Local partnerships, strategy of responsabilisation and Internal Police Reform in France*

Jacques de Maillard | Valérie Icard

Abstract
Urban security has become a new policy preoccupation in many European cities since the 1980s. City governments throughout Europe have increasingly engaged in the repression of incivilities, the fight against street crime, and actions and measures of securitization and protection. The last 30 years have seen the emergence and institutionalisation of a new urban politics in which public security has become a new policy preoccupation based on several common characteristics: a focus upon pro-active prevention rather than reactive detection; emphasis upon wider social problems, quality of life, anti-social behaviour and disorder; implementation through decentralised, local arrangements for the delivery of these politics; delivery through a partnership approach, drawing together a variety of organisations and stakeholders in horizontal networks (Crawford, 2014). Mobilising recent research on France on the operational partnership groups created since 2019 (as part of the "day-to-day security police" reform), we identify the main tensions at the heart of these policies: the thwarted strategy of responsibilization by the French central state and the difficult reform of the *police nationale*.

Keywords: Local governance, police nationale, partnerships, problem solving, responsibilization

Jacques de Maillard, University of Versailles-Saint-Quentin en Yvelines (Université Paris-Saclay), Cesdip | **Valérie Icard**, University of Versailles-Saint-Quentin en Yvelines (Université Paris-Saclay), Cesdip

Local partnerships, strategy of responsabilisation and Internal Police Reform in France

1. Introduction

Urban security has become a pressing political issue in many European cities, as it has come "to express a number of key tensions, if not contradictions in European thinking about crime and violence – between the importance of prevention and sanctioning as policy priorities established by 'active citizens' as well as scientific and political elites" (Edwards, Hughes and Lord, 2013, p. 265). For the last thirty years, in Italy (Calaresu and Selmini, 2017; Quassoli, Colombo and Molteni, 2018; Selmini, 2005), but also in France (de Maillard, 2005; de Maillard and Mouhanna, 2017; Ferret and Mouhanna, 2005), the Netherlands (Prins and Devroe, 2017; Van Swaaningen, 2005), England and Wales (Edwards, Chambers, Fyfe and Henry, 2017b; Hughes, 2007) or Belgium (de Pauw and Easton, 2017), local authorities have mobilized around the issues of crime, incivilities and insecurity. Through the use of local police forces and administrative tools, the adoption of new technological devices (the most widely used being CCTV) or the adoption of a more or less harsh rhetoric, mayors and more globally local authorities have developed local security policies, sometimes challenging the traditional dominance of the central government on these issues (Kübler and de Maillard, 2022). As Adam Crawford (2014, p. 126) has highlighted, we have witnessed "the emergence and institutionalization of a new urban politics in which public safety has become a new policy preoccupation", marked by several commonalities: a focus on proactive prevention rather than reactive detection, an emphasis on wider social problems (including quality of life issues), a focus on modes of informal social control, delivery through a partnership approach and an orientation towards holistic solutions. More particularly, in France, since the 1980s, a variety of local councils, committees and working groups have been introduced that stucture a new and more holistic way of dealing with crime issues.

A large body of literature has discussed the complexities of this new local governance of urban security. Crawford (1999; 2001) has stressed its contradictory components, both joined-up and fragmented, at arm's length but also hands on ('hands on' central government interventions), wide-angled (partnership approach) but also with a tunneled vision (intra-organizational focus on 'outputs'; performance indicators), relying on a growing demand for trust and on the institutionalization of distrust (role of procedures, new managerial rules), based on co-operation and negotiation in a cold climate of competition (bids and benchmarking), marked by a nostalgia disguised as modernization (crime as a result of the breakdown of communities) and ambivalent political responses, combining preventive strategies and populist punitiveness). Edwards et al. (2017) have mapped out the convergences and divergences impacting upon the formulation of policing strategies for European Metropolises, devising several types of "governing assemblages" in European metropolises, in the wake of Stone's urban regimes (2005).

