

# Students' Views on the Police in the Republic of Macedonia

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Gordana Buzarovska, Oliver Bachanovic,  
Gordan Kalajdziev, Aleksandra Gruevska Drakulevski,  
Boban Misoski, Bogdancho Gogov,  
Divna Ilic, Natasa Jovanova

## **Purpose:**

Although the issues of police legitimacy and police trust are very important for creation of the general level of trust in governmental institutions, there is a lack of research on the topic in the Republic of Macedonia. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to understand the students' experience with the criminal-justice system and possible victimization.

## **Design/Methods/Approach:**

The national survey using a structured questionnaire was conducted in the Republic of Macedonia in February 2013 with respondents from Faculty of Law and Faculty of Security. After the factors analysis was performed to verify the questionnaire, a correlation matrix was produced and two regression analyses were done to uncover the factors that significantly affect both trust and obligation to obey as aspects of legitimacy of the police.

## **Findings:**

The findings point to the importance of procedural justice and police effectiveness for trust in the police, but only police effectiveness has a statistically significant effect on the obligation to obey.

## **Originality/Value:**

This is one among the first papers in Macedonia that draws a conclusion based on opinions expressed by students of law and security studies. The implications of this research can be used to help the national police in drafting policies that should focus on improving effectiveness and procedural justice. Future studies should focus their attention on how to accomplish those important aspects of police work.

**UDC:** 351.74/76(497.7)

**Keywords:** police, police authority, police trust, police cooperation, legal compliance, criminal victimization

## Stališča študentov do policije v Republiki Makedoniji

### Namen:

Čeprav so vprašanja o legitimnosti policije in zaupanja v policijo zelo pomembna za oblikovanje splošne ravni zaupanja v vladne institucije, v Republiki Makedoniji na to temo primanjkuje raziskav. Namen študije je oceniti izkušnje študentov s kazensko-pravnim sistemom in morebitno viktimizacijo.

### Metode:

Nacionalna raziskava, v kateri je bil uporabljen strukturiran vprašalnik, je bila februarja 2013 izvedena na Pravni fakulteti in Fakulteti za varnostne vede v Republiki Makedoniji. Po opravljeni faktorski analizi z namenom preverjanja veljavnosti vprašalnika je bila izdelana korelacijska matrika. Zatem sta bili izvedeni dve regresijski analizi z namenom identifikacije spremenljivk, ki pomembno vplivajo na obe dimenziji legitimnosti policije, in sicer na zaupanje in na dolžnost spoštovanja zakonov.

### Ugotovitve:

Ugotovitve opozarjajo na pomen postopkovne pravičnosti in učinkovitosti policije za zaupanje v policijo. Toda le učinkovitost policije je imela statistično pomemben vpliv na dolžnost spoštovanja zakonov.

### Izvirnost/pomembnost prispevka:

To je ena izmed prvih študij v Makedoniji, ki temeljijo na mnenjih študentov prava in varnostnih ved. Rezultate je mogoče uporabiti kot pomoč nacionalni policiji pri pripravi politik, ki bi se morale osredotočiti na izboljšanje učinkovitosti policije in postopkovne pravičnosti. Prihodnje študije morajo svojo pozornost osredotočiti na načine za doseganje teh pomembnih vidikov policijskega dela.

**UDK: 351.74/76(497.7)**

**Gljučne besede:** policija, avtoriteta policije, zaupanje v policijo, sodelovanje s policijo, spoštovanje zakonov, kriminalna viktimizacija

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The issue of police legitimacy is one of the most important ones when it comes to public perception of the police as one of the most visible governmental entities in a country. We can even go further and say that the perception of the police in most of the cases is a benchmark for citizens to evaluate the level of democracy in the state. For these reasons, police legitimacy in recent years has become a leading factor that determines the level of public trust and confidence in state institutions.

However, regardless of the importance of the police trust and police legitimacy for the creation of the general level of trust in the government institutions in the state, only a handful of research efforts have been conducted in the Republic of Macedonia. Needless to say, as a young democratic country, the Republic of Macedonia has just recently completed the process of transformation and transition, accepting the bedrocks of democratic societies, which is why we think

it is of utmost interest, particularly to Macedonian institutions, to conduct such surveys regarding trust in state institutions and to develop, above all, relevant studies measuring police legitimacy, as these would facilitate decision-making processes and, in particular, help police chiefs and officers carrying out specific actions aimed at enhancing the public's perceptions and general acceptance of and support to their everyday work.

