

# The Spanish National Police training system

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## Abstract

In this contribution it is intended to give an overall view of the training taught in the Spanish National Police Training Division. The Training Division consists of different centres and its structure takes into account the type of student and training needed in each case. In recent years there has been a qualitative shift in training, with enhanced cooperation with the university in master's degrees, specialisation courses and other activities. Moreover the training of sergeants and inspectors is recognised by the Ministry of Education by an official degree (equivalency) and an official master's degree respectively. The specialisation of courses has also increased, as new crime trends constantly emerge and the police need to give the most appropriate answer implementing new methods. This presentation is divided into three parts: competences and structure of the training and improvement division; the implementation of a training programme; and the main challenges in training for the future.

**Keywords:** training; improvement; cooperation; university; service.

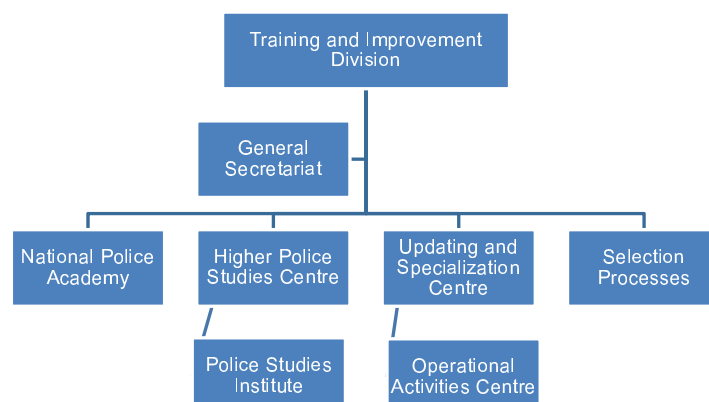
## Competences and structure of the training and improvement division

The Training and Improvement Division of the Spanish National Police has the following **competences**:

- selection and training of candidates who have passed their public examinations;

- training of officers in promotion courses;
- updating courses;
- specialisation courses.

The **structure** of the Training and Improvement Division has to do with the above mentioned competences.



**Figure 1: Structure of the Training and Improvement Division**

### 1.1. National Police Academy (ENP — Escuela nacional de Policía)

Located in Ávila, a town with a population of approximately 62 000 inhabitants, the National Police Academy is 115 km from Madrid. Ávila is located at an altitude of 1 140 m above sea level. In 1982 the city was declared World Heritage Site by Unesco.

The National Police Academy became operational in 1986. It is already 30 years since the academy started its activities, and for that reason various celebrations for the anniversary took place in 2016.

It covers an area of 500 000 m<sup>2</sup>, with buildings covering 220 000 m<sup>2</sup>. We can distinguish four main zones: training, sports, residence and common areas.

- Training: classrooms, an auditorium for nearly 900 people and a conference hall for 130 people, along with several indoor and outdoor shooting ranges.
- Sports: an athletics track, a football field, two basketball courts, three volleyball courts, two handball fields, four tennis courts, an indoor multisport centre, a 300 m<sup>2</sup> tatami floor, a weights room, a 50 m indoor pool, table-tennis area, sauna and dressing rooms.
- Residence: 10 buildings to host the students.
- Common area: four dining rooms, two coffee shops, laundry, print shop, museum and library.



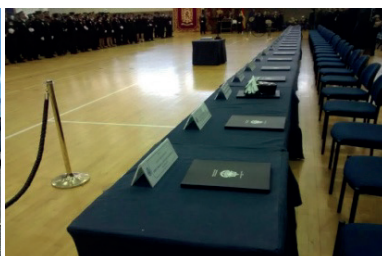
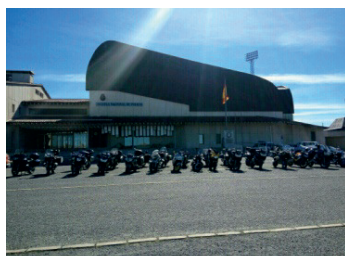
The National Police Academy is located in Ávila

#### 1.1.1. Training

The training is different for those who have passed the examinations to enter the police force and those who have been promoted.

