



July 22nd a window of opportunity for police reform?¹

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Abstract

This article deals with questions concerning the relationship between the Norwegian police reform of 2016 and the terrorist attack at Utøya in 2011. The 2016 reform is often presented as an automatic response to the attack by media, politicians and the Police Director. As something that had to be done. A reform that had been in the cupboard for more than a decade since the previous reform of 2000 and was simply dusted off and presented as a neat and fresh general solution to many different problems facing the police. The article argues that the terror attack on July 22nd and the subsequent July 22nd Report (The Gjørv Report, NOU 2012:14) presented “a window of opportunity” for police management to make changes not only in the organization of the police, but also in regard to basic ideals of policing. These are changes that would have raised political resistance under normal circumstances. Furthermore, they had little connection to the basic problems of the force as identified in the July 22nd Report and in the debate concerning the police response after the attack.

Keywords:

Police reforms, policing of terrorism, policing.

Early May 2011 I received a mail from the head of the research department at the Norwegian Police University College. He asked if I could work out a plan for evaluating the planned phase II of the Police reform 2000 for the Department of Justice (St.meld. nr. 22 2000 – 2001). My first reaction was, “at last”. We had been waiting for something to happen for some years. The Police Reform 2000 was heralded as a “makeover” of the old dusty police force of Norway. Its content were well known from similar reforms in other countries in the western world² (Fyfe et. al. 2013, van Dijk et. al. 2015). The reform was presented as a way to make the police more efficient and up to date (Ellefsen

1. The author wants to thank Tony Kamphaug and Barry Lovedale for help with the text.
2. There are similarities to changes in other western countries, but also some differences that are worth considering. The question of cutting costs of the police has been less visible in Norway, instead the focus has been on efficiency. The “law and order” perspective in politics has not been as central as in UK or the US and media has, as a general rule, been less focused on sensational crimes (Green 2012).



2018). The way to modernize and develop a more efficient police was mainly by structural reforms, to create larger and fewer units. Police should also narrow its scope only to deal with “real police work”. As such these changes were quite similar to other reforms in the public sector guided by the ideals of New Public Management (Sørli and Larsson 2018).

The main outcome of the first reform was the National Police Directorate, established in January 2001, and cutting the number of police districts from 54 to 27. The reform did not affect the local level, the lensmann (sheriff). There were 374 local units of varying size, some covering vast areas (Larsson 2010). Still the message was that 27 districts were far too many for an efficient management of resources. It was high time to reduce the numbers of local offices. But local police represented a sensitive political topic. The idea of a locally based, community style of policing, called *near policing*³ had been an ideal since the 1980’s. It was cemented in the ten principles of the police.⁴ These had wide political support and had been more or less untouchable. The report “The Role of the Police in Society” (NOU1981:35) summed them up. They state that the police shall:

1. Reflect the norms and ideals of the society.
2. Be civilian in style. It is seen as essential for good interaction with the public.
3. Be a unitary police force. Multiple police forces and specialisation is deemed undesirable and negative.
4. Be decentralised.
5. Be a generalist. This principle is linked to the one above. The police officer shall be able to solve most of the tasks he encounters in his day-to-day work.
6. Interact with the citizens. The police are dependent on good relations and co-operation with the public to solve their tasks.
7. Be integrated in the local community. “Integration in short means that the police belong to and are a natural part of the local community.”
8. Have a wide basis of recruitment. The police shall reflect the heterogeneity of the society.
9. Prioritise between tasks and emphasize the use of preventive measures.
10. Be under effective control / supervision from the society.

Some of the principles were seen as outdated and old fashioned by police leaders and management, but they still held a strong position among politicians and the population. Substantial changes in the Norwegian police system and politics since the 90’s had pulled away from these ideals. Developments internationally and nationally, in politics and economics, the

3. That is a direct translation of the Norwegian term. In international studies the terms community policing or the more awkward term proximity policing are used (Larsson 2010). In the following the term proximity policing will be used instead of the term near policing.

4. They reflect and share similarities with Robert Peel’s nine principles from 1829.



increased importance of risks and security, but also changes in the public perceptions of threats from crime have pushed towards other ideals of policing than community, decentralization, civilian style and generalist skills (Garland 2001, Zedner 2009). At the same time there has been a growth in private policing by security firms and other agencies taking over central tasks of policing, while the police got new priorities and assignments such as policing immigration and computer frauds (Franko 2020, Dahl et. al. 2022, Reiner 2010).