David Garland has provided a powerful interpretation of these transformations with the concept of "responsibilization", that is *"instead of addressing crime in a direct fashion by means of the police, the courts and the prisons, this approach promotes a new kind of indirect action, in which state agencies activate actions by non-state organisations and actors"* (2001, p. 124). It is true that police agencies, judges and magistrates are now in closer relationships with other forces of social control, with whom they seek to build alliances and exchange information. The key words of this new local governance of urban security are: 'public/private partnerships', 'multi-agency co-operation', 'social participation', 'local co-ordination'. The diffusion of local partnerships is an illustration of this trend: new local partnerships define frameworks for interpreting problems, sets of resources and procedures for responding to them, rather than defining *a priori* the objectives and respective roles of the actors involved. The state chooses to shift responsibility for crime control to the municipalities and to other services (education, urban planning, social work, road traffic, etc.). For the central government, new local partnerships are part of a logic of "doing with" rather than "doing". On the one hand, this trend can be seen as a horizontal logic, where the state (and in this case the national police) enters into a logic of constant negotiation with the other actors to define reciprocal roles and joint actions, and to decide on common strategies. But, on the other hand, it may be analyzed as an attempt to impose, in a more vertical mode, a distribution of missions, defining what the police can (or cannot) do and assigning missions to other local actors. This raises a question of indirect government: to what extent do police services orientate and shape the actions of other actors on the local scene? In France, as we will see, the central state has created local councils and groups (such as the operational partnership groups, see below) to favor more horizontal ways of dealing with local security issues. But at the same time, several research projects have shown how the police continue to define the ways issues of local security are dealt with, by imposing a certain framing (based on a narrow conception of security) and distributing responsibilities between partners (Darley and Gauthier, 2018).

This issue of responsibilization is related to a second one which concerns reform of the police style of action.

We know that the public police were traditionally dominated by a mode of action relying on three dimensions (the three Rs: "three Rs": random patrol, rapid response, and reactive investigations; see Sherman, 2013). More particularly, in France, the action of the national police is dominated by a model of "intervention": the dispatch of patrols in response to emergency calls, and a distanced relationship with local areas (within a broad literature, see in particular de Maillard and Zagrodzki, 2021; Roché, 2016). Numerous reforms have been introduced that have tried to change this dominant police strategy (often defined as "one size fits all"). Community policing reforms are based on organizational decentralization, involvement of local communities and problem- solving strategies (rather than mere law enforcement interventions). Local partnerships should favor the feedback of security requests from the public, define priorities and specific actions (sending out patrols, launching investigations, etc.) according to a problem-solving logic[1]. This leads us to the following question: To what extent does the implementation of these local partnerships transform the way in which the national police operate in the local areas?

To answer these two lines of questioning, we will use empirical research conducted on operational partnership groups (*groupements opérationnels de sécurité*, GPOs) launched in France in 2019. We will start by presenting these new local partnerships, as well as the methodology used in our research. On the basis of the empirical data collected, we will then answer the two questions raised above.

1. Operational partnership groups partnership groups: new local partnerships and day-to-day security

Operational partnership groups (GPOs) are part of the reform of the day-to-day security police (PSQ) launched in 2018 by the French government. The latter involved a number of ideas that clearly reflected the spirit of community policing. These included the police mixing with residents in sensitive areas, the development of local partnerships, conflict management and dialogue training courses, officer empowerment, and decentralized decision-making. These ideas are featured under the rubric of the "*Police de Sécurité du Quotidien*" (PSQ). Translated as "day-to-day security policing," this reform was announced in February 2018 (see de Maillard and Zagrodzki, 2020). The GPOs follow in the footsteps of the many partnership-based schemes that have sprung up since the early 1980s, from local crime prevention councils (*Conseils communaux de prévention de la délinquance*) to local security and crime prevention councils (*Conseils locaux de sécurité et de prévention de la délinquance* - CLSPD), via local

crime treatment groups (*Groupements locaux de traitement de la délinquance* - GLTD) and other priority security zones (de Maillard, 2005). As we shall see, this similarity is also a redundancy: GPOs take their place where there are already existing councils, which raises questions about the overlap of specific areas of action and organizational competition (CLSPDs are chaired by mayors and run by municipal departments, whereas GPOs are run by police officers). This is precisely one of the specific features that makes it worthwhile analyzing GPOs: whereas the leadership of previous mechanisms had been entrusted to municipalities (CLSPDs), or even public prosecutors (local crime treatment groups), GPOs are managed by police officers.

