to increase the number of visible police in public in order to raise the (subjective) feeling of security among the population;
- to improve the relationship between police representing the state law enforcement agency and the citizens.

This concept, partly criticised as 'hobby horse policing' was introduced by conservative parties (Christian Democratic Union — CDU) in both states. However, the implementation of the concept differs from one state to another in essential points as will be seen below. The volunteers in Hessen are intentionally called 'voluntary police assistants' (*Polizeihelfer*) while those in Baden-Württemberg are known as 'police volunteers' (*Polizeifreiwilliger*). It has been shown that the type of description can be associated with the corresponding volunteering activity.

POLICE VOLUNTEERS IN BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG

Police volunteers in Baden-Württemberg act as regular police officers according to the provisions of the Baden-Württemberg Police Act. Therefore, they are obliged to engage in law enforcement when they are on duty (Art. 6 par. 1, FPolDG). The wearing and use of firearms (Walter P5, calibre 9mm) is permitted but only on duty



which on principle is done as 'double patrol' in pairs with a regular police officer. Carrying a gun is justified on the arguments that volunteers can get into a situation in which they have to protect their own lives or those of others (Polizei Baden-Württemberg, 2013).

The service uniforms of the police volunteers were almost identical to those of regular police officers. The only difference was the epaulette and the inscription '*Freiwilliger Polizeidienst*' on the breast plate. However, in 2007/08 the police force in Baden-Württemberg changed their uniforms (including the colouring) which did not extend to the police volunteers. Hence, the primary visual unity of both types of services ended. Like every citizen, police volunteers are endowed with the so-called everyman's rights ⁽⁶⁾ which allows them, in accordance with the general principles of reasonable interference, to detain potential offenders until the arrival of a regular police officer (cf. Czepluch & Eschenbruch, 1995, 205f). In this regard, they can be seen as part of community-based crime prevention (for instance when they patrol schools, playgrounds or other public facilities) but also regressive in the sense of law enforcement (Art. 1, FPoIDG).

Police volunteers are not employees or civil servants, but they can request a compensation fee of EUR 7 per hour (Art. 7, FPoIDG). For reasons of cost-effectiveness they have to serve a minimum of 200 hours per year outside their actual occupation. Before starting their honorary duties they pass a 2-week training ⁽⁷⁾. Applications are open to German citizens or, when needed, persons with foreign citizenship. The minimum age is 18, while the upper age limit is 60. Applicants need to be in good health, enjoy a good reputation, be constitutionally faithful, show no serious criminal records, and care for order (Art. 61 StGB). The selection of the police volunteers is, in the end, the responsibility of the respective police station.

In 2010, this voluntary service was operating in 37 cities in Baden-Württemberg and the number

of volunteers was about 1 250. The change of government in 2011 ⁽⁸⁾ resulted in the dissolution of the voluntary service with a simultaneous increase in the number of the regular policing staff until 2016 (Baden-Württemberg 2011). Since 2013, no patrol activities by police volunteers are allowed any longer (cf. Bäßler, 2013).

VOLUNTARY POLICE ASSISTANTS IN HESSEN

In Hessen, the voluntary police assistants conduct patrols in teams of two without being escorted by a regular police officer and can only go on patrol by police order (Art. 6, par. 1, HFPG). They also have '*Jedermannrechte*' and, additionally in line with their respective assignment, the same rights and obligations as regular Hessian police officers (Art. 1, HFPG). They are not allowed to carry or use firearms (Art. 2, par. 1, HFPG). More than 700 voluntary police assistants are still active in around 100 cities and communities in Hessen. With a maximum of 20 hours of honorary office per month outside their actual occupation, they can request a compensation fee of EUR 7 per hour (Art. 8, HFPG). No employment benefits or integration into the civil servant status are permitted. Training is realised on the basis of a 50-hour uniformly-designed curriculum at the Hessian Police Academy (Art. 6, par. 2, HFPG)⁽⁹⁾.

The Hessian voluntary police service acts preventively, being employed for patrol duties in public facilities, residential, and pedestrian areas; they likewise support the police in the field of physical services; and lastly conduct administrative regulations (Art. 1 par. 3 HFPG). The voluntary police assistants wear uniforms that are nearly identical to those worn by regular police officers (see Figure 4); only the designation *Freiwilliger Polizeidienst* on their breast plate, the headpiece, and the epaulette mark the differences. A mobile phone as a communicational tool, an ID card, and a can of pepper spray for self-defence represent their equipment.