The basic ideals of policing changed, while the principles still held a strong emotional impact in politics. The phase II, that would reduce the number of police districts and local units was “put on ice”.⁵ The mixed experiences in the wake of the reform 2000 was an indicator that time were not ripe for a new reform (Larsson 2010). So, when the research proposals was made in May 2011, recommending both qualitative and quantitative research, I figured the draft would end in the bottom drawer somewhere in the Department of Justice. I could hardly see any signs pointing towards a new police reform being launched in the near future, at that time such an endeavour seemed close to political suicide.

What happened next would change the rules of the game. A wet and chill Friday in the summer holiday would turn Norway upside down. 22 July 2011 had many victims, one of those it might be argued was the Norwegian police. The pictures of the heavily loaded rubber boat weighted down by anti-terror police that had to be rescued by civilians on their way to Utøya is as close to a trauma you can get. The questions of what could have been done differently. The collapsing communication system (Renå 2022), shared similarities with the *never again* after the German invasion 9th of April 1940 that has haunted Norwegian society and armed forces since the war.

To better understand the changes we have to shed some light on some peculiarities of the Norwegian police. One of those is the high trust of the police in the society (Egge et. al. 2012). Another is the high social status of the police. The general trust of the police in the Nordic countries is exceptionally high, Norway and Denmark are at the top compared to other nations.⁶ These figures are often presented in a fashion that we have “the best police in the world” as a Danish report appropriately is named (Balvig, Holmberg and Nielsen 2011). Most researchers point to other factors that have to do with the relationship between state and its citizens, the high degree of general trust in society and low levels of social distance and division. We believe in the state,

5. Little research was initiated on the Police Reform 2000. The Police Directorate ordered an analysis from a private firm – Agenda. Even in this commissioned and rather narrow report the mixed experiences shine through and unveil open discontent in parts of the police organization.

6. In international rankings of trust police are below middle Worldwide ranking: trust in professions | GfK Compact (nim.org) but in Nordic countries, at least in Norway, they tend to be on top. Nordmenn på tillitstoppen i Europa – SSB



and the police is one of its most visible representatives. We trust the police to have the capacity and skills to help us if we are in trouble.

In the wake of the attack, it was early on pointed out that some parts of the public sector worked better than others. The doctors and the medical rescue system were the real heroes. The first assessments found they tackled the stress in an effective way and saved many lives. Police got a more mixed reception by the media (Egge 2018). The police response in connection with the bomb outside the government buildings in Oslo was generally conceived as well done, but the handling of the massacre at Utøya was met with negative feed-back for being slow and uncoordinated. The political response was to set up a commission to evaluate and sum up what happened.⁷

Innocence lost, the 22nd of July Commission.

The 22nd of July Commission was appointed in the fall of 2011. Their mandate was to leave *no stone unturned* and get the facts *out in the open* as stated by the Norwegian Prime Minister Stoltenberg. The time frame to produce the report was limited to one year. This was a very short time span taken the complexity and extent of the task in consideration. The report (NOU 2012: 14) was presented by its leader Alexandra Gjørsv in August 2021 (dubbed the Gjørsv-report).

The scope of the investigation was the total response and the responsibilities in connection to the terrorist attack of July 22nd. Among the different authorities involved in the attack the police got most of the attention. The police directorate had at this time already published a report of their own, known as *the Sønderland-report*. It was made public in March of 2012 (Politidirektoratet 2012). The mandate of the Sønderland commission was to learn from the experiences of the attack. It presented quite a few points where the police needed to get better training and resources, but the overall message was that police handled the difficult and chaotic situation as well as it could be expected under the circumstances.

The assessment of the committee is that the police have done their duty as quickly as the situation and other circumstances allowed. The actions of the police are considered to be in accordance with the procedures for immediate action, and in accordance with the police's duty to assist and the special instructions for "ongoing shooting". (Politidirektoratet 2012 p. 10)

7. Commissions are the standard response when something unexpected happens in Norway.



Until the Gjørsv-report the “normal response” was that the police evaluated itself.⁸ In contrast to the Sønderland-report the findings of the July 22nd commission was much darker.⁹

The conclusions were presented in bullet points:

- The attack on the government quarter *could have been prevented*
- The authorities’ ability to protect the youth on Utøya *failed*
- Several security and contingency measures to make it more difficult for new attacks ... *should have been implemented*
- Health and rescue agencies did well
- The communication by the Government worked well
- The Security Police (PST) *could have detected* the terrorist.