What is interesting about this paper is that the conclusions related to police legitimacy have a certain added value, as they were drawn from the opinions elicited from students of law and security studies and reflect the fact that they are not uninformed people or the general public. On the contrary, they are the aspiring active members of society who can contribute to enhancing police legitimacy or decreasing it through their future professional activities. Furthermore, it is important to have these so-to-say professionalized opinions on police legitimacy because most of the students are well-informed and trained in theoretical and positive legal aspects of the state's respect for and protection of human rights, organization, and function of legal, political and social systems. For these reasons, we can expect a higher threshold in the evaluation of police legitimacy by these respondents.

Another important fact giving additional credit to this paper is the fact that its empirical foundation stems in a broader study regarding the legitimacy of the police as provided by the Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security, the University of Maribor, Slovenia, allowing for the results regarding the police legitimacy in the Republic of Macedonia to be evaluated and monitored against other comparable results of the multinational study.

Nevertheless, the present study does not encourage the authors to harbour unrealistic expectations that a single study is sufficient and grounds enough to fill the gap in empirical and theoretical evaluation of police legitimacy in this region, or that it provides sufficient data for improvement of police legitimacy in the Republic of Macedonia. We also strongly believe that these research efforts are far from being comprehensive, and the number of already performed research activities in this region is lagging far behind the amount of research conducted so far, particularly in the USA (Kääriäinen, 2007). However, we hope these results can and do provide sufficient information which can serve as an effective tool to increase police legitimacy in the region, particularly in the Republic of Macedonia.

The article is composed of two main parts. One deals with police legitimacy on a theoretical level, while the second one brings a statistical analysis of the data gathered from the students in regard to police legitimacy and taken into account in generating several factors affecting police legitimacy. These factors can serve the decision-makers in taking additional steps towards improvement of police legitimacy in the Republic of Macedonia.

## **2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE LEGITIMACY**

### **2.1 Legitimacy in its Broadest Sense**

In general, legitimacy can be defined as governance of political elites based upon the principles that are generally acceptable in one specific political community.

Having legitimate political power implies that individuals do not accept this political order because it is close to their moral habits or simply because it fulfils their individual interest, or even because they would fear that very same political power. It is quite the opposite, individuals accept certain political power and consider it legitimate due to the fact that they share the same beliefs justified and based upon the same and mutual system of values (Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012).

Legitimacy of political power in contemporary European states is closely related to the ideas of natural law which are accepted as a basis for the European ethics and philosophy underpinning the mutual European legal tradition. The essence of the natural law is based upon the concept of human dignity and human ratio existing in every individual and determining that in our society the latter is the internal force behind progressive changes of the human species. This philosophical standpoint articulates that a person is subordinated to a reasonable sense of their ratio (as human nature) and their ability to control and humanize human nature, needs, and interests. Furthermore, the natural law theory notes that human communities are transformed into political ones through democratic means of reaching a mutual agreement and a contractual type of election of the sovereign (Bentham, 1998).

Legitimacy, therefore, denotes compliance by the majority of citizens with the existing legal order (*lege in timus*). Legitimacy of political power is a key issue raising immense interest in every society where the governing power is concentrated within a certain group of people and where political representatives enact laws in the name of the general electorate. On the other hand, absolute legitimacy is impossible, for when political power uses violence on the electorate, it denies common social values and becomes illegitimate. Professor Kambovski (1995) states that legitimacy is a value category which cannot be reduced only to mere general compliance with the laws, because compliance with and/or obeying of the laws by the citizens can be achieved through force or mass manipulation of the people. If legitimacy is not considered a value of political power, particularly as a value characterising the relations between the state and the citizens, this idea can be manipulated and considered an instrument of creating false support to political power, or a tool providing for strict obedience of the enacted laws. The most important elements in determining the essential meaning of legitimacy are citizens' rights and position in society, strict respect for the citizens' property, and nurturing of the civil society by the state. These are the only criteria that can be perceived as real limitations of legitimacy as a value (Kambovski, 1995).