Focused on "proximity areas" (941 have been defined throughout the territory of the central public security directorate), GPOs are "the place for contact, exchange of information, collective definition of concrete solutions to problems revealed and collegial evaluation of their effectiveness with representatives of the population and partners"[2]. They are supposed to embody "a global approach which aims to identify precisely the security expectations expressed by the population and elected representatives, and to respond to them in an appropriate manner by means of concrete and tailored actions"[3]. Organizationally speaking, they are led by a sector referent, appointed from among the middle managers (inspectors) or the frontline supervisors. This police officer, in principle specially trained for this mission, has the task of collecting security requests, developing transversal and collegial responses and evaluating the actions implemented.

These GPOs follow in the footsteps of the many partnership mechanisms that have been in existence since the early 1980s, from communal delinquency prevention councils to local security and crime prevention councils (CLSPDs), local delinquency treatment groups (GLTDs) and other priority security zones. As we shall see, this similarity is also a redundancy: GPOs take their place where other mechanisms already exist, which raises questions of overlapping specific areas of action and organizational competition as CLSPDs are chaired by mayors and run by municipal services, whereas GPOs are run by police officers. This is one of the specificities that makes it interesting to analyze these GPOs: whereas the leadership of the previous mechanisms had been entrusted to municipalities (CLSPDs), or even to the public prosecutor's office (GLTDs), these GPOs are entrusted to the police, a shift that should be questioned: should we see this as a return to the state's control of local partnerships?

In terms of research strategy, we chose to focus on four medium-sized towns in the Yvelines region (in the far

---

1 Problem-solving policing refers to a type of policing that is based on the idea that police should not only respond to incidents but also address the more substantive issues underlying them.

2 Ministère de l'intérieur, *Police de sécurité du quotidien, la mise en œuvre des groupes de partenariat opérationnel (GPO)*, february 2021, p. 1.
3 *Ibid.*

South-Western suburbs of Paris) with different socio-demographic characteristics: two towns marked by the importance of higher social categories (Valentine and Saboville[4]), two more Working class towns (Louisville and Trouville) and different political majorities (two right-wing towns, two left-wing towns).

To conduct our fieldwork, we relied primarily on cross-sectional interviews with partners (a total of about 50). These interviews are particularly useful for identifying the different cognitive maps and professional norms (types of vocabulary, representations of action, cognitive schemes), as well as the types of power relationships between actors (more or less negotiated, more or less asymmetrical). Thanks to the support of the Yvelines departmental public security directorate (DDSP), we were able to meet with the heads of each of the towns' precincts (and/or their deputies), as well as with the officers who ran these groups. In each of the towns, we were also able to meet with the municipal officials involved in the GPO (prevention and security department, municipal police officers, and even, more rarely, elected officials), as well as with several of the partners (notably the 'social landlords'[5]). In two of the towns (Valentine and Saboville), we were also able to observe GPO meetings (five in total), which allowed us to supplement our interviews by observing the exchanges.

2. A thwarted strategy of responsibilization

As we said earlier, GPOs are somewhat original in the landscape of local partnerships: contrary to other ones (such as the local security and crime prevention councils), they are led by police managers, not by municipality officials. One may therefore wonder if GPOs are a tool to regain control of local partnerships, by redistributing the tasks and missions of the various partners, whether they are municipal police, social landlords or even associations. These new devices are led by the national police, with sometimes an aggressive discourse on the 'pedagogy of partnership':
"*The police wanted to show that they could take over the field, to show that we were present... and that we could manage things... To show that we are the leaders on the ground... I think that's the idea of daily security police, with the municipal police taking on more and more weight*" (Captain, GPO Chief, Saboville, January 2021).

Representatives of the national police worked to define the conditions for the participation of the different actors, in other words, the rules of exchange, what can be asked or not:
"*At the beginning, people came with their shopping list... We had to explain to them that the approach was not that*

4   We have chosen to anonymize the four towns.
5   A social landlord is an organization that owns one or more properties for residential use. It rents these properties to low-income households at moderate rents. In some cases, it is responsible for building social housing.

one... But to tell them that we were in a logic of coproduction..." (Divisional Commissioner, Chief of District, Saboville, December 2020)

To illustrate this question of responsibilization, the cases of the relations with municipalities and social landlords are particularly significant. For some municipalities, it has meant an increasing constraint by the national police, as GPOs may have led to an increased control of local partnerships by the police.

