

CITIZENSHIP AND SECURITY: CONTRIBUTIONS TO A NATIONAL PROXIMITY SECURITY STRATEGY¹

CIDADANIA E SEGURANÇA: CONTRIBUTOS PARA UMA ESTRATÉGIA NACIONAL DE SEGURANÇA DE PROXIMIDADE

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Abstract

Today, it would not be possible to draw up public policies that have social impact on communities without basing them on a process to generate action-oriented knowledge grounded on theory, to ensure that all policy decisions are sustained and appropriate to local realities. The goal of this study is to analyse the territorial forces of the GNR assigned to proximity policing. The study used an inductive reasoning methodology, a qualitative research strategy and a case study design. Based on a survey assessing the perceptions of Territorial Commanders and on interviews with experts, proximity policing in Portugal still consists, essentially, of the ad hoc implementation of a set of programmes rather than of a national organizational strategy, and that citizen involvement in the coproduction of security at the local level is not expected to increase in the short term. The study revealed that a national strategy of proximity security is urgently needed and identified a set of proposals to address the lack of a shared concept of proximity security, which must be driven and sustained by policy to make it effective and successful in local communities.

Keywords: Citizenship; Proximity Security; Proximity Policing; Civic Participation.

Resumo

Atualmente já não é possível conceber políticas públicas, para terem efeitos sociais nas comunidades, sem ter por base um processo de produção de conhecimento científico fundamentado teoricamente e orientado para a ação, para que posteriormente a decisão política seja sustentada e mais adequada à realidade local. O objeto de estudo desta investigação centrou-se no dispositivo territorial da GNR afeto ao policiamento de proximidade e o método

How to cite this article: Silva, N. M. P. (2023). Citizenship and Security: Proposals for a National Community Security Strategy. *Revista de Ciências Militares*, May, XI (1), 291-315. Retrieved from <https://www.ium.pt/publist/1>

¹ Article adapted from the individual research work carried out in the 2021 / 2022 Flag Officer's Course at the Military University Institute.

de investigação assentou no raciocínio indutivo, numa estratégia de investigação qualitativa e num estudo de caso. Foi possível verificar, através do levantamento das percepções dos Comandantes Territoriais e das entrevistas aos especialistas, que a proximidade em Portugal continua, no essencial, a consistir na implementação ad hoc de um conjunto de programas em detrimento de uma estratégia organizacional nacional e que não se antecipa a curto prazo, o reforço da participação cidadã na coprodução da segurança a nível local. Nesta investigação, demonstrou-se a necessidade urgente de concretização de uma estratégia nacional de segurança de proximidade, tendo sido possível identificar um conjunto de contributos que assentam na inexistência de uma ideia partilhada sobre segurança de proximidade que carece de ser estabelecida e sustentada politicamente, para que tenha eficácia e êxito junto das comunidades locais.

Palavras-chave: *Cidadania; Segurança de Proximidade; Policiamento Proximidade; Participação cívica.*

1. Introduction

In July 2020, the XXII Constitutional Government presented the Strategy for the Innovation and Modernization of the State and Public Administration (SIMSPA) 2020-2023, as foreseen in its programme (2019-2023) (Council of Ministers Resolution No. 55/20 of 2 July). The strategy was structured around four axes of change: (i) investment in people; (ii) management development; (iii) exploitation of technology; (iv) strengthening proximity of the State to citizens by implementing deconcentration, decentralisation and participation processes.

This cross-cutting strategy addressed the need to modernise the State and improve public services by strengthening proximity and citizen trust in public institutions (MEAP, 2020) and influenced the definition of public policies and the political action of the Ministry of Internal Administration (MAI).

The importance of proximity security (PS) is confirmed by the fact that, over the last six years, the concept was mentioned in several State policies, including in the programmes of the last three Constitutional Governments (CG) and in the Major Options of the Plan (MOP) for 2019 and 2020. To some degree, this justifies the relevance of citizen participation in the SIMSPA 2020-2023, in which the Government takes on the challenge of coordinating the different levels of territorial participation, from central administration to local administration (MEAP, 2020).

Therefore, the topic of this study is analysed bearing in mind the current climate of modernisation and innovation in Public Administration (PA) and the policies to increase citizen participation and promote proximity between the government and communities.

The study analyses the territorial forces of the GNR assigned to proximity policing (PP) at local level, in their area of responsibility. In conceptual terms, the study is delimited in the following domains: time, space and content (Santos & Lima, 2019). The research horizon covers the legislatures of the XXI and XXII CG, that is, the period from 2015 to 2021, during which there was continuity in structural and sectorial policies and, consequently, in cross-

cutting sectorial strategies. The study focuses on the GNR's operations in Portugal because the territorial forces of this SF cover the entire national territory, which differentiates it from other SF. In terms of content, the study analyses the twenty Territorial Units of the GNR assigned to PP in their respective areas of responsibility.

A general objective (GO) – To propose measures to develop a national PS strategy – was defined to guide the study. Three specific objectives (SO) were also defined: To analyse the perceptions of Territorial Commanders (TCom) about PS in their area of responsibility (SO1); To analyse the perceptions of TCom about the special proximity policing programmes (SPPP) in their area of responsibility (SO2); To analyse the perceptions of TCom about community civic participation in security in their area of responsibility (SO3).

This study is especially relevant for the MAI and the GNR because it answers the following research question (RQ), which summarises the issue under study: “What measures can be adopted to implement a national PS strategy?” Three subsidiary questions (SQ) were also defined, each corresponding to a SO: SQ1 – What are the perceptions of TCom about PS in Portugal in their area of responsibility? SQ2 – What are the perceptions of TCom about the SPPP in their area of responsibility? SQ3 – What are the perceptions of TCom about community civic participation in security in their area of responsibility?

