ISSN 2029-1701
ISSN 2335-2035 (Online)

Research Journal
PUBLIC SECURITY AND PUBLIC ORDER
2026, Vol. 38, Nr. 3

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND RESILIENCE FOR THE SECURITY OF COMMUNITIES AND THE LITHUANIAN SOCIETY

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DOI: 10.13165/PSPO-26-38-03-10

Abstract. *This paper is dedicated to exploring the context of some of the research questions that are at the heart of the research project („Policijos veiksmų modeliavimas siekiant padidinti bendruomenės saugumą krizinėse situacijose“/ “Modeling the Police activity for the enhanced security of communities during crises/adverse situations” (No. S-LU-26-3) 2026-2027, which is financed by the Lithuanian Research Council). While the issues of what is the difference between security and safety have been explored in-depth by one of the authors of this paper[1] and[2]; another theme of utmost importance is contextualization of police (law enforcement in general, please, note, law enforcement and police will be used in an intermingled manner further on, as synonyms, though, surely, there is a difference between the terms). At the same time, the fabric of contemporary society is being analyzed. However, in this paper the main focus is on the relative, perceived, and also reported preparedness of police to react to adverse/crises, which - the authors of these lines will be the first to admit - were not the direct focus. In contrast, the second publication was developed in 2021. That is, when the full-fledged war in Ukraine was still in the feared, but not yet manifested, future. We, researchers, have to come to terms, that sometimes our predictions, the feeling of unease that we try to communicate to the wider society, are unpopular at the time of communication, and may be even both not helpful and depressing, when the predictions come to be true; and yet, even if a small proportion of compatriots are made aware of the trends and either re-configure their professional lives, and/or contribute to the best of their abilities to building up wider resilience, the likelihood of a lesser degree of losses increases. This is especially true for professionals, particularly those who work directly in critical institutions, such as medical care providers and other critical services providers, such as law enforcement.*

[1] Zuzevičiūtė, Vaiva. Security studies: what we have learned and what remains to be discussed. The ICT dimension and education // ALTA'24: Advanced learning technologies and applications: Sustainability and partnership in education: annual international conference for education: conference proceeding = Pažangios mokymosi technologijos ir aplikacijos: Tvarumas ir partnerystė švietime: tarptautinė konferencija skirta švietimui, [2024 m. gruodžio 5 d]. Kaunas: [Kaunas University of Technology]. ISSN 2335-2140. 2024, p. 49-60.

[2] Šlapkauskas, Vytautas; Zuzevičiūtė, Vaiva. Between Security and Safety - Outlines for the Contours of Research in Search of a Holistic Approach // Europe Alone : Small State Security without the United States / edited by David Schultz, Aurelija Pūraitė, Vidmantė Giedraitytė. Lanham : Rowman & Littlefield International, 2022, Chapter 18. ISBN 9781538167281. eISBN 9781538167298. p. 403-422.

Acknowledgements. *Let us acknowledge the input of Ms. Agnė Greblikaitė, the liaison officer for admissions between the Academy of Public Security at MRU and the police, who was instrumental in collecting empirical data in the Lithuanian context, and express our gratitude for cooperation and the invaluable input from one of the police stations in Lithuania in one of the Lithuanian cities.*

Keywords*: Police officer, law enforcement, community, resilience, preparedness, perceived preparedness.*

Introduction

We believe that, in the context of the full-fledged war in Ukraine, it is worthwhile to examine the relative, perceived, and reported preparedness of police to respond to adverse crisis situations. We, researchers, have to come to terms with the fact that sometimes our predictions, the feeling of unease that we try to communicate to the wider society, are unpopular at the time of communication, and may even be both not helpful and depressing when the predictions come to be true. Yet, even if only a small proportion of compatriots become aware of the trends and either reconfigure their professional lives and/or contribute to the best of their abilities to build wider resilience, the likelihood of fewer losses increases. This is especially true for professionals, particularly those who work directly in critical institutions, such as medical care providers and other critical services providers, such as law enforcement.

