Trust in Police by Slovenian Law and Criminal Justice and Security Students

Gorazd Meško, Rok Hacin, Katja Eman

Purpose:

The purpose of this paper is to explore criminal justice students' and law students' trust in the police and factors related to trusting the police.

Design/Methods/Approach:

The data were collected using a web-survey on a convenient sample of law students and criminal justice and security students. The data were analysed by descriptive and multivariate statistical methods.

Findings:

The findings imply that variables *procedural justice*, *police effectiveness*, *police authority* and *legal cynicism* have impact on trust in police. Furthermore, regression analysis shows that for law students the variables *police authority*, *procedural justice*, *police effectiveness*, *distributive justice*, *deterrence* and *legal cynicism* significantly predict trust in police. Regression analysis for criminal justice students implies that variables *police authority*, *police effectiveness*, and *procedural justice* significantly predict trust in police. Results of discriminant analysis imply that law students more positively respond on variables about life goals and moral credibility. Mean values of the variables *police authority*, *trust in police*, *legal cynicism*, and *procedural justice* by criminal justice students are higher than those by law students.

Research Limitations/Implications:

Due to the convenience sample (law students and criminal justice and security students), the results are not generalizable, but the results do provide insights into trust in the Slovenian police of potential future professionals in (criminal) justice system.

Practical Implications:

The results imply that the police should put more efforts in their relationship with students, especially in the fields of police authority, procedural justice, police effectiveness, distributive justice, deterrence and legal cynicism to improve the level of police justice and law students' trust in the police.

Originality/Value:

The article presents the foundation for further research on student's perception of trust in the police in Slovenia and includes several suggestions on how to improve their trust in police.

Keywords: trust in police, police, law students, criminal justice, security, students, Slovenia

Zaupanje v policijo pri slovenskih študentih prava in varstvoslovja

Namen prispevka:

Namen prispevka je raziskati zaupanje študentov varstvoslovja in prava v policijo in s tem povezane dejavnike.

Metode:

Podatke smo zbrali s pomočjo spletne ankete na priložnostnem vzorcu študentov prava in varstvoslovja. Podatke smo analizirali z uporabo opisnih in multivariatnih statističnih metod.

Ugotovitve:

Ugotovitve kažejo, da spremenljivke *postopkovna pravičnost*, *učinkovitost policije*, *avtoriteta policije* in *pravni cinizem* vplivajo na zaupanje v policijo. Poleg tega regresijska analiza kaže, da so pri študentih prava spremenljivke *avtoriteta policije*, *postopkovna pravičnost*, *učinkovitost policije*, *distributivna pravičnost*, *odvračanje* in *pravni cinizem* pomembne za napovedovanje zaupanja v policijo, za študente varstvoslovja pa to velja za spremenljivke *avtoriteta policije*, *učinkovitost policije* in *postopkovna pravičnost*. Rezultati diskriminantne analize kažejo, da študenti prava bolj pozitivno ocenjujejo *življenjske cilje* in *moralno kredibilnost*. Pri spremenljivkah *avtoriteta policije*, *zaupanje v policijo*, *pravni cinizem* in *postopkovna pravičnost* so povprečne vrednosti pri študentih varstvoslovja višje kot pri študentih prava.

Omejitve/uporabnost raziskave:

Zaradi priložnostnega vzorca (študenti prava in varstvoslovja) rezultatov ni mogoče posploševati, vendar ti kljub temu zagotavljajo vpogled v zaupanje do slovenske policije med potencialnimi bodočimi strokovnjaki (kazensko)pravnega sistema.

Praktična uporabnost:

Izhajajoč iz študije ugotavljamo, da bi bilo treba povečati avtoriteto policije, postopkovno pravičnost, učinkovitost, distributivno pravičnost policije, zastraševalni učinek kazenskih sankcij in zmanjšati pravni cinizem.

Izvirnost/pomembnost prispevka:

Članek predstavlja izhodišče za nadaljnje raziskovanje dojemanja zaupanja v policijo pri študentih v Sloveniji in vključuje predloge, kako povečati zaupanje študentov v policijo.

UDK: 351.74(497.4)

Ključne besede: zaupanje v policijo, policija, pravo, kazensko pravosodje, varstvoslovje, študenti, Slovenija

1 INTRODUCTION

Understanding trust in the police and legitimacy became one of the leading research topics among criminologists in the 21st century. As demonstrated by Hinds and Murphy (2007: 30), "[...] in modern, democratic societies, police legitimacy rests on public consent". In other words, police are legitimate when public feels obligated to obey them and their orders. Besides, an individual's decision to accept the power of police authority and to accept its justification cannot be ignored. Hinsch (in Jackson & Bradford, 2010: 3) stresses that moral alignment between people and the criminal system is set in the forefront of the discussion: "If one follows this criteria, then judgements among individuals about the legitimacy of an institution must be based to some degree on assessments of the congruence between its goals, practises and behaviours and their own."

Legitimacy is more than merely an excuse for power – it is also a justification of the power, known also as 'moral alignment' between individuals and the criminal justice system they use (Jackson, 2010); therefore, when considering legitimacy, researchers have to take into consideration a normative, ideological, or moral element of legitimacy. The fact that legitimacy is based on expression of common shared values should not be ignored. Thus, Jackson (2010: 10–11) founded his framework of legitimacy on the cognition that "an individual confers legitimacy on the justice system when that individual feels: a) an obligation to obey the authority; b) that the authority expresses shared morals; and c) that the justice system follows its own internal rules". It is almost unavoidable that people trust the justice system.

Trust refers to public beliefs about the trustworthiness of the authorities (usually police and courts) to act effectively and fairly. Jackson (2010: 1) emphasizes that the importance of people's belief that police (and courts) possess the right to govern and dictate appropriate behaviour. Generally, trust in police is studied from three perspectives: 1) trust in police compliance; 2) trust in police procedural fairness; and 3) trust in police distributive fairness.