The Media raised critical comments concerning the police after the attack (Egge 2018), but it took some time before many of the aspects concerning the handling of the attack were known. Pictures from the day, especially the anti-terror police in their boat, made it painfully clear that things had been chaotic. But few, if any, were prepared for what happened at the press conference in connection to the publication of the July 22nd report on 13th of August 2012. Norwegian press have a history of being police friendly and accepting police information more or less at face value.¹⁰ The 13th of August was a turning point, it also marked a shift in the relationship between police and the political authorities.

One interesting aspect is that it does not seem that the general trust in the police was much affected either by the terrorist attack or by the publication of the final report (Egge, Strype and Thomassen 2012, Egge 2018). But what changed was the relationship between media and police, even if it was not heavily affected. This could be seen most clearly in how the political authorities started to treat the police more in line with other public services, being more openly demanding and critical.

There seemed to be a wide agreement that the Norwegian police was not ready, trained and staffed to handle attacks of such dimensions. As the July

8. And few if any raised any critical questions since this was standard procedure.

9. This is not the place to evaluate the question of what report gives the most accurate description of the way the police handled July 22nd. The Sønderland-report that was seen in a rather bleak light after the Gjørsv-report does in many ways present a picture that is more realistic concerning the normal police response on terror. The Gjørsv-report might be too optimistic concerning the possibilities of what the police could have done under these circumstances (see also Renå 2022). Many of the failings of the police uncovered by the report are also normal in countries with more frequent experience of terrorism (Mueller & Stewart 2016, Deflem 2010, Moran & Phytian 2008).

10. Many will disagree with this, but I think it will hold closer scrutiny. In Sweden the claim from police officers has also been that the media is too critical towards the police. Studies of media coverage in Sweden clearly documents the opposite, that media treats the police remarkably well (Palm & Skogersson 2008).



22nd Commission pointed out there were a number of issues the police *could* or *should* have managed better. The report ended with a list of 31 recommendations, many concrete. The police were perceived as ill equipped and trained for serious attacks on more or less all levels. The report was rather open when it came to basic structural problems – *attitudes, culture and leadership* was pointed out (p. 456). But it was very vague on what it aimed at by using these open terms.

Høyer et al. (2018) points to the report (NOU2014: 14) as a central document for the following process that ended in the police reform of 2016. The report's authority seemed to be above criticism and it was frequently cited and used. In the parliamentary reform proposals (Innst. S nr. 306 (2014-2015)) a 75-page paper, the report of the commission is mentioned explicitly no less than 43 times (Høyer et al 2018). Its combination of presenting a strong narrative combined with concrete proposals on one side and totally open and vague ones on the other made it useful. It was also seen as leaving "no stone unturned" and was often perceived as something of a gold standard. But many critical voices raised asked how comments on bad attitudes, unhealthy cultures and failure in leadership ended with recommendations for a structural reform.

The final nail in the coffin – the Police Analysis NOU 2013:9

The so-called police analysis was initiated seemingly unrelated to the terror attack. It was presented as a thorough work concerning the state of the working of police service in Norway. The mandate of the commission was mainly presented in terms of efficiency, administration and management. Its aim was:¹¹

"... assessing the police's use of resources, priorities, competence, management and organization. It must consider whether administrative resources can be reallocated to provide more police power in the districts. It will also consider what changes can be made so that the police tasks can be solved better and more efficiently. "

To sweeten this rather dull talk of efficiency it was added by the social democratic minister of Justice Grete Faremo that local police and crime prevention should be strengthened and still be at the core of policing. A statement that seems contrary to the message of the mandate.

The police analysis, presented in June 2013, is narrowed down what is defined as core police tasks. It removes or reduces much of what is presented as public service, help and aid. There is a clear focus on more reactive "crime fighting". Crime prevention is said to be important, but it redefines crime prevention to be the work of specialists. This is a break with previous strategies

11. Press release the department of Justice 8th November 2012.



and understandings of crime prevention as central to *all* police work. Crime prevention in the plan is reduced to meetings and multi-agency approaches and the development of a new role, the police contact (Larsson 2017). Traditional forms of preventive work based on knowledge about the locality and police presence are not considered, the community police (nærpoliti) are hardly mentioned (Sørli og Larsson 2018).