When preparedness to withstand the crisis/adverse situations is conceptualized, a quotation from La Rochefoucauld (a philosopher, a state person, who lived and worked in the 17th c. (1613-1680), here from Tatarkiewicz, 2002[3])) comes to mind. The paraphrased idea goes: people are actually very good at overcoming suffering, especially when this suffering is not of their own, but of some other person. The paraphrased quotation is fitting here when we discuss a crisis/adverse situation that is next door, and yet still not here, not yet in our country, not yet in our communities. However, the experiences of the heroic Ukrainian people and the performance of critical services provide impetus for examining the relative, perceived, and reported preparedness of police to respond to crisis/adverse situations, and their impact on overall resilience.

Research **object:** the conceptualization of perceived and reported preparedness of contemporary Lithuanian police to produce a productive response for the security of our communities and the society at large in Lithuania in the event of a crisis/adverse situation.

This paper aims to discuss the conceptualization of perceived and reported preparedness of contemporary Lithuanian police to produce a productive response for the security of our communities and society at large in Lithuania in the event of a crisis/adverse situation.

The problem is formulated as a **research question (RQ)**: What is the perceived and reported preparedness of contemporary Lithuanian police to produce a productive response in the event of a crisis/adverse situation?

Methods: The theoretical considerations were discussed, and the empirical data items, using a focus group, were collected during the second and third quarters of 2026, under the framework of the research project („Policijos veiksmų modeliavimas siekiant padidinti bendruomenės saugumą krizinėse situacijose“/ “Modeling the Police activity for the enhanced security of communities during crises/adverse situations”(No. S-LU-26-3) 2026-2027, which is financed by the Lithuanian Research Council).

Resilience and intermediary resilience agents

Firstly, resilience will be discussed. Crisis/adverse situations, when war is the ultimate one of such situations, at least from an anthropocentric point of view (natural disasters, such as

[3] Tatarkiewicz, W. (2002). Filosofijos istorija. II. Vilnius, Alma Littera.

ELE[4] or similar are not taken into consideration in this particular paper) lead us to discuss the concept and the terms of *resilience*.

Resilience is a multilayered concept, which is reflected in at least two widely used terms. On the one hand, psychologists refer to it as something that each person may develop, conceptualizing it as a set of particular skills rather than a particular personality trait. On the other hand, resilience has gained political prominence, as it is referred to as the key pillar of the EU defense strategy (https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2026-07/Brief_2026-10_Resilience.pdf).

In the first instance, when the term *resilience* is used to characterize preparedness to build well-being and to overcome the challenges that each person faces throughout his/her life, such as the death of loved ones, divorce, being made redundant, and health issues, it is important to note that contemporary psychologists and education professionals note its developmental character. That is, attention to certain techniques and practices, such as rationalization, keeping oneself knowledgeable, engaging in conscious lifelong learning, the conscious and deliberate search for help and assistance, the conscious and deliberate offering of support for other people, building networks, building physical health practices, and maintaining several social networks and several interests, to name a few without a particular order, which are the elements of emotional intelligence; they are instrumental for resilience at individual's level[5]. A person facing grave health issues will be more resilient if he or she has previously maintained several interests and hobbies, as this helps keep oneself engaged and avoid all-consuming despair.

In the second instance, when a term is associated with communities and societies, rather than individuals, resilience has become a recurring theme in political debate in the last two decades. For example, the European Defense Agency (eda.europa.eu) spearheads the EU Capability Development Plan (CDP), which was updated in light of recent events in 2023. The list of focal points was published in the document 2023 *EU Capability Priorities* (https://eda.europa.eu/docs/default-source/brochures/qu-03-23-421-en-n-web.pdf), where resilience is given a prominent role, especially as it relates to civil infrastructure and services (including its role in deterrence). Building up shelters, installing alert systems, enhancing other essential services that support the EU mutual assistance clause, Article 42 (7) TEU[6] are all aligned with boosting resilience at the EU, individual states, and, ultimately, each citizen's level.

Thus, the two terms, one that refers to an individual's preparedness, the other that refers to state and even supra-national structure (the EU) preparedness to withstand the crisis/adverse situation, are related and intertwined.