It is generally known that people change with age and that experiences shape their opinions. It is the same with attitudes towards authority – young people have less knowledge and experiences, which is why their trust in police is lower. Moreover, attitudes of youth (e.g. students) towards the police can be specific, if compared with their attitudes towards other social institutions (e.g., schools, social centres), described as an "anti-authority syndrome". Previous studies on attitudes of young people towards the police (Chow, 2012; Reisig, Tankebe, & Meško, 2013, for example) show that 1) contextual factors and individual characteristics influence perceptions of the police by young people; 2) in general, young females have more positive attitudes toward the police than men; and 3) the quality of the contacts young people have had with the police is correlated with their attitudes towards the police. Based on past cognitions, the aim of the paper is to study students' perceptions of police authority and trust in policing in Slovenia. The section on policing and police legitimacy presents the theoretical basis for the research on perception of trust and legitimacy of policing in Slovenia and is followed by the results of the study. The authors are aware that the results

are based on self-reported perceptions of trust and legitimacy of the Slovenian police. It is necessary to test and discuss how students would behave towards the police and cooperate with them in real situations.

2   POLICING AND TRUST IN POLICE

In last two decades, new approaches to policing focusing on police legitimacy, public compliance with the law, acceptance of police authority and cooperation with the police in responding to crime began to develop. Thus, Tyler (2011) emphasizes their value, especially the connection between trust and legitimacy. He acknowledges that professionalization of the police has influenced the growth in quality of policing, but the public support for the police, also known as 'trust and confidence' in the police, must also be taken into consideration, especially those factors that shape public views about police legitimacy:

"If public trust and confidence in the police are not linked to objective performance, the nature of trust and confidence needs to be addressed as a distinct question in and of itself. The issue is: 'What is the basis of perceived police legitimacy?' Understanding how public views about police legitimacy form and change can provide us with a new framework through which to evaluate policing policies and practices." (Tyler, 2011: 255)

Tyler (2011: 258) believes that the way and quality of a police officer's performance and his attitude towards the people in legal procedures has an important impact on public opinion and feelings about the police. For this reason, the police must implement policies that encourage an approach to communities in which public views are central, thus focusing on the way that people evaluate the police and police actions. Tyler (2011: 263) is certain that these public views shape how people behave in reaction to the police. Moreover, public trust in policing is important and needed because of its influence on attitudes to and public cooperation with justice. Furthermore, public trust in justice has an important impact on institutional legitimacy and public compliance with the law. In this way, Jackson, Bradford, Hough, and Murray (2012: 30) define police legitimacy as "obligation to obey and moral alignment" and link it to legal legitimacy, cynicism, and compliance with the law.

Bradford, Jackson, and Hough (2013) presented a model of policing based on the procedural justice theory and the theory about policing by consent. The origin was Tyler's (2006a, 2006b) argument that "if the normative route to compliance with the law can be achieved, it is likely to be more durable and less costly than the coercive route that requires a credible deterrent threat" (Bradford et al., 2013: 80). The model predicts that if police officers treat people with respect and dignity, the basis for fair decision-making processes is created, allowing police officers to have a voice in the interaction. This communication must reflect an officers' respectful behaviour and messages of status and worth to the individual concerned. Furthermore, this way police officers show people that the power they have in the process is balanced and that they are acting in accordance with values of legality and propriety. Sunshine and Tyler (2003) described such behaviour as a 'procedurally fair way' that leads to the belief that the police are legitimate and that their power is justified (Bradford et al., 2013: 82). The authors conclude

that the police should invest more in the policies that clearly promote procedural fairness as a core aspect of police work. Police leaders need to explain intelligibly that "improvements in trust and legitimacy have to be earned, and not simply claimed" (Bradford et al., 2013: 95). Nevertheless, police officers must retain a certain degree of distance from individuals to be able efficiently and fairly to resolve conflicts in the communities. When dealing with young adults (i.e., adolescents), the police have to be even more cautious and indubitable in their performance and attitude, as presented in the following section.

3   YOUNG PEOPLE AND TRUST IN POLICE

Young people's attitudes towards legal institutions (e.g., police, courts) are similar to their attitudes towards other social institutions (e.g., schools, social centres), suggesting an "anti-authority syndrome" orientation during adolescence (Clark & Wenninger, 1964: 488). Easton and Dennis (1969) emphasized that behaviour, formed during adolescence, can have a lasting influence on their judgements of police as adults. In addition, young people usually form their beliefs according to direct experiences (Nelsen, Eisenberg, & Carroll, 1982). From the perspective of the relationship between youth and the police, this means that "the treatment received from police in direct contact or encounters with police officers, rather than more global attitudes formed about policing in abstract, or policing as an institution" (Hinds, 2009: 12).

Cunneen and White (1996), Loader (1996) and Hinds (2009) emphasize that contacts between young people and the police are anything but rare, because as noted by White (1994), police officers are often the only agents of the criminal justice system in daily contact with young people. Moreover, young people are extensive users of public spaces and thereby often the subjects of involuntary and generally negatively experienced contacts with the police (Cunneen & White, 1996; Hinds, 2009; Loader, 1996; White, 1994). Similarly, Brown, Benedict, and Wilkinson (2006) tackled the issue of public perceptions of the police in Mexico. The survey was conducted among law students in Tampico, Mexico, during the summer of 2003, and the results revealed that the majority of the students have negative experiences with municipal, state and federal police in Mexico. The comparison between police forces revealed that municipal police is viewed most negatively and the federal police less negatively. Furthermore, the younger people are, the less favourably they view the police.