Complexity of the modern state and dilemmas faced by the governing elites require a new evaluation of the instruments creating legitimacy of the political power. This leads to the requirement of additional consent from the citizens for the establishing of new and improved governing procedures. For these reasons, the basic policy type in modern societies is the one that implies a decision-making process aiming at reducing, to a minimum, every issue that could lead to abating or reducing capacity of the same political decision-making process (Tyler, 2006). Therefore, an effective political decision-making process is possible only if this process is unconstrained by the collective values and motives of the members of the political community. A political power cannot hold power unless it is

based upon an administrative adjustment of political structures and upon the political and administrative system apparatus. Procedural legitimacy is possible only if there are possibilities within the political system for the citizen to gain essential material goods, if there is a prevailing political communication, and if the sustainable support of the cultural subsystem is obvious. A precondition for a political system to be considered democratic is for procedural legitimacy of that system to be foreseen as universal, formalized, and specific. This means that the political system should provide an expression of the principles of the political community as a totality of the citizens' interests. The democratic state can achieve and maintain its legitimacy only if it re-establishes its legitimacy through consensual resolution of conflicts on a daily basis (Levi, Sacks, & Tyler, 2009).

## 2.2 Police Legitimacy

Research into procedural justice was first initiated in the mid 1970-ties. Thibaut and Walker (1978) were among the pioneers studying procedural outcomes and among the first theoreticians to have used the expression "procedural justice" (MacCoun, 2005) as a value of a criminal procedure system. They analysed the criminal procedure against the citizens' satisfaction level in two major legal systems: the US/UK adversarial criminal procedure and the continental/mixed or inquisitorial criminal procedure in continental Europe. Through interviews, they reached a conclusion that the adversarial criminal procedure has more advantages than the continental mixed/inquisitorial one. Thibaut and Walker (1978) see the reasons for this in the fact that during the adversarial trial the judge has a mediator role between the parties and establishes the terrain for fair "battle" between them, with the jury being the entity deciding about the actual guilt of the defendants. On the other hand, in the continental mixed criminal procedure, the role of the judge includes both functions, the one of the mediator and that of a person ruling on the defendant's guilt. This means that in the criminal trial in continental Europe the distributive justice and the procedural one are not clearly allocated either to the parties or the court. In their further research, Thibaut and Walker (1978) conclude that one of the factors impacting the deliberation of a just verdict by the criminal court rests upon the opportunity of the parties in a trial to have equal possibilities to explain their side of the story, which means that both parties should enjoy the benefit of equality of arms and legal rights during the criminal trial. Thibaut and Walker's (1978) work is important because they were among the first theoreticians addressing the issue of legitimacy of the criminal trial by comparing, on a general level, both types of criminal procedure. Furthermore, they have concluded that legitimacy of the criminal-justice system is evident through its ability to allow the parties, particularly the defendant, to exercise their right to open discussion of the facts in the court, on the one hand, and the right to freely challenge the other party's evidence through questioning it in an open court hearing (Thibaut & Walker, 1978), on the other.

During the 1960-ties, in the USA, increasing crime control was feasible through higher professionalization of the police. The police had been organizationally standardized on as a homogenous and autonomous structure

through the development of its independent position in regard to the political influence and effective distance from the communities which they served and protected. Legitimacy of the police had been identified through establishment of professional norms and provisions of conduct, through an army style of governing, and by creating a proactive model of conduct in those cases when police officers were called to help local community members. This model of professionalism of the police created a form of democratic legitimacy (independent of political influences) but undermined one other type of legitimacy, that based upon citizens' needs and desires. For these reasons, the police force began to be seen as elite service for crime control in the historical period when both in the USA and in the Western European states massive social disturbances occurred as a result of the civil sector's activism to end the war in Vietnam and to increase the liberty of the people while enhancing accountability of the governments. Through these social movements, civil activism became a facet or an eminent characteristic of liberal democratic regimes. Due to these social reactions, elitism of the police had an adverse effect on police legitimacy (Schulhofer, Tyler, & Huq, 2011).

Another status indicator of legitimacy is the level of fairness of communication among group leaders and group members. In one experiment conducted by Lind, Canfer, and Early in 1990 (in Van den Bos, & Van Prooijen, 2001), several respondents had an opportunity of being evaluated with regard to their participation in the group leader's decision-making process. The first group of respondents expressed their opinions before the group leader's decision was reached, the second group commented the group leader's decision after it was made, and the third group did not have the chance to express their opinion of the group leader's decision at all. The results from this experiment noted that group members consider it more rightful and fair to be able to express a personal opinion even after the decision is made than not to be able to express a personal opinion at all. Naturally, the most rightful scenario was the one where the individuals had the opportunity of expressing their opinion before the decision was made. However, even though the outcome from the scenario envisaging a possibility to express a personal opinion after the decision is made has the same effect as the scenario where the individual does not have the right to express their personal opinion (since either way the people cannot influence the decision-making process of the group leader), the possibility of expressing an opinion *post festum* was considered as more just and rightful, simply because it existed. The conclusions of this experiment have influenced the development of a group values model as a specific model referring to group authorities, which has also explained the importance of the procedural rights to the legitimacy issues.