⁽⁶⁾ '*Jedermannrechte*' according to Art. 127, par. 1 German Code of Criminal Procedure.

⁽⁷⁾ Forty-four hours of theory, which covers basics in police law, criminal law, administrative law, police sanctions, traffic supervision, and regulation; a further 40 hours of practice in which they are concerned with behavioural training, conducting police actions, dealing with the radiotelephone, and self-protection; 16 hours of firearm training; 32 hours of demand-oriented practical introduction; and 18 hours of further education per year are likewise required.

⁽⁸⁾ Change from a conservative government (CDU) to a green/red coalition (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen — SPD).

⁽⁹⁾ The curriculum includes basics in police law, criminal proceedings law, administrative law, civil rights, techniques of negotiation, fundamentals in self-protection (including the use of pepper spray), and service operations.



Applicants for the honorary office have to be in good health, have a minimum age of 18 years and not be older than 65 years, be able to speak and write German, and likewise to produce a school leaving certificate, or a completed professional education diploma. They need to be constitutionally faithful, show no serious criminal records, and care for order (Art. 61, StGB). Similar to Baden-Württemberg, the selection of voluntary police assistants is the responsibility of a commission which is composed of representatives of the on-site police and the municipality.

Even though some political parties (SPD, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen) in Hessen refuse the voluntary police service and demand its abrogation other political parties (for instance, the CDU) wish to restock the honorary office. Within the current coalition agreement of Hessen it was noted that the decision on the continuity of the

honorary office will be made after performing an evaluation which has already been accomplished. According to unofficial information, the service will be maintained, but an increase has not been decided, nor is it desired.

RESEARCH METHODS

Aiming at a qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2010), partially structured interviews were conducted between October 2010 and February 2011 with members of the respective security apparatuses and politicians (borough councillor, local politician) in four German cities of different sizes, geographical locations and legislations. Table 1 shows the quantitative distribution of the interviews conducted, and specifies which model in which city has been examined.

Table 1 — Qualitative sample (interviews)

	N total	Sex male	Ø-Ag (σ = standard deviation)
Town 'M' (analysing 'Stadtpolizei')	12	12	44 years (σ = 7,4)
Town 'N' (analysing Hessian 'Freiwilliger Polizeidienst')	9	9	54 years (σ = 8,7)
Town 'O' (analysing Baden-Württemberg 'Freiwilliger Polizeidienst')	8	8	50 years (σ = 5,8)
Town 'P' (analysing 'private-police-partnership')	8	8	47 years (σ = 8,6)
In total	37	37	

Source: Hirschmann & Groß 2012: 43.

Furthermore, quantitative data collected in the same cities by the consortium partners at the Ernst-Moritz-Arndt University of Greifswald on the sub-project 'Polizierende Präsenz' ⁽¹⁰⁾ were included in the analyses. Table 2 indicates the number of

evaluated questionnaires by age and sex of the respondents. The samples are not representative, but the data findings can be interpreted as a trend picture.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Citizens' survey on the 'Subjective sense of security'. For further findings on the citizens' survey see: Bornewasser & Köhn, 2012.



Table 2 — **Citizens' survey** *Polizierende Präsenz*

	N total	Sex		Ø-Ag (σ = standard deviation)
		male	female	
Town 'M' (analysing 'Stadtpolizei')	233	(114) 49 %	(119) 51 %	37 years (σ = 19.0)
Town 'N' (analysing Hessian 'Freiwilliger Polizeidienst')	200	(83) 42 %	(117) 58 %	33 years (σ = 16.5)
Town 'O' (analysing Baden-Württemberg 'Freiwilliger Polizeidienst')	224	(87) 39 %	(137) 61 %	44 years (σ = 18.1)
Town 'P' (analysing 'private-police-partnership')	274	(127) 46 %	(147) 54 %	43 years (σ = 16.0)
In total	931	(411) 44 %	(520) 56 %	

Source: Hirschmann & Groß 2012: 44.

All findings on 'Polizierende Präsenz' are published in Hirschmann & Groß 2012. As the focus of this paper is on voluntary civic engagement, illustrated by the *Freiwilliger Polizeidienst* in Hessen (medium-sized Town 'N') and Baden-Württemberg (small-sized Town 'O'), and the impact of that engagement on citizens' perceived feeling of security only the survey data and the interviews of those two cities will be presented below.