Taylor, Turner, Esbensen, and Winfree (2001: 295) found out that criminal justice practitioners, researchers, and policymakers began to study citizens' attitudes toward the police in 1960. The general perception based on observations and research results was that poor people, especially minority groups, have less favourable attitudes toward the police as compared to other groups of people. Moreover, young people reported less favourable attitudes towards the police than older social groups. Leiber, Nalla, and Farnworth (1998) emphasized in 1998 that juveniles present a relatively large percentage of the population that is subjected to police contacts and arrests. Walker (1992) focused on police perspectives of juveniles and deviance and discovered that juveniles are seen by

police officers as a 'special set of problems', forcing them to become involved with the school system and cooperate with other social service agencies. Furthermore, in more than forty years of study of attitudes towards the police, criminologists have learned the following (Taylor et al., 2001: 296–298):

- *race* is the most studied demographic variable in surveys on peoples' attitudes towards the police;
- in the 1960s, the majority of citizens in the USA reported about their favourable attitudes towards the police: white citizens' attitudes were far more positive than those by African Americans;
- ethnic groups differ significantly in their attitude towards the police;
- people in the US cities view (their) local police more positive compared to state police;
- *gender* – usually females rate police more positively compared to males, irrespective of the age group;
- possible reasons of a difference in attitudes towards the police between boys and girls include: different socialization processes, prejudicial social control and parental supervision, and different role expectations and limitations associated with males and females;
- girls have far fewer contacts with police than boys; therefore, compared to males, females are likely to show more positive attitudes toward the police;
- police officers act differently towards youth female and male suspects during police procedures – police officers exercise discretionary powers more often with girls than boys; and
- *city of residence* is one of the demographic factors that can influence citizens' attitudes towards the police: studies in American cities showed that the social context has to be included and considered when attitudes of (young) people towards the police are discusse.

Eller, Abrams, Viki, and Imara (2007) studied youth perceptions of contact with the police (e.g., the impact of the quantity and the quality of people's contact with the police) and focused on the possible differences among white and black university students. The survey was conducted in universities in Southeast England and one university in South London, Great Britain. Results show that black university students had lower-quality contacts with the police, experienced more police racism and, as a result, expressed lower propensities to cooperate with the police. In addition, the comparison between white and black students revealed that black students have "higher-quantity and lower-quality contacts with police, stronger racial identification, a less positive view of police, and showed less desire for closeness" (Eller et al., 2007: 221). The authors concluded that higher quality and lower quantity of contacts correlate with a more positive view of the police. In addition, respondents expressed higher desired closeness. Furthermore, the analysis revealed the effects of race on the quantity of contact, the view of the police, and desired closeness, with negative effects driven by high identification (Eller et al., 2007: 213).

With the aim to find out just how strong is the influence of public attitudes on criminal justice institutions, e.g., police, and the policies that guide them, Chow

(2012) studied the attitudes of university students towards the police in Canada. The study was conducted in 2007 and 2008 among university students in Regina, Canada. Results show that respondents held moderately positive attitudes toward the police and that socio-economic status, location of residence, personal safety, criminal victimization, contact with the police, and police harassment or mistreatment experiences have an important impact on respondents' evaluation of the police (Chow, 2012: 508).

Machura, Love, and Dwight (2014) examined trust of law students' in courts of law and the police in Bangor (Bangor University) in the United Kingdom. The authors assume that views of students could be influenced by the faculty (i.e., curriculum and attitudes of lecturers towards the police), media, personal experience and factors such as past victimization and cooperation with the police and having a police officer as a relative, etc. Based on the results of previous studies, the authors believe that students are becoming more critical towards the police and courts over the course of their studies. They compared the views of 2012 final-year undergraduate law students with the same cohort from 2010 starting their studies and with those of the 2010 final-year law students. Results revealed that the final year law students showed more trust in courts and the police than their predecessors. They concluded that in addition to the study of law, personal experiences together with secondary experiences of family and friends, and the media do influence students' trust in the institutions (Machura et al., 2014).

The aforementioned studies emphasize the importance of age, gender, race or ethnicity, education and prior experiences with the police in creating their attitudes towards the police.

3.1 Slovenian Research on Trust in Police

A study on Slovenian public opinion of the police (Uhan, Toš, Kurdija, Kovačič, Filej, & Falle, 2002) pointed out that 56% of the public trust the police and that higher trust was recorded in rural areas. A subsequent study in 2003 showed that 50% of the respondents reported a high level of trust in police. Uhan, Toš, Kurdija, Vovk, and Bešter Falle (2004) conducted the Slovenian public opinion survey on police in 2004, and results showed that more than 50% of the population reported high trust in the police. The results also pointed out a distinction based on demographics, such as gender, age and place of residents of respondents. A public opinion research project about police work conducted by the Public Opinion and Mass Communication Research Centre at the Faculty of Social Sciences in Ljubljana reported that 45% of respondents highly trusted the police. That puts, with regard to the degree of trust, the police above the military, the courts, the president of the country, the media, the prime minister, the parliament, and political parties. In addition, a high degree of trust of the police puts it in the upper half of the trusted institutions in Slovenia, along with the media and the trade unions (Kurdija & Vovk, 2006).

Černič, Makarovič, and Macur (2009) conducted a study on Slovenian public opinion of the police in 2009 and find out that 50% of the representative sample of the Slovenian population reported trust in the police. A project measuring

residents' opinion about the police in 2012 pointed out that approximately half (53%) of the respondents trusted the police (Meško, Lobnikar, Jere, & Sotlar, 2013). In these studies, the percentage of trust in the police in Slovenia varies between 50 and 60 percent of the respondents.

The European Social Survey in 28 European countries was conducted at the end of 2010 and included 45 questions about justice and trust in it. Jackson et al. (2011) found out that personal contact with police officers is a key predictor of trust, where significant variation in the proportion experiencing a police-initiated contact was detected across the 20 countries. Respondents in Slovenia reported a low level of trust in public institutions, especially the police. Slovenia ranked seventeenth out of twenty-eight countries included in the study (European Social Survey, 2010).

