

# BUDGETARY PERSPECTIVE ON POLICE FORCE: A CASE STUDY ON SLOVENIA

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## Abstract

The author explores some of the generally overlooked roles of police force in contemporary world. The last decade was strongly marked by a need for increased safety, and police forces were strongly motivated to change the security paradigm. However, a connection between police and security can be seen as well, through the budget, where the activity of the police is measured using the amount of revenues obtained from fees and fines. In the case of the Slovenian security situation and fine revenues, police has both the main role in providing a certain level of national internal security and an important budgetary role by providing 1% of the Slovenian budgetary revenues that are sufficient to cover the expenses of approximately 15 main institutions belonging to the political system.

## 1. Introduction

Providing the overall security of a country is one of the most important roles of the modern state. This statement became even more emphasized after the terrorist attacks from September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 on the symbols of the coercive capitalist world order. Simultaneously, we are facing a 'privatization' of security that is widely spread in 'Western' democracies, and quickly develops in transitional countries. The states transfer different police competences to other security institutions (other than private protection agencies), such as municipal patrols or agencies for highways. All these agencies are competent to maintain peace and order (in a broader sense) in the society. On the other hand, they are usually seen as the repressive apparatus of the government, suppressing the freedom of individuals while appearing very ineffective in their protection role. However, the insight into the state-building role of these institutions is limited. In this article we will attempt to understand the budgetary role of repressive institutions, especially police force. Firstly, we believe that in the modern state, police force has only limited interest in providing general security. Secondly, it appears that security providing institutions are strongly concerned about collecting relatively large sums of money from fees and fines. In general, money is paid to local or national budgets. The paper attempts to show how the Slovenian police force contributed to the security and budget. In this sense we can paraphrase Adam, Tomšič and Kristans (2008, pp. 60-61) according to which Slovenia, as one of successful models of transition, started to develop dysfunctions on the basis of positive elements. What in the socialist regime was seen as mildly positive (compared to other socialist states in Central and Eastern Europe) control turned into high control that is financially motivated.

Police is both the most important national institution for providing internal security and one of the public sector's components. According to different definitions of public administration, the police may also be considered as an integrant part of the public administration. This statement can be valid in Slovenia, where police is a subordinated institution of the Ministry of Interior and where each ministry is defined as public administration. Be it so or not, one of the main tasks of modern police is to protect the state and the citizens from different individual threats made by individuals or institutions other than those belonging to the national or foreign army. Such consideration of the police forces as part of the public sector/public administration adds to this debate a component that even though it is not discussed in this article, it is certainly important for the perception of police work. Despite the rare discussion in this matter, the police work can and shall be systematically subordinated to the main principles of the last decade public administration reform. Here we are referring to New Public Management as a set of certain principles introducing private sector working principles into the sphere of public sector work (Klimovský, 2010). However, especially in the case of police work we have to be very selective in applying New Public Management (or other similar) principles into practice. In fact, one would expect that the main priority in police force reform to be the movement from the state centric

approach (providing security of the state), to the citizen centric approach (providing security of the citizens and for the citizens). However, in many cases, it is obvious that the police usually understand reform and New Public Management wrongly, simply increasing efficiency and effectiveness of its budgetary role. This aspect will become obvious in the empirical case of our article. The peak of such behaviour can be seen in the market-oriented behaviour of the police force. In some of these cases, the police price their services as their additional institutional income (see Talaga and Tucci, 2008). In this context, Klimovský (2010, p. 193) stresses the importance of New Public Services concept as a possible answer to all lacks of New Public Management concept. At the same time, this concept shall answer to all dysfunctions of classical bureaucratic behaviour of public administration.

On the other hand, Lazăr (2005, pp. 126-127) is pointing out six main principles of good governance to be implemented in Romania and Slovenia as well. These principles are: low inflation, low taxation, development of public services, individual and public safety, tax equity and individual liberty and integrity of any citizen. Lazăr (2005, p. 127) argues that these six principles were not taken into account until the 2004 change of the Romanian government. On the other hand, in the case of Slovenia, we can argue that since 2004 the situation is worsening concerning public safety, individuals' liberty, low taxation burden and low inflation situation.

Despite most of the presented changes suggested by Klimovský (2010, p. 193) are irrelevant for the police (due to their specific nature), there is an important statement saying that within New Public Services it is important to serve the citizens and not the government. Developing this implication of New Public Services and respecting at least two points from Lazăr's list (2005, pp. 126-127), the police needs to take all necessary actions to protect citizens from any significant danger and to help them in different situations in a customer-friendly way, rather than to strictly serve the governmental interests by collecting budgetary money.