Secondly, it is worth discussing the concept of an *intermediatory resilience agent*. We posit that for ultimate resilience, an intermediatory resilience agent is necessary: a critical service that any sophisticated, technology-oriented, expertise-based society enjoys. An intermediatory resilience agent connects an individual's resilience with resilience at a wider scale: at the community level, and nationally or internationally, among allies. In the above example, a hypothetical health struggle that any individual may face – and does! - during their lifetime was shortly addressed. While an individual's resilience is important, it can only lead to

[4] Extinction-level-event; https://www.thoughtco.com/extinction-level-events-4158931
[5] Naudužienė, Gitana; Zuzevičiūtė, Vaiva. Emocinio intelekto ir psichologinės gerovės ryšys: ugdymo galimybės = The relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being: educational possibilities // Šiuolaikinės visuomenės ugdymo veiksniai : mokslo žurnalas. Vilnius : Generolo Jono Žemaičio Lietuvos karo akademija. ISSN 2424-6131. eISSN 2424-614X. 2021, t. 1, p. 217-235.
[6] https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Article%2042%287%29%20TEU%20-The%20EU%27s%20mutual%20assistance%20clause.pdf

a positive result when paired with the quality and effectiveness of health/medical services. Health/medical services are one of those critical services that connect an individual's resilience with the ocean of specific (medical) expertise that can lead to a positive, or at least satisfactory, outcome.

In the case of hybrid threats or direct attacks, the effectiveness of military and law enforcement services takes precedence. An intermediary agent, law enforcement, connects an individual's resilience with the specialized expertise available in the community to overcome adverse situations both in the short and long term.

That is, the effectiveness of these intermediary resilience agents- critical services such as the health/medical system, law enforcement (and surely others, such as transport, communal services, etc.)- comprises a foundation of ultimate overall personal, national, and international resilience.

While an individual's resilience may be enhanced by education and deliberate, conscious lifelong learning, national and international resilience requires deliberate and conscious policies, investments, and participation. Due to the limitations of the scope of the paper and the project[7], only the role of the intermediary resilience agent - law enforcement – is examined further.

In this context, law enforcement may be understood not merely as a public service responsible for maintaining public order, but as an institutional intermediary between the individual, the community, and the wider system of critical services and institutions. An individual citizen, even if personally resilient, cannot independently ensure security in the face of a large-scale crisis/adverse situation. The individual needs access to information, assistance, protection, coordination, and, when necessary, the capacity of institutions to act collectively. Law enforcement, together with other critical services, provides an important link between individual and community resilience and the institutional capacity to respond to a crisis/adverse situation. Thus, police preparedness is not only a matter of the readiness of individual officers to perform their assigned tasks. It is also a matter of the ability of the institution to connect, coordinate, and mobilize the necessary human, informational, organizational, and technological resources when the situation requires it.

Crisis, law enforcement and community

Again, a paraphrased quotation from La Rochefoucauld may be used as a stepping-stone for this part of the paper. While the author (whether seriously or ironically, or maybe desperately – we will not know 400 years later!) tells us that people are actually very good at overcoming suffering, especially *when this suffering is not of their own, but of some other person*, here we would like to argue otherwise. That is, that a civilized, democracy orientated, expertise-based, technologized, and future-oriented sophisticated society, a law-and-order-oriented society, a society that wants to be resilient, a society of resilient citizens, will be both sympathetic to the suffering of other people and will try to help in overcoming the suffering. That is, we will argue, surely, the essential function of intermediatory resilience agents (the function of critical services).

[7] *Project: „Policijos veiksmų modeliavimas siekiant padidinti bendruomenės saugumą krizinėse situacijose"/ "Modeling the Police activity for the enhanced security of communities during crises/adverse situations" (No. S-LU-26-3) 2026-2027, funded by the Lithuanian Research Council*

Lithuanian police enjoy a high level of public confidence, which is a double-edged sword, one may argue. According to the Report of the Activities of the Lithuanian Police (for 2024[8]; note: the data for 2025 was not yet confirmed when this paper was developed in late Spring 2026), the Lithuanian public had a high level of confidence in the Lithuanian police. 82% of respondents expressed a positive view.