2. Theoretical and conceptual framework

This chapter does not contain a full review of the literature. Instead, it highlights the most relevant national and international studies on the topic, selected from a wide body of work. The following reflection on PS in Portugal is also based on the analysis of the political commitments in the area of SP made by the XXI GC 2015-2019 and XXII GC 2019-2023.

This study addresses the research area “Internal security and criminal phenomena” and the sub-areas “Citizenship, internal security and criminal phenomena” and “Crime Prevention and Criminal Investigation” (IUM, 2019; Andrade et al., 2017).

2.1. State of the art

The consolidation of polysemic concepts such as citizenship, institutional trust and proximity security has evolved over the years. However, in contemporary society, there has been a constant need for a multidisciplinary approach to understand the relationships, assumptions and perceptions about those concepts. Using different research paradigms, robust explanatory models and methodologies based on strong theoretical constructs, studies in this field have produced scientific knowledge grounded on conceptual approaches that provide a full understanding of a research object.

A study conducted by Araújo in 2018 for her PhD Thesis in Political Science provided a relevant contribution to knowledge in this scientific field of research. The study was carried out at the NOVA University of Lisbon and analysed new security paradigms, with special focus on PS models and Local Security Contracts (LSC). Having reviewed the reforms of the internal security system in Portugal from 1974 to the present day, the author found that,

during the security reform, PS policies which aimed to integrate a systemic dimension of crime prevention policies in the internal security system were put in the backburner. This led to the uneven application of PS programmes and initiatives (Araújo, 2018a, p.45).

On the other hand, Araújo (2018a) argues that this rather negative assessment of the implementation of PS policies in recent years may be due to the lack of a systematised definition in the Internal Security Law (LSI), as well as to the fact that the programmes and initiatives are developed by the MAI and the SF autonomously and without any coordination. Another factor is the lack of common goals between the two SF, which would provide a way to assess, in an integrated way, the efficiency and effectiveness of the outcomes of the SPPP, some of which have barely been implemented. In the author's opinion, establishing a coherent doctrine and a common operational model is critical to enhance citizen involvement in the coproduction of PS at local level, which is virtually non-existent (Marcelino, 2018). Furthermore, the author argues that LSC should have been included in the programmes of SF to avoid the misconception that the issue is political, rather than operational (Araújo, 2018a, 2018b).

In light of this contextualisation, the next subchapter will clarify the key concepts addressed in the study and provide useful knowledge and data on the research topic.

2.2. Conceptual framework and key concepts

Before approaching the issue in a scientific manner and examining its current and future trends, it was decided that the study would be framed within the research area of Military Sciences, Internal Security and Criminal Phenomena, but that it would be based on consolidated knowledge in the scientific areas of Public Administration, Public Policies and Sociology of Organizations and the Police.

The study analyses two key concepts: the concept of citizenship, focusing especially on community participation in security, and especially on proximity security; and the concept of PP. On the other hand, given that this is an interdisciplinary and exploratory study, and to ensure methodological coherence, the concepts were operationalised in an integrated and interconnected way.

As the aim is not to conduct an in-depth review of the topic, the study begins by summarising one of the work's central ideas, the active participation of citizens in community life, and especially in the coproduction of PS at local level, which presents a new challenge to the institutions and actors involved in the process (Silva, 2017). This is especially relevant because citizens are both the object and the driver of the current State and PA reforms. Therefore, the issue of institutional trust should not and cannot be ignored. The goal is to impress on the community that PS is not the responsibility of the police alone, but of every citizen, because citizenship is not only the basis for security, it is increasingly a prerequisite of freedom and democracy (Silva, 2010, 2015, 2017).

Thus, if the concept of citizenship dates back to the Greek *polis*, it is clearly linked to participation in a community. Throughout history, different types of political communities gave rise to different types of citizenship. In modern democratic Nation States, citizenship

means that every citizen is able to participate in the exercise of political power through the electoral process. Citizenship can be defined as a set of rights and the institutions through which a person can exercise their rights (Silva, 2017, p.78).

According to Marshall and Bottomore (1992), this set of rights was established in three distinct phases. The first phase was the establishment of civil citizenship and civil rights (18th century); the second phase was the emergence of the concepts of political citizenship and political rights (19th century); and the third phase was the introduction of social citizenship and socioeconomic rights (20th century). However, despite the criticism aimed at Marshall's work – for example, Turner (1994, pp.153-168) criticised the lack of economic and cultural citizenship in his theories –, the contributions of this English sociologist to the field of political science, and even to the development of modern citizenship, are still invaluable today.

For Turner (1994, pp.153-168), cultural citizenship consists of a set of social practices that allow a citizen to participate fully in the national culture. Therefore, institutions such as universities are a crucial aspect of cultural citizenship because they play an important role in socialising citizens into a national system of values.

On the other hand, Barbalet (1989) argues that the most obvious condition for the development of modern citizenship has a material basis, that is, it requires economic prosperity, which gives us a tool to analyse what constitutes citizenship in Portugal today (Silva, 2017).

The legal framework that regulates Portuguese citizenship and its social practices show that there is distrust in some public institutions, which is usually based on the feeling that challenging the system is useless, and that ordinary citizens are unable to enforce their rights, which in turn creates a citizenship gap (Silva, 2017, p.80). According to data collected by the European Social Survey from 2002 to 2012 and, more recently, in late 2019, this trend has not changed, and that, of the 30 countries surveyed, Portugal has one of the highest rates of distrust in political institutions.

This slight increase in institutional trust in Portugal implies that the action of public institutions is based on a new model of motivation for citizenship. The main role of the State is to ensure the safety of people and property, and this will only be possible if the State can show citizens that everyone should participate in security (Silva, 2015). The concept of security can be defined as “the guarantee of survival, independence, conservation, integrity and solidarity of a political unit, but also as a prerequisite for citizens to live in peace, democracy and freedom, in a World that belongs to everyone and is enjoyed by everyone” (Borges, 2013a, p.55).