For some towns, the idea of having their priorities dictated by the national police force is not accepted:
"*The police say 'we're not here to give orders to mayors', but it's a bit like 'tell us what's going on in your area and we'll tell you what to do'. But, as far as I'm concerned, it's out of the question for people from the town other than me to take part. We're the representatives. Whoever pays is in charge here*" (Security directorate, Saboville, February 2020).

The question of the relation with social landlords is central to these arrangements. In all the GPOs we attended, they were present. And they regularly come back to the center of the stories we hear:
"*I take the case of social landlords, which is interesting... I had an exchange with a social landlord... we have reports of drugs trafficking in such and such a place... what do you do? First of all, it's a private place... Secondly, they are still responsible for the peace and quiet of their tenants... First of all, the parking lots, re-encoding, lighting, cameras... It's not up to us to do anything... It's a problem that we don't have with all the landlords...*" (Divisional commissioner, chief of police district, Saboville, December 2020)

What comes up regularly in the discourse of police officials, and in particular heads of department, is the idea that the police do not allow their agenda to be imposed by other actors, and in this case by the landlords: "*The approach is not the police calling for help... But the police convening meetings to respond to requests... Before we intervene, you would have to put in cameras, re-engage your digicodes, etc.*" (Commissioner, head of the street units, Trouville, December 2020).

Two approaches are then mobilized: on the one hand, a logic of empowerment (what are you doing for your own security?), and on the other hand, police support by sending out patrols, carrying out controls, and even investigative work. Several operations illustrate this logic of reciprocal commitment, following the example of an operation carried out in a block of flats on the banks of the Seine (on the towpath), where young people come to meet and do car races. Realizing that there are garages there hidden from view, they use them to conduct crimes (in particular to receive stolen goods). This is one of the issues that appears in one of the GPOs:
"*We say [to the landlord]: what are you going to do? Well, we don't know... The other partners make suggestions, say why not video, etc. And we come up with other ideas and I say that I will try to bring in human resources, with more frequent patrols from such and such a time to such and such a time... But according to the problems and emergencies. And the police will also put in their resources, they will say from*

such and such a time to such and such a time [...]. Then, when we get all this information, we put together a team and set up a plan of attack, with the head of the department, to monitor drug dealing points, we set up a team... I communicate the information to my head of the SU [Urban Security, i.e. Criminal investigation department] and to go and see is also important... We will ask the public prosecutor's office for requisitions, we will ask the police, we set up a Codaf [departmental anti-fraud operational committee]. All of this, thanks to the feedback" (Major, GPO chief, Louisville, January 2021).

On the landlord's side, they closed the block of flats to traffic, installed cameras, reinforced the lighting, and thus mobilized a whole series of financial means. The police and the landlord have made progressive commitments, with the commitment of one leading to the commitment of the other:

"Without GPO, we wouldn't have had these results. They've play their part and now they have the financial means. And afterwards, they realize that the police intervene, there have been several interventions..." (Major, GPO chief, Louisville, January 2021).

However, these partnerships contain tensions and contradictory logics, which refer to the territorial organization of the different organizations, to the timeframes of action or to the means made available by the donors, as a condition of give and take. The first question is that of the territory covered by the funders. Participating in meetings implies finding managers who can represent the organization while having knowledge of the field. This results in some actors being overloaded by the multiplication of meetings:

"The difficulty with the GPO is really this: the landlords are all interested, but they cover too many areas, and not just on the constituency... With an issue that can go to four meetings" (Major, GPO chief, Louisville, January 2021).

A second parameter is the temporality of action. Different organizations obey different temporalities: the landlord's redevelopment operations may be long-term (redevelopment of a space, for example), while some police operations may be decided immediately:

"In block of flats J, there is a lot of work, it takes time, to do everything at the same time, because you need a dog handler. So, it's going to take two years to do the work... We at the GPO, the delinquency problem, it's solved after 6 months..." (Major, GPO chief, Louisville, January 2021).

Conversely, while a landlord may have installed cameras, some of the investigative operations conducted by the police take a long time. These gaps can create impatience on both sides. In these two cases, what is also apparent is a question of trust between the different operators, with cooperation being put to the test:

"There are some who are impatient... While we must give the investigation time. For example, the manager didn't come anymore... Because he could think that it wasn't going well... He found out about it afterwards... With the need for the investigation, we can't tell them... We can't communicate before

the intervention, obviously. Relationships of trust, but at the same time you have to give time to do the investigation. So, we go to the area to give signs of involvement..." (Major, GPO leader, Louisville, January 2021).