On the one hand, it is common sense that a society that respects law and order is more likely to flourish, as security is one of the basic needs; only when security is guaranteed can creativity and ingenuity come to the fore. At individual's level, this was emphasized by Maslow in the mid-20th century[9]. Back in the 16th century, De Montaigne went so far as to suggest that good political governance, in essence, equals respect for justice and law. Thus, high confidence in law enforcement reflects a high level of perceived quality in the services provided by police. However, when the achieved level of public expectations is high, the pressure to maintain these expectations is also high. Police must continue providing services at the same high quality, which can be demanding. One example of how difficult it will be to maintain this level of confidence is that just more than a third (37.5%) of offenses and crimes in the digital space were successfully solved in 2024 (p. 24)[10]. When a huge portion of activities in all spheres of private, economic, and social life is being transferred into the digital sphere, this low percentage may lead the public to question the police's competence and readiness to apprehend this type of criminal activity. It must be noted that confidence in the police (actually in any other institution, or even a person) is earned every day by providing quality services. It takes decades to build a solid reputation, and it takes one, two, or three incidents for the goodwill and the credit to be wiped away. The example of the UK may be given here, where the citizens are extremely dissatisfied with two-tier policing after the tragic death of Henry Nowak in December 2025, and the following revelations about the horrifying role that the police had are just one such example. This latter example is useful. It reminds about the need to discuss here and now the role, the expectations, the functions and also the support our police needs here in Lithuania to foster productive, responsible, legally transparent, democratic and yet firm response of this crucial social institution for building productive response for our communities and the society at large here in Lithuania, and, probably, beyond, when (or, arguably, already does) it faces crisis/adverse situations.

Another example, central to the discussion in this paper, is the effectiveness of police in assisting citizens in crisis/adverse situations. Because of Ukraine's experiences and suffering, this effectiveness will play a major role in the resilience of communities and the country. Toynbee[11], one of the most influential historians of the 20th century, notes that the continuation of a certain culture, a certain group of people, is probably is determined by the ability of that given culture/group/civilization[12] to react to challenges. Each given culture/group/civilization, at a certain point in its development, inescapably faces some challenge, which may be of a different nature: a natural disaster, the ascendance of unfriendly neighbors, etc. It is up to that

[8] https://policija.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1740978344/10416/2024%20m.%20policijos%20veiklos%20ataskaita%20fin.pdf accessed on June 13, 2026.

[9] Here from https://www.vle.lt/straipsnis/abraham-harold-maslow/

[10] https://policija.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1740978344/10416/2024%20m.%20policijos%20veiklos%20ataskaita%20fin.pdf accessed on June 13, 2026.

[11] Here from the abridged version, 1987: Toynbee, J. Arnold (1987). A Study of History. The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order. Abridged (I-VI) by D.C. Somervell, Oxford University Press.

[12] Note: we will just note that *culture/group/civilization* are not complete synonyms, we use them as approximates due to the overall complexity of the issue and the required limits for the paper's length.

culture/group/civilization to produce an innovative, productive, rewarding response and thus flourish and continue to have a future, or the response is insufficient and the culture/group/civilization declines and ultimately perishes. Toynbee did not go so far as to suggest that a certain specific achieved civilizational *status quo* is something that human history tries to achieve, either consciously or subconsciously, as an ultimate satisfactory or even positive state. These ideas, about some types of the ultimate human state, were put forward by other authors, which now, after a hundred or even much less years, fail to produce evidence as to their validity (ideas of Marx[13] or Fukuyama[14]). Toynbee posits that history is created by dynamic, brave, innovative (in many spheres, be that military, artistic, social, or economic ingenuity) cultures, which means by dynamic, brave, innovative people whose ingenuity is not stifled by their culture too much.

What we are witnessing now is somewhat symptomatic, as the ideals that liberal Western societies nurtured for almost eighty years, approximately after WWI and, surely, after WWII, are challenged to a significant extent by the realities we observe today. The war in Ukraine is one glaring example, but it is just one of a string of events that differ in scale and are similar in nature. That is, loss of the agreed-upon and more or less universally supported ideals about the kind of society we want, and which is worth living. The Middle East wars (Autumn of 2023; Spring of 2026) may be quoted as the chains of that string; while the underlying reasons may be different, the price that individuals and communities pay is universal: despair, devastation, loss of life and prospects. The suffering of other people may soon become our own; thus, planning and preparing to overcome that suffering, building resilience at individual, community, and institutional levels, is a logical course of action.