In the European Social Survey, trust in police was examined from three perspectives: 1) trust in police compliance; 2) trust in police procedural fairness; and 3) trust in police distributive fairness. Results show that opinions regarding the procedural fairness of the police vary widely across Europe (Jackson et al., 2011: 5). People in Israel, the Russian Federation, and Bulgaria have the most negative opinions about the way the police treat people, while people in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Spain have the most positive opinions. Furthermore, people trust the police least in Russia, Israel, Bulgaria, Portugal, and Poland. In Slovenia, approximately 30 percent of respondents believed that police officers did not often make fair and impartial decisions (Jackson et al., 2011: 5–6). They concluded that trust and legitimacy have a multi-dimensional nature. They assumed that trust is revealed by public assessments of the trustworthiness of public institutions along three dimensions: effectiveness, procedural fairness, and distributive fairness, and likewise, legitimacy is expressed by their consent to power and their sense of the normative justifiability of power (Jackson et al., 2011: 8, 10).

Meško and Klemenčič (2007) studied the transition of Slovenian police from an ex-Yugoslav militia to professional police similar to its Western counterparts. They found that the public "approval rating", through the public surveys, was unusually high at the beginning of the transition from a socialist system to democracy. Positive opinions about the police decreased until 2001, when it stabilized. Further research identified problems of police professionalism, such as para-military leadership and chain of command, unsuccessful changing of mentality of street police officers, lack of specialized skills in police ranks, violation of human rights, and excessive use of force by the police, especially against members of ethnic minorities. Despite a lack of professionalism in certain areas, the Slovenian police have adopted strategic aims in the form of community policing, which was believed to contribute to police professionalism and higher trust in police.

Reisig, Tankebe, and Meško (2012) explored the effect of procedural justice, perceptions of police legitimacy and willingness to cooperate with the police among adult students in secondary schools in Ljubljana and Maribor. The results showed that procedural justice strongly correlates with police legitimacy, which has a major impact on the public's willingness to cooperate with the police.

Meško, Fields, Šifrer, and Eman (in press) analysed law students' perceptions

of police authority and trust in the police in the eight countries of Central and Eastern Europe, including Slovenia. The results show that law students, in general, question their willingness to comply with laws and cooperate with the police. The results indicated that police authority and procedural justice are related to trust in the police in all countries, and police effectiveness in Slovenia, Russia, Romania, Poland, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. The authors suggested that if the police wish to improve trust and legitimacy in policing, they should strive primarily to improve their effectiveness, authority, and procedural justice (Meško et al., in press).

The goal of this paper is, therefore, to learn about students' trust in the police and the factors that influence this trust in Slovenia among law and criminal justice students. Furthermore, our aim is also to identify differences between the two groups of students and reflect upon possible differences.

4   THE PRESENT STUDY

This study presents the findings from a national student survey on trust of policing conducted in Slovenia in autumn 2012 and spring 2013. The analysis includes law and criminal justice and security students' trust in police in relation to police authority, police effectiveness, procedural justice, distributive justice, cooperation with police, moral credibility, deterrence, obligation to obey, legal cynicism, legal compliance and selected demographic variables.

4.1   Method

4.1.1   Data Collection

The survey previously used by Reisig et al. (2012) was translated from English into the native language, and presented to students of the Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security at the University of Maribor, the Faculty of Law at the University of Maribor, and Faculty of Law at the University of Ljubljana. After preliminary tests, the survey was published on the web (https://www.1ka.si/), and the students who were enrolled in criminal law and criminology courses during the academic year of 2012/13 were given a certain period of time in which to complete the online survey. The web survey was administered in autumn 2012 and spring 2013 and was accessible only to those students who received a web address provided by their criminal law and criminology lecturers.

Students were selected due to the nature of their studies and their interest in becoming professionals in law enforcement or criminal justice agencies. Data collected on a sample of undergraduate law and criminal justice and security studies students ($n = 442$) were used for the analysis (160 law students, 282 criminal justice and security students). A response rate of 10.5% (students of Faculty of law – 5.4% and students of Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security – 22.6%) was determined for the entire student population in both faculties included in the study. The sample consisted of 293 female and 149 male respondents, with a modal age of 21 years ($n = 89$), and the majority were enrolled in the third year of the law

programmes (*n* = 142). Three hundred and eighteen students have already had some experience with the police and criminal justice system, either as someone who reported a crime (*n* = 110), was an eye witness (*n* = 113), a hearsay witness (*n* = 126), someone who committed a minor offence (*n* = 177), a crime suspect (*n* = 23) or a crime victim (*n* = 118). Some respondents appeared in several different roles (e.g., as someone who reported a crime, was a victim and also a hearsay witness), and some were victimized by theft (78), fraud (13), burglary (28), assault (48), armed robbery (1), sexual assault (5), and other minor crimes (28). Some students reported more than one criminal victimization; of 147 students who reported criminal victimization, 54 indicated that this victimization did not have any effect on them, 22 students reported that they handled their victimization well, 53 of them felt that their victimization was bad but they are not suffering any more, and 18 victimized students are still suffering the consequences of their victimization. Perceptions of police and criminal justice professionalism of those law and criminal justice and security students who have already had experience with the police and criminal justice (*n* = 273) divided into three groups: those who perceived police and criminal justice professionals as 'professional' (*n* = 238), 'unprofessional' (*n* = 32), and 'extremely unprofessional/abusive' (*n* = 3).

4.1.2 Variables

Factor analysis was used (maximum likelihood) to test all constructs (scales). The reliability test by Cronbach's alpha and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) tests of sampling adequacy were calculated for each factor, new variables (factors) were computed after factor analysis, and descriptive statistics for each factor (means with standard deviations and median) and percentages of agreement/disagreement with each variable are also presented in the Table 1.