Finally, the give-and-take logic assumes a reciprocity that is not always found. In fact, a plurality of practices appears among the landlords, depending on the resources available, but also on the projects they have for certain blocks of flats. In the interviews with the GPO managers, the very different relationships they have with the landlords were mentioned several times. The issue at stake is the action of the police if a landlord does nothing:

"On another sector, the landlord tells us «I don't have the means», the head of department will say «I can intervene, but...» The patrols are put in, but it's not a priority anymore. We go where there will be results. Because otherwise..." (Major, GPO leader, Louisville, January 2021).

This last remark reflects the logic of police involvement: it is likely to vary according to the commitment of its interlocutors, implying an à la carte distribution of resources according to the quality of partnerships and the involvement of landlords, as assessed by police managers. This differentiated police involvement raises the question of the change of police modes of action induced by the implementation of GPOs, which is the subject of the last section.

3. Local partnerships: a limited redefinition of the modes of police action

GPOs question the transformation of the police institution in the territories. This issue concerns both the relations established with local partners and the internal relations of the national police, both within the police stations and with central management. First, they result in a limited redistribution of responsibilities within the police services. Secondly, they favor moderate change in the way things are done.

One of the original features of the GPOs is that they entrust the mission of leadership to officers or non-commissioned officers, generally with responsibilities for the public highway. The aim is therefore to make middle managers (but not police officers) more responsible within the police station. This can be seen as a partial delegation of responsibilities, allowing for professional valorization and nuancing the usual vertical logics, but generating questions about the coordination of actions. As we mentioned earlier, although some department heads were somewhat reluctant to experiment, especially with GPOs considered to be sensitive they were ultimately inclined to emphasize the forms of valorization that these functions allowed. Like the unit heads in small specialized judicial groups studied by E. Lemaire (2020), these new functions allow department heads to distribute responsibilities and the associated valuations:

"It's powerful in managerial terms, because I have who feel responsible for their territories... But also because I'm not

the one telling them." (Divisional Commissioner, Chief of Precinct, Valentine, December 2020)

It is this dimension of involvement in the territories, with the need to report regularly, that is frequently emphasized by the heads of department, which has led to allowing autonomy to the GPO heads:

"There is also a form of collective commitment... With people saying 'I am committed to'... All bound by commitments, with accountability. Which makes people care about making it work." (Divisional Commissioner, Chief of Precinct, Valentine, December 2020)

"People chosen, cast and profiled to be in those positions. What I make sure of and what I see is that there is a real exchange of information... I think the more responsible and autonomous they are, the better. What I try to do is to make them as responsible as possible, someone who makes his thing come alive and who gives me good feedback... And on which I have good feedback... I have quite a lot of confidence, so I don't rap them on the knuckles... Decentralization on our scale and accountability that is very beneficial for everyone." (Commissioner, Chief of Precinct, Louisville, January 2021).

The assessment of the GPO heads is perhaps less unilaterally positive, insofar as they are also inclined to emphasize the constraints associated with these missions. However, there is the same idea of a territorial commitment, with all that it entails in terms of accountability to partners, as well as a fairly large degree of autonomy left by the heads of department:

"Me at the beginning, managing both [GPO and Territorial Proximity Security Group] was super difficult... in the end, it's done well... Me, I don't sign up at all to be an office guy, I'm really on the gound. And it's important to want to do it... and to be given a little autonomy to create it... Without that, it wouldn't have worked... If I had been told: «you do meetings like the others», it wouldn't have worked..." (Chief Brigadier, Chief GPO, Louisville, January 2021)

According to our interviews, it would appear that this internal valorization is more noticeable in the ranks, as inspectors (*officiers*) are more accustomed than frontline supervisors to autonomy and direct relationships to department heads. On the other hand, this intermediary position of the GPO chiefs does not always allow them to respond to requests made to them by partners. Here, we find the classic dissociation between functional and territorial logics. Solicited by territorial requests requiring reinforced patrols or the dispatch of personnel to specific locations and times, GPO leaders are not always able to activate services for functional reasons: they simply do not have control over these services, and must go through the order and employment office. A GPO leader who is also in charge of a "territorial security group" (GSPT, *Groupement de sécurité de proximité territorialisé*) can rely on his or her staff to work daytime hours, but must call on other units at night. A GPO chief, who has no manpower responsibility, will have to constantly call on other manpower, whose mobilization is far from automatic:

"I can't impose things on the night brigades. Even if we only spend the day, as I am only the chief, I pass it on to my officers for the night... Here, the doctrine has been to put in place in the troubled area... If a neighborhood is managed by the hierarchy, it's difficult when you're just a chief... But, on the contrary, it's more difficult for the other units... I have to go through the officers..." (Chief Brigadier, GPO Chief, Louisville, January 2021).

Two problems appear in the functioning of GPOs. The first is that of rank: in a world that remains extremely hierarchical between the three corps (*commissaires, officiers, gardiens de la paix et brigadiers* [frontline supervisor]), the fact that one is an inspector or a frontline supervisor when one has the responsibility of GPO chief is far from trivial. The ability to activate additional personnel for whom one is not directly responsible is made more difficult in a highly stratified bureaucratic universe. In this case, the intervention of department heads can be used, but this can only be on an ad hoc basis, otherwise it risks becoming commonplace. The second is that of functional responsibility: the tendency of each of the GPO chiefs is to call on their own staff: GSPT for some, police rescue and BAC (*Brigades anti-criminalité*, street units with an anti-crime mandate) for others (heads of street services). From this point of view, the GPOs, rather than promoting cross-cutting activities, are part of the silos that are part of the daily life of police stations. This leads us to take a longer look at the ways in which police action repertoires change.

To what extent has police work changed in the context of GPOs? The question of the types of action mobilized and the methods of evaluation is the focus of attention here.

We have seen above that some of the actions carried out within the framework of GPOs are based on a give-and-take logic: increased patrols on the part of the police services, on the one hand, and recourse to situational prevention on the part of landlords, on the other. And this is one of the major observations that emerges: for the most part, the main resource associated with GPOs is the dispatch of crews. It entails therefore greater work for programming patrols, even if it means multiplying the targets and limiting the operational autonomy of the agents:

"For the time being, with the GPO, it is true that the patrols are impacted, they are more solicited... But to be able to observe, they have to go there! They see that the orders increase [...] and when you have only one patrol for 13 municipalities. And sometimes when we don't have feedback, well, we understand... They tell us: 'but your whole list of errands, I couldn't do it'..." (Captain, GPO leader, Saboville, January 2021).

These targeted patrols, fueled by the emergency telephone, can lead to more regular practices of distributing fines to the audiences that are at the origin of the partners' solicitations, such as groupings in the halls of buildings. In one of the meetings, the head GPO, thanking the landlords, attests to his action in the following terms:

"Chief GPO: Well, so that's very good, we have the pass [to enter the block of flats], thank you very much. I tell you every time, when we move, we don't move for nothing. We

fine, that's really our philosophy, I'll tell you that: hit the wallet" (Observation, GPO Valentine East, October 2020).

Also recurrent in the work of the GPOs is the difficulty of problems that are only displaced or only temporarily resolved. This is the case for squatting issues and, above all, for dealing points. While some of them may have been resolved at one point, the problem is always likely to reappear, which does not fail to arouse a certain frustration:

"For the drug point, the landlord put cameras in, as a result of GPO meetings, and it moved somewhere else...They just crossed the street...There are some notable successes, but a never-ending problem...in terms of narcotics materials, at least..." (Chief Brigadier, GPO Chief, Louisville, January 2021).

Our observation is therefore similar to that of Thierry Delpeuch and Mathieu Zagrodzki (2021) for the Nantes GPO: fairly stable repertoires of traditional police action are mobilized (visits and controls, surveillance of individuals, collection of information, identity checks, visits to cellars or common areas). In other words, "the action taken is targeted, territorialized and planned, but is not strictly speaking a 'tailor-made' action" (2021, p. 26). The proposed solutions are based primarily on the street units, and exceptionally on the judicial services. The defining division between the street units and the investigative services, continues to be structuring. However, the cases analyzed above show that, in one of the towns, exchanges with the judicial services have increased, notably thanks to the problems raised in the framework of the GPOs:

"The SU [urban security, i.e., the criminal investigation department] on top, the Pinot[6] or the blues outside. But the GPO improves relations, makes the link between services. You are obliged to exchange in a GPO, so we are obliged to exchange... it creates a kind of emulation in a police station, it creates dialogue..." (Chief Brigadier, Chief GPO, Louisville, January 2021).