Van den Bos (Van den Bos & Van Prooijen, 2001) confirmed that the influence of the information noted to the participants earlier has a greater value than the information served later, meaning that when evaluating police legitimacy and fairness, the respondents were keener on focusing on the information served first and often disregarded or forgot the subsequently communicated information (Klaming & Giesen, 2008).

Müller (2012) focuses on the issue of relevance of the procedural justice to conflict resolution. He evaluates the relation between procedural justice and

cooperative behaviour. He stated that in conflicts people do not make profit-driven decisions only but also consider their personal relations and future relations with other people. In this sense, fair treatment is an important tool for preventing any future conflicts and preventing current ones. This is the reason why in many social conflict situations the key question is how a fair and rightful negotiating procedure of a negotiator can help reduce the difficulties in the negotiation process. In this case, the author concludes, in order to have a successful conflict resolution through a negotiation process, the negotiator, essentially, must apply negotiating procedures based upon the procedural justice (Müller, 2012).

Police performance satisfaction is bound to several factors including the type of police communication with the community; the level of assistance and help provided by the police to the community; the quality of this assistance, and the police sincere commitment to resolution of community problems. It is understandable that a community is more satisfied when the police are successful in their performance, appropriately addressing the problems of the community members, resolving crimes, and successfully protecting the citizens' property. However, the citizens/members of the community also expect that, besides their efficient performance, the police should be particularly careful with the community members, be polite and fair, and provide enough time to explain its actions to the members of the community and address citizens' needs.

The simplest solution to trigger an increase in the police performance satisfaction is the establishment of a communication model with the citizens, based upon mutual respect and respect for the citizens' dignity. Throughout their performance, the police should demonstrate appropriate and fair conduct, but even more so be able to show the individuals that the police officers are concerned about their opinion, that they respect the individual as a person, and that individuals really matter to them. These ideas are essential to the understanding of the procedural justice model, particularly in the direct relations or contacts between police officers and community members. Establishing this type of communication when a person is informed of the reasons for the stopping of their vehicle, for example, provides an opportunity for the police to demonstrate that police officers follow the regulations and procedures and treat citizens with respect.

Some other research has shown sufficient arguments with regard to the influence of the police standpoint towards the readiness of the citizens to cooperate with police officers. This means that citizens are keener on cooperating with police officers if they express respect for their individual rights and if they demonstrate respect for them as persons. This means that they are more willing to report crime or appear and stand as eye witnesses during a trial if police officers demonstrate the abovementioned attitude and characteristics. According to Tyler (2003), the type of police communication and the general police attitude affects the citizens' readiness to obey the law even at times when the police officers are not present. He further states that the police can do much to increase their reputation in the community, and even if sometimes they cannot reach desired standards in crime control, police officers must always treat citizens fairly and respectfully. In personal contacts with the police, citizens expect to have an

opportunity to express their opinion and have a chance to explain the reasons that have led them to appear in a critical situation. They expect to face an impartial and neutral police that reaches its decisions objectively and police officers who treat them with respect and dignity, showing that they care for their wellbeing. The quality of the communication between the police and community members is very important for perception of police legitimacy. This conclusion has risen from the individual-level empirical data used from the interview data collected in connection with the European Social Survey (ESS) in September 2005 data across 16 countries among a population aged 15 and above (Kääriäinen, 2007). This survey confirmed the correlation between the police trust and the perception of police corruption. This means that the higher the perception about police corruption, the more police-trust and police-confidence levels are reduced, proportionally.

The reasons why surveys measuring citizens' attitude towards the police are important include their willingness level to participate in the initiatives for improving community safety, their readiness to cooperate with the police, and for measuring police legitimacy.

### **3 POLICE AND POLICING IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

Having gained independency in 1991, the Republic of Macedonia as a transition society had to build effective and legitimate security systems without which there cannot be sustained development or any progress towards democracy. To reach this goal, every society must achieve a minimum level of social order, political stability, economic well-being, and a sense of human dignity. The police is one of the state agencies that can help create and sustain these conditions. Security is important to the development of democracy, and the police are important to the character of that security (Bayley, 2002).