Table 1: Factor analysis

Factors ranked by α	KMO & Cronbach's alpha	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*Me*	*Agree/ Disagree %*
Procedural justice[a]	(KMO = 0.93; α = 0.90)	442	2.57	0.49	2.62	16.3/**83.7**
Police effectiveness[a]	(KMO = 0.86; α = 0.85)	442	2.61	0.51	2.65	21.1/**78.9**
Police authority[a]	(KMO = 0.71; α = 0.82)	442	2.37	0.57	2.49	21.1/**78.9**
Obligation to obey[a]	(KMO = 0.64; α = 0.78)	442	2.59	0.67	2.63	37.6/**62.4**
Cooperation with police[b]	(KMO = 0.76; α = 0.76)	442	3.38	0.56	3.57	**75.8**/24.2
Distributive justice[a]	(KMO = 0.74; α = 0.75)	442	2.34	0.57	2.19	17.6/**82.4**
Trust in police[a]	(KMO = 0.90; α = 0.74)	440	2.71	0.57	2.85	39.5/**61.5**
Detterence[c]	(KMO = 0.77; α = 0.72)	442	2.62	0,58	2.65	29.0/**71.0**
Legal cynicism[a]	(KMO = 0.73; α = 0.65)	442	1.96	0,54	1.98	4.8/**95.2**
Moral credibility[a]	(KMO = 0.64; α = 0.64)	442	1.98	0,57	2.00	7.1/**92.9**
Legal compliance[d]	(KMO = 0.68; α = 0.51)	442	2.46	0.36	2.49	**90.0**/10.0

a. 1 – Strongly disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Agree, 4 – Strongly agree; b. 1 – Never, 2 – Rarely, 3 – Occasionally, 4 – Frequently; c. 1 – Very unlikely, 2 – Unlikely, 3 – Likely, 4 – Very likely, d. 1 – Not wrong, 2 – Somewhat wrong, 3 – Very wrong;

The primary outcome measure, *trust in police*, is a seven-item factor. Specifically, survey respondents were asked to report their opinions on how much trust they have in the police and what their opinions towards police and police work are, such as: 1) The police in my community are trustworthy; 2) The police can be trusted to make decisions that are right for your community; 3) I am proud of the police in this community; 4) I have confidence in the police; 5) People's basic rights are well protected by the police; 6) The police in this community are often dishonest; and 7) The police are usually honest. Each item featured a close-ended response set ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The level of internal consistency exhibited by the scale is acceptable (KMO = 0.90, Cronbach's α = 0.74, var. = 64.3%). This factor is coded so that higher scores reflect higher levels of trust in police.

Deterrence is a five-item factor where respondents are asked to report how often they are caught and punished if they commit a variety of six legal infractions: 1) used marihuana or some other drug; 2) stole a car; 3) broke traffic laws; 4) bought something you thought might be stolen; and 5) made a lot of noise at night. Each item featured a close-ended response set ranging from 1 (very unlikely) to 4 (very likely). The level of internal consistency exhibited by the scale is acceptable (KMO = 0.77, Cronbach's α = 0.72, var. = 47.8%).

A process-based measure, *procedural justice*, is a ten-item factor that consists of two components: quality of interpersonal treatment (e.g. "The police are courteous to citizens they come into contact with" and "The police treat everyone with dignity") and quality of decision-making (e.g. "The police make decisions based on facts" and "The police explain their decisions to the people they deal with"). The operationalization of this process-based scale is consistent with prior research (see, e.g., Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). The process-based items featured a closed-ended response set ranging from "strongly disagree" (coded 1) to "strongly agree" (coded 4). The level of internal consistency for procedural justice (KMO = 0.93, Cronbach's α = 0.90, var. = 53.9%) is acceptable.

Police authority (1. The police act in ways that are consistent with my own moral values, 2. When the police deal with people, they always behave according to the law; 3. The police always obey the law; and 4. If I were to talk to police officers in my community, I would find their values to be very similar to my own) and *obligation to obey* (1. You should accept police decisions even if you think they are wrong; 2. You should do what the police tell you to do even if you disagree; and 3. People like me have no choice but to obey the directives of the police) are four- and three- item factors. The levels of internal consistency exhibited by the scales are acceptable (KMO = 0.71, Cronbach's α = 0.82, var. = 64.7%) for police authority and (KMO = 0.64, Cronbach's α = 0.78, var. = 69.4%) for obligation to obey.

An instrumental variable was created to address concerns with endogeneity bias. It is always preferred that the number of instruments (i.e., exogenous variables that are correlated with the endogenous regressor) exceed the number of potentially problematic variables (e.g., police legitimacy). Accordingly, two instruments were used in this study. Research shows that perceptions of how well the police handle crime are linked to legitimacy perceptions (Sunshine & Tyler 2003; Tankebe, 2008).

Police effectiveness is an eight-item factor (e.g. "The police are doing well in controlling violent crime" and "The police do a good job maintaining order in my neighbourhood"). The level of internal consistency exhibited by the scale is acceptable (KMO = 0.86, Cronbach's α = 0.84, var. = 49.2%).

C*ooperation with police* is a five-item factor: 1) If the police were looking for witnesses in a case where someone's wallet was stolen, how likely would you be to volunteer information if you witnessed the theft; 2) How likely would you be to volunteer to serve as a witness in a criminal court case involving a crime that you witnessed; 3) Imagine that you were out and saw someone steal a wallet. How likely would you be to call the police; 4) How likely would you be to call the police if you saw someone break into a house or car; and 5) Imagine you had evidence that someone bribed a government official. How likely would you be to report this form of behaviour? The level of internal consistency exhibited by the scale is acceptable (KMO = 0.76, Cronbach's α = 0.76, var. = 51.7%).