Therefore, it will be necessary to

[...] rediscover the State, which can be more or less liberal, or more or less socially oriented, but must definitely be closer to its citizens. The State must be reimagined to provide more effectively solutions to the problems of its citizens, both current and future. (Borges, 2018, p.11)

The increasing densification of the concept of security in contemporary societies means that new actors are being called to intervene in national security. Therefore, the concept of

security should be updated to accompany the evolution from the traditional levels of analysis proposed by realists – national, regional, international and cooperative security – to the levels of analysis defended by liberals, which include common, global and human security (Ribeiro, 2009).

This idea of security extends to non-traditional areas, and, in addition to the defence dimension, it includes domains such as politics, the economy, diplomacy, transportation and communications, education and culture, healthcare, the environment, science and technology. Therefore, there is a need for cooperation and solidarity across all areas to address global risks and threats (Lourenço, et al. 2015, 2018; Silva, 2015).

However, in the case of domestic threats, the military capabilities of the Armed Forces (AAFF) can be deployed in internal security operations, on an “exceptional basis and in a complementary way” (Borges, 2017). The linkages and coordination mechanisms between the AAFF and the SF are increasingly centralised and integrated, as are the decision-making processes. Furthermore, there is an urgent need to improve crisis management processes (Borges, 2013b, 2015, 2017, 2018).

In conceptual terms, for the sake of methodological simplicity, this study uses the concept of national security used by the National Defence Institute (IDN):

[...] the condition in which a Nation can survive in a permanent state of peace and freedom while guaranteeing its sovereignty, independence, and cohesion; the integrity of its territory; the collective protection of its people, goods, and spiritual values; the normal functioning of the State; the political freedom of action of its sovereign bodies; and the full functioning of democratic institutions.” (Cardoso, 1981, p.23)

It is clear from this definition that “the interests to be protected were selected in a careful and cautious way” (Ribeiro, 2009, p.51). However, while the concept of national security can be defined as the guarantee of independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and state cohesion, it can also be much broader (Couto, 1988).

Having reviewed the published literature in these research areas, it becomes apparent that the coproduction of security by public and private actors will require a cross-cutting policy complemented by strong social mobilisation (Silva, 2015).

On the other hand, increasing proximity to citizens and taking decisive steps towards active citizenship (considered a source of legitimacy and a prerequisite for governability in a Democratic Constitutional State) will require: encouraging citizens to participate in security activities and investing on what is known today as distributed responsibility; adopting a model based on the sharing of responsibilities (Buzan & Ole Waeber, 1997) to ensure the common good, rather than continuing to concentrate responsibilities; promoting and implementing the principle of subsidiarity.

Thus, PS policies aim to address the densification “of the concept of security, the new threats and risks, the impetus of civil society and the need for political actors, both public and private, to participate in the design and implementation of public policies, which suggests an ideological shift” (Araújo, 2018a, pp.51-52). In fact, the idea behind PP and the LSC that the

MAI has tried to implement over the last few years is based on partnership approaches and on the involvement of the community in a concept of security coproduction in which civil society and government agencies work together to identify security problems and implement measures (Silva, 2015).

According to Durão (2008) and Oliveira (2006), the concept of proximity policing was introduced in Portugal in the 1990s, that is, significantly later than in other countries, both in Europe and in other continents. In the US and the UK, this type of policing was introduced in the 1960s, and some of the most influential theories in this field were proposed by Skogan and Harnett (1997, 2005), Skogan (2006), Bayley (1994), and Skolnick and Bayley (2002).

The set of changes that led the Portuguese SF to adopt a new type of local policing became known as PP (Durão, 2012, p.102). For Lisboa and Teixeira (2008, 2015), PP provides an alternative to the traditional model of reactive policing. The latter focuses on responding to police incidents and random patrolling, and has been largely ineffective in solving or helping to solve the problems of local communities.

According to Araújo (2018a, p.47), the concepts of PS, community safety, community policing, or PP refer to policing models that are less repressive than the traditional model, which is based on the assumption that crime can be reduced through sanctions and punishment. For this author, PS emerges in the 1970s, when States (the entities that hold the monopoly on the legitimate use of force), influenced by the sociological studies conducted at the time, understood the importance of prevention in the fight against crime. These new security models that focus on the relationship between the police and citizens are known by different names. Anglo-Saxon countries use the term Community Policing (CP), whereas in continental European countries such as Portugal, which are under Francophone influence, the concept became known as Proximity Policing.

What these designations have in common is that both represent new organizational cultures in SF and involve policing strategies that aim to bring the police closer to the community by strengthening the preventive dimension of crime, decentralising security policies and creating partnerships with civil society, in a joint effort between the police and the community to find solutions to solve problems (Elias, 2018).

The difference between these two approaches is that PP is based on a top-down approach to security, in which there is more intervention and interference from the central level. It is funded exclusively by the State and mainly focuses on investigating crimes, and programmes and projects are usually developed in ministerial offices. On the other hand, CP is based on a bottom-up logic and focuses on the coproduction of PS, with citizens sharing responsibility for security. It is less centralised, relying on partnerships with local stakeholders, and, in some cases, citizens themselves can fund these projects (Elias, 2018).

3. Methodology and Method

The study uses inductive reasoning (Santos & Lima, 2019, p.18) and a qualitative research strategy (Bryman, 2012, p.27). As the aim was to collect detailed information on the territorial

forces of the GNR assigned to PP at local level, in its area of responsibility, a case study research design, or plan, was chosen to conduct this study.

Regarding the sampling process, the respondents were selected based on the following criteria: (i) having theoretical and practical knowledge on the research topic acquired during their career in the GNR; (ii) having served on active duty in the GNR for more than 20 years; (iii) holding a command position in one of the twenty Territorial Units of the GNR assigned to proximity policing. By applying these criteria, a non-probability purposive sample was obtained, using a process of sampling through multiple cases known as “sample by homogenization”. The sample consisted of twenty GNR officers with the rank of Colonel, who hold command positions in the twenty Territorial Units of the GNR (i.e. Territorial Commands²) assigned to proximity policing in the eighteen districts of mainland Portugal and in the Autonomous Regions of Madeira and Azores, in their respective areas of action.