The main message is that further centralization is required with recommendations of reductions in numbers of police districts from 27 to 6¹² and a cutting down on local units from 354 to 225. The core activity of the police in the report is crime fighting. The development towards this narrowing of the meaning of policing had been in the making for the last two decades. The reduction of districts and peeling away tasks to get to core activities easy to register and manage is a “classic” new public management (NPM) approach.

The police analysis was clear on strengthening the powers of the National Police Directorate and the need to create a more efficient police management. The report touches on many other topics and the need to improve the quality of police work, especially investigation. It deals with the ever-present problem of the quality of the data resources in the police and the need to upgrade the communication systems.

An interesting issue is the total absence of the ten basic principles in the report (see above). They are not mentioned at all. The leader of the Commission when asked why this was the case made a remarkably honest answer; *they did not fit in the report*.¹³ He could see no use for them whatsoever.

The report is an interesting document compared to the report of the July 22 commission. The recommendations and analysis do not seem to be much affected by the findings presented in the NOU 2012: 14. Instead it follows in the footsteps of the Reform 2000, but it also reflects the criticism raised by the Auditor General in 2010 that resources were not used efficiently, especially in connection to policing organized crime and that there were substantial problems related to the use of information technology (Sørli and Larsson 2018). The NOU2013:9 presented few new perspectives, instead it was an echo of earlier reforms. But something had changed. Norwegian politicians and media post July 22nd demanded a more efficient and alert police and an organization that “deals with the challenges seriously”. Change was already on its way, both with more resources to intelligence work, investigation and a better working communication system (Renå 2022). But something more visible *had to be done*. There was a readymade answer, *time for further police reform*.

12. After rounds in the parliament the end result was 12 districts.

13. The question was raised at the police university college on a presentation of the report in the summer of 2013.



Arming the Police

Among the most central questions raised by the Police Union the last decades has been the arming of the police. Norwegian police have a history of being civilian in style and unarmed as a general rule. This principle has a long and strong tradition. Arms are available in patrol cars with easy access.¹⁴ Nordic police share similarities, but arming is one of the open differences with the Danish and Swedish being armed (Knutsson 2005).

The question of arming the police has a history before 2011. The main argument for arming has been self-protection. It was claimed that the police had to handle more cases of mentally unstable or ill persons as a result of changes in the health care and treatment systems. The question was also linked to a increased attention and awareness of security, especially among younger officers. Society was described as more hostile and dangerous, and the use of knives was pointed out as one of the most worrying trends (Finstad 2015). There was a referendum within the Police Union in 2011, the majority of members voted against arming, one year later the Union changed policy. Finstad describes how these changes came about, one of the most decisive factors was pressure groups in the police actively working for arming.

As mentioned, terror is not a new phenomenon in Norway. In the wake of the terror at the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972 there was established an anti-terror unit in the Police force (NOU 2017:9). Following 9/11 Norway, as other western countries, implemented new anti-terror laws and strengthened the resources to the police (Deflem 2010). Norway was defined as a possible terror target.¹⁵ Our oil industry and vulnerable nodes like government buildings, airports and railway stations was perceived as suitable targets for attack (Renå 2022). Islamic terror was seen as the most dangerous threat (Hammerlin 2010). Following the July 22 attack the consciousness of so called homegrown terror threats became clearer. Previously it was more or less taken for granted that if Norway would be a victim of terror it would be Islamic. Norway had experienced right wing terror in the 70's and 80's, but the seriousness and scale of the attack made many believe it was Islamic before the identity of the terrorist was revealed.

July 22nd pushed the debate on arming the police to the forefront. It made the arguments of protecting the public central, while self protection came in second. Since the attack there have been periods with a general arming the police when levels of threat have been declared by the PST. Arming the police was the topic of a commission lead by Professor Liv Finstad. The conclusion of the Finstad report (NOU2017:9) was continuing the general rule of unarmed police but opening up for the use of tazers. It was met with heated response

14. Called advanced storage (fremskutt lagring).

15. As part of Nato and in war activity in Afghanistan and Libya.



by the police, especially from the Police Union who argued for being armed on a permanent basis.