Moral credibility (1. Most people in my community believe that the law punishes criminals the amount they deserve; 2. The law does a good job making sure that criminals get the punishment they deserve regardless of how much money they have and 3. Innocent people who are accused of crimes are always protected by the law) and *legal cynicism* (1. To make money, there are no right or wrong ways anymore, only easy ways and hard ways; 2. Nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today and let tomorrow take care of itself; 3. Fighting between friends or within family is nobody else's business; 4. Laws were made to be broken; and 5. It is okay to do anything you want as long as you don't hurt anyone) are three- and five-item factors, and *distributive justice* (1. The police enforce the law consistently when dealing with ALL people; 2. The police provide the same quality of service to all citizens; 3. The police provide better services to wealthier citizens; and 4. The police make sure citizens receive the outcomes they deserve under the law) is a four-item factor. The closed-ended response sets that accompanied the survey items used to create the instrumental variable ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The level of internal consistency for moral credibility (KMO = 0.64, Cronbach's α = 0.60, var. = 56.0%), legal cynicism (KMO = 0.73, Cronbach's α = 0.65, var. = 42.4%) and distributive justice (KMO = 0.74, Cronbach's α = 0.75, var. = 57.9%) is acceptable. These variables are coded so that higher scores reflect more positive evaluations of police effectiveness and more favourable moral credibility judgments.

Life goals (such as having a high social status, dressing according to the latest fashion, having comfortable standard of living, and having a rewarding job) is a four-item factor. Items featured a closed-ended response set ranging from "unimportant" (coded 1) to "somewhat important" (coded 3). The level of internal consistency for life goals (KMO = 0.71, Cronbach's α = 0.65, var. = 51.8%) is acceptable.

Legal compliance is a four-item factor. Items featured a closed-ended response set ranging from "not wrong" (coded 1) to "very wrong" (coded 4). Since the level of internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) is not acceptable (KMO = 0.68, Cronbach's α = 0.51, var. = 42.3%), legal compliance was not included in further analyses.

4.2 Results

We tried to identify which of the following variables predict trust in police: 1) family social status; 2) obligation to obey; 3) deterrence; 4) cooperation with police; 5) moral credibility; 6) gender; 7) legal cynicism; 8) parent's education; 9) age; 10) police effectiveness; 11) police authority; 12) distributive justice; and 13) procedural justice. Regression analysis accounts for 66.6% of variance of trust in police, of which statistically significant are procedural justice, police effectiveness, police authority, and legal cynicism, ranked from the highest to lowest value. The results of regression analysis (trust as a dependent variable) and others as independents are presented in Table 2. Studying in criminal justice or law (major area of study) was not found to be statistically significant.

Variables	B	SE	p	VIF
Cooperation with police	0.02	0.03	0.45	1.01
Police authority	0.27	0.04	**0.00**	2.49
Obligation to obey	-0.02	0.02	0.50	1.07
Deterrence	0.01	0.03	0.73	1.03
Moral credibility	-0.02	0.03	0.61	1.46
Legal cynicism	-0.07	0.03	**0.04**	1.18
Police effectiveness	0.31	0.04	**0.00**	1.99
Distributive justice	0.02	0.04	0.67	2.20
Procedural justice	0.39	0.06	**0.00**	3.20
Age	0.00	0.00	0.70	1.24
Gender	0.04	0.04	0.26	1.13
Parents education	0.03	0.02	0.13	1.18
Family social status	-0.04	0.03	0.13	1.17
Major area of study	0.03	0.04	0.43	1.12

Table 2: Regression analysis of trust in police

Dependent variable: Trust in police

Our results partly resemble those of other studies, especially the findings of Jackson et al. (2011) who believe that trust in police and their fairness are very important factors of police legitimacy in Europe. Therefore, to improve trust in police, reforms of the police and the government should focus on increasing (1) procedural justice, (2) police effectiveness, (3) police authority, and (4) decreasing legal cynicism among young people. Furthermore, age revealed a limited variation in the sample because it consisted of university students with average age of 23 years (the majority of sample represents young people aged from 19–25). In a comparative study, Meško et al. (in press) came to similar conclusions. Furthermore, we are presenting separate regression analyses for each group of the students (Table 3 and 4).

The results of regression analyses for law students (Table 3) show that six variables: 1) police authority, 2) procedural justice, 3) police effectiveness, 4)

distributive justice, 5) deterrence and 6) legal cynicism significantly predict trust in police. Among them, police authority has the greatest impact on trust in police.

Table 3: Regression analysis of trust in police by law students

Variables	B	SE	p	VIF
Cooperation with police	0.03	0.05	0.60	1.13
Police authority	0.33	0.06	**0.00**	2.55
Obligation to obey	0.05	0.04	0.20	1.11
Deterrence	0.14	0.05	**0.00**	1.07
Moral credibility	-0.09	0.05	0.64	1.51
Legal cynicism	-0.13	0.06	**0.02**	1.24
Police effectiveness	0.26	0.06	**0.00**	2.25
Distributive justice	0.15	0.06	**0.02**	2.33
Procedural justice	0.31	0.08	**0.00**	2.89
Age	0.00	0.01	0.54	1.33
Gender	0.07	0.05	0.22	1.12
Parents education	0.05	0.03	0.12	1.31
Family social status	-0.01	0.04	0.83	1.29

Dependent variable: Trust in police

The results of regression analysis for criminal justice students (Table 4) show that variables 1) police authority, 2) police effectiveness, and 3) procedural justice significantly predict trust in police. Among them, procedural justice has the greatest impact on trust in police.