The collected data was complemented by interviews to seven experts, which were not confirmatory, and which focused on some aspects of the concept that required conceptual densification and clarification. The interviewees were grouped into three panels, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – List of interviewed experts

Panel		Entity	Position	
1	Heads of the proximity policing units of the GNR and the PSP	National Republican Guard Operational Command	1	Head of the Crime Prevention and Community Policing Department
		Public Security Police National Directorate	2	Head of the Public Prevention and Proximity Division of the PSP
2	Scientific researchers in the field of national security	Higher Institute of Police Sciences and Internal Security	3	Director of the Police Sciences Scientific Department <i>(PhD in Sociology; Scientific Researcher)</i>
		Lisbon Municipal Police	4	Senior Officer in the Prevention, Security and International Relations Unit <i>(PhD in Human Ecology; Master in Sociology; Scientific Researcher)</i>
		National Laboratory for Civil Engineering (LNEC)	5	Assistant Researcher at the Social Ecology Division of the LNEC Buildings Department. <i>(Assistant Professor of Sociology; Scientific Researcher)</i>

² Azores; Aveiro; Beja; Braga; Bragança; C. Branco; Coimbra; Évora; Faro; Guarda; Porto; Leiria; Lisbon; Madeira; Portalegre; Santarém; Setúbal; V. Castelo; Vila Real; Viseu.

[Cont.]

3	Experts who intervened in the formulation of National Security Policies.	Ministry of Internal Administration	6	Deputy Secretary of State and Internal Administration (XXII Constitutional Government – 26OCT19 to 30MAR22)
			7	Deputy Secretary of State and Internal Administration (XVIII Constitutional Government – 26Oct09 to 21JUN11)

With regard to the data collection instruments, the study used several techniques available for this type of exploratory qualitative research: a literature review of published studies in this research area and of the relevant legislation and technical reports, as well as expert interviews. The data collection and processing technique that was considered the most useful to understand the phenomenon in depth was the interview. More specifically, semi structured interviews were used to gather information from TCom and unstructured interviews were used to assess the opinions of the panel of experts, as this method allows for more flexibility during the interview (Quivy & Campenhoudt, 1992, pp.193-194). Two interview scripts were prepared, both of which were structured according to interrelated topics, as this would make it easier to analyse the issue in its different dimensions and levels.

This study mainly relied on “the inductive nature of empirical research”, as it used qualitative research techniques, such as a literature review and content analysis, deemed the most suitable to perform a systematic analysis of the interview transcripts (Bardin, 1977; Coutinho, 2014, pp.215-228).

The content analysis was performed on the transcripts of the interviews to twenty GNR TCom and seven experts.

The qualitative data analysis or content analysis included three traditional dimensions: theorisation, which corresponds to categorisation, selection, which concerns codification, and, finally, analysis which used for data reduction. Some of the coding categories were drawn from the relevant theoretical framework, while others were not based on a predefined theoretical framework. The interviews to the panel of experts were not used to confirm or validate the findings, but as a means to obtain different perspectives and representations and new proposals to address the phenomenon.

4. Data analysis and discussion of findings

This chapter will analyse the collected data and answer the research questions.

4.1. Increasing the State’s proximity to citizens: proximity security policies

The MAI of the XVII (2005-2009) and XVIII (2009-2011) CG developed, during these two legislatures, an integrated community security programme in which PP mainly focused on the protection of especially vulnerable victims. Based on this programme, in 2009 the General Directorate of Internal Administration (DGAI), translated and adapted to the Portuguese

reality the “Manual of local security diagnoses – A compilation of international standards and practices”. This document aimed to allow the MAI, the SFS and local authorities, as well as other public and private entities that actively participate in the production of security, the possibility to adapt their initiatives to local realities. After this local security diagnosis was carried out, an action plan would be prepared to address criminal phenomena and the challenges in the field of community security, which would include a timeline to implement the measures (Pereira, 2009, p.xvii).

However, more than a decade after the programme was implemented, and despite the fact that, in 2009, the now extinct DGAI of the MAI recommended the use of this Manual by all SF, this practice has not been adhered to as expected.

As mentioned above, the XXII CG (2019-2022) introduced the SIMSPA 2020– 2023. In the opinion of A. Luís (email interview, 21 March 2022), neither the axes of this strategy nor their operationalisation are suited to the services of the MAI, even if they are aligned with the Ministry’s strategy to implement the SPPP. It is the responsibility of “[...] the MAI to adapt this strategy to its reality and promote technological evolution by using digital channels to foster proximity and innovation and by creating platforms that allow it to interact with citizens”. (A. Luís, op. cit.)

Therefore, according to the strategic objectives and measures set out in this cross cutting strategy, public institutions must contribute proactively to the formulation of more inclusive public policies adapted to local and regional realities. In light of these policy guidelines, the MAI and the SF should continue to increase their organizational capacity, develop proximity relations and strengthen citizens’ trust.

The answer to SQ1 – What are the perceptions of TCom about PS in their area of responsibility? – is that, despite the fact that Local Safety Diagnostics and LSC are considered important, these instruments have not been used as frequently as the MAI recommended and have not had the expected impact. Furthermore, the analysis of the perceptions of TCom revealed that there is considerable room for improvement in some territorial areas, and that this can be achieved by increasing and updating cooperation and collaboration partnerships with local actors, including with other SF, according to the needs and characteristics of each area and community.

TCom also stressed that PS can only be implemented if the needs correspond to the available resources. In this regard, it is crucial to coordinate and involve all local actors in the search for solutions adapted to the local realities. Furthermore, the study revealed that the GNR does not carry out reviews of the SPPP, that the LSC are not reviewed by external entities, and that it does not conduct a regular and systematic evaluation / assessment of the qualitative and quantitative satisfaction and quality of the services provided by the police, neither internally nor externally. Even though global, ad hoc and empirical internal reviews are carried out, they are not systematic.

