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SWEDISH POLICE AND CIVIL ORGANIZATIONS: WAYS FOR SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

Job satisfaction is connected to perceived work-related stress, with work stress being a key determinant of job satisfaction. Research indicates that policing is inherently stressful, and the cumulative impact of daily stress and exposure to traumatic events can lead to negative outcomes such as burnout, mental health issues, reduced job satisfaction, and decreased job performance. Although research on policing has increased in Sweden over the past decade, following the integration of policing education into academic programs however, research remains limited, particularly in understanding how job stress affects mental health and the psychological impact of job stress, such as anxiety, depression, and trauma, are well-documented for police officers, especially in contexts of high stress.

In recent years, there have been growing concerns about rising criminal activities in Sweden, including organized crime, gang-related violence, and associated incidents like shootings and explosions. This trend has received significant media attention. Sweden, once known for low crime and safety, has seen a rise in crime, including youth recruitment into criminal networks, protection of crime data has been an evidence-based approach. While physical safety is a key area of focus, the raising of job stress (e.g., preoccupation with crime) has

become the core topic in Swedish society, media coverage, and public discourse. Police work, stress, and public safety have become central issues in Swedish society, media, and political discussions. In particular, increasing crime, including organized crime and gang violence, is often presented as a threat to safety and social values. Even when overall crime rates remain stable, media and political discourse frame rising crime as a significant concern. Transnational and national media, including the brand of national security and safety, have been used to highlight areas where crime, particularly in contexts of the police, remains a central concern for public safety, rapid responses to crises, and involvement of legal acts and physical interventions to prevent violence and security threats. Both public and private sectors aim for better frameworks—integrated and up-to-date frameworks remain the key focus [1].

The police are often seen as a central part of the response and prevention, with increasing public attention to crime and gang-related issues. Political parties, including both right-wing and liberal parties, have emphasized the importance of clearly defined roles for the police, positive organizational structures, and clear legal frameworks. This discussion has led to public safety as a central objective and support for extended training and development of law enforcement to smother and deter crime in public spaces and gang-related activity.

These topics have been part of public and political discourse for more than a decade. There is a clear focus on policing, law enforcement, and crime prevention.

The Swedish Police Authority defines crime prevention as activities that the police carry out or take part in with the primary aim of preventing crime. These activities are usually at the secondary level. The Swedish Parliament has recently introduced visitation zones that give the police a broader mandate, allowing them to perform tasks like visiting people and conducting vehicle searches without requiring specific suspicion of crime. The debate often includes discussions on immigration, ethnic diversity, and the role of integration policies in addressing societal challenges. These discussions have led to the rise of a so-called 'parallel society' and increased criminal activity. The police's definition of crime prevention is quite limited, focusing mainly on preventing crime in the narrower sense, without considering broader public safety initiatives. This lack of clear definition can lead to diverse

interpretations of what crime prevention involves. While the police provide two separate definitions of crime prevention and public safety, they are treated as distinct concepts. However, the police's definition is circular and lacks clarity. Sohlberg & Sohlberg highlight that unclear definitions and interpretations play a significant role in how police officers understand and implement crime prevention or public safety measures. The goal is solid, but the interpretation of crime prevention is not well understood, and the Swedish model has been shown to work. Even though the Swedish police see fighting organized crime as a top priority, most of the materials they use talk about things like trust, safety, meaningful work, and teamwork, which is different from the usual "fear of crime" stories you see in the media and politics. Like all public agencies in Sweden, they have to be objective, fair, just, and respectful [2].

In conclusion, the Swedish police authority identifies combating organized crime as one of its top priorities, most of the discourse focuses on strengthening the self-esteem and life skills of adolescent girls, enabling them to resist social and family pressures. This aligns with values such as trust, safety, meaningfulness, and collaboration. As with all public authorities in Sweden, there are requirements for being objective, fair, just, and respectful. As discussed above, the general goals are politically defined, which is why it would be surprising to find strong emotional arguments or explicit normative conclusions in official documents. However, the contrast between the general alarmistic discourse on criminality and how the police authority defines itself may present challenges in implementing political decisions regarding the police's mission and in gaining and maintaining citizens' trust.

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