

POLICE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

“The police are the people, and the people are the police”

These are the first words every police cadet has seen and read when they entered the OSCE-run Kosovo Police Service School (KPSS). It is the mantra for the training of a new police force based on democratic principles and the highest standards of integrity.

The KPSS was established in September 1999 with an aim to create a modern police force that would restore confidence in law enforcement and effectively apply community based principles of policing. Given that it began its work at a time when no other institution was functional it can easily be considered as one of the greatest successes in post-conflict Kosovo.

KPSS started with little more than the dedication and vision of the early members of the staff. The OSCE's commitment and investment has been significant in terms of results achieved, yet according to Steve Bennett, who has been the School Director from the outset, it is important to recognize the individual role of every KPS officer. “No matter how good your school is and how good your instructors are, if you do not have people with basic integrity and basic capacity, willingness and the desire to learn, you will never get any results.”

The first class of cadets completed their course in October 1999, while class 31 will graduate at the end of 2005 – nearly 7,500 new police officers. In the meantime the KPSS developed re-certification and advanced courses for Kosovo Police Service (KPS) Officers who are now on the streets serving the people. The implication is that every officer one might come into contact with or see in Kosovo has received the OSCE training.

More importantly, thanks to the efforts of the OSCE, today there are men and women of all ethnic communities serving in the KPS. The statistics not only reflect the diversity of the population – 16% from non-Albanian communities; but also demonstrate that female officers can also play a law enforcement role in protecting and serving society – 15% of the KPS are women.

“While basic police training has been our key priority, we are increasingly focused in the areas of management and leadership, as well as advanced and specialized training courses,” said Bennett about the course work which is in direct support of fully developing the KPS into a well organized police service as they carry out more responsibilities.



The specialized training and expertise found at the KPSS includes criminal investigation skills, surveillance, forensics, and combating organized crime. KPS Officers have also been trained in modern techniques to deal with domestic violence, awareness of human trafficking, and community policing.

In a staged process, core training and technical support functions within the KPSS have been passed to over 100 KPS Officers who have returned to the School as trainers in their own right and its own Kosovan staff. Although in greatly reduced numbers, the international staff continue to provide essential support to the on-going process of building long-term capacity. This has proved very successful as it aims at the sustainability of the institution.

Gradually, the KPSS has evolved as an institution that represents a good model for professional education and development of public safety personnel. Over the years it has shared its considerable expertise in police education and development to other OSCE Missions in the FYR Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Azerbaijan.

Over the past five years, the School has also been providing services to several key disciplines in the public safety system – including fire rescue, corrections, customs and boundary police, as well as court security. Steve Bennett believes that the School and KPS will continue to exist in the future and work for the interests of all people of Kosovo. “I believe the School will evolve into what Kosovans determine is the best solution for public safety education and development.”

Community-based policing

The Kosovo Police Service (KPS) has only been around for 6 years, and this has meant that they are still striving to build confidence in the people they serve. Rather than trust, in Kosovo there is a legacy of mistrust and lack of co-operation. A relationship between the police and the people needed to be built. The KPS is working to demonstrate that it is a professional force and can tackle the issues which face society.

As a measure to help build confidence, in 2003 the OSCE-run Kosovo Police Service School (KPSS), in close co-operation with its local and international partners, developed the first Community Safety Action Teams. Their purpose is to develop new, and promote the existing, relationships between community members, municipal representatives, and the police.

Under the community policing concept, police officers and ordinary people work together to solve a community's problems that relate to crime and social disorder. “Achieving the goals of police working together with community members and local government representatives with the common goal of reducing crime and increasing safety is the essence of community policing,” said Julie Fleming, the Community Policing Co-ordinator at the KPSS.

A human rights oriented police culture underpins the entire philosophy of community-based policing. Its strategy has two core tracks of changing the methods and practices of the police to be more democratic, and establishing strong and collaborative relationships between the police and the public.

Often people think that security and safety are purely police matters. Julie Fleming thinks the opposite: "All local partners must be engaged in community safety." This kind of relationship gives people a sense of ownership in setting policing priorities and how their community is safeguarded.