The police in a democratic state function according to a rather strict and straightforward legal framework, which in Lithuania is based on stipulations described in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania[15], the Law on the Police of the Republic of Lithuania[16], and the Law on the Approval of the Statute of the Internal Service of the Republic of Lithuania[17]. The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania provides the fundamental legal basis for police activities, as it enshrines the core principles of human rights protection, equality of persons, and the rule of law, which all state institutions, including the police, must adhere to. For example, Article 29 of the Constitution stipulates that all persons are equal before the law, the courts, and other state institutions or officials, and that human rights may not be restricted or privileges granted based on sex, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, beliefs, or views. This provision is particularly significant when addressing the issue of security for vulnerable communities, which becomes highlighted in crisis/adverse situations. This Constitutional provision implies not only a formal recognition of the equality of all persons, but also an obligation on state institutions to effectively defend the rights of individuals in cases where they face discrimination, hostility, or other threats to their safety. While the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania provides the general normative basis from which further legal regulation

[13] Barevičiutė, J. (2008). Kapitalizmo kultūrinis ir politinis pjūviai naujųjų medijų sąlygomis: K. Marxas, F. Engelsas, J. Baudrillard'as. Filosofija, Sociologija, 2008, Vol 2008, Issue 3, p. 60.
[14] Williams, Howard, Fukuyama, Francis, Sullivan, David, Matthews, E. Gwynn (2016). Francis Fukuyama and the End of History. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. ISBN 1-78316-877-3; ISBN 1-78316-878-1.
[15] Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, TAR, accessed on June 6, 2026, https://e-tar.lt/portal/en/legalAct/TAR.47BB952431DA

[16] Law on the Police of the Republic of Lithuania, TAR, accessed on June 7, 2026, https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.CA89372D00AA/asr

[17] Law on the Approval of the Statute of the Internal Service of the Republic of Lithuania, TAR, accessed on June 25, 2026, https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/legalAct.html?documentId=TAR.4FC026AC03AE

of police activities and their duty to ensure a safe environment for all members of society arises, other, more specifically targeted legal acts specify stipulations in greater detail.

The Law on the Police of the Republic of Lithuania[18] elaborates on the general principles enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania and defines the role of the police within the public security system. Article 1 of this Law defines the purpose of the police, the principles of their activities, the legal basis, the tasks of the police, the police system and structure, as well as the duties, rights, and responsibilities of police officers, the grounds for the use of force, and other issues. Such regulation indicates that police activities are not understood solely as a response to violations of the law that have already occurred, as the law defines a broader role for the police in advance in ensuring public safety.

The provisions of Articles 4 and 5 of the Law on the Police of the Republic of Lithuania are particularly significant[19]. Article 4 establishes the principles of police activity, which include respect for human rights and freedoms, humanism, public morality, proportionality, the balance between transparency and confidentiality, as well as professional secrecy. Article 5 stipulates that the primary tasks of the police are the protection of human rights and freedoms, the maintenance of public order and public safety, the provision of emergency assistance (which, we may argue comprises the response to crisis/adverse situations, at least in the short term, but also in longer term), as well as the prevention, detection, and investigation of criminal offenses and other violations of the law. Therefore, the Law on the Police of the Republic of Lithuania allows for a broader interpretation of the police's role, which is a duty not only to respond to violations but also to actively contribute to the creation of an overall safe environment in communities.

The Law on the Approval of the Statute of the Internal Service of the Republic of Lithuania[20] supplements the legal framework established in the Law on the Police of the Republic of Lithuania, as it defines in greater detail the status of officers in the internal service system, the principles of service organization, the rights and duties of officers, accountability, and requirements for professional ethics. Article 3 of the Statute of the Internal Service[21] establishes the principles of professional ethics for the internal service and its officers, which include respect for the individual and the state, justice, impartiality, decency, exemplary conduct, the reconciliation of public and private interests, accountability, and zero tolerance for corruption. This provision is particularly important when examining police activities in the context of the safety of vulnerable communities, as it demonstrates that professional and lawful conduct by an officer is understood not merely as a formal official duty, but also as a necessary condition for trust in the institution. Therefore, the Internal Service Statute complements the Law on the Police of the Republic of Lithuania not only from an organizational perspective, but also from a values-based perspective, as it establishes standards upon which, in practice, both public trust in the police and the ability of officers to act appropriately in sensitive situations depend, and which, again, we will argue, definitely characterize crisis/adverse situations, even if they are associated or are caused by an adverse external force/threat, at least in a short term.

