



International Opportunities for the Study and Development of Police Science



Zoltán Hautzinger

PhD, Deputy Dean of Education, associate professor, police colonel
University of Public Service,
Faculty of Law Enforcement
hautzinger.zoltan@uni-nke.hu



Abstract

Aim: This paper, as a kind of simplified follow-up to an earlier study on international law enforcement research cooperation published in the first issue of *Belügyi Szemle* in 2011, attempts to take stock of the most important institutions that can be identified today for the support of research on law enforcement, albeit only in an exemplary manner.

Methodology: Based partly on personal experience, the study describes and illustrates the institutional options available for improving law enforcement. It recalls a working group meeting convened by INTERPOL in 2010 and the main findings of the study that was carried out on that occasion.

Findings: In particular, INTERPOL can be a useful catalyst for the coordination of police research and the practical application of scientific results in the fields of criminal law enforcement, criminology and international cooperation in criminal matters. Other voluntary institutions (e.g. AEPC) could provide a regular forum for sharing the results of research in police academics across continental boundaries.

Value: The value of the study is to draw attention to the institutions that can be major catalysts for the cultivation and development of police science.

Keywords: INTERPOL, CEPOL, INTERPA, AEPC

Introduction

The study of police science encompasses all the scientific tools and methods used to perform the functions associated with the maintenance of a safe society

The Hungarian version of the publication was published in *Belügyi Szemle* 2023/11. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.38146/BSZ.2023.11.7>. The publication was submitted to the Editorship in Hungarian.

and to develop the activities of the organisations responsible for this purpose. From another point of view, the cultivation of police science also means carrying out research for the benefit of law enforcement and sharing and publishing the results of that research.

The conduct of law enforcement research and the exploitation of research results are not hindered by national borders or national legal systems. The protection of public safety or the prosecution of crimes committed, as a social responsibility (Gaál, 2022), has similar experiences in different countries, in many cases requiring international cooperation. Accordingly, international cooperation in law enforcement research is in the interest of almost all nations around the world.

Recollection of a Police Research Working Group Meeting Organised by INTERPOL

International initiatives to promote thinking in the field of law enforcement and to take account of the results of police research are not new. It is enough to think back to the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, when a working group was set up under the auspices of INTERPOL to promote police research and development worldwide in a coordinated way by disseminating the scientific results of this research.

According to the recommendations of this international consultation, police research was mainly concerned with criminology and forensic science, law enforcement technologies and the practical applicability of the results of further police research (Hautzinger, 2011). The working group included

- the Training Research at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centre, one of the central police research institutes in the United States of America, which has also studied the central nervous system's ability to 'train the brain' to cope with stress, including driving skills and the practical use of firearms;
- the Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention, part of the University of Wollongong in New South Wales, Australia, whose research has focused on areas such as the fight against organised crime, covert policing methods and international pollution;
- from Africa, a research unit of the Botswana Police, which focused on gold and diamond smuggling, among other classic topics, and the Police Research Centre in Egypt, which focused on research activities for practical police work;

- the National Policing Improvement Agency, which is part of the UK Home Department and was set up in 2007 to provide information and guidance to individual police forces;
- from India, the National Academy, whose research covers both the protection of certain procedural rights (e.g. use of mother tongue, banking secrecy) and the development of the national justice system;
- from Canada, the Canadian Police Research Centre, which is not only involved in police research, but also extends its professional-scientific activities to the fields of disaster management and emergency health care;
- from Germany, the Department of Law Enforcement Sciences and Training of the Forensic Science Institute (Bundeskriminalamt) in Wiesbaden, Germany, which has a significant contribution to criminal procedure, criminology and technical development; and
- from Singapore, the Singapore Police Force's Planning and Organisation Department, that works on policy implementation, organisational development and police training.

The working group meeting held in 2010 showed that police research in the broader sense is not limited to police work, but includes the results of criminal sciences, in particular criminology and forensic science, as well as all the administrative and governmental measures, not least technical and technological innovations, which can increase the efficiency of police work.

A significant benefit of this meeting was also when the participants noted that while research in continental Europe (including Germany, Hungary, and CEPOL as an international organisation) is expanding to include strategic planning in support of practical activities, the research is also expanding to include strategic planning, while in other developed countries (USA, Australia, UK, Canada), the research remains mainly at the level of police practice and organisation.

In addition to the above, the arenas in which police research is conducted vary. Looking at some examples from abroad, it can be seen that the centres of such research are either academic research institutions or government-led organisations. The former includes the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centre in the United States of America, the Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention at the University of Wollongong in Australia, and the Mubarak Police Academy in Egypt. For example, as a public, government-led research centre, think of the National Policing Improvement Agency in the UK and the Canadian Centre for Police Research and Policy in North America. Another common example is that police research is supervised within police forces. This happens in Botswana, India, Germany and Singapore.