At the same time, in order to meet the needs for education in human rights in policing training, a series of courses related to human rights and democratic policing were developed. The training curriculum is based on European policing and international human rights standards and covers a wide variety of skills required for policing in a democratic society.

Despite great public interest, the reform of the police did not receive any greater scientific interest. The only relevant research regarding policing has been conducted biannually by OSCE mission in Skopje since 2002. The results of these surveys show that the citizens evaluate the attitude of the police towards them negatively, and so do they evaluate police professionalism.

#### **3.1 Survey on the Position of Students as Regards the Police in the Republic of Macedonia**

##### **3.1.1 Methods**

This paper presents findings from a national survey that was conducted on students from the Faculty of Law – Skopje and students from the Faculty of



Security – Skopje, the Republic of Macedonia, in April and May 2013. The aim of the survey was to determine the factors that impact police legitimacy.

The survey was conducted by distributing a questionnaire for the students to fill in electronically. A non-random sample included 487 respondents, all students attending classes when the data was gathered. The total population of the students at the Faculty of Law roughly consisted of 2,700 students approximately equally distributed in five years of study (550 per year), while that at the Faculty of Security was estimated to 380 regular students (171 freshmen, 78 sophomores, 69 juniors, and 62 seniors). The sample consisted of more participants who attended the Faculty of Law (71.9%;  $n = 350$ ) than the Faculty of Security (28.1%;  $n = 137$ ). As to the year of studies, juniors dominate with 58.6% ( $n = 285$ ); 23.7% are sophomores, ( $n = 115$ ), and 10.9% of the respondents are freshmen ( $n = 53$ ); 5.3% are seniors ( $n = 17$ ), and only 1.4% are master-degree students ( $n = 7$ ). The sample is dominated by female respondents, amounting to 68.3% ( $n = 332$ ), with only 31.7% (154) represented by their male counterparts.

### 3.1.2 Measures

This study investigated the main factors that shape perceptions of police legitimacy or have an impact on public cooperation with the police in Macedonia. Police legitimacy was viewed as a two-dimensional concept consisting of 1) an obligation to obey, and 2) trust in police. On the other hand, cooperation with the police was conceptualized through procedural justice and police effectiveness.

In order to perform the necessary analyses and check the hypotheses, a factor analysis was conducted by way of 25 questions yielding six factors, only five of which were taken into account in further analysis (the sixth one not being significant enough): obligation to respect; trust in the police; procedural justice; police efficiency, and cooperation with the police (Table 1).

## Students' Views on the Police in the Republic of Macedonia

**Table 1:**  
Descriptive  
statistics

	<i>n</i>	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Imagine that you were out and saw someone steal a wallet. How likely would you be to call the police?	486	1	4	3.01	.951
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?	485	1	4	3.15	.955
Imagine you had evidence that someone bribed a government official. How likely would you be to report this behaviour to the police?	486	1	4	2.72	1.086
How likely would you be to call the police if you saw someone break into a house or car?	484	1	4	3.57	.748
How likely would you be to volunteer to serve as a witness in a criminal court case involving a crime that you witnessed?	486	1	4	2.72	.965
You should do what the police tell you to do even if you disagree.	485	1	4	2.35	.966
You should accept police decisions even if you think they are wrong.	487	1	4	2.23	1.034
The police in my community are trustworthy.	487	1	4	2.48	.955
I am proud of the police in this community.	485	1	4	2.19	.939
The police are usually honest.	485	1	4	2.33	.917
People's basic rights are well protected by the police.	486	1	4	2.22	.878
The police can be trusted to make decisions that are right for your community.	486	1	4	2.13	.838
The police treat citizens with respect.	485	1	4	2.17	.821
The police treat people fairly.	486	1	4	2.23	.792
The police respect citizens' rights.	484	1	4	2.29	.810
The police are courteous to citizens they come into contact with.	485	1	4	2.22	.799
The police treat everyone with dignity.	485	1	4	2.18	.790
The police make decisions based on the facts.	483	1	4	2.34	.839
The police explain their decisions to the people they deal with.	485	1	4	2.32	.851
The police make decisions to handle problems fairly.	485	1	4	2.38	.844
Crime levels in my neighbourhood have changed for the better in the last year.	482	1	4	2.33	.882
There is not much crime in my neighbourhood.	481	1	4	2.50	.915
The police respond promptly to calls about crime.	481	1	4	2.40	.880
The police are doing a good job preventing crime in my neighbourhood.	480	1	4	2.44	.869
The police do a good job maintaining order in my neighbourhood.	480	1	4	2.49	.909