## **2. The socio-economic situation in Slovenia**

State related security issues are strongly connected to the cultural and socio-economic situation in the state. A high level of drug-addiction will raise the level of robberies, thefts and burglaries, just as a high level of poverty will do. A high presence of different mafias in a country will normally raise the number of gunfights, violent deaths and kidnaps. A high number of cars in a state will result in a higher share of car accidents and consequent injuries etc.

The cultural situation in a country can influence the tolerance to different habits, such as drinking and driving, state activities as raising and introduction of taxes, the tolerance towards different minorities (national and societal), the tolerance towards rules or ability to comply with them.

In Table 1, we present some basic information on general crimes in Slovenia. Overall, one can see that the number of discovered and punished crimes is increasing. In this

respect, the number of reported crimes and violations can be useful information as well. However, we can see that the overall violence is relatively high (compared to all convictions), and that there are some additional specifics. It seems that the courts are able to convict more persons of violations against human rights, and that crimes against property are not only the most common, but they can be interpreted as result of an unfair society and of different other issues. Crimes against public order are mainly connected to fights, inappropriate behavior etc., mainly due to abuse of alcohol. On the other hand, the number of public transportation violations is decreasing, especially in connection with more and more repressive sanctions against drivers.

**Table 1:** Convicted adults by type of criminal offences

	1995	2000	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3462</b>	<b>6304</b>	<b>7974</b>	<b>7718</b>	<b>8119</b>	<b>8685</b>	<b>8739</b>
Against life and body	405	691	826	815	838	765	785
Against human and civil freedoms and rights	155	368	607	705	734	756	779
Against sexual inviolability	43	73	92	91	118	123	112
Against human health	36	213	332	252	383	356	345
Against matrimony, family and youth	41	103	110	116	164	151	165
Against employment and social security	-	-	-	-	28	30	34
Against property	1453	2449	3364	3376	3490	3828	3787
Against economy	73	376	443	352	479	467	472
Against official obligation and public authority	23	20	14	15	19	32	27
Against public order and peace	164	479	689	657	723	822	882
Against the general safety of people and property	80	53	57	72	43	46	74
Against the safety of public transport	543	811	702	531	459	446	385
Against the environment, space and natural assets	23	30	33	28	25	29	30

Source: [http://www.stat.si/letopis/2009/11\\_09/11-07-09.htm](http://www.stat.si/letopis/2009/11_09/11-07-09.htm)

The main reason of death in Slovenia is connected to various diseases, such as heart and veins illnesses (over 7,000 deaths per year), illness of respiratory or digestion system etc. According to the statistical data, in Slovenia each year die more than 18,000 people, of which about 50-55% people dies in hospital. However, Table 2 shows some crucial data on violent deaths.

In general, we can see that between 7-9% of all deaths in Slovenia are violent. The number of direct killings or homicides is almost irrelevant in the percentage of all deaths and also only barely worthy to mention within violent deaths. About 2% of all deaths are suicides, which are not mainly connected to adolescence; it seems in fact, that there are favorable conditions for senior citizens to appeal to suicide. In such case, social security (demanding great amount of money and returning only low taxes) failed. It seems that old males, often under influence of their drinking habits, are not given enough support to live and die naturally.

**Table 2:** Deaths due to accidents, homicides and suicides

	1995-1999	2000-2004	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>TOTAL</b>	1721	1537	1492	1435	1590	1597	1515
<b>Accidents</b>	1091	954	942	909	1048	1142	1094
<b>Homicides</b>	37	26	38	23	13	21	13
<b>Suicides</b>	593	557	512	503	529	434	408
<b>Cause of accident<sup>1)</sup></b>	1092	954	942	909	1048	1142	1094
Transport accidents	381	308	307	277	293	319	251
Poisoning	38	29	24	26	28	37	70
Falls	382	330	309	321	437	485	550
Fire and explosions	16	11	7	10	7	13	10
Suffocations and drowning	59	55	42	45	68	70	52
All other causes	216	221	253	230	215	218	161
<b>Suicides</b>							
Total	593	557	512	503	529	434	408
Men	461	427	370	391	415	335	324
Women	133	130	142	112	114	99	84
<b>Age groups (years)</b>							
0-19	24	15	15	6	10	6	13
20-49	286	240	215	221	205	163	172
50 +	283	302	282	276	314	265	223
<b>Per 100 deaths</b>							
Violent deaths	9.1	8.2	8.1	7.6	8.7	8.6	8.3
Accidents	5.8	5.1	5.1	4.8	5.8	6.1	6.0
Homicides	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Suicides	3.1	3.0	2.8	2.7	2.9	2.3	2.2
The International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Tenth Revision classifies the causes of death.							