The lack of a doctrinal, operational and instrumental model of PS common to all SF, and the lack of coordination in PS initiatives, suggests that all actions are carried out autonomously by

each SF, according to their technical and operational capabilities. However, with the exception of the TCom for the Azores and Madeira, where the SPPP have no direct applicability, all other TCom agree on the need for a national strategy of PS.

4.2. Police intervention strategies: special proximity policing programmes

The GNR's Regulations (NEP) – 3.58 (2017, p.1) define SPPP as “police intervention strategies that aim to solve concrete insecurity problems at local or national level”.

Therefore, the answer to SQ2 – “What are the perceptions of TCom about the SPPP in their area of responsibility?” – it that, in general, perceptions are highly positive and that there has been a clear effort by TCom to provide the Community Policing Sections (CPS) with the required personnel, according to the local realities, with the specialised training and the personal and professional skills required to work in this technical area. In the opinion of most TCom, some SPPP should have already been terminated, but most are being reoriented to address local security problems, with special focus on at risk groups, in order to address the information gathered from local actors and citizens by the military personnel assigned to the CPS. However, when the territorial responsibility at district level is shared with the PSP, TCom have not felt the need to coordinate technical and operational activities with the PSP before implementing a SPPP at local level. Furthermore, TCom agree that formal procedures should be created to monitor and assess the SPPP, both internally and externally, and especially that there is a need to update GNR Operations Manual issued in 1997, and that a handbook on PS should be elaborated.

4.3. Community civic participation in security at the local level

Based on the studies conducted by North-American authors Skogan and Hartnett (1997; 2005) and Bayley (1994; 2005) and the studies produced in Portugal by Durão (2008; 2012) and Lisboa and Teixeira (2015), among others, there are four empirical and conceptual principles linked to the implementation of CP: (i) organizational decentralisation; (ii) goal oriented policing; (iii) policing based on local concerns; (iv) the coproduction of local policing and security (Durão, 2012, pp.105-106).

Thus, it can be said that the concept of integrated and community security was introduced in Portugal in 2008 (Pereira, 2009, p.xvii). The scarcity of theoretical work in this field means that the perceptions of TCom about the application of these principles, all of which require high levels of community civic participation in security at the local level, are especially relevant.

Therefore, the answer to SQ3 – “What are the perceptions of Territorial Commanders about community civic participation in security in their area of responsibility?” – is that, in the opinion of TCom, despite the SPPP and CLS in force and the receptiveness of citizens in some regions of the country, citizen participation in security at the local level is still in its early stages compared to other countries in Europe, which is in line with the national trend of low participation of civil society. While there has been an increase in community civic participation in this security in recent years, in most cases, the programmes continue to be conducted and

organized in a top-down way, rather than being root-based (Goinhas & Branco, 2013), which means that in most cases, participation consists of providing information to the public. The GNR informs the community about the issues addressed by the SPPP, but citizens are not given the opportunity to voice their opinion about the programmes. According to the TCom, it is not expected that high levels of community involvement can be achieved in the short term, as in some Anglo-Saxon countries (Goinhas & Branco, 2013), where local communities participate in all stages of the process of codecision and coproduction of local security, and are allowed to participate in decision making and influence all stages of the process, including implementation and monitoring.

4.4. Proposals for a National Proximity Security Strategy

Based on the data and the arguments provided above, the differences of opinion between TCom and the panel of experts – scholars, members of the SFS and politicians –, as well as between the interviewed experts, were not considered especially relevant because they were interpreted and understood as different perceptions, which are usually based on different understandings of the same concepts, and in most cases these differences can be explained by possible conflicts of interest, or personal and institutional values.

Therefore, in light of the strategic objectives and measures set out in the SIMSPA 2020-2023, it is clear that all public institutions must contribute to the formulation of more inclusive public policies, adapted to local and regional realities, as recommended in axis 4 – strengthening proximity. To comply with these cross cutting policy guidelines, all Ministries must actively work to achieve this objective. The MAI, and especially the SFS, depending on the needs and available resources, should continue to increase their organizational capacity, develop proximity relations, build trust and, essentially, involve citizens in the search for solutions to community problems.

To examine the implementation process in a scientific manner (the implications and impact of proximity policies and policing), scientific approaches should continue to be developed (DGAI, 2009, p.xv). Translating knowledge into community intervention in PS will require being up to date with the latest theories in the field of social sciences, and especially with the systematised and consolidated findings, both empirical and theoretical, of the disciplines that have contributed the most to this social and cultural domain. The scientific work produced in the field of Police Sciences and Internal Security, as well as in the fifth core area of military sciences – Internal Security and Criminal Phenomena –, cannot fully explain the social reality, the effects and the impact of this social phenomenon without this interdisciplinary approach.

For P.F. Machado (email and videoconference interview, 4 April 2022), “[...] one of the shortcomings of what we call police sciences is the difficulty in producing accumulated, credible knowledge through a genuine knowledge production system”. For the author, the concept of proximity police action in Portugal suffers from a lack of densification that must be addressed urgently, even if “[...] some work already exists, which nevertheless cannot be considered a knowledge base that can be used as a doctrinal, operational and instrumental model for PS” (P. Machado, op. cit.). Most interviewed experts stated that some basic

principles of COP have been put into practice, but only in an ad hoc, empirical manner, and without systematic monitoring and assessment. However, Portuguese society has changed significantly since the implementation of SPPP in the 1990s, but the concept of proximity in the operational environment, and especially in the relations between police and citizens, has not accompanied this change.

Therefore, the conceptualisations and methodological experiences provided by police sociology, organizational anthropology (especially in community intervention and development processes) and even community psychology, which is based on community based preventive science, should continue to be used, in order to expand the knowledge base and improve the implementation of preventive intervention projects by establishing community partnerships between the relevant social actors – the State; the police; institutions; local organizations and associations and groups of organized citizens.