RESEARCH FINDINGS: POLICING PRESENCE AND THE CITIZENS' PERCEPTION

In addition to general questions about locals' feelings of security and the public's confidence in security stakeholders, specific information about the *Freiwilliger Polizeidienst* were requested at the citizens' survey. Respondents were asked about their knowledge and perceived effectiveness of police officers and volunteers. The answers are summarised in Table 3:

Table 3 — **Citizens' perspective**

	Town 'N'			Town 'O'		
	%	\bar{x}	σ	%	\bar{x}	σ
Voluntary citizens' commitment for police tasks is essential.	50.0	2.58	1.0	64.2	2.22	0.9
Only the police should take care of security in Germany.	48.7	2.42	0.9	48.4	2.45	1.0
Next to the police, private security services should be available.	67.2	2.20	0.9	72.8	2.04	0.8
Only police forces aren't sufficient to assure public security.	62.3	2.23	1.0	68.8	2.07	0.9
The municipal administration in my town is taking care adequately of security.	56.4	2.45	0.8	65.2	2.26	0.7
It is difficult to distinguish between the distinct uniformed stakeholders who are taking care of public security.	38.8	2.78	1.0	29.0	2.93	0.8
The term 'Police' should only be used by the operational police and not by other stakeholders.	69.8	2.05	1.0	69.1	2.04	1.0
Citizens' willingness to get involved with the producing of security in the city.	46.3	2.58	0.8	56.1	2.43	0.9

\bar{x} = arithmetic mean; σ = standard deviation; % (valid) = agreement (scale 1 & 2)



Two thirds of the questioned citizens believed that public security cannot be guaranteed by police forces alone; therefore, they deemed private security agencies necessary as well. However, almost half of the respondents represent the idea of the state's monopoly on the use of force by supporting the statement 'only the police should take care of security in Germany'. Two thirds up to three quarters of the interviewees prefer a stronger separation between the term 'police' and similar concepts (cf. Groß, 2014: 14). This information is of particular interest in

relation to volunteers and some administrative staff in the municipality bearing not only a visual but also a semantic resemblance to the proper state police such as Stadtpolizei or Freiwilliger Polizeidienst (see Figure 2). Constitutionally, the term Polizei only refers to the executive organ of the government. It may be assumed that the introduction of such complementary designations has been done on purpose in order to produce a close connection to the regular police authority. The public seem to disagree with this practice as it arouses substantial confusion.

Figure 2 — **Confusing use of the 'police' label as attractive source of authority**

WachPOLIZEI <i>civil employees at the police</i>		StadtPOLIZEI <i>executive field service of the office of public order</i>
BundesPOLIZEI <i>former German border police</i>	(Landes)POLIZEI <i>regular police</i>	Freiwilliger POLIZEIdienst <i>citizens' in uniform</i>

Source: Own compilation.

The confusing use of the term 'police' was evaluated by the interviewed stakeholders differently: in town 'N' for instance, there seemed to be less concerns as long as the assigned (limitations) of competences were respected. The semantic closeness to the police term was considered to be potentially dangerous where citizens approach voluntary police assistants with requests that the same could not meet. To avoid possible confusion one interviewee of the local government proposed the term 'citizen with special tasks' (Hirschmann & Groß, 2012: 86). However, as noted in Town 'O', a close association with the legitimate 'Polizei' was thoroughly seen as essential where individuals are being used for reinforcement to the operational police force on the street. This is particularly important when they act — with some limits — on behalf of police officers in the sense of the Baden-Württemberg police law. In that case they need to be recognised as police officers — both by name and by appearance.