The general rule is still an unarmed police in Norway, but there have recently been changes. Most important in 2016 when the decision concerning arming in a critical situation was moved from the Police Chief to the operational commander (Operasjonsleder). This made arming of the police faster and easier, the numbers of armed responses rose dramatically – from 1500 missions in 2007 to more than 5800 in 2016.¹⁶ One interesting aspect was that the actual use of firearms did not rise proportionally (Henriksen and Kruke 2020). Norwegian police officers still rarely use their arms. In 28 situations in the period 2005 – 2018 a gun was fired aimed at a person by Norwegian police (Politiforum 2021). In fact there was no shooting when arresting the terrorist at Utøya July 22nd. It is still early to make any assessments of the wider effects of these changes, to what degree they have affected the practical actions, culture and perceptions of the police.

Prepared for emergency and terror

Norway has been a peaceful corner of Europe. That is not to say that we have not experienced terror attacks before 2011. Since the mid 60's there have been a few terror attempts, but also bombings of buildings,¹⁷ in connection to political demonstrations¹⁸ and attacks on asylum centers.¹⁹ These attacks have been linked to both left-wing and right-wing groups, with the last dominating the picture (Bangsund 1984, Wolff 2022). As mentioned above in the wake of 9/11 the focus on Islamic terror increased in Norway.

In general, the Norwegian Security Police, or the surveillance police as they were named, had focused mainly on the political left since the late 40's. This was clearly documented by the report of the Lund Commission in 1996.²⁰ They unveiled massive surveillance of the political left for decades, also of persons with a seat in Parliament perceived as moderate. At the same time the police were criticized for not taking other threats as seriously, especially on the political right wing.

The most obvious result of the terror attack has been a tremendous growth in attention and resources on emergency preparedness.²¹ Emergency and

16. Figures are 1 507 missions in 2007 to 5 816 by November 2016. (POD 2017)

17. Like the bombing of the radical October bookstore in Tromsø in 1977.

18. 1979 Kyvik threw a bomb at the Faglig 1 Mai march. There were also other bomb raids at the same time.

19. The list of attacks of asylum centres but also shops owned by immigrants is long and started in the late 1980's.

20. Dokument nr. 15. (1995-96).

21. Beredskap in Norwegian, the police contingency system (politiets beredskapssystem) (Politidirektoratet 2020).



security are wide concepts covering help, support and armed assistance concerning such as threats against data systems, environmental and natural disasters, threats from organized crime, accidents, nuclear accidents to terror and war. As mentioned, specialized counter terrorist units were established in Norway in the early 70's.²² After 2011 it was stressed that emergency preparedness should be spread more widely in the police organization and that general police officers should have a higher level of training and awareness on this subject. This resulted in more stress on mobility, always being on the alert (Gundhus et. al 2018), that all officers should have at least 48 hours of shooting a year and that it should be established units locally dealing with emergency preparedness.

Much attention in public was drawn to serious crimes, crime fighting became the mantra, while the crime statistics of Norway documented a slow and ongoing decline in registered crimes since the turn of the millennium. The main mover behind this drop is the reduced numbers of thefts, but most forms of crimes are falling (Larsson et.al. 2022). The number of killings in Norway is among the lowest in the world (0.5 per 100 000), for the last decade the numbers of killed have been between 20 and 30 in a population of 5.3 million (Politiet 2020).

Simultaneously the police is prepared for worst case scenarios. The Police are more and more associated with risk related work, security and safety have become central goals of the police (Dahl et.al. 2022, Gundhus et.al. 2018). It is taken for granted that safety and security is at the heart of police work, an ideal far from what was seen as central 40 years ago when law and order was pivotal (Larsson 2010). The perspective is summed up in the opening words of the report on The Police Contingency System: "The mission of the police is to prevent and fight crime and create security for the population." (Politidirektoratet 2020, p. 16)

There have been many changes. The Police are better equipped with protective equipment. New communication centres are established in the districts. More time and resources are used on training and the training facilities have been upgraded. These resources are taken from other core tasks of policing. A brand new national mega anti-terror training centre was opened in September 2020.²³ These costly and substantial changes have not generated much political or public debate. Few if any have questioned the value and effects of this, or if there are better ways of protecting society against terror and other threats (Mueller and Stewart 2016). The only question that raised some heat was where the centre was going to be situated.