To provide a basis for the proposal presented in this work, the Internal Security Law³ (LSI) was analysed to identify the areas where it intersects with PS policies.

Article 8(1) and (2) of the updated version of the LSI states, among other aspects, that under the terms of the Constitution, the Government is responsible for drafting internal security policies, and the Council of Ministers is responsible for defining the general lines of the internal security policy and the guidelines to put it into practice, as well as for planning and securing the means required to implement it.

Article 14 establishes that the Secretary General of the Internal Security System (SGSSI) answers to the Prime Minister or, by delegation of powers, to the MAI, as the acting Secretary of State. Under Article 17(2)(d), among other responsibilities, the SGSSI is tasked with processing, consolidating, analysing and publishing crime statistics in an integrated way, conducting surveys on victimisation and insecurity and drawing up the Annual Internal Security Report (RASI).

As mentioned above, the RASI identifies and describes the General Prevention and Policing Programmes and the Specific Prevention and Policing Programmes and initiatives carried out by the SFS. In the last chapters, it provides a general assessment of the strategic guidelines for internal security in the year under analysis and presents the next year's guidelines. In this case, the guidelines to improve the PS model (RASI, 2020, pp.248-270) are particularly relevant for this study.

Article 21 of the LSI states that the Security Coordinating Office (SCO) is the specialised advisory and consultancy body responsible for the technical and operational coordination of the activities of SFS, and that it answers directly to the Prime Minister or, by delegation of powers, to the MAI. The Office is chaired by the SGSSI and its members are the Secretary General of the Intelligence System of the Portuguese Republic, the General Commanders of the GNR and the Maritime Police, the National Directors of the PSP and the Judiciary Police, the Directors of the Foreigners and Border Services, of the Defence Strategic Information

³ See Law No. 53/2008 of 29 August (updated version).

Service and of the Internal Intelligence Service, and the Director General of Reintegration and Prison Services. This Office holds regular quarterly meetings, and extraordinary meetings when convened by the President, who may do so at his or her behalf or at the request of any of the members. The Office has a permanent secretariat staffed by liaison officers, which operates under the SGSSI.

Article 22(1) states that the SCO is responsible for assisting the SGSSI, on a regular and permanent basis, in its coordination, direction and operational command and control tasks, and to analyse and propose public policies on internal security; SFS cooperation schemes; improvements to the SFS device and national crime prevention strategies and action plans. However, the literature review did not identify any studies or technical proposals related to PS elaborated by this Office.

Araújo (op. cit.) argues that “[...] more than having a doctrine on PS, it would be important to clarify the concept in the LSI, to make it consistent with public policies. [...] from a conceptual perspective, PS is the other side of global security”. In the opinion of this expert, it is urgent that the next review of the LSI includes a PS policy, as the lack of a definition of PS, which already exists for the concepts of security and safety, makes it even more difficult to identify SPPP that are particularly suited to a given region of the country.

For P. F. Machado (op. cit.), the lack of a structured, tested procedure to verify the accountability of SPPP from the moment they are implemented constitutes a conceptual gap in this area. However, according to P. F. Machado (op. cit.), accountability should be assessed based on the criteria defined by Blair (2000): it is only achieved when the objectives, usefulness and performance of the SPPP are assessed to determine if are, in fact, increasing community security. This assessment would not serve as a financial audit procedure, but as a way to increase the legitimacy of political action by holding its authors accountable.

This study revealed that, not only is there no operational and instrumental doctrinal model of PS common to the SF, but the lack of conceptual densification has generated multiple perceptions about the policing models that are applied. However, there is a forum where important issues can be discussed and coordinated at the national level: the quarterly meetings of the Security Coordinating Office, chaired by the SSMS. In other words, as the Head of the Public Prevention and Proximity Division of the PSP, H.D. Guinote (videoconference interview, 11 March 2022) explains,

[...] in the PSP, our principles and identity are based on the PP model, and we only use the concept of CP to explain what this type of policing model does not include. [...] the matrix, or the principles that we would have to follow to implement CP, should be similar to the PP model because the philosophy is the same. The difference is in the details of the implementation, such as the sharing of policing responsibilities at local level. While Anglo-Saxon countries have organized citizen groups such as the Neighbourhood Watch, in which members of the community form patrol teams, this would not be possible in Portugal because the Portuguese law does not allow it. Portuguese society is used to internal security being the responsibility of the State rather than the citizens.

N. C. Poiares (email interview, 3 March 2022) agrees that “[...] there is no doctrinal, operational and instrumental model common to the two SF. The main source of doctrine (Anglo-Saxon and Francophone) is the same, *mutatis mutandis*, but the implementation is not coordinated between the two Forces in an integrated way.”

On the other hand, the GNR, as defined in NEP/GNR - 3.58 (2017, pp.1-11) which regulates the functioning of the criminal prevention and CP activities of the GNR, uses both models, PP and CP, with special focus on the latter, as demonstrated by the creation of a centralised Criminal Prevention and Policing Department in the Operational Command, and, at local level, by the creation of Criminal Prevention and CP Sections of the Territorial Detachments tasked with implementing the SPPP.

While these are different organizations, and, as such, cannot be compared, it is worth noting that the PSP and the Lisbon Municipal Police have a radically different understanding of PS, which the latter adopted at local level, because it is considered an international best practice in urban security and because it provides an innovative model of intervention based on CP programmes, on promoting and integrating strategic partnerships to ensure community security, and on establishing a network to coordinate efforts in what is essentially a proximity approach⁴. For A. V. Neves (email interview, 14 March 2022), the SF should encourage citizen participation in the coproduction of PP by “[...] creating security groups that hold monthly meetings, after all members of the group, including the SF, are given appropriate training, as the CML does with its CP programmes.”