As it was stated before, the multiplicity of stakeholders produces a complex pattern of security and order production in Germany. Even if the survey data in Table 3 show that only 30 % to 40 % of the citizen respondents have difficulties

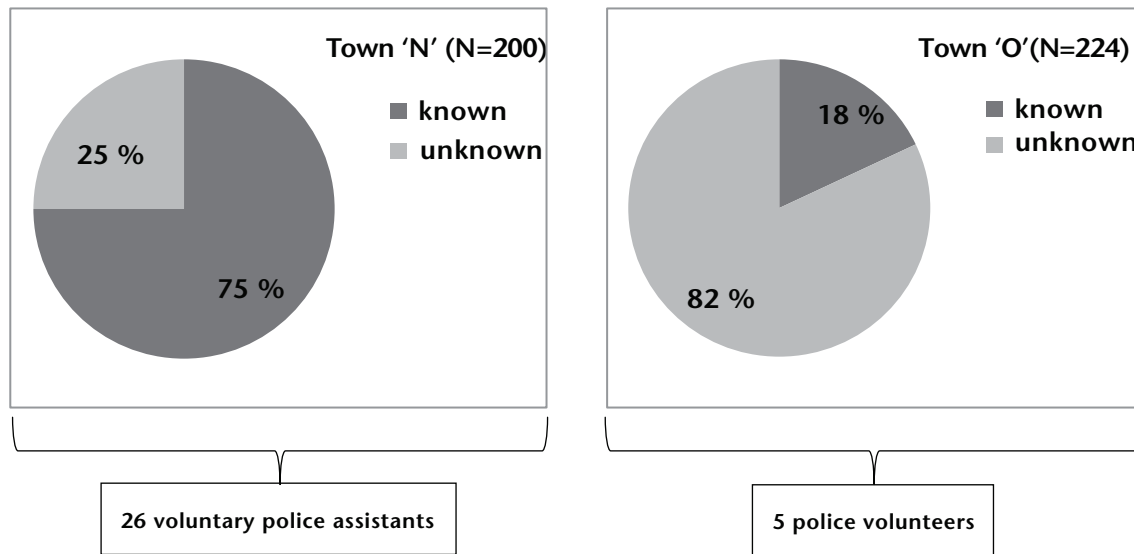
distinguishing between the various uniformed protagonists, it can be assumed that the figure still is an under-representation considering that many respondents do want to admit that they do not know the difference (cf. Groß, 2014: 14).

Asking citizens in town 'N' and town 'O' if they knew the voluntary police service got different responses (see Figure 3): in town 'O', police volunteers are unknown to the majority of the survey respondents. In contrast, in town 'N' the voluntary police assistants are known by two thirds of the respondents. A possible reason could be the amount of volunteers in those cities. At the time of the survey, there had been 25 citizens and an extraordinary voluntary police assistant in town 'N'. It was apparent from discussions with members of the *Freiwilliger Polizeidienst* in town 'N' that the voluntary office became accepted by the citizens with increasing duration.

The *Freiwilliger Polizeidienst* in town 'O' had been introduced in the 1960s as part of the general development in Baden-Württemberg. The police station in town 'O' had five police volunteers available at the time of the survey.



Figure 3 — **Citizens' knowledge of the stakeholders**



Source: Hirschmann & Groß 2012: 49; amendments by the author.

As the police volunteers in town 'O' performed their service together with a regular police officer in a two-man team and were clothed almost identically (including carrying a gun) the lack of distinctness could be another reason for the low level of awareness. The police volunteers were just not being recognised as what they really were: non-professional policemen in uniforms nearly identical to those of the police. Citizens normally only perceive two persons in uniform as some of the interviewed stakeholders in town 'O' stated. Similar to the semantic proximity, the uniform

unity was seen as helpful, if not necessary when considering the type of actions they could get involved in. Thus, it was clearly stated: as long as the police volunteer is used to enhance the police sub-unit, they have to be treated like a police officer. Then the question arises as to whether citizens tended to boycott demands spoken by police volunteers. The answer is simple and is closely linked with the citizens' expectations. If there is no observable distinction between 'real' and 'lay' police, both earn the same respect (or disrespect) from the citizens.

Figure 4 — **New hessian uniforms since 2008 (parka from the front)**



Source: Hirschmann & Groß, 2012: 88 (photo: Nathalie Hirschmann).