22. One of the main problems with such devoted units are that they very rarely are used in sharp operations.

23. It also had a huge price tag costing 2.6 billion nok. The symbolic value of the centre was unquestionable. This was a mega project that met little or no political opposition. Beredskapssenteret tar form (politiforum.no)



A new police?

Police reforms often come as a result of some sort of crises or lack of trust in the police (Fyfe et. al, 2013, Dijk et. al. 2015). Reforms are often presented as a political fix. But it can also work the other way. Crises, in this case a terror attack with its traumatic experiences, can be a window of opportunity for making changes that under ordinary circumstances would have been politically indigestible. Such an argument might seem cynical and instrumental, but it might not be so. Ideals of policing will always be contested. The ideals of a civilian, unarmed and locally based police, often called a Nordic ideal of policing, have always been contested, even in the liberal 70's and early 80's. The ten principles, were put down on paper by a commission with criminologist Nils Christie as a member and reflected ideals of small is good and back to the local (decentralization). Ideals held high at the time. From the end of the 1980's a new more instrumental way of thinking focusing more on efficiency, cost and governance built on econometric thinking came to dominate the thinking about public services including the police. These ideals are linked to the umbrella of New Public Management (Sørli and Larsson 2018).

For public officials working with police management the old principles, still popular among politicians and the public, often came to be seen as irrelevant or outdated. The new perspective was central in the Police reform 2000. The reform was structural and built on ideals of management, seeking easily quantifiable goals to measure police work²⁴ (clear up rates, reported crimes and emergency response) and trying to reap the profits from systemic reforms. There have been new ideals of policing such as intelligence-led policing, pro-active policing, problem oriented policing (POP), more use analytical knowledge and strategies and developments in investigation (Dahl et.al. 2022). Policing has developed towards *office work*, often far away from the mundane life of the streets and the patrol car. What is measured on the balance cards for the police management and the political authorities and eventually to the media have changed policing in multiple ways. These developments moved away from the old ideals. Traditional policing was of little worth if it could not be measured and linked to goals and targets. Traditional police work, as is well documented in classical texts, is often of the sort that is hard to measure (Reiner 2010, Larsson et al. 2014). Much of it is what police themselves view as, *not real police work*.

It might be stated that it is not the police that has changed but society, and that the police is trying to catch up developments in technology, economy, on internet, ecology, in global movements and a world that is evolving at a faster phase. That is the explanation from the police management. The police role and assignments are indeed changing (Dahl et.al. 2022). Police today are

24. I was thrown into the task of developing measurable goals (parameters) for the police in 2002 – 2003.



assigned to tasks and problems that require new ways of working (Brodeur 2010). The question is not if police should change, but rather in what direction and how to best solve their jobs for the best of society. Bigger units, a more distanced police and a move towards a more armed paramilitary style of policing is one track that will have substantial effects on society and there do exist other roads to be taken.

With the last reform in 2016, the move towards bigger units, centralization and the de-rigging of the local has accelerated (Sørli and Larsson 2018). With the closing down of 129 local units, most of them in rural areas, and now twelve large police districts, some of them bigger than Denmark alone, there is little meaning in talking about local police in Norway. Old terms have been redefined. Crime prevention is not what it used to be, neither is local nor community policing (Larsson 2017).

Besides the move towards arming and emergency policing the *response time* of the police has grown in importance and developed into one of the most central measurements of policing. The time of response is linked to the ideals of more mobile patrols “on wheels”, one aspect of bigger centralized units. It is also a central aspect of the emergency ideals, that police should be like a fire department for crime.²⁵ This incident driven style of policing, the “you call, we respond” is what Herman Goldstein criticized in his classic work “Problem oriented policing” (Goldstein 1990). Problem oriented policing (POP) had a central position as method in policing in Norway during the first decade of this century (Politidirektoratet 2002). POP underlines the importance of proactive measures, the use of analysis to identify the causes of repeated problems and develop measures to prevent future crimes. The drift towards more reactive forms of policing with response time as an indicator of “good policing” has been evident for quite a while. This form of management has also been seen as one reason for “cooking the books” and fixing the numbers in the police (Wathne 2018).

It might be pointed out that the development towards intelligence-led policing in Norway is a step in the direction towards proactive policing. The central importance of intelligence for policing and management was formalized in the report *the intelligence-doctrine* (Politiet 2014). The ideals of this doctrine are summed up:

“The police will continue to work reactively, but the police reform requires that the intelligence-led, preventive strategy is the primary for almost all police work (Politidirektoratet 2018). This requires a double discipline for the patrol: You must do what you are told to do, and you shall not to the same extent take initiatives yourself.” (Paulsen and Simensen 2019)

25. This is not so far out as it seems. There has been a co-location of police and fire departments in Scotland as one example.