On the one hand, the concept of *community* is exceptionally multilayered: when the community by some is described as a certain geographic entity, by others - as a certain group

[18] Law on the Police of the Republic of Lithuania, supra note, 1.
[19] Ibid., Arts. 4–5.
[20] Law on the Approval of the Statute of the Internal Service of the Republic of Lithuania, supra note, 15.
[21] Law on the Approval of the Statute of the Internal Service of the Republic of Lithuania, supra note 15: Art. 3.

with certain characteristics[22], again by some other authors - as a group that shares common specific values or common specific history, or common specific goals (here from Butrimė, Zuzevičiūtė, 2014[23]). On the other hand, it is not crucially disqualifying to describe as merely a community a group of people that share the same geographic and intellectual/emotional territory, language, and history in the context of facing a crisis/adverse situation caused by an external force/threats, and when it is important to demonstrate resilience. In such a context, a community will be vulnerable across most parameters.

Thus, for answering **research question (RQ)** (What is the perceived and reported preparedness of contemporary Lithuanian police to produce a productive response in the event of crisis/adverse situation.?) from a theoretical point of view we may conclude that *resilience* may be conceptualized as either a set of skills an individual has, or, also, the quality of the activities that institutions and the state have. Most importantly, these two conceptualizations are intertwined: an individual's resilience is important; however, an individual must be connected to necessary services/expertise via an intermediary resilience agent. That is, critical services and institutions, such as health care or law enforcement, among many others. Thus, both strengthening the resilience of individuals via education (which is beyond the focus of this paper) and the resilience of institutions, particularly law enforcement, via proactive planning, investment, and the building of infrastructure and networks, are of equal importance.

We may also conclude that national legal stipulations are sufficient to build intermediary resilience agents – institutions of law enforcement's preparedness for providing assistance and support for the citizens and communities. Thus, the next step for investigation is to examine empirically what police officers themselves perceive and report as the preparedness of contemporary Lithuanian police to produce a productive and effective response in the event of a crisis/adverse situation. Therefore, during Spring 2026, an empirical study, based on the qualitative methodology of social research, was designed. It was implemented in early Summer, 2026.

The process and the participants of the empirical study

To answer the research question during Spring 2026, an empirical study based on qualitative social research methodology was designed; a focus group method was selected for two main reasons. First, it aimed to give participants opportunities to discuss ideas and challenges and elaborate on peers' contributions. Second, it aimed to allow researchers to engage minimally in the discussion to clarify certain points. The focus group was implemented in early summer 2026. A convenience sample was assembled; that is, the focus group participants were those who attended a certain in-service event. Participants were invited to dedicate additional time to the focus group discussion on a volunteer basis.

Limitations. The decision to participate in the focus group comprises one of the important limitations of this study. That is, those professionals - Lithuanian law enforcement officers – who decided to dedicate additional time to the research exercise may possess certain personal and professional attributes that their peers, who did not dedicate their time, do not possess. Thus, their responses may reflect their personally specific, heightened awareness of the situation, the goals and expectations, and the heightened responsibility for the Lithuanian

[22] E.g., as is emphasized by Reports commissioned by European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, accessed on July 16, 2026, https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fundamental-rights-report_challenges-and-achievements_2025.pdf

[23] Butrimė, Edita; Zuzevičiūtė, Vaiva. E-learning as a socio-cultural system: towards a balanced development. Saarbrücken : Lambert Academic Publishing, 2014. 184 p. ISBN 9783659588693.

public. Surely, without a control group, which in this case is impossible to implement, this hypothesis remains merely a cautionary comment. The second limitation stems from the fact that any method that is based on the qualitative methodology of social research generates rather subjective results. The third limitation is that the recording failed to capture all contributions due to the fast pace of the discussion or the low voices of some participants.

While the third limitation was impossible to compensate for, the first and second limitations were countered, at least to some extent, by the approach researchers implemented during the process. First, the participants and moderator of the focus group discussion were not acquainted, minimizing the subjective, even if subconscious, impact of the researcher. Secondly, the voluntary and confidential nature of the exercise was emphasized and implemented. As we already shared, the volunteer basis may have posed its own limitations; however, openness and dedication to one's profession directed the decision to participate in focus group discussions rather than some external social pressure. The confidentiality was ensured by only asking the participants to share their years of their professional experience and the type of activities they perform in law enforcement only (as opposed to what is the police station they represent); also, men were asked to introduce themselves by a name of their Father, and women were asked to introduce themselves by the name of their Mother or any other preferred name (as opposed to their own name; we did not ask to share any other personal information, such as surname, or even a level of education). However, it was impractical to follow each participant's chosen alias. Yet the main purpose of guaranteeing anonymity was achieved. Participants (11) were asked twice about their consent to participate: at the time of invitation and again at the beginning of the group discussion. Consent to record the discussion was also obtained, which was important for processing the information.