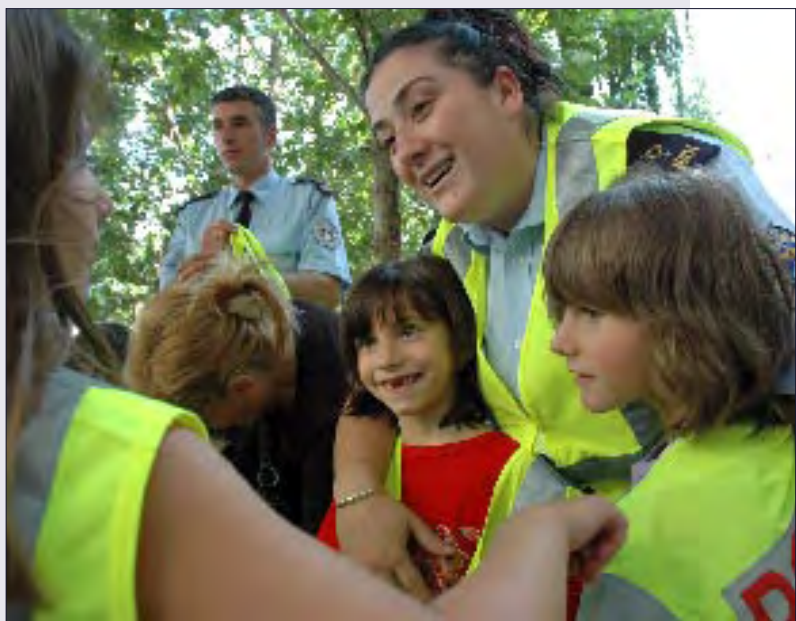
Changing traditional policing to community policing is not an easy task. To date, teams of up to 35 people have been established in eight municipalities, and more are being trained in an additional four municipalities.

Community Safety Action Teams will continue working to further promote the community policing philosophy through implementation of prevention, partnerships, and problem solving strategies to address concerns recognized by both the people and the police.

An obvious result of this effort has come through the creation of a community safety Handbook called: *Only Facts – Information on Crime Prevention*. In the Prizren region, KPS Officers and the main stakeholders in the municipality worked together to create this handbook, which offers necessary information on how the citizens can give their contribution to prevent the crime. Its publication is an example on how cooperation can be enhanced by involving more than just police in law enforcement issues while also creating a sense of ownership.

According to Ron Schwartz, an instructor at the KPSS and public safety specialist, communication between the police, municipal leaders and communities has increased remarkably. "Since 2003, concrete problem solving projects have taken place in different municipalities including addressing youth and drug problems in schools, landfill issues, traffic safety, stray dogs, border crimes, and many more," said Schwartz

This is just one of the many benefits of community based policing. The reduction of crime and improved safety are another. Greater progress in proactively working to solve community problems is expected in the future.



A core principle of community policing concept is creating a partnership between the police and local communities, especially with young people.

Protecting people's right to protest in Kosovo

Officers from the Kosovo Police Service (KPS) are now better able to handle civil disturbances, thanks to training provided by the OSCE-run Kosovo Police Service School (KPSS).

A first group of 70 KPS officers completed the course in April 2005, which was part of efforts to build police capacity to deal with tense situations such as the March 2004 riots, as well as to ensure respect for the rule of law and human rights.



Following the March 2004 riots, the Kosovo Police Service has engaged in number of riot management trainings. The OSCE Mission supports these efforts with providing European expertise and best practices.

The training offered by the KPSS was based on the Danish 'Force Mobile' tactics that are now being adopted by a number of west European countries.

New policing tactics

Danish National Police Superintendent Kaspar Andreasen, who headed the team of four trainers and also ran the demonstration, explained: "People have the right to protest and express their opinions."

However, he sees the job of the police in such a situation to extract violent protesters, to prevent aggression against others and the destruction of property, and to enable people to speak their minds. "Police need to open a dialogue with representatives of the protesters and agree on the way the protest will be conducted," he added.

The key philosophy of the training was that the police should in no way appear to be hostile towards the crowd of demonstrators. The police - while clearly uniformed law enforcement officers - should not display symbols of force, such as batons, shields or helmets, when dealing with public disorder.