Conclusion

One of the starting hypotheses of this research was that GPOs were a tool to regain control of local partnerships, in connection with everyday security, by redistributing the tasks and missions of the various partners, whether they be municipal police, social landlords or associations. This logic corresponds in part to the definition that police officers have of themselves, namely that they are the real "security experts" and that they are not a partner like the others. As one commissioner said, "it is not the police who call for help, but they who call the meetings". However, the very dynamics of these meetings are more horizontal than it might seem at first sight. More than a form of accountability imposed by the national police, it is a logic of exchange and give and take that predominates. The po-

lice target their patrols, carry out controls, and can launch investigations, while landlords launch security operations through situational prevention. As with other partnership arrangements (Darley and Gauthier, 2018; Germain, 2013), GPOs are a tool for the police to reinforce a pragmatic legitimacy weakened by the decline in clear-up rates, criticisms of police action that is too ineffective, or of the institution's over-centralization. In other words, the national police are not able to impose their views: they may define the conditions of their involvement, but have to listen to local queries and to exchange resources with other actors (municipalities and social landlords in this paper). GPOs do not mean increased control by police actors, but a resumption of their power of initiative conditional on their ability to listen and lead partnerships.

Our analysis also questions the transformations of the police institution from two points of view: the redefinition of internal responsibilities and the type of response promoted. On the first point, GPOs are based on a desire to delegate responsibility for running them to actors who are not heads of department. This was not easily achieved, as some department heads were worried about losing information or being evaluated on systems they did not manage. However, our fieldwork reveals, if we listen to the GPO heads and the heads of department, shared satisfaction that this may have generated in terms of valuing agents in the police stations. However, this delegation has raised questions about rank (what is the legitimacy of the GPO chief, ,when the chief is a senior officer, to request work from other services headed by other officers?), but also about types of specialization (how to mobilize services for which one is not responsible?), which may have put some GPO chiefs in difficulty with regard to the commitments they had made locally. In terms of preferred responses, the dominant response was to borrow from the traditional repertoire (targeted patrols, checks, and more rarely investigations) of an intervention model. Public-solving methods remain mobilized in a shallow manner: rapid diagnoses, use of patrols, situational prevention. The public street units have been activated, at the risk of putting excessive strain on patrols, all of which reveals a not very imaginative approach to local crime situations.

References

Calaresu, M., & Selmini, R. (2017). Policing and urban control in Rome and Milan: a view from the southern edge of Europe. In E. Devroe, A. Edwards & P. Ponsaers (Eds.), *Policing European metropolises*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Crawford, A. (1999). *The local governance of crime.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Crawford, A. (2001). Joined up but fragmented: contradiction, ambiguity and ambivalence at the heart of New Labour's 'Third way'. In R. Matthews & J. Pitts (Eds.), *Crime, disorder and community safety*. Abington: Routledge.

Crawford, A. (2014). L'hétérogénéité du concept de sécurité: ses implications sur les politiques publiques, la justice et la durabilité des pratiques. *Cahiers de la sécurité et de la justice*, *27/28*, 125-134.

6   "Pinot" refers to the average police officer working on the streets.

Darley, M., & Gauthier, J. (2018). Le travail policier face à la réforme. Une ethnographie de la mise en œuvre des Zones de Sécurité Prioritaires . *Politix*, *124*(4), 59-84. doi: 10.3917/pox.124.0059.

de Maillard, J. (2005). The governance of safety in France. Is there anybody in charge?. *Theoretical Criminology*, *9*(3), 325-343. doi: 10.1177/1362480605054814.

de Maillard, J., & Mouhanna, C. (2017). Governing metropolises: the false pretenses of metropolisation. In E. Devroe, A. Edwards & P. Ponsaers (Eds.), *Policing European metropolises.* Abingdon: Routledge.

de Maillard, J., & Zagrodzki, M. (2020). Community policing initiatives in France. In J. de Maillard & W. Skogan (Eds.), *Policing in France* (pp. 294-309). London: Routledge.