However, regarding the important dimension of community civic participation in local security, P. F. Machado (op. cit.) argues that, in the current social, economic and political climate, the relationship between State institutions and citizens has become somewhat degraded, not only in the areas of healthcare, education, tax administration, but also (to a lesser degree) in the area of public security. This situation discourages citizens to participate actively in the process, as such, currently most types of participation are reactive. To promote citizen participation, institutional actors must base their activity on proven criteria, such as: “[...] (1) reducing response times; (2) increasing police proactivity; (3) increasing communication and improving the quality of that communication; (4) clarifying the strategic definition of cooperation and tactics used by the different institutions [...]” (P. F. Machado, op. cit.).

On the other hand, the interviews to the panel of experts revealed that there have been some efforts by the SF to clarify the difference between the concepts of PP and CP. For P. F. Machado (op. cit.), this is “[...] a relatively pointless discussion because what we are talking about is a change of philosophy in relation to the past, rather than a difference in the procedures that we wish to implement in the present”. In this expert’s opinion, CP focuses on the partnerships between the SFS and citizens, using creative and innovative ways to solve the community’s insecurity problems, while in the European tradition, and especially in countries under Francophone influence, the focus is on PP. However, when the strategies and

⁴ See the institutional site of the Lisbon Municipal Police at: <https://cidadania.lisboa.pt/acoes-comunitarias/seguranca>

practices of proximity are analysed more closely, there is always some reference to the more Anglo-Saxon concept of COP, or community-oriented policing.

For P. Machado (op. cit.), the creation of a national PS strategy or programme seems inevitable

[...] I believe that a national prevention and PS programme is essential. It is worth noting that, while Portugal is considered one of the safest countries in the world due to its remarkable position at the top of the Global Peace Index (4th place in 2021), this is mainly due to macro level indicators and a (more abstract) context of Peace. When the country's performance is analysed according to specific indicators, it is not as impressive (but is still positive).

This was also stated by D. Araújo (face-to-face interview, 30 March 2022)

[...] a National Programme for Prevention and SP has not been implemented yet. If the issue of PS had already been addressed in the LSI, it would certainly make it easier to implement such a plan. [...] it is inevitable that, in the short term, the MAI will have to draw up a National Plan on PS Policies.

On the other hand, the strategic guidelines included in the 2019 and 2020 RASI, regarding the need to improve the PS model, as well as the guidelines set out in the current Programme of the XXIII CG (2022, p.61) and in the previous programmes, also show this concern, inasmuch as they recognise the need to improve internal security by promoting, "in coordination with local authorities, the implementation of a new generation of LSC that put into practice a PP strategy in areas such as school security, support to the elderly or security in sports and major events".

Therefore, for P. Machado (op. cit.), a national programme or strategy that involves institutional actors in relevant areas of responsibility could help address "the issue of low intensity insecurity and the important challenge of mitigating citizens' feelings of insecurity, which are linked to domestic violence, night insecurity, school bullying, street crime, and environmental insecurity".

Therefore, the answer to the RQ – "What measures can be adopted to implement a national PS strategy?" – is that, according to the guidelines set out in the current Programme of the XXIII Constitutional Government and in the previous programmes, as well as in the SIMSPA 2020-2023, the main proposals identified in this action-oriented study are organized as follows:

- a. There is an urgent need to create an interministerial Working Group (WG) to develop a national PS strategy for the next decade, with members and criteria defined by the Prime Minister or, by delegation of powers, by the MAI, which should include all relevant institutional actors, in their respective areas of responsibility;
- b. The body responsible for this WG could be the SCO, due to the powers entrusted to it by Article 22(1) of the LSI. However, in light of the broad scope of the issues that will be addressed, as well as of the need to make a diagnosis with multiple dimensions of analysis, other public and private entities that add technical and scientific value to

- the final product should also be involved. It would also be beneficial to involve expert researchers who have published studies in the following areas: (i) police sciences; (ii) military sciences – internal security and criminal phenomena; (iii) organizational, internal security and police sociology; (iv) organizational anthropology, especially in intervention and community development processes; (v) community psychology. It would also be possible to request specialised technical support from international organizations, such as the *Institut des Hautes Études du Ministère de l'Intérieur* (France) and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL);
- c. Considering the low levels of community participation in Portuguese society, a thorough analysis of the theoretical framework of partnerships and community intervention should be carried out to: (i) identify which participation methods and techniques can be used to involve communities in processes that aim to promote coordinated and integrated responses to complex social problems; (ii) identify the best criteria to measure the effectiveness of community partnerships and the impact at individual, organizational and community level;
 - d. The initiatives developed by the WG should be based on the main trends and best practices in other European countries, and especially on benchmark national processes and public policies, such as the National Road Safety Strategy: Vision Zero 2030 of the National Road Safety Authority (ANSR, 2020), which provided the template for the proposal presented below;
 - e. The strategy that will be developed by this WG could include the following stages:
 - 1) Stage 1 – Defining the guidelines for a national PS strategy, according to the responsibilities of the internal security system agencies, aligned with Portugal's national and international commitments and shared visions for this area, as well as with the national cross-cutting strategies that have already been implemented; defining the timeline to complete the work and implement the next stages of the strategy.
 - 2) Stage 2 – Preparing four technical and scientific reports on which the strategy will be based: (i) a diagnostic report on the police proximity models currently used in Portugal, including the most relevant challenges that are foreseen for the next decade with regards to community participation and the relationship between police and citizens, in comparison with the main European trends; (ii) a report that identifies the basic principles that guided the development of PS policies in contemporary societies and defines general scientific guidelines and a methodological framework for the strategy; (iii) a report that will serve as a basis for the elaboration of a handbook on PS and community participation, which should include best practices for SF and a solid conceptual framework that can be used as a common doctrinal, operational and instrumental model, and promote process standardisation, integration and automation, but be flexible enough to allow each SF to adapt it to different realities. The goal is to increase proximity to citizens and, simultaneously, to promote active

citizen participation rather than reactive participation; (iv) a report that establishes the methodological framework for the strategy and the action plans, which should include the procedures to develop and monitor their implementation.