### 3.1.3 Police Legitimacy

The starting point in considering legitimacy is that it should be viewed as a two-dimensional concept consisting of obligation to obey and trust. The results of the factor analysis generated the third and the fifth factor: the obligation to obey ( $\lambda = 1.610$ ) and trust ( $\lambda = 1.185$ ). The obligation factor consists of two questions (items): "You should do what the police tell you to do even if you disagree" and "You should accept police decisions even if you think they are wrong", while the trust-in-the-police factor consists of three questions: "The police in my community are trustworthy", "I am proud of the police in this community", and "The police are usually honest".

Cooperation with the police refers to readiness and willingness of people to cooperate with the police and help its work. On the basis of the factor analysis, a second factor was generated, cooperation with the police ( $\lambda = 1.624$ ). Five questions constructed this factor: "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?", "How likely would you be to volunteer to serve as a witness in a criminal court case involving a crime that you witnessed?", "Imagine that you were out and saw someone steal a wallet. How likely would you be to call the police?", "Imagine you had evidence that someone bribed a government official. How likely would you be to report this behaviour to the police?", and "How likely would you be call the police if you saw someone break into a house or car?". The close-ended responses to these survey items ranged from 1 (very unlikely) to 4 (very likely).

### 3.1.4 Procedural Justice

Procedural justice concerns personal views on the manner in which the police treat people and is used as a variable derived from the factor analysis showing this factor being constructed of 10 statements ( $\lambda = 6.198$ ): "The police respect citizens' rights", "The police are courteous to citizens they come into contact with", "The police treat citizens with respect", "The police treat people fairly", "The police treat everyone with dignity", "The police can be trusted to make decisions that are right for your community", "The police make decisions based on the facts", "People's basic rights are well protected by the police", "The police explain their decisions to the people they deal with", and "The police make decisions to handle problems fairly". The close-ended response set to these items ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree).

### 3.1.5 Police Efficiency

In theory, police efficiency is often associated with police legitimacy and refers to the positions of the public regarding police performance in dealing with crime. The factor analysis has shown that five statements constructed the fifth factor ( $\lambda = 1.471$ ), called police efficiency: "The police are doing a good job preventing crime in my neighbourhood", "The police do a good job maintaining order in my neighbourhood", "The police respond promptly to calls about crime", "Crime levels in my neighbourhood have changed for the better in the last year", and

“There is not much crime in my neighbourhood”.

Two demographic variables are included in the analyses: gender (1 = female, 2 = male), and family social status ranging from 1 (far above the average) to 5 (far below the average). The year of studies was also included in the analyses, ranging from 1 (first year) – 5 (master), study field 1 (law) and 2 (criminal justice), and prior victimization 1 (yes) and 2 (no).

#### 4 RESULTS

In order to verify the hypothesis existing in the literature on procedural justice and police legitimacy, we should first determine the factor loadings of the variables (derived from the factor analysis) (Table 2).

Table 2:  
Factor  
analysis

Structure Matrix	Factor					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	The police respect citizens' rights.	.721	.165		.420	.512
The police are courteous to citizens they come into contact with.	.701	.173		.403	.361	
The police treat citizens with respect.	.677			.337	.587	
The police treat people fairly.	.676	.170		.331	.484	
The police treat everyone with dignity.	.664			.341	.269	.127
The police can be trusted to make decisions that are right for your community.	.656	.187	-.112	.326	.585	.244
The police make decisions based on the facts.	.564	.185		.318	.283	.196
People's basic rights are well protected by the police.	.547	.182		.334	.523	
The police explain their decisions to the people they deal with.	.537	.120		.250	.182	.345
The police make decisions to handle problems fairly.	.428			.252	.326	.314
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?	.123	.722	-.114			-.146
How likely would you be to volunteer to serve as a witness in a criminal court case involving a crime that you witnessed?	.129	.608				
Imagine that you were out and saw someone steal a wallet. How likely would you be to call the police?	.140	.558				