Source: [http://www.stat.si/letopis/2009/04\\_09/04-16-09.htm](http://www.stat.si/letopis/2009/04_09/04-16-09.htm)

On the other hand, it is evident that a vast majority of all violent deaths are caused by different accidents. It is interesting to note that traffic accidents are not the main cause of accidental deaths. Most of accidental deaths are caused by different falls, including those of falling on the ice, due to bad maintained road in the wintertime, falling when mountain climbing, due to bad physical condition or bad equipment or due to bad luck at paragliding. However, it is obvious from statistics that the number of traffic accidents deaths is declining, while the number of deaths by different events categorized as falls is increasing. For the safety on the road we can blame/praise higher fees and other repressive sanctions in Slovenia introduced in recent years. However,

it is hard to determine how is it possible that the number of incidental deaths by falling increased significantly when compared to the decrease of traffic accident deaths. There are few different explanations: the decrease of the safety in construction areas (in the last few years, the number of fatal working accidents increased, mainly in construction); the need for adrenalin, causing the decision of greater number of people to start extreme sports (usually badly prepared); and the increasing number of (especially foreign) tourists in Slovenian mountains, who are badly equipped for walking and climbing on altitudes 1000 m above sea level.

It seems that the Slovenian institutions responsible for providing the overall security situation in Slovenia are performing bad their job. The 2009 yearly report shows that the police force in Slovenia is able to solve less than one half of all crime cases in the period between 2005 and 2009. The police was in the same period able to indicate only each ninth criminal act, while victims of citizens reported the other eight. Briefly, this last conclusion may explain the basic security situation in Slovenia.

Meško and Lobnikar (2005) on the other hand conducted research on local communities on most important measures for maintaining the security in local communities in Slovenia in 2003 and 2004, showing that local community security councils assess that following security measures should take place in order to prevent crime and disorder: organized work with youth, more leisure activities available, professional policing, anti-unemployment measures, training for parents, schoolteachers competent for work with 'difficult children', solving social problems etc. According to Meško and Lobnikar (2005, p. 360), police control over problem areas came only tenth, traffic regime 18<sup>th</sup> and repressive policing 26<sup>th</sup> from 28 different options. From this perspective it is rather visible that Slovenian population understands security in a social and not crime way. Such perspective brings up numerous financial problems from gathering resources to their allocation.

### **3. Slovenian police force**

According to the Yearly Report of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Slovenia, in 2009 there were 10,985 systematized working places (in 2008 this number was 10,590) and out of them 9,349 (9,300 in 2008) were occupied. Among them about 6,200 of staff were members of uniformed police, while the rest were administrative personnel. In 2009, the Slovenian police force bought or rented 50 unmarked police cars and 61 marked police cars or vans. From 2008, the ratio between hired marked to unmarked police cars changed from 30% to almost 41% of all patrol cars (there is no info available about the police cars that are owned by police).

In this manner one can argue that Slovenia is heading back on the road of control. In opposition to what Adam, Bernik and Rončević (2005, p. 66) are arguing for the ideological control in the times of socialist Yugoslavia<sup>1</sup>, the Slovenian police force

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1 Klimovský (2008, p. 46) nicely expressed the main problem of any public administration reform, that can be applied for political system as such as well, is that any reform starts with enthusiasm and high expectations and in most cases ends with low results and

is recently developing a sophisticated system of total control over traffic that can be even misused for collecting data on personal routes. Despite the economic crisis, the number of police force was increasing, just as the undercover police presence did. According to the 2009 Police Yearly Report almost 78% (258,642,122 EUR) of the police budget was spent for salaries of the staff. From 2008, the amount of money for salaries of the police increased by 7.4%.