Participants. Table 1 illustrates the participants of the discussion.

Table 1. Characteristics of the participants -law enforcement officers – of the focus group discussion.

Professional experience in law enforcement	Type of activity/responsibility (one person may have several responsibilities, or several participants may have the same responsibility: this is merely a list)
Less than 1.5 years (two officers, who joined the service most recently) 6 years 8 years 10 years 11 years (two), 12 years 3-unintelligeble	Patrol; Primary pre-trial investigation; Prevention; Apprehension of drug dealing; Surveillance; Pre-trial investigation organization, such as organizing work and allocating tasks.

Thus, in light of the limitations, the findings are to be used as guidelines for enhancing understanding, rather than established facts.

The audio recording was transcribed; both the audio (amounting to 1 hour 11 min.) and the transcribed text (amounting to 48 pages (Word)) are being kept on the personal computers of the authors (no one has access to the designated personal computers; moreover, each is protected by a unique passcode; thus, the original/raw data is secured).

Due to the limited scope of the paper and the ample data, only a part of the findings will be presented here.

The participants were asked to reflect on several questions/items designed to contribute to **the research question (RQ)** (What is the perceived and reported preparedness of

contemporary Lithuanian police to produce a productive response in the event of a crisis/adverse situation?).

Results. We will present findings as a summary, without sharing specific data on time frames or locations, to avoid oversharing potentially sensitive information.

When asked: In the case of an emergency, some adverse/risk situation, maybe of a *full-fledged direct military attack, but, let us say, the incursion of drones, do you know what your responsibilities/tasks will be?*, all the participants reported that they absolutely know what is expected of them.

Firstly, they are confident that they must respond to information provided by a dispatcher/an officer on duty at their police station (not some random person), which helps avoid 'false flags' and deliberate confusion due to misinformation.

Secondly, the officers know the time frame to arrive at the indicated destination.

Third, the arrival time is calculated based on the police station's location and other factors.

Fourthly, officers know that expected tasks will be tailored to their specific circumstances, such as whether an individual officer has small children or is a primary caregiver in their family.

Fifthly, the officers are aware of the action plan within their respective police stations (they did not share these plans, which is reasonable given their potentially sensitive nature); moreover, the plans are officially stipulated in an appropriate legal document.

Sixthly, the officers are fully aware of the chain of command; at least two designated commanding officers are responsible for organizing further actions.

Seventhly, officers are fully aware that even in an adverse/crisis situation their responsibilities to uphold public order will stand; thus, the range of responsibilities will expand rather than shrink; that is, they know that additional responsibilities will complement the regular ones rather than superimpose them. Some of the officers hypothesize that, probably, some of them will be given specific orders in connection with an adverse/crisis situation. Others will continue with regular duties, since, as the officers put it: 'criminal elements will not, surely, cease with their plans due to an emergency; *most probably, they will see it as an opportunity to spread their wings*'.

Eighthly, the officers have constant access to the most recent and pertinent information via a specifically designed app.

Ninthly, even in the case of a breakdown of technology-based information channels, there is a contingency for securing information flow by using an alternative information channel.

And finally, the officers reported having had specific in-service training and practical exercises regarding these plans and requirements, which the majority of participants considered adequate to the situation.

The part of the presented findings, without revealing specifics, indicates that the reported preparedness of contemporary Lithuanian police to produce a productive response in the event of a crisis/adverse situation, at least from the subjective perspective of officers, is adequate in the immediate and, most likely, short term. In the longer term, the officers reported a deep commitment to continue with their main duty to the public, that is to maintain law and order, and also a commitment to expand their responsibilities and to perform additional tasks, as required by the situation and as assigned by their supervisors.

The findings add to the understanding of the perceived feeling of public security and thus the positive morale, which constitutes an absolute basis for a creative, fulfilled, progress-oriented life for an individual and a society, which has been established as a fact for centuries.