Imagine you had evidence that someone bribed a government official. How likely would you be to report this behaviour to the police?		.498				.233
How likely would you be to call the police if you saw someone break into a house or car?		.490				
You should accept police decisions even if you think they are wrong.			.830			
You should do what the police tell you to do even if you disagree.	.117		.569		.232	
The police are doing a good job preventing crime in my neighbourhood.	.266			.610	.198	.168
The police do a good job maintaining order in my neighbourhood.	.353			.554	.179	
The police respond promptly to calls about crime.	.256			.541	.235	
Crime levels in my neighbourhood have changed for the better in the last year.	.382			.512	.340	
There is not much crime in my neighbourhood.	.138		.155	.490	.218	-.171
The police in my community are trustworthy.	.332		.122	.298	.669	
I am proud of the police in this community.	.375		.238	.363	.616	
The police are usually honest.	.322		.246	.318	.608	.151

Table 2:  
continuation

*Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring*

**The results of the correlation** show that the positions of students on procedural justice are strongly associated with those on confidence in the police (as one of the dimensions by which legitimacy of the police is measured;  $r = 0.625$ ) but not with the positions regarding the second dimension of legitimacy, i.e., obligation to obey (which was also proved in previous studies). This brings into question whether legitimacy can be measured by the obligation to obey the laws or does it require other parameters defining whether the police have legitimacy among the public.

Likewise, the correlation shows a strong connection between the respondents' positions regarding the effectiveness of the police and the confidence in this body ( $r = 0.508$ ), though lacking a strong association with the obligation to obey ( $r = 0.146$ ).

The results on the relationship of the two dimensions of legitimacy with the positions of students about willingness to cooperate with the police is interesting. They do not confirm the thesis that willingness to cooperate with the police is linked to the positions of students about legitimacy (trust and obligation to obey) and, perhaps, indicate that this population is ready to cooperate with the police, but their willingness might not be based only on the confidence they have in the

police but also on certain moral values they hold and are motivated by for such cooperation.

In order to determine which factors in inter/correlation as a model affect the legitimacy of the police, a **regression** is made separately for both dimensions.

The results from the regression made for the first dimension of police legitimacy show that procedural justice has the strongest influence on trust (these results are confirmed in the correlation, as well). They are in line with what has been previously confirmed in numerous studies, i.e., that police legitimacy is based on perceptions of procedural justice. In addition, efficiency of the police is closely related to the trust in the police. Other variables included in the model, such as *Field of study* and *Year of study*, have a statistically significant impact on confidence in the police (Table 3).

Table 3:  
Trust

Model	Trust				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta</i>		
(Constant)	(.436)	.255		(1.707)	.088
Field of study	.196	.081	.102	2.427	<b>.016</b>
Procedural justice	.458	.042	.482	10.797	<b>.000</b>
Police effectiveness	.211	.046	.203	4.624	<b>.000</b>
Economic-financial status	(.020)	.055	(.014)	(.368)	.713
Year of study	.096	.043	.087	2.216	<b>.027</b>
Gender	.121	.067	.066	1.801	.072
Prior victimization	.007	.082	.003	.082	.934
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.416				
Adjusted <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.407				

From the regression made for the second dimension of legitimacy (Obligation to obey), one can notice that there is no statistically significant effect of procedural justice. These results can be explained in the same direction with the above-mentioned correlation (Table 4).

Obligation to obey the law					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	B	SE	Beta		
(Constant)	.151	.320		.472	.637
Field of study	(.548)	.101	(.281)	(5.408)	<b>.000</b>
Procedural justice	(.032)	.053	(.034)	(.611)	.541
Police effectiveness	.219	.057	.208	3.823	<b>.000</b>
Economic-financial status	(.044)	.069	(.029)	(.634)	.526
Year of study	(.030)	.054	(.027)	(.560)	.576
Gender	.053	.085	.028	.628	.530
Prior victimization	.051	.103	.023	.498	.619
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.104				
Adjusted <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.090				

**Table 4:**  
Obligation to obey the law

## 5 DISCUSSION

The findings suggest the importance of understanding of the factors that shape public judgments about legitimacy of the police. In this study, two models of antecedents of legitimacy were contrasted: an instrumental performance model and a non-instrumental procedural justice model. A performance model of policing links public views about cooperation to their judgments about effectiveness of police performance in fighting crime. It suggests that in order to be viewed as legitimate, the police need to communicate with those in the community. Procedural justice was the potential normative base for the evaluation of legal authorities, suggesting that the public evaluates legal authorities primarily against criteria of procedural justice.