This reduces the importance of the long-standing ideal of police discretion and the ability to solve problems on the spot in dialog with the public. Intelligence-led policing is promising when it comes to policing certain problems, like forms of organized crime (Larsson 2018) but vulnerable as a general strategy of policing. There are aspects of the approach that are problematic such as the quality of the intelligence data, the analysis and the use of these sources for management (Larsson et.al. 2022). Most important in this context are what it does to ordinary patrol policing, the interaction between police and the public and how crime prevention are redefined. The ideals of cooperation of police and public, of reciprocity, interaction and integration in the community have come to be worn thin.

The ideals behind the intelligence doctrine, note the name, are adopted from the armed forces mixed with business management perspectives and phrases. It is stated that all police are now working preventatively, the question is what does this mean? Gundhus et al. (2018) have followed and studied the police in Oslo describing how “the new proximity police” have limited contact with the public, are managed by the local communication centrals, have little room for discretion, are guided by central goals and must be alert, ready to move. The result of this is a police force that is removed from the public. Technology and documented effectiveness are pivotal. This has little resemblance to what was primarily known as community policing and crime prevention. A clearer statement of the importance of incident driven mobile police than what the former police commissioner made is hard to find (Larsson 2017):

“I want a mobile and accessible police. We must get out of the office, into the patrol cars, and out to the people. With the use of available modern technology, we will solve the public’s problems on the spot ...” (VG 1010-2013, author’s translation).

This is the antithesis of the basic ideals, they state: *Traditionally, the Norwegian police have drawn their strength from the close contact with citizens in local communities* (NOU 1981:35 p. 16). That was then, but it is not anymore.

A window of opportunity

“In many cases, police reform would not have occurred in the absence of an ‘open’ social and political situation, often the result of serious crises, scandal or disaster.” (Fyfe et.al. 2013 p. 7)

Three months after the draft for evaluating Police reform II was sent the plans seemed outdated. Past July 22nd was a new reality. Old lines of divisions became blurred and new ones arose. Attention now was at being prepared for or preventing catastrophic incidents. Old threats like organized crime or environmental challenges had to take second place behind terror (Larsson 2018). Policing drifted towards a focus on the hard end, being prepared for



emergency.²⁶ It was close to political suicide to ask critical questions about such pervasive changes.

This situation opened a window of opportunity for the reformers. Decentralization, local police and crime prevention had for decades been “untouchable” values. At the same time there had been a drift towards centralization, efficiency and professionalization for decades in the police and public sector (Ellefsen 2018, Larsson 2010). The need for change and development in the police was emphasized, especially by police management, before July 22nd. ICT (information and communication technology) in the police had been a thorn in the side for years. Both the communication systems and the computer aided services were seen as falling behind and upgrading these systems seemed to be full of nasty surprises with heavy price tags.²⁷ The need to make better use of police intelligence and analytical skills was well documented. The challenges of leadership and management on all levels recognized, also the need for professionalization of investigation, crime prevention, victims support and violence in relationships.

The crises in the wake of July 22nd made it clear that something had to be done. Change was demanded by politicians across the whole spectrum. *What* to be done was less clear. In such situations reforms might work as instant solutions (Larsson og Sørli 2018). The result of the processes following July 22nd and *the proximity police reform* was a mix, most of it was well known, but there were also new developments.

This was “more of the same”:

“All processes now pull towards big units, specialization, centralization, cooperation with experts instead of the public, control through performance measurement in lieu of public control, and increased power to the Police Directorate.” (Larsson 2017).

The move towards emergency policing and creating a mobile distanced police on the other hand, was something few had foreseen. The ideals of policing in Norway during first decade of the century were more characterized by POP, intelligence-led, predictive and proactive policing (Dahl al. 2022). The growth in the field of anti-terror has been substantial. This has affected ordinary patrol activity and changed policing in significant ways. Rapid response to calls developed into a measure for good policing while the essence of policing, what is done, and interaction with the public seems less important (van Dijk et.al. 2015, Gundhus et.al. 2018).