Table 4: Regression analysis of trust in police by criminal justice students

Variables	B	SE	p	VIF
Cooperation with police	0.01	0.04	0.78	1.10
Police authority	0.21	0.06	**0.00**	2.59
Obligation to obey	-0.05	0.03	0.11	1.09
Deterrence	-0.05	0.03	0.15	1.06
Moral credibility	0.22	0.04	0.59	1.41
Legal cynicism	-0.06	0.04	0.13	1.15
Police effectiveness	0.35	0.06	**0.00**	1.91
Distributive justice	-0.03	0.05	0.49	2.23
Procedural justice	0.45	0.08	**0.00**	3.35
Age	0.00	0.00	0.70	1.27
Gender	0.02	0.04	0.73	1.18
Parents education	0.03	0.02	0.24	1.10
Family social status	-0.07	0.04	0.06	1.09

Dependent variable: Trust in police

Wilks' Lambda (0.854) of discriminant function (Table 5) revealed that there are statistically significant differences between the groups of law students and criminal justice and security students ($p < 0.001$). Correlations between

discriminating variables and discriminant function show that variables legal cynicism (0.558; $p < 0.001$), procedural justice (0.667; $p < 0.001$), life goals (-0.311; $p < 0.01$), moral credibility (-0.651; $p < 0.01$) and trust in police (0.145; $p < 0.01$) have the greatest impact on the distinction between groups. Another statistically significant variable at $p < 0.05$ is police authority (0.107).

To learn how many students in the samples share common characteristics and how many of them differ in their responses, we conducted discriminant analysis and classification of responses to get an additional insight into their responses and group characteristics.

Table 5: Discriminant analysis

Variables	Law M/SD	Criminal justice M/SD	Wilks' Lambda	p	Correlations between discriminating variables and discriminant function
Cooperation with police[b]	3.41/0.54	3.37/0.58	0.999	0.479	-0.115
Police authority[a]	2.29/0.59	2.43/0.55	0.986	**0.013**	0.107
Obligation to obey[a]	2.55/0.69	2.62/0.66	0.998	0.307	0.075
Life goals[d]	3.09/0.51	2.92/0.51	0.973	**0.001**	-0.311
Trust in police[a]	2.62/0.62	2.76/0.53	0.984	**0.008**	0.145
Deterrence[c]	2.63/0.54	2.62/0.60	1.000	0.827	-0.103
Moral credibility[a]	2.08/0.60	1.91/0.54	0.978	**0.002**	-0.651
Legal cynicism[a]	1.83/0.48	2.03/0.55	0.966	**0.000**	0.558
Police effectiveness[a]	2.55/0.56	2.64/0.48	0.993	0.071	0.025
Distributive justice[a]	2.33/0.57	2.35/0.58	1.000	0.726	-0.148
Procedural justice[a]	2.45/0.52	2.63/0.46	0.969	**0.000**	0.667
Wilks' Lambda	0.854				
p	0.000				

a. 1 – Strongly disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Agree, 4 – Strongly agree; b. 1 – Never, 2 - Rarely, 3 – Occasionally, 4 – Frequently; c. 1 – Very unlikely, 2 – Unlikely, 3 – Likely, 4 – Very likely; d. 1 – Unimportant, 2 – Somewhat unimportant, 3 – Somewhat important;

A comparison between criminal justice students and law students shows (Table 5) that law students have more positive views on life goals and moral credibility. In the case of police authority, trust in police, legal cynicism, and procedural justice, the mean values of criminal justice students are higher than those of the law students.

In the case of variable moral credibility, law students expressed a higher support to the statements: 1) that criminals should be punished according to the law, 2) that law does a good job making sure that criminals get the punishment they deserve regardless of how much money they have and, 3) that innocent people who are accused of crimes are always protected by the law. With regard to the factor mentioned, criminal justice students have expressed a stronger support to the statement "Lots of people I know think the law often punishes people who DO NOT deserve it."

On variable life goals, law students expressed higher values in a high social status, enjoyment of life, possibilities to afford clothes according to the latest fashion, rewarding job, comfortable standard of living and involvement with non-profit organisations. Criminal justice students expressed higher values in a close network of friends and involvement in special-interest groups.

Classification of responses shows that 70.7% of originally grouped cases were correctly classified (39.0% of law and 88.6% of criminal justice students). Based on the classification of the results, we can conclude that the views of the criminal justice students are more unified and that 61% of the law students have similar views as the criminal justice students. On the other hand, only 11.4% of the criminal justice students have similar views as the law students.

101 out of 160 law students who completed the web survey reported that they had previous experience with the criminal justice system (hereinafter referred to CJS): 1) in the role of hearsay witness, 41; 2) in the role of an eyewitness, 44; 3) in the role of a person who committed a minor offence, 58; 4) in the role of someone who reported a crime, 43; 5) in the role of someone who was a victim, 52; and 6) in the role of someone who was a suspect of a crime, 22.

193 out of 282 criminal justice students who completed the web survey have reported that they had previous experience with the CJS: 1) in the role of hearsay witness, 85; 2) in the role of an eyewitness, 69; 3) in the role of a person who committed a minor offence, 119; 4) in the role of someone who reported a crime, 67; 5) in the role of someone who was a victim, 66; and 6) in the role of someone who was a suspect of a crime, 15.

Results show that law students who had previous experience with the CJS generally reflect higher mean values with regard to variables 1) cooperation with police, 2) deterrence, and 3) moral credibility than the law students who did not have any previous experience with CJS. In regard to criminal justice students, the results show that, as to variables 1) cooperation with police, 2) police authority, 3) trust in police, 4) distributive justice, and 5) procedural justice, those who had previous experience with the CJS generally reflect higher mean values than the criminal justice students who did not have previous experiences with CJS. Furthermore, our results show that criminal justice students and law students who had committed a minor offence or were victims of a crime in general reflect lower mean values. The largest differences in reflection between the groups of students are seen in the field where students had previous experience with the CJS in the role of someone who was suspect of a crime.