In the case of police constables, the professional training lasts 9 months (September-June) and is followed by a probationary period (12 months) in police stations all around the country.

Inspectors study for a master's degree, which takes two academic years (120 ECTS) and is also followed of a probationary period (7 months). In this case an agreement was signed in 2016 with the Catholic University of Ávila. previously, for 29 years, there was a cooperation agreement with the University of Salamanca. The university's professors and police officers work together preparing course content and teaching.



Pictures of the National Police Academy

In this academy training is also provided for officers who have been promoted to senior police officers, sergeants or inspectors. A distinction should be made between those students who already are police officers and those who have just joined the police, as this difference involves the different study plans.

The training provided at the National Police Academy has been adapted to university pedagogic methods. Since 2009, a police inspector gets an official master's degree after finishing the 2-year course at the National Police Academy. Changes were made 2 years ago to the study plan for sergeants, who get an official degree (equivalence) in public security issued by the University of Salamanca.

The procedure for drawing up the curriculum of the course for sergeants was very demanding, as the traditional training had to be adapted to new requirements, i.e. the design of the general, specific and transversal competences the students need to reach. This is a very important achievement and is the result of laborious and hard work by the teachers involved in it.

Those students who have passed their examinations to become local police officers are also trained at the National Police Academy. So far, constables from the Madrid local police and the Castile and Leon local police have been trained, as seen in the table below.

The public employment offer made by the Spanish government last year increased the possibility of training for more police officers in 2016, as seen in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
Courses in the National Police Academy, 2015/2016 and 2016/2017

ENP	Students 2015/2016	Students 2016/2017
Inspectors (first course)	176	226
Inspectors (second course)	151	176
Sergeants	146	210
Senior police constables	200	203
Police constables	262	1 305
Madrid local police	167	
Castile and Leon local police	16	
Total	1 118	

### 1.1.2. Iberpol

The National Police Academy hosts the Permanent Secretariat of Iberpol (Escuela Iberoamericana de Policía). Iberpol was recently created; it is an initiative that brings together 18 Latin American countries with the

aim of cooperating against organised crime, encouraging both continuous improvement in this respect and the exchange of good practices. The first meeting was held in Salamanca in April 2015, and the Iberpol Virtual campus has already been set up.

**Table 2**  
Iberpol courses 2015

ENP — Iberpol 2015	Courses	Students
Face-to-face	3	52
Online	1	243
Total	4	295

Officers from other countries are also trained in the National Police Academy course for police inspectors. In 2015 the following nationalities were represented: Algerian, Chilean, Colombian, Moroccan, Mauritanian, Mexi-

can, Nigerien and Peruvian. Five students from Chile and Mexico will be trained in our facilities in the 2016/2017 course. The number of foreign students has been reduced as the scholarship budget has decreased.

## 1.2. Higher Police Studies Centre (CAEP — Centro de altos estudios policiales)

The Higher Police Studies Centre and the Updating and Specialisation Centre are located in Madrid, in a beautiful old building which was firstly intended to

host the College of Orphans of the National Police. In the Spanish Civil War the facilities of this large building were used as a military hospital. The building has recently been renovated, though its original appearance has been preserved.



Pictures of the Higher Police Studies Centre, Madrid

In the Higher Police Studies Centre, training is given to officers who have been promoted to chief inspector, superintendent or commissioner.

This training is very specific, as students will be the police chiefs in the future. The training is provided by

officers of the most renowned units, but for some specific matters and subjects we request the cooperation of well-known professionals, including university professors, technicians and magistrates.

**Table 3**

Courses in the Higher Police Studies Centre, 2015

CAEP — 2015	Students
Commissioner	20
Superintendent	35
Chief Inspector	49
Total	104

The textbooks and exams for those students seeking promotion, not included in the above summary table, are also produced in the Higher Police Studies Centre. More than 1 500 police officers seeking promotion are called for exams every year.