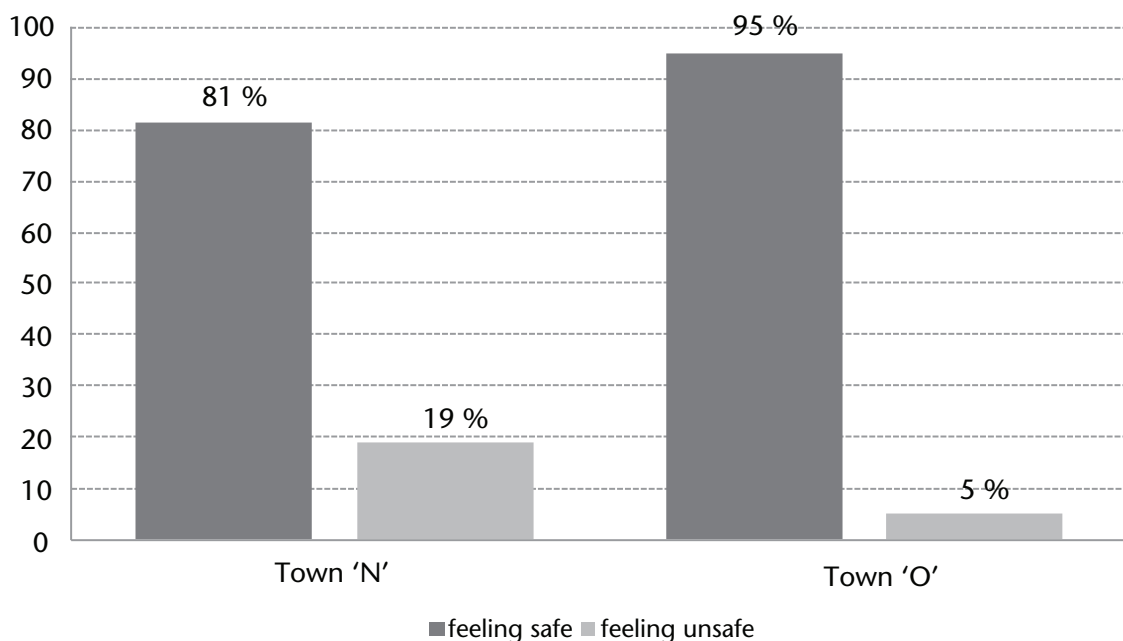
Starting in 2005, state police forces ⁽¹¹⁾ carried out a uniform reform, exchanging the uniforms of the operational police which also altered the colouring ⁽¹²⁾. Originally the colour of the uniforms related to responsible authority: beige-green belonged to the state police, light-blue was the colour of the voluntary police service and dark blue or black were the uniforms of the private security sector ⁽¹³⁾.

As a consequence of the reform, it has become difficult to distinguish between state police and alternative security providers. But just the missing differentiation seems to be helpful that this 'new type of police' for public order (cf. Söllner, 2001: 35; Zimmermann, 2005: 111) is getting accepted by the urban population. At the same time, by blurring the visual distinctions, an inflated

image of police presence in public is created — intentionally or not. There are arguments for both interpretations. In an epoch of shrinking public funds the police can uphold a certain deterrent visibility which may help to maintain public order at a lesser cost.

Personal security and safety is an intangible right which can only be perceived by citizens indirectly via several (subjective) indicators, such as their personal feeling of safety (Groß, 2014: 14). Figure 5 shows clearly that more than 80 % of the survey respondents (citizens) feel safe in their district. As expected, the survey participants indicated (on a scale ranged from 1 'very unsafe' to 4 'very safe') to feel safer during the day (tendency of 'very safe') than at night (still a tendency to 'pretty safe'; see Table 4).

Figure 5 — **Feeling of safety in the district (in percentages)**



Source: Hirschmann & Groß, 2012: 45.

⁽¹¹⁾ Bavaria and Saarland were exceptions.

⁽¹²⁾ Apart from the wearing comfort some interview partners assumed the uniform unity is also a result of a transnational standardisation of the visible policing presence.

⁽¹³⁾ In this context: Article 12 of the guard regulation states that the danger of confusion between the appearance of private security and police needs to be eliminated, a fact which is no longer excluded.



Table 4 — **Arithmetic means of the feeling of security by the time of day**

	Town 'N'	Town 'O'
Safer during the day	3.53	3.69
Safer at night	2.77	3.05

On a scale ranged from 1 'very unsafe' to 4 'very safe'.

Source: Hirschmann & Groß 2012: 45.

The survey respondents were also asked about security- and safety-producing factors (see Table 5). Against the background of the demand for more uniformed players on the street, the following result appears surprising: the visible presence of policing protagonists is no crucial factor to increasing and positively influencing the feeling of security (an effect of acclimatisation? a feeling of monitoring and control?). Rather structural

measures and having a good view of a space are seen as more meaningful. Furthermore, technical systems (alarm systems, video surveillance) have little influence on perceived security. Thus, one can conclude that technical systems serve to only minimally increase the personal feeling of security and safety; those systems are rather used by security agencies for the clearing up of incidents (cf. Hirschmann & Groß, 2012).

