



# CURRICULUM



## SWaPOL – Cooperation in Social Work and Policing

### A Curriculum for Vocational Training

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# **SWaPOL – Cooperation in Social Work and Policing A Curriculum for Vocational Training**

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*In SWaPOL we strive for a promotion of humanistic values of respect, ethnic and social diversity, and integration in society, and at the same time endorse the principles of law enforcement and social control that contribute to more inclusive and safer cities. Re-integration of these principles is urgently needed in present times, and our project is strongly dedicated to follow this objective.*

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## 1. Introduction

Management of social order in public space has become a shared responsibility of authorities and welfare institutions. However, the collaboration of stakeholders is often marked by severe tensions, as organisations often differ in their strategies and approaches to public order management. Vulnerable groups, such as drug users, homeless people and youth groups, are often confronted with divergent professional work-ethics: The police may judge a situation according to legal standards, whereas social workers interpret the same situation as a problem of health and social welfare. However, the collaboration of social worker and police officers needs confidence and mutual trust. Therefore, the respective institu-

tions shall work out solutions to increase health and safety in urban space together.

However, consensual cooperation in public order management between social workers and police officers can neither be imposed nor ordered in a top-down process. The objective of this training is to support the collaboration of organisations that share responsibilities for public order management but differ in socio-political, organisational and historical backgrounds. A consensual approach to solving problems of social disorder in public space shall be elaborated and become an integral part of teaching schedules in both professions: Social work and policing.

### Background:

- Public order management has become a shared responsibility in security governance
- Vulnerable groups in public space are clients of police authorities and welfare institutions
- Police and social workers sometimes pursue different work ethics

## 2. The Project SWaPOL – Social Work and Policing

This training curriculum is a direct output of the project “SWaPOL – Social Work and Policing”, funded by the ERASMUS+ Programme on Strategic Partnerships in Vocational Education and Training. This training programme is a proposal developed by a consortium of practitioners and researchers at police academies and universities of applied sciences in Austria, Belgium and Portugal.

### Partner institutions:

- European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research – Austria
- University College Gent – Belgium
- FH Joanneum Gesellschaft MBH – Austria
- Camara Municipal de Lisboa / The Lisbon Municipal Police – Portugal
- Universidade de Porto – Portugal

### Associated partner institutions:

- Vienna Police (Landespolizeidirektion Wien) – Austria
- Polytechnic Institute of Porto – Portugal
- Ghent University: Innovation Centre for Security – Belgium
- Paulo Police Academy of East-Flanders – Belgium

All countries in this project have experience with trainings in social work and policing in a variety of settings – drug prevention, youth violence, homeless refugees, and general problems of social disorder in public places. This training shall respond to existing national projects in community policing, where the police already collaborate with other institutions in public order management.

The SWaPOL project partners drafted this first training programme for professionals in social work and policing. This programme has been designed to be implemented sustainably in organisational structures of national training institutions both in schools of social work and in police

academies. However, the consortium is committed to expand the network and include other training institutions in other countries in Europe and beyond.

In each partner country a pilot training was carried out in 2019/20 to gain experience. The Curriculum and the Handbook for Trainers are currently available in English, German, Portuguese and Dutch. The pilot trainings were held on a national basis in the partner countries, but an international exchange of trainers and participants is conceivable in the future.

## 2. The Project SWaPOL – Social Work and Policing

The SWaPOL Training aimed to achieve the following overall goals:

- Improvement of the cooperation between police and social workers
- Reduction of prejudice between the professions through exchange, building trust and clear distribution of responsibilities
- Sustainable integration of issues at the interface of social work and policing into respective training systems
- Dissemination of the SwaPOL Training on a national and international level

### Balancing law enforcement and social welfare services

The SWaPOL project was dedicated to developing a common training programme for practitioners in social work and in the police to improve the collaboration between those professions in the field of public order management in public places. The SWaPOL Training shall contribute to a good balance of law enforcement and social welfare policies to support social inclusion of vulnerable people in public space.

### The Curriculum and the Handbook

This Curriculum shall be used as a supplement to the *SWaPOL Handbook for Trainers*. The aim of the Curriculum is to provide any trainer consortium with a schedule to organise their own SWaPOL Training, whereas the Handbook offers more detailed information on objectives, competences and learning activities.

### Qualification of trainers

The trainer consortium should be composed of qualified representatives from different professions, i.e. the police, social work and possibly other vocations such as healthcare or social geography, and show an expertise in social work, crime prevention, community policing, social pedagogy, street-work, youth work, prevention of substance use, and management of public (dis)order.

### Target group: Practitioners

The SWaPOL Training is dedicated to practitioners and is therefore conceived as continuous education rather than early-stage basic training. The target group in the SWaPOL Training is hence defined as *practitioners in social work and policing* with a particular focus on cooperation in solving problems of social disorder and giving support to vulnerable persons in public places.



## Vocational training

The SWaPOL Training has been designed to be applied either as a stand-alone continuous training course or as a course that can be integrated in existing training schedules in seminars in various forms at police academies and in schools of social work. However, participants in SWaPOL Trainings shall always be recruited from both sides and complete the training together. At the police the SWaPOL Training may supplement existing trainings for "crime prevention liaison officers" or courses in "security and safety management"; in schools of social work SWaPOL may be linked with subjects such as "working with vulnerable groups", "social area management" and "practice projects".

# 3. Didactical Concept: Student-centred Learning

## 3. Didactical concept: Student centred learning

This SWaPOL Training programme is informed by most recent developments in academic teaching and learning (ETCS Users' Guide 2015 – European Commission). The focus on “Student-centred Learning” entails a fundamental change from conventional lecturing towards knowledge transfer as active, self-regulated and self-responsible learning by students. In SWaPOL, trainers are both instructors and mediators for a constructive exchange among participants with different professional