#### **4. The budget of the Republic of Slovenia**

The Republic of Slovenia has two-year budget with fiscal year covered by calendar year. For 2009 estimated budgetary revenues were 8,986,762,000 EUR, mainly collected from taxes (7,669,825,396 EUR). The estimated amount of collected fines and fees was 46,469,549 which is about 0.52% of all budgetary revenues. This sum was changed to 72.199.071 EUR (with budgetary rebalance made on July 16, 2009) as well as all budgetary revenues that dropped to 7,920,040,319 EUR. According to the above-mentioned rebalance of budget, fees and fines in 2009 represented more than 0.9% of the Slovenian budget. At the same time, the revenues from state selling goods and services were almost unchanged due to the rebalance (the state did not try to offer more services to the citizens and enterprises) and, at the same time, according to the rebalanced budget, the state expected 7 fines on one sold service (initially 1:4). This is completely against Klimovský's New Public Services principles (2010, p. 193) that the public sector serves primarily the government and not its citizens. In the case when the government is able to change revenues from fines to almost twice within the budgetary year and to count on these revenues, it is rather evident that governmental demands have higher priority than citizens needs (in this case citizens have no need for fines, but for security, and fines cannot be the main measure for providing security). The final budgetary report shows that the realized 2008 budgetary revenues for services were approximately equal as planned for 2009 and amount from fines was much closer to the 2009 rebalanced budget plan than to initial budget for 2009 (<http://www.mf.gov.si/slov/proracun/proracun.htm>).

The 2009 budget of the Republic of Slovenia confirmed the 9,112,167,385 EUR of expenditures. The expenditure budget of the Ministry of Interior in 2009 was 322,397,582 EUR. On the other hand, the Ministry of Healthcare received 97,004,755 EUR and the Ministry of Economics received 274,573,571 EUR of the total budgetary expenditure. From these data it is evident that the Ministry of Interior spent 3.5% of the national budget and at the same time gained much more money than the Ministries of Healthcare and Economics (two important sectors for development and quality of life).

In 2009, 983,606,070 EUR were allocated for salaries paid by the state to the employees in public sector. According to the data on salaries in police force, 26.3% of all budgetary expenditures for salaries went to salaries for the police. According to

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dissappointment. We can add that includes it lots of social/political 'extrenalities', which can lead to devolution of quality of life.

these data, the Slovenian police force adds great share to the budgetary expenditure with only small possibility to find some reserves in a sense of greater efficiency and effectiveness side of police work or on the side of possibility to limit expenditures of Ministry of interior.

### 5. The budgetary role of police

The Slovenian police have a double budgetary role. As we saw from previous parts, it is one of the greatest spenders of budgetary revenues, especially if considering the amount of money spent for the salaries. On the other hand, the police force is one of the most effective institutions for collecting additional budgetary revenues. The majority of fines are connected to traffic violations, mainly due to speeding, driving under influence of alcohol and other violations. It is not surprising that fines are established in order to suppress these violations. According to the Act on traffic security, in Slovenia, the lowest fine for violating a traffic sign is 40 EUR, and the highest one, for speeding, is 1,000 EUR. This means that if one drives (without causing accident) into one way street from the wrong end, the driver risks a 40 EUR fine, but if one drives 80km/h in a settlement where the speed limit is 50 km/h, he/she will receive a 1,000 EUR fine and endure some other non-financial consequences. According to this, it is necessary to be aware of two facts. For any fine paid within 16 days without complaint or court procedure, there is a 50% discount. And second, in many cases speed limits in Slovenia are set in a manner that they allow fining (e.g. the town mark is put 100-300 m before first house, speed limits indicators not removed after reconstruction of the road etc.). So we have to be aware that our further calculation is of limited validity.

For reasons of comparison, we present first some data on fines for speeding, alcohol driving and some other dangerous violations of traffic rules in Slovenia and some relevant for Slovenia’s neighbor countries Austria, Italy and Croatia.

**Table 3:** Fines for most common traffic violations in Slovenia and some of neighbor countries (EUR)

	Slovenia	Croatia	Austria	Italy
Intoxicated driver	180-950	100-2100	300-5900	500-6000
Speeding	250-1000	70	70	150-600
Driving into the red light	250	290-700	72-2180	150-600
Non-use of safety belt	120	70	35	74-295
Use of the cell phone	120	70	50	70-290
Intoxicated driver speeding into the red light with no use of safety belt and using cell phone (highest fines)	2440	3010	8235	7785

Source: <http://www.zurnal24.si/slovenija/kazni-179588/clanek>

From Table 3 it is obvious that Slovenia has lowest fines for driving under the influence of alcohol and highest fines for speeding. It is necessary to stress that speeding is categorized by place of violation and speed measured.