For the first time the heads of the Madrid local police have been trained in our premises. The course was initiated in January 2016 and 22 officers of the highest rank of this local police force were trained by means of a 5-month course (390 hours).

### 1.2.1. Police Studies Institute (IEP — Instituto de estudios de la policía)

This institute is part of the Higher Police Studies Centre and its main tasks are as follows.

- Gathering information and analysing social needs related to National Police Corps duties.
- Cooperation with universities and other scientific institutions in developing courses and projects.
- Investigating, promoting and developing new methods and professional proceedings.

As a result of the abovementioned tasks the following activities have been developed.

- Master's in security strategic management.  
The students are police chiefs who need to improve their knowledge in this field. The third edition of this master's was initiated in September 2016 in co-operation with Universidad Rey Juan Carlos.
- Master's in cybercrime.  
In this case the master's is aimed at chief inspectors, inspectors or sergeants who are the heads of groups or units tackling cybercrime. The first edition was initiated in October 2016. The university cooperating in this master's is the Universidad Nebrija.
- Advanced university course in management.  
The profile of the students is very specific: superintendents or chief inspectors who are the heads of units and who have to cope with the management of human and technical resources. The fifth edition of this course will be initiated in January 2017. In this case the cooperation agreement was signed with IE University.
- University expert degree in communication and security.  
This course is aimed at police officers in charge of press offices.
- Summer courses in cooperation with the university.  
In July 2016 three seminars for 300 students were given in cooperation with the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos. As a result of the analysis of social needs, the following topics have been dealt with: hate crimes, bullying and jihadist terrorism. It is important to highlight that the presentation given by our police officers in the hate crimes seminar has been presented as an example of good practices in various forums <sup>(1)</sup>.
- Conferences and working sessions.  
Gender violence has been widely dealt with, but changes have been made in its protocol. For this reason, working sessions took place on this matter in November 2016 to update skills. It is intended that educational activities will take place over the next several months focusing on diversity and equality of opportunities and on animal mistreatment, as so far not much attention has been paid to these fields.
- The Police Studies Institute has cooperated in the implementation of the European joint master's in strategic border management (Frontex).

New communication tools are used by the police with very good results. More than 2 million people

<sup>(1)</sup> Diario El País, 2 May 2016, 'EU includes the Spanish Protocol Against Hate Crimes as an example of good practices'. [http://politica.elpais.com/politica/2016/05/02/actualidad/1462210916\\_840119.html](http://politica.elpais.com/politica/2016/05/02/actualidad/1462210916_840119.html)

**Table 4**  
Police Studies Institute courses, 2015

CAEP-IEP —2015	Students
Master's degree in security strategic management	31
Advanced university course in management	24
University expert degree in communication and security	30
Summer courses (hate crimes, jihadist terrorism and cybercrime)	382
Open classroom conference on new security challenges	377
Workshop on cybercrime	265
Total	1109

### 1.3. Updating and Specialisation Centre (CAE — Centro de Actualización y Especialización)

The main tasks of this centre are as follows.

- Updating and specialisation courses in all areas of responsibility of the National Police Corps (counterterrorism, criminal police, public order, aliens and borders, and public order).
- Distance learning courses by means of the Moodle platform.

- Cooperation with other institutions and police forces, at national and international level, including CE-POL, the judiciary and civil defence forces.

It is important to note the large number of students who are enrolled in distance-learning training, as this option allows students to receive further training in certain areas that do not need face-to-face courses (criminal law, gender violence, proceedings with minors involved, etc.).

The following table lists the specialised police units that have received training, followed by the number of courses held and the overall number of students.