- 3) Stage 3 – The national PS strategy should be based on the technical and scientific reports, and the first action plan 2023-2024 should be based on the fourth report (Stage 2), which defines the methodology for preparing the action plans.

On a final note, it is worth remembering that “political power intervenes, it was created for that purpose. But it must know what it is intervening on. Most importantly, one should never lose sight of the fact that science and politics are an integral part of this knowledge” (DGAI, 2009, xii).

5. Conclusions

This study showed that there is an urgent need for a national PS policy, and that this can only be achieved by defining a strategy with goals and indicators that can be implemented across the national territory and adapted to different local and regional realities, and that is flexible enough to allow the GNR to make any necessary adjustments at the operational level. However, the conceptual gap that must be addressed through a national strategy is the lack of a shared idea about PS, established and sustained by policy, as only this will ensure its effectiveness and success with the communities.

In 2009, the foreword to the Portuguese version of the Manual of Local Security Diagnoses stated that public policies and political actions that aim to have a social impact on local communities must be based on a process to generate action-oriented knowledge grounded on theory to ensure that all policy decisions are sustained and appropriate to local realities. The data collected locally by the SFS is not sufficient; it must be systematically analysed and processed by entities with recognised technical and scientific expertise, integrated in a multidisciplinary knowledge network. There is no room or tolerance for amateur efforts in this area, as the social and political costs are extremely high.

The study used inductive reasoning and a qualitative research strategy based on a literature review of national and international studies on the topic, on the perceptions of TCom and of a panel of experts, as well as on critical analysis and interpretation of the relevant legislation. A case study research design was used to collect the data, which was drawn from a single study unit.

SO1 – To analyse the perceptions of TCom about PS in their area of responsibility – corresponds to SQ1 and was achieved by determining that, in the GNR, SPPP or CLS are not assessed by an external entity, and that there are no regular organized procedures to measure / assess the public’s satisfaction, in qualitative and quantitative terms, with the quality of the service provided by the police, both internally or externally. Global, ad hoc and empirical internal reviews are carried out, but they are not systematic. Furthermore, there is no doctrinal, operational and instrumental model of SP common to the GNR and the PSP, or any coordination in the field of PS, as the initiatives are carried out autonomously by each SE, according to their technical and operational capabilities. However, with the exception of the

TCom of the Azores and Madeira, where SPPP have no direct applicability, all TCom agree that a national PS strategy is needed.

SO2 – To analyse the perceptions of TCom about the SPPP in their area of responsibility – corresponds to SQ2 and was achieved by establishing that TCom perceptions are generally rather positive. Most TCom agree that some SPPP should have already been terminated, but most are being reoriented to address local security problems, with special focus on at risk groups, in order to address the information gathered by the military personnel assigned to the CPS from local actors and citizens. However, when the territorial responsibility at district level is shared with the PSP, TCom have not felt the need to coordinate technical and operational activities with the PSP before implementing a SPPP at local level. Furthermore, TCom agree that formal procedures should be implemented to monitor and assess SPPP, both internally and externally, that the 1997 GNR Operations Manual should be updated, and that a handbook on PS should be elaborated.

SO3 – To analyse the perceptions of TCom about community civic participation in security in their area of responsibility – corresponds to SQ3 and was achieved by determining that, according to TCom, it is not expected that high levels of community involvement can be achieved in the short term, as in some Anglo-Saxon countries, where communities participate in all stages of the process of codecision and coproduction of security at the local level, and are allowed to participate in decision making and influence all stages of the process, including implementation and monitoring.

Finally, the GO – To propose measures to develop a national PS strategy –, which corresponds to the RQ, was achieved by establishing that implementing the guidelines set out in the current XXIII CG Programme and the SIMSPA 2020-2023 will require a common vision of PS, sustained by policy, which is shared by all SF.

Much like the studies published by Durão (2008, 2012), which are more applicable to the reality and area of responsibility of the PSP, this study contributes to knowledge by collecting the perceptions of a universe of 20 TCom and a panel of experts, which revealed that: (i) in the GNR's area of responsibility, PS in Portugal is limited to the ad hoc implementation of a set of SPPP, and there is no alternative organizational strategy or general approach to policing; (ii) an interministerial WG should be established and a handbook on PS should be elaborated; (iii) in the short term, it is not expected that citizens will be able to actively participate in all stages of the process of codecision and coproduction of local security, which means that there is a need for a national PS strategy common to all actors involved in community security.

The study's main limitation was the fact that it was only possible to conduct interviews with two experts who were involved in the formulation of internal security policies in Portugal and three researchers in the field of internal security.

To expand on these findings, future studies should include military personnel currently serving in the CPS of the Territorial Detachments, as well as the District Commanders of the PSP.

As for practical recommendations, the GNR Operations Manual should be updated in the short term, and a mobile application similar to the AlertCops⁵ app of the Spanish Ministry of the Interior could be developed.

Finally, as all other gendarmerie forces in Europe and the world, which have a specific role within the national force system, the GNR is a unique organization that is not limited to regular policing roles. In addition to being the only SF with a presence in more than 500 localities, it is responsible for PP in 270 of the 308 municipalities and in 2,733 of the 3,092 parishes. This makes it especially suited to ensure the effectiveness of PP and to establish a relationship of mutual trust and legitimacy with citizens, allowing the State to exercise its authority in all parts of the national territory, and ensuring the safety and peace of mind of the population.

Furthermore, the study findings suggest that TCom should be involved in the implementation of a PS policy for Portugal, in order to adapt the needs to the available resources and the operational requirements, coordinating and involving all local actors in the search for solutions adapted to local and regional realities, as this will further increase proximity between SF and citizens.

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⁵ See the institutional website at: <https://alertcops.ses.mir.es/mialertcops/>

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