Drawing on psychological models of procedural justice, two dimensions were distinguished: judgments about the justice of the decision-making aspects of procedures, on the one hand, and judgments about the justice of the interpersonal treatment that people receive from the authorities, on the other. Justice involving the decision-making element in procedures links procedural justice to issues such as the degree of neutrality and the absence of personal bias or prejudice. Justice in interpersonal treatment links procedural justice to the respect for people's rights and dignity and to consideration of their needs and concerns. The relationship between the procedural justice of police policies and practices and public evaluations of legitimacy of the police was tested using regression analysis. Results of previous analyses indicated that public evaluations of justice of police decision-making and justice of the manner in which the police treat members of the public both shaped police legitimacy.

The results of our study suggest that in Macedonia the willingness to cooperate with the police is linked to the perceptions of students about legitimacy (trust and

obligation to obey). The results stress that legitimacy of Macedonian police does not rest solely upon the two above-mentioned values. Even more, the results have shown that this population is ready to cooperate with the police. However, the willingness for cooperation may not be based only upon the confidence they have in the police but also on certain moral values they hold and are motivated by in such cooperation.

Some of the reasons for the perception of the police depicted through this analysis could be attributed to several societal factors present in Macedonia. The first and maybe the most important factor is that the general public perceives Macedonian society as strongly influenced by the political parties. This perception is specifically characteristic of the police and the courts. This might be one of the reasons that students show lack of obligation to obey or to report crime, since they think that reporting crime will make no difference or that their criminals are "above" the law. This public opinion is particularly created through the media which, in most of the cases when reporting of the Governmental performance, are biased and politically incorrect. These conclusions may stem in the fact that most of the respondents in our study did not have any previous contact with the police and that they developed their perception of the police largely through the media. Another dimension might be that some of the respondents are identifying themselves with the police, since they are students at the Faculty of Security and they feel as a part of the police.

An additional factor that might influence the police perception is that the data gathering in Macedonia coincided with the ongoing local self-government elections campaign, meaning that during this period most of the students were under a strong influence of the political parties' election campaigns. This milieu may have resulted in a biased students' perception of legitimacy of the police, the most exposed part of a government in the eyes of the general population.

However, even if these societal factors may not be the most significant influence shaping the results of this study, and setting aside a particularly low interest of Macedonian students in the obligation to obey the police, this study should serve as a starting point for subsequent research in order to determine the specific factors influencing Macedonian students' attitudes in regard to police legitimacy, and the obligation to obey the police, in particular, as one of the key factors for police legitimacy in general.

Finally, we can conclude that these results, particularly those related to the obligation to obey, should be treated as extremely important, particularly by the Macedonian police, as they are a strong point of reference for every subsequent enhancement of the Macedonian police legitimacy as perceived by the citizens.

For these reasons, we consider that this analysis should only be the first indicator for the Macedonian police to take additional steps to improve the level of its legitimacy. Furthermore, it might also serve as an initial step to carry out additional research aimed at identifying and determining other factors that may influence legitimacy of the Macedonian police, drawing sufficient attention to addressing these factors. Namely, as widely suggested in policing-related theories, when people think that the police make decisions following fair procedures, they regard the police as a more legitimate institution, and when the police are regarded



as a more legitimate institution, people tend to respect their decisions more. These findings reinforce the argument that the police can best regulate public conduct by engaging prevalent social values such as legitimacy, which leads to higher self-regulation in most of the public.

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**About the Authors:**

**Gordana Buzarovska**, Ph.D., Professor, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, *Iustinianus Primus* Faculty of Law in Skopje.

**Oliver Bachanovic**, Ph.D., Professor, St. Kliment Ohridski University in Bitola, Faculty of Security in Skopje.

**Gordan Kalajdziev**, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, *Iustinianus Primus* Faculty of Law in Skopje.

**Aleksandra Gruevska Drakulevski**, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, *Iustinianus Primus* Faculty of Law in Skopje.

**Boban Misoski**, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, *Iustinianus Primus* Faculty of Law in Skopje.

**Bogdancho Gogov**, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, St. Kliment Ohridski University in Bitola, Faculty of Security in Skopje.

**Divna Ilic**, Ph.D., teaching and research assistant, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, *Iustinianus Primus* Faculty of Law in Skopje.

**Natasa Jovanova**, Ph.D., teaching and research assistant, St. Kliment Ohridski University in Bitola, Faculty of Security in Skopje.