Table 5 — **Security-/safety-producing factors**

To feel safer outside if...	Town 'N'			Town 'O'		
	%	\bar{x}	σ	%	\bar{x}	σ
...places are well-lit.	86.7	1.77	0.8	85.4	1.73	0.8
...many people are on the street.	81.2	1.84	0.8	76.7	1.97	0.9
...places are well manageable.	89.2	1.74	0.8	78.8	1.88	0.9
...there are easily accessible options to get away.	68.4	2.13	0.9	68.7	2.12	1.0
...there are emergency response facilities (phone, alarm system) available.	50.3	2.48	0.9	53.5	2.41	1.0
...find oneself in a confident environment.	85.3	1.77	0.9	83.3	1.80	0.9
...video cameras are installed for surveillance.	37.1	2.78	1.0	48.2	2.55	1.0
...there are uniformed people on the street.	56.3	2.39	1.0	67.0	2.20	1.0

= arithmetic mean; = standard deviation; % (valid) = agreement (scale 1 & 2)

Source: Hirschmann & Groß 2012: 46.

Lange and Schenck (2004: 313f) refer to an observed dilemma that the subjective feeling of security and the real vulnerability do not need to match and are positively influenced by implication. On the contrary, for instance, a reinforcement of police presence in quiet and calm residential areas may contribute to feeling more insecure in one's own district because it could be assumed by the residents: 'Something is wrong! Why else should there be so many police on the beat?'

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The practice of voluntary police services has been evaluated in two cities, one in the German state of Baden-Württemberg and the other in the state of Hessen. The two operate on different models. In Baden Württemberg, the voluntary police service was introduced some 50 years ago and was implicitly incorporated into the police force, but is currently being phased out. The police volunteers have similar powers as regular police officers; both work in pairs side by side when they go on patrol. Because both are armed and wearing almost identical uniforms, unprepared citizens could not distinguish easily between the two. In



Hessen, the voluntary police assistants also have uniforms similar to the ones that are used by the regular police, but the two do not merge on duty and each of both types go on patrol in separate groups. The volunteers do not carry arms and their principal function is to increase the visible policing presence in the street and to serve as a communicative interface in order to improve the relationship between citizens and the traditional police. The volunteers are more 'civilians' than police officers; nevertheless, the voluntary police service is institutionally integrated and organised by the police.

According to our survey, the respondents felt safe in their neighbourhood district in both towns visited. However, the perception of security and safety depends on many different factors. Other data from the research do not confirm the assumption often voiced by public authorities or politicians, that a higher policing presence would increase the citizens' feeling of security and safety in general. On the contrary, the survey results suggest that a larger number of uniforms visible in public alone do not necessarily correlate with a higher perception of security. Therefore the decision to assimilate visual ('iconography') and semantic appearance of commercial and

voluntary service providers with that of state police seems to be unlikely to lead to a higher perception of security by citizens. It may even turn out counter-productive to that aim when the 'dressed-up' commercially acting security agents and the 'hobby horse policemen' cannot provide the protection that the public, unable to distinguish between the different forms, expects from them. Hence, a clear differentiation of the various protagonists (especially appearance, used terms) is recommended in order to clearly indicate responsibilities as well as competences and to prevent confusion of roles.

Basically, there is no categorical objection against citizens playing a more active part in the field of policing prevention such as it is done with the model in Hessen ⁽¹⁴⁾. Caution is advised if these concepts are used for compensation as a result of miscalculations or monetary shortages (in the sense: what you buy is what you get and do you really want what you buy?).

The plurality of agents of security providers, according to our results, does not challenge the state's monopoly on the use of force as long as the powers of each stakeholder are clearly defined, commonly known and respected.

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⁽¹⁴⁾ Especially when following the basic idea pronounced by Eduard Lintner, Parliamentary State Secretary between 1991 and 1998 at the German Federal Government Department: 'Citizens do have a joint responsibility, they even are obliged to contribute' (translated by the author; Innere Sicherheit 4/1992 cited in Weichert, 1995: 272).



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