de Maillard, J., & Zagrodzki, M. (2021). Styles of policing and police–public interactions: The question of stop-and-search by police units in France. *International Journal of Police Science & Management*, *23*(2), 157-167. doi: 10.1177/1461355720980768.

de Pauw, E., & Easton, M. (2017). Policing Antwerp and Brussels: two of a kind?, In E. Devroe, A. Edwards & P. Ponsaers (Eds.), *Policing European metropolises.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Delpeuch, T., & Zagrodzki, M. (2021). Police de sécurité du quotidien et approche de résolution de problème: quelques résultats de l'étude CoPPOSQ. *Cahiers de la sécurité et de la justice*, *53*, 20-35. HAL Id: halshs-03513054.

Devroe, E., Edwards, A., & Ponsaers, P. (Eds.). (2017). *Policing European metropolises.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Edwards, E., & Hughes, G. (2005). Comparing the governance of safety in Europe: a geo-historical approach. *Theoretical Criminology*, *9*(3), 345-363. doi: 10.1177/13624806050-54815.

Edwards, E., Hughes G., & Lord, N. (2013). Urban security in Europe: translating a concept in public criminology. *European Journal of Criminology*, *10*(3), 260-283. doi: 10.1177/1477370813483386.

Edwards, A., Devroe, E., & Ponsaers, P. (2017). The European world of metropolitan policing: interpreting patterns of governance, policy and politics. In E. Devroe, A. Edwards & P. Ponsaers (Eds.). *Policing European metropolises* (pp. 315 – 343). Abingdon: Routledge.

Edwards, A., Chambers, S., Fyfe, N., & Henry, A. (2017b). Metropolitan policing agendas in Britain: divergent tendencies in a fragmenting state? In E. Devroe, A. Edwards & P. Ponsaers (Eds.). *Policing European metropolises* (pp. 201-228). Abingdon: Routledge.

Ferret, J., & Mouhanna, C. (Eds.). (2005). *Peurs sur les villes.* Paris: PUF.

Garland, D. (2001). *The Culture of control.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Germain, S. (2013). Les cadres policiers face à la territorialisation de l'action publique: une institution à la conquête du local. *Sciences de la société*, *90*, 42-57. doi: 10.4000/sds.510.

Hughes, G. (2007). *The politics of crime and community.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kübler, D., & de Maillard, J. (2022). Why European mayors emphasise urban security. Evidence from a survey in 28 European countries. *European Journal of Criminology*, *19*(4), 712-729. doi: 10.1177/1477370820921486.

Lemaire, E. (2020). Specialization in criminal investigation. In J. de Maillard & W. Skogan (Eds.), *Policing in France* (pp. 100-115). London: Routledge.

Prins, R., & Devroe, E. (2017). Local strategies for global challenges: Comparing policing agendas in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. In E. Devroe, A. Edwards & P. Ponsaers (Eds.), *Policing European metropolises* (pp. 268-299). Abingdon: Routledge.

Quassoli, F., Colombo, M., & Molteni, A. (2018). *Governing through security ? Institutional discourse, practices and policies in the Metropolitan city of Milan.* Sciences Po LIEPP Working Paper 83.

Recasens i Brunet A. (2012). Social crime prevention policies in Spain from 2000-2010. In P. Hebberecht & E. Baillergeau (Eds.), *Social crime prevention in late Modern Europe* (pp. 321-348). Brussels: Brussels University Press.

Roché, S. (2016). *De la police en démocratie.* Paris: Grasset.

Selmini, R. (2005). Towards città sicure? Political action and institutional conflict in contemporary preventive and safety policies in Italy. *Theoretical Criminology*, *9*(3), 307-323. doi: 10.1177/1362480605054813.

Sherman, L. (2013). The rise of evidence-based policing: targeting, testing, and tracking. *Crime and Justice*, 42, 377-451.

Simon, J. (2009). *Governing through crime.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stone, C. (2005). Looking back to look forward: Reflections on urban regime analysis. *Urban Affairs Review*, *40*(3), 309-341. doi: 10.1177/1078087404270646.

Van Swaaningen, R. (2005). Public safety and the management of fear. *Theoretical Criminology*, *9*(3), 289-305. doi: 10.1177/1362480605054812.