Moreover, we compared criminal justice and law students that had previous experience with CJS as to which group reflects higher mean values in which variables. The results revealed that, in general, criminal justice students reflect higher mean values regarding 1) police authority, 2) obligation to obey, 3) trust in police, 4) legal cynicism, 5) procedural justice, 6) distributive justice, and 7) police effectiveness.

5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Our results are similar to Tyler's (2011: 258) statement that the manner and quality of a police officer's performance and attitude towards the public during the

procedures has an impact on their opinion and feelings (i.e., trust) about the police. Thus, the results of regression analysis show that variables (1) procedural justice, (2) police effectiveness, (3) police authority, and (4) legal cynicism predict trust in police by both groups of students. Procedural justice has the greatest impact on trust in police and points out the importance of the treatment of the student by the police in a direct contact or encounters with police officers, as determined by Hinds (2009) and Cunneen and White (1996). Furthermore, Jackson, Bradford, Stanko, and Hohl (2013) confirmed the impact of procedural justice on trust in police. Further analysis revealed that for law students, six variables (police authority, procedural justice, police effectiveness, distributive justice, deterrence and legal cynicism) significantly predict trust in police, whereby police authority has the greatest impact on trust in police. On the other hand, for criminal justice students only three variables (police authority, police effectiveness, and procedural justice) significantly predict trust in police, with procedural justice having the greatest impact on trust.

We further compared both groups using discriminant analysis, and our aim was to find out how many students share common characteristics and how many differ in their responses. Results showed statistically significant differences between the law students and criminal justice and security students. The groups of students differ the most in their opinions relative to variables legal cynicism, procedural justice, life goals, moral credibility, and trust in police. At this point, it is important to stress that if police chiefs want to improve trust in police, their reforms should focus on increasing (1) procedural justice, (2) police effectiveness, (3) police authority, and (4) decreasing legal cynicism of young people.

A comparison between criminal justice students and law students reveals that variables life goals and moral credibility are more positively perceived by law students. On the other hand, police authority, trust in police, legal cynicism, and procedural justice are more positively perceived by criminal justice students. One of the possible reasons for the differences between trust in police by law students and that by students of criminal justice and security could be the difference in their study programmes and in (personal) characteristics of both groups (e.g., life goals, social background, curriculum, among others). The students who choose to study law are different from the students who choose to study criminal justice and security (i.e., legal aspects and police aspects). For example, Machura et al. (2014, based on the results of their study in 2010, point to an increase in scepticism of law students during the study, which is influenced by political events and personal experiences with the police and media. In general, criminal justice students express high punitive attitudes. Mitar and Meško (2008) pointed to higher punitive attitudes of criminal justice students in relation to law students. The reasons for the differences between law students and criminal justice students can be also seen in the nature of their studies. We assume that the results of our study and, consequently, responses of the students were affected by the protests against corruption and the government taking place during data collection.

As regards previous experience with CJS in general, results also show that law students who had previous experience as compared to the law students without such experience more positively perceive variables cooperation with

police, deterrence and moral credibility. In the case of criminal justice students, variables cooperation with police, police authority, trust in police, distributive justice and procedural justice are more positively perceived by the students with previous CJS experience than by those without it.

Reisig et al. (2012) found out that procedural justice judgments significantly shape individual perceptions of trust in police and explain self-reported compliance with the law. Results from comparing both criminal justice and law students with previous CJS experiences revealed that law students reflect higher moral credibility and are more willing to cooperate with the police. On the other hand, criminal justice students expressed higher respect for police authority, feel more obligated to obey the police, have higher trust in police, procedural and distributive justice, and see the police as more effective than law students. Is the reason for such a difference hidden in more experience and cooperation with police by criminal justice students during their study and in the differences between the study programmes or previous (personal) experiences?

Perception of the police and criminal justice professionalism of those with experience with the police- and the criminal justice systems breaks into three groups: those who perceived police and criminal justice professionals as 'professional' (n = 238), 'unprofessional' (n = 32), and 'extremely unprofessional/ abusive' (n = 3). Further analysis revealed that, as regards students' previous experience with CJS, both law and criminal justice and security students who were hearsay witnesses, eyewitnesses, or persons that reported a crime, consider the police as a more professional institution. Nevertheless, the result showing that Slovene police officers behaved professionally and offered all the necessary support and help when dealing with a student as a victim confirms the finding about the police as a (very) professional institution.

To conclude, if we want to improve trust in police, we should improve the fairness of their procedures. It needs to be emphasized that police effectiveness shows in the level of quality of their services. Thus the level of success in controlling crimes by the police and police authority shows the legality of the police. What is more, this is also viewed as the ability of the public to identify them with the police morality and general goals of the police. We can conclude, as already emphasized by Meško et al. (in press), that police authority and procedural justice have an impact on trust in police. Despite the fact that the studied sample was specific due to the differences in study programmes (law and criminal justice and security) that include more often 'contacts' with the police, we believe that, to some extent, our results can be generalized and seen as important from the citizens' perspective. We believe that the police in Slovenia, in order to increase public trust, should focus on the improvement of police authority, police effectiveness, and procedural justice, while legal cynicism reflects a general social climate in the society where we conducted the study.

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About the Authors:

Gorazd Meško, Ph.D., is Professor of Criminology at the Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security, University of Maribor. E-mail: gorazd.mesko@fvv.uni-mb.si

Rok Hacin, M.A., is Junior Researcher and Ph.D. student at the Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security, University of Maribor. E-mail: rok.hacin@fvv.uni-mb.si

Katja Eman, Ph.D., is Assistant Professor of Criminology at the Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security, University of Maribor. E-mail: katja.eman@fvv.uni-mb.si