Finally, in the context of police or law enforcement research, individual states and international organisations pay particular attention to modernising the prevention and prevention of threats to society. Some foreign examples are also reflected in Hungarian practice, since in Hungary, in addition to educational institutions (in particular the Faculty of Law Enforcement and the Doctoral School of Law Enforcement of University of Public Service) and police departments (such as the International Training Centre), institutions not belonging to the police (Hungarian Institute for Forensic Sciences) are also involved in law enforcement and police research.

As a final conclusion of my previously published paper, I concluded that *'the use of the results of such studies could perhaps be even more effective if they were standardised nationally and internationally, if the results were published not only in the language of the country concerned but also in English, and if other countries were involved in the international coordination of police or law enforcement research by INTERPOL.'* (Hautzinger, 2011).

The aim of the present short essay is to take stock of the institutions that have been the scene or supporting partners of police science and police research in the decades following the earlier INTERPOL initiative – without claiming completeness, but rather by way of an exemplary list – and the forms of support that international police science cooperation has taken.

Some Traditional Areas of Police Research

INTERPOL

The idea of international coordination of experience in police research was conceived under the auspices of INTERPOL's Group of Experts on Police Training, which has made the international police organisation an international centre for the coordination of police research. This coordination is not far from the mission of INTERPOL, as its primary task is to provide technical, technological, information and operational support to the work of the police forces of the member countries, and the main areas of INTERPOL's activity and the databases created to support them also guide the development of police research. Such territory includes public and national security, the fight against terrorism, trafficking and smuggling of human beings, drug abuse, financial and economic crime, corruption, the fight against organised criminal groups based on the commission of the above offences and certain databases (fingerprints, documents, DNA, weapons, works of art, motor vehicles, etc.) created for the purpose of reducing the commission of the above offences (Hautzinger, 2011).

However, nowadays, INTERPOL is no longer just an information collecting and disseminating organisation but is also able to analyse and evaluate the data it receives, with the help of the specialists (experts, analysts) available in the fields it covers, and to formulate recommendations or strategic objectives based on their conclusions (Hegyaljai, 2015).

European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL)

CEPOL, as a virtual network of European police academies, colleges and universities, aims to promote cross-border cooperation in the fields of law enforcement, crime prevention, public security and public order, by widely disseminating its research results, organising conferences, seminars, symposia, publications, electronic knowledge bases (Hautzinger, 2011).

In the field of police research, the Network of National Research and Science Correspondents should be thought of as a dedicated organisation, whose task is to ensure that tried and tested practices in areas directly supporting police work are made widely known, that communication on police research is possible within each Member State, and not least that Member States can participate in each research project. The main areas of activity of this network are:

- to identify and transmit to the various law enforcement research centres and institutions information relating to the different areas of law enforcement;
- to formulate scientifically grounded recommendations for law enforcement practice;
- to collect and make available electronically the literature on law enforcement;
- to support projects involving comparative law enforcement research;
- to publish the results of law enforcement research as a scientific resource in CEPOL's *European Law Enforcement Research Bulletin*, and
- to organise conferences as a scientific platform (CEPOL's Annual Police research and Science Conferences) ([URL1](#)).

Of these, the *CEPOL's Research and Science Bulletin*, which has been a source of literature for police academics since 2009, is particularly noteworthy ([URL2](#)).

International Organisations for Law Enforcement Education

International Association of Police Academies (INTERPA)

The International Association of Police Academies (hereinafter: INTERPA) is an international organisation founded by Turkey for the cooperation of police

academies and their equivalent institutions responsible for police (police officer) training, established on 2 July 2011 with the participation of 24 police academies and other training institutions from 22 countries.

INTERPA was established with the aim of creating a platform for communication and cooperation between law enforcement training institutions, which will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of law enforcement education and training on a wide scale. The organisation seeks to increase the capacity and raise the standards of law enforcement training, in accordance with international law and human rights requirements throughout the world. It also aims to maximise cooperation and coordination between law enforcement training members by optimising the use of existing resources and sharing best practice and research results, and to enable exchanges between national training institutions for both teachers and students.

From 2021, Hungary becomes a member of INTERPA through the Faculty of Law Enforcement of University of Public Service.

Association of European Police Colleges (AEPC)

As the European Higher Education Area now encompasses almost the whole of Europe, and as a result of this a common knowledge market is beginning to emerge (Szabó, 2017), so too is law enforcement higher education beginning to take on an increasingly collaborative framework. The Association of European Police Colleges, which has been in existence since 1996, has a key objective to share best practices in police training. In addition, this association is also an opportunity to take stock of current practices in law enforcement higher education across the Member States, but also to address the current issues in policing, from serious threats to public safety to the applicability of artificial intelligence in law enforcement.