**Table 5**  
Updating and Specialisation Centre courses, 2015

CAE-2015	Courses	Students
General management (specialised units)	84	2 853
Criminal police	52	2 002
Public order	111	12 155
Counterterrorism	80	1 688
Forensics	70	1 552
Aliens and borders	23	1 019
Human resources	46	1 078
Economic and technical division	242	3 359
Languages	119	28 164
Documentation unit	2	62
Distance learning courses	26	21 797
International	23	289
Total	878	76 018

#### 1.3.1. Operational Activities Centre (CPO — Centro de Prácticas Operativas)

This centre is located in Linares, a town in Andalusia with a population of approximately 60 000. Its huge outdoors facilities are used by specialised units in need of open areas for practical training exercises. It covers a total area of 76 205 m<sup>2</sup>. It has 204 apartments, single- and two-storey houses and four school buildings along 15 streets.

These facilities are mainly used by riot units, bomb disposal experts and prevention and reaction units. The data regarding the number of courses and students are included in the above table, in the 'Public order' and 'Counterterrorism' fields.





Pictures of the Operational Activities Centre, Linares

#### 1.4. Selection processes (procesos selectivos)

The exams for those who have applied to join the National Police are very similar: a knowledge test, a physical training exam, an aptitude test and a personal interview. Those candidates who want to join the police as an inspector need to do additional exams: a test to assess their English or French skills and also a case study.

Because of the economic situation, in recent years the number of applications to join the National Police has increased.

The selection processes area is also responsible for the selection process for those police officers who seeking

promotion; the type of examination depends on the professional level they are seeking promotion to.

## 2. The implementation of a training programme

When a course is implemented, the work invested in and feedback received from previous similar courses is always taken into consideration in the preparation of the activity.

The training activities programme follows the schemes shown below.

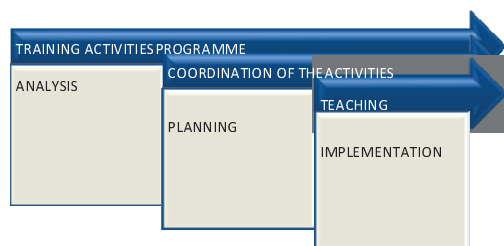


Figure 2: Implementation of a training programme

The aims of the training should be broader than the course itself. The main goal is a well-trained police force with knowledge of the following fields.

- The organisation, including its history, development and culture.
- The social dimension of our profession: code of ethics, human rights, attitudes and values, sense of belonging, etc.

- The technical aspects: abilities and technical expertise.
- Institutional relationships.
- Unified criteria at both tactical and operational level.

The training has been properly achieved if the police involved are personally enriched by it.

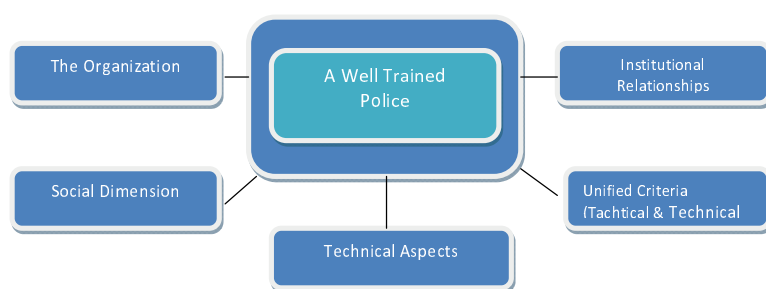


Figure 3: Requirements of a well-trained police force

### 3. The main challenges for the future

**Cooperation with other institutions** is the main point to consider. Over the last several years the Secretary of State for Security has signed cooperation agreements with many universities, as many of them have implemented degrees and post-graduate study courses having to do with public security.

Last May, at the closing of the Advanced university course in management, the general director of the National Police said eight **new master's degrees** would be implemented in the coming years, as specialised training is the only means of staying up to date.

**Online teaching** has to explore new possibilities for training students in more fields of knowledge, as this is a good option for reaching more students and can be constantly updated.

Training in **languages**. Language training is a priority in the National Police Academy. It is intended that bilingual education will be implemented over the next several years.

**Retraining of teachers** in the National Police Academy. Every summer teachers from the academy visit police stations or headquarters in order to be updated in procedures and investigation methods.