Yet, as researchers, we must warn against overly optimistic conceptualization of these findings considering the limitations of the sampling. That is, the participants of this study may

have possessed personal and professional attributes that make them - and thus, their perspectives - exceptional: their perspective may be skewed towards being more informed and more confident than all the officers in the force generally have.

We should note that an important distinction should be made between perceived and objectively demonstrated preparedness. The present empirical study examines how the participating police officers themselves perceive and report their preparedness to act in crisis/adverse situations. Such perceptions are important, as confidence in one's responsibilities, knowledge of procedures, access to information, and trust in the chain of command may influence the ability to act under conditions of uncertainty and pressure. However, perceived preparedness cannot automatically be equated with objectively demonstrated operational preparedness. The latter would require additional forms of investigation, including the observation of practical exercises, the analysis of institutional procedures, and the assessment of performance in simulated or actual crisis/adverse situations.

Therefore, the findings presented in this paper should be understood as an examination of an important subjective dimension of police preparedness rather than as a comprehensive assessment of the overall operational readiness of the Lithuanian police.

Conclusions

In summary, for answering research question (RQ) (What is the perceived and reported preparedness of contemporary Lithuanian police to produce a productive response in the event of crisis/adverse situation.?) from a theoretical point of view, we conclude that resilience may be conceptualized as either a set of skills an individual has, or, also, the quality of the activities and services that institutions and the state provide. Most importantly, these two conceptualizations are intertwined. While an individual's resilience is important and may be enhanced because it is a skill rather than a personality trait, for a positive or at least satisfactory outcome, an individual must be connected to necessary services/the necessary expertise via an intermediary resilience agent. That is, critical services/institutions, such as health care or law enforcement, and many others, such as communal services. Thus, both strengthening the resilience of individuals via education (which is beyond the focus of this paper) and the resilience of institutions, in our case - of law enforcement via proactive planning, investment, building infrastructure, and networks are of equal importance for the security of communities.

A community here is understood as a group of people who share the same geographic and intellectual/emotional territory, language, and history, and which, in the context of facing a crisis/adverse situation caused by an external force/threat, must demonstrate resilience for its own well-being or even survival.

For answering to research question (RQ) (What is the perceived and reported preparedness of contemporary Lithuanian police to produce a productive response in the event of crisis/adverse situation.?) based on empirical data, it is concluded that, based on the part of presented findings, the reported preparedness of contemporary Lithuanian police to produce a productive response in the event of crisis/adverse situation, at least from the subjective perspective of officers, is adequate. It is adequate in the immediate and most likely short term from their own subjective perspective. In the longer term, the officers reported deep commitments to continue with their main duty to the public, that is, to maintain law and order, and a commitment to expanding their responsibilities: to perform additional tasks, as required by the situation and as assigned by their supervisors. The findings, notwithstanding the limitations addressed in this study, add to the perceived feeling of public security and thus to positive morale in communities. These constitute an absolute basis for a creative, fulfilled,

progress-oriented life for an individual, communities, and society, which has been established as a fact for centuries.

Thus, for contributing further to the aims of the research project („Policijos veiksmų modeliavimas siekiant padidinti bendruomenės saugumą krizinėse situacijose“/ “Modeling the Police activity for the enhanced security of communities during crises/adverse situations” (No. S-LU-26-3) 2026-2027, which is financed by the Lithuanian Research Council) a more in-depth analysis of the remaining collected data will be performed and presented in future publications, regarding both subjective and more objective dimensions of the issue (police preparedness to enhance security of communities during crises/adverse situations).

The findings allow us to return to the conceptualization of resilience discussed above. The reported preparedness of the participating officers appears to be based on several interconnected elements: clarity of responsibilities, access to relevant information, a functioning chain of command, alternative communication channels, training, practical exercises, and the capacity to maintain regular law enforcement functions while undertaking additional crisis-related responsibilities. In this respect, preparedness appears not to be a single quality possessed by an individual officer or an institution, but rather a network of mutually dependent capacities. The effectiveness of one element may depend on the functioning of the others. Consequently, reported, subjectively perceived confidence in officers' preparedness is important; however, the coordination of an individual’s resilience, institutional procedures, communication, leadership, training, and available resources may ultimately determine the effectiveness of the response in a crisis/adverse situation.

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