The areas of international exchange of experience for this organisation are the scientific conferences, which thematically discuss specific law enforcement, professional area on an annual basis. Examples of such conferences include:

- Virtual Reality in Police Training. Prague, 2023;
- Law Enforcement Training – Good Practices of Bachelor and Master Level Education. Budapest, 2021;
- Mass Killings. Lyon, 2019;
- Domestic Violence. Baku, 2018;
- Future of Migration – challenges and steps to address them. Tbilisi, 2017;

- Preventing Radicalisation and its Implementation in Police Training. Antalya, 2016.¹

It is important to note that the scientific products of the conferences, which are of broad interest, are of limited public use but accessible to those involved in law enforcement education and research. The exception to this is the issues related to the actualities of law enforcement bachelor's and master's programmes, which were discussed at the Budapest conference in 2021 and are available in a structured way with the support of the University of Public Service and the Hungarian Association of Police Sciences (Kovács & Mészáros, 2021).

A similar conference-organising approach to the AEPC's international consultation can be seen in the initiative taken by the Faculty of Law Enforcement of University of Public Service, which aims to provide a forum for the topics that are becoming more current in law enforcement work and education. This is the International Symposium on Law Enforcement Research, which was first organised in 2022, and the results of this symposium are also available on an electronic platform in Hungary (Czenczer, Kovács & Mészáros, 2023).

Summary

The aim of this short paper was to highlight some of the institutional arrangements for the promotion of police science and police research in the international dimension of today's world, following the first meeting of a working group on police science and police research convened by INTERPOL in 2010.

It is important to note that the institutions mentioned are not new but are long-standing organisations that have been active for several decades and have traditionally been supporters and catalysts of law enforcement science, either from the law enforcement profession or from the field of law enforcement higher education.

In particular, INTERPOL can be a vital catalyst for the coordination of law enforcement research and the practical application of scientific results in the fields of criminal justice, criminology and international criminal cooperation. CEPOL can also support European police training by providing a platform for educational and scientific cooperation between training centres and by ensuring the preservation of the scientific value of the resulting scientific knowledge through its scientific journal.

¹ For more about AEPC events and reports, visit: <https://www.aepc.net/>.

INTERPA and AEPC, as the umbrella organisations of the various law enforcement higher education institutions, can be a regular meeting forum for law enforcement higher education institutions through their voluntary organisations, transcending continental borders. In this context, the network of contacts between the various educational and research collaborations can be developed in a more informal way, focusing specifically on particular research issues.

References

- Czenczer, O., Kovács, G. & Mészáros, B. (Eds.) (2023). *I. Ludovika International Law Enforcement Research Symposium*. Conference Proceedings. Hungarian Association of Police Science.
- Gaál, Gy. (2022). Quo vadis Belügyi Szemle? Fókuszban a szakmaiság és a tudományosság [Quo vadis Belügyi Szemle? Focus on professionalism and scientific excellence]. *Belügyi Szemle*, 70(11), 2269–2272. <https://doi.org/10.38146/BSZ.2022.11.21>
- Hautzinger, Z. (2011). Rendészettudomány és rendőri kutatások [Police science and police research]. *Belügyi Szemle*, 58(1), 22–35.
- Hegyaljai, M. (2015). Az Interpol lopott és elveszett úti okmányok adatbázis (SLTD) használatának felértékelődése. In Gaál, Gy. & Hautzinger, Z. (Eds.), Pécsi Határőr Tudományos Közlemények XVI. Modernkori veszélyek rendszete [Pécs Border Guard Scientific Bulletins XVI. The policing of modern-day threats] (pp. 183–189). Magyar Hadtudományi Társaság Határőr Szakosztály Pécsi Szakcsoportja.
- Kovács, G. & Mészáros, B. (Eds.) (2021). *Law Enforcement Training – Good Practices of Bachelor and Master Level Education*. Hungarian Association of Police Science.
- Szabó, A. (2016). Nemzetközi együttműködési lehetőségek a felsőoktatásban – különös tekintettel a pénzügyőr tisztképzésre [Opportunities for international cooperation in higher education – with a special focus on customs officer training]. *Magyar Rendészet*, 16(4), 91–105.

Online links in the article

- URL1: *CEPOL Management Board Decisions. 2008*. <https://www.cepol.europa.eu/2008-management-board-decisions>
- URL2: *European Law Enforcement Research Bulletin*. <http://bulletin.cepol.europa.eu/index.php/bulletin/issue/archive>

Reference of the article according to APA regulation

- Hautzinger, Z. (2023). International Opportunities for the Study and Development of Police Science. *Belügyi Szemle*, 71(SI3), 81–88. <https://doi.org/10.38146/BSZ.SPEC.2023.3.7>