26. A teacher in emergency preparedness told me with a sigh that the pendulum now had swung too far, “now there is simply too much training for emergency, we need more focus on prevention.”

27. During the police reform 2000 the upgrading of the ICT systems was one of the Achilles heels. The data crises have been ongoing till this day. The system Palantir seems to be the last of these very expensive blunders, it cost Norwegian police more than 100 million kroner (Politiforum 2020).



The core task of the police became crime fighting, it used to be order and crime prevention (Gundhus et.al. 2018, Dahl et.al. 2022). The Police analysis depicted police work as roughly similar to crime fighting. The report seemed to avoid central tasks, norms and values central in the Police law (1995) the importance of assistance, service and support.

The trauma of July 22nd hit the nation hard. The Gjørsv-report highlighted the extent of the failings of the police for all to see (Renå 2022). It had a pivotal role in the process of reforming the police (Høyer et al. 2018). The combination of the sheer volume and quality of the report, the bullet points, but also its vagueness on central points made it well suited as a fundamental basis for what eventually came to be the police reform of 2016. The volatile situation in the top leadership at the time was another factor. Under rather dramatic circumstances Øystein Mæland had to resign his post as Police Director for his response to the criticism raised against the police in August 2011.²⁸ The Director appointed to “clean up” was Reidar Humlegård who also took part of the police analysis commission. He was given powers and authority to make substantial changes. Humlegård was known as the leader and reformer of the UP – the mobile traffic police. Much of the substance of the *proximity police reform*²⁹ was known from police reform 2000. Many of the ten principles were now dead, numbers four, six, seven and nine pointed towards other ideals of policing. Number nine: *prioritise between tasks and emphasize the use of preventive measures*, was redefined (NOU2013:9). It became linked to intelligence and analysis, centralized units, police contacts³⁰ and mobile units (Larsson 2017). It lost its local affiliation and was professionalized. The ten principles were not officially dropped in the process of the reform of 2016. In fact, they were re-introduced in the process (Prop 61 LS (2014-2015)), so they are still on paper the basic principles of policing in Norway.

One might ask, has this focus on arming, response and emergency pushed the police towards a more authoritarian semi-military style of policing (Johannessen 2018)? The Changes in the previous decade seems to have had a disciplining and formalizing effect on the police on many levels. The strikes³¹ and political processes of the Police Union seem to be history and the Unions power seems to be somewhat restricted. Police work today is more regulated. Lispkys (2010) street-level bureaucrat with his “substantial discretionary authority and the requirement to interpret policy on a case-by-case basis” has lost some of his discretionally powers (Granér og Kronkvist 2014). The tension between police management and the patrolling police is well documented in the classic work of Ianni (1983) and beyond. The push towards permanent arming and the resources

28. His tenure was short from May 2011 to August 2012.

29. The re-naming of the reform was a political decision in the best Orwellian tradition done in the spring of 2015 (Larsson 2017).

30. The Police Contacts are meant to be networkers working with multi agency approaches and different authorities to prevent crime.

31. The police strike of 2009 for better working conditions and pay was debated and highly controversial.



now used on emergency preparedness point towards a more military style of policing, but there are also strong forces pulling towards more civilian style. Some of the most substantial changes in the police force in Norway during previous decades have been in the recruitment of women and the professionalization of the force (Ellefsen, Sørli and Egge 2021).

Terrorism has been a moving force affecting the police forces for decades. Most western countries, among those Norway, established anti-terror groups in the 1970's (Kumm 2002). This had an impact not only on styles of policing and arming, but also on the development of the use of intelligence and analysis (Deflem 2010, Mueller and Stewart 2016). This can be described as a movement from a more low style of policing towards high-policing (Brodeur 2010). Since 9/11 anti-terror has been a field of priority (Renå 2022). There were different roads that could have been taken in the aftermath of July 22nd, and as we have seen the developments did not follow one track alone. The ambitions driving the reforms were probably unrealistically high. Police reform was one of the quick fixes. But it was probably one that had little impact on the abilities of the police and society to prevent terror in the future. It is difficult to see the links between the central points of criticism in the Gjørøv-report, pointing to problems related to attitudes, leadership and police culture and the reform. This has been pointed out by critics (Finstad 2012, Halvorsen 2013, NRK 2016), as this reform was mainly a structural reform while the identified problems appear to have been of a more cultural and technical nature.

Kontaktoplysninger

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