The Slovenian police force is organized into two different working unions (Union of Slovenian Police and Slovenian Police Union) with about 50-50% membership. On October 5<sup>th</sup> 2009, they organized a two-hour strike that included about 3,000 policemen. The strike was organized in a way that the police would only respond to emergency calls and interventions and issuing no fine tickets. Information was that in one day with an average fine of 200 EUR, two hours of no fining meant a budgetary deficit of 200,000 EUR. This number is close to the estimated daily budgetary revenues expected in 2009 for achieving the goal of 72,199,071 EUR from fines and fees (197,805.7 EUR per day). This number will certainly vary due to weather conditions and other legal conditionalities not taken into the account here (such as paying half of amount in 16 days, which gives space for revenues from other fines and sanctions).

According to this information we can make a small calculation of informative nature, which is far from being exact. An average shift is 8 hours; the police are working 24 hours/day and 365 days per year. The traffic control squad is composed from a car and two officers. According to the previously mentioned data on cars, at any given moment 75 traffic patrols can be active, but due to the diversity of tasks only about one third (25) patrols are working on traffic control at any given time, with smaller numbers during nights and bad weather conditions.

The budgetary importance of the Slovenian police force can be measured as well in relative way compared to different other elements. First, we can see that for 208 Slovenian municipalities the expected budgetary revenues from fines are higher than 2009 yearly budget. Only the biggest two Slovenian municipalities had larger budgetary revenues in 2009 than the expected state revenues from fines and fees. On the other hand, 40 (20%) municipalities with lowest revenues all together were not able to realize the 2009 expected budgetary revenues from fines and fees.

On the other hand revenues from fines (72.2 mil. EUR) according to the rebalanced budget of Slovenia for 2009 can cover expenditures according to the same document for: The Office of the President of the Republic of Slovenia – 3.6 mil. EUR, The National Assembly of Republic of Slovenia – 29.2 mil. EUR, The National Council of the Republic of Slovenia – 2.3 mil. EUR, The Electoral Commission of the Republic of Slovenia – 3.8 mil. EUR, The Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia – 2.3 mil. EUR, The Information Security Office – 1.3 mil. EUR, The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Slovenia – 4.9 mil. EUR, The Court of Accounting of the Republic of Slovenia – 6.9 mil. EUR, The Anti-corruption Commission of the Republic of Slovenia – 1.1 mil. EUR, The Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts – 4.3 mil. EUR, The Prime minister Cabinet – 2.3 mil. EUR, The Governmental offices – 32 mil. EUR, The Ministry without portfolio for Development and European Affairs – 22.9 mil. EUR, The Slovenian Intelligence Agency – 15.3 mil. EUR and the Cabinet's Office for legislation – 2.5 mil. EUR.

From this list, it is obvious that revenues from fines can cover budgetary expenditures of many Slovenian political system institutions; and that many institutions are hardly reaching the levels of fine revenues. With 1% of expected budgetary revenues we are

able to cover expenses of about 10-12 political system institutions, responsible for general situation in the state as well as for the specific areas important to any democratic country such as human rights protection and anti-corruption activities. However, we have to be aware that the amount collected yearly from fines and fees cover only 1/3 or one 1/4 of money necessary for salaries of police force. Such comparison of budgetary items can go on and on but the picture will remain about the same.

## **6. Concluding remarks**

Statistically speaking, the Slovenian police force receives about 1% from the national budget revenues and about 30% on expenditure side concerning salaries paid from the national budget. However, one can conclude that the level of fees and fines revenues has to be seen in double perspective. On one hand, the amount of fees is enormous, and in some cases it is even endangering the existence of individuals, while enabling numerous state functions to be carried out. Not only fees' levels are a reflection of state perspective on 'dangers'; according to the statistics they have some effect on the overall security. However, their role on the budgetary revenues side is much greater. A second side of the fees' role in the Slovenian traffic system seems to be according to the national character that the legal system and traffic security policy has to be connected to the long-term budgetary effects that shall be achieved. Despite the fact that a large number of fatal accidents include drunken persons, the main cause of accident is usually unadjusted speed (not too high speed). Intoxication can be almost seen as apologizing circumstance for unadjusted speed (which is any speed at which a person is not able to control the vehicle completely), while inability to control the car completely at a certain speed is not connected to the intoxication, even when sober individual would be able to avoid the accident at the same speed.

However, in the situation where taxation reform is unpopular and can be strongly politically opposed, one of easiest way to increase the budgetary revenues is to increase police control over citizens' daily routine and impose higher fines and fees for most common legal violations that are highly unavoidable. In this sense, the police force can be seen as an important regulatory mechanism that can strongly influence the level of public debt and deficit. In the case of Slovenia, excluding the revenues from fees and fines, the budgetary deficit would be higher than previously mentioned 1%.

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