Handling a riot is one of the hardest things police officers have to do, as they may be put in a position where they have no option but to use force against the fellow citizens they are trained to serve and protect.

One of the trainees, KPS Lieutenant Amir Gërguri, commented: "It is hard to be in a situation where one has to confront one's own people. But now we know better. We know we have to remove the instigators of violence from the crowd. We know how to establish communication with protesters and co-operate with them."

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Further developing police capacity

Taking on board the lessons learned from the March 2004 riots, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo also sought ways to further develop police capacity, so as to enable them to take on full responsibility and deal properly with such situations.

One of the main problems during the riots was a lack of co-ordination between the KPS, the UN civilian police and KFOR (the NATO-led international force responsible for security in Kosovo), so the Mission is also working to ensure the exchange of information between all parties.

The Norwegian Ambassador to NATO, Kai Eide, who was invited by the UN Secretary General to report on the riots, made police training and exchange of information a priority in his recommendations.

While both KFOR and the UN civilian police still play a role in maintaining security in Kosovo, it is important that the Kosovo police are capable of acting independently.

“We want them to know what the KPS is capable of, so they will know what to expect and can plan supporting actions accordingly,” said Heinz Schneider, an OSCE international police trainer at the KPSS.

Dialogue with the protestors

After protests in Denmark, noted Superintendent Andreassen, the police invite the protest leaders to discuss what went well and what didn't.

Lieutenant Gërguri added that another unit was working on community policing and conflict prevention. With these two units co-operating to develop dialogue with protestors, the chances of protests or riots having severe negative consequences will be greatly reduced.

The best 15 trainees, who are now qualified trainers themselves, will pass on their knowledge to some 500 KPS officers who will form public disorder teams to deal with such situations. The training they will provide during 2005 will be carried out in co-operation with the KPSS and the KPS's regional support units, created to assist training efforts.

It is for real - Women are making a difference

Involvement of women in the new Kosovo Police Service has been one of the greatest challenges that the OSCE Mission's Department of Police Education and Development has faced since it first opened its doors in September 1999.

Considering the patriarchal mentality still present in the Balkans, it was not expected that the women in Kosovo would be interested in joining the newly created Kosovo Police Service (KPS). The reality turned out to be the opposite.

KPS female officers can do just as good as their male colleagues

Women in Kosovo, like everywhere else in the western world, showed that there is no role or responsibility in society they could not take on. In fact the experience in Kosovo taught us that KPS's female officers can be just as good as, if not better, than their male colleagues, in performing all of their duties.

It is encouraging that all of the KPS female cadets and later graduated officers were strongly supported by their families, friends and the society. Shortly after the 1999, seeing female officer policing streets of Kosovo, for many, was a dream come true.

“My family is very proud of me being a police officer and having a chance to serve the people of Kosovo. I am very happy that I have a chance to prove that Kosovo women can make a big difference in improving the life of all Kosovans,” said Arbresha Bajrami who is serving with the regional police station in Pejë/Peć and was awarded KPS's first Lifesaving Medal.



KPS female officers can do just as good as their male colleagues.

Everyone serves under one flag

KPS is very proud of its multi-ethnic composition. Thanks to the never-ending efforts and contribution of the OSCE and the international community, today there are men and women of all ethnic groups serving under one flag, the flag of the Kosovo Police Service.

Slađana Stojanović, KPS Instructor and mother of two, said: “I am very glad that I had the opportunity to show that women can do difficult and responsible jobs in Kosovo and make positive changes.”

In some way, the OSCE has fulfilled its mandate in this regard. Out of over 7,000 police officers that graduated from education and development basic training programming at the KPSS, 15 percent are female representing all ethnic groups of Kosovo.

Since 16 October 1999, when the first class of 176 recruits graduated from the KPSS, Kosovan female officers were present in each and every class. Class 31 completed basic education programme on 16 December 2005, and now KPS has the following ethnic and gender composition:

Kosovo Albanian	83.5%
Kosovo Serbs	10.5%
Others:	6% Kosovo Roma, Turks, Gorani, Bosniaks, and Muslim Slavs
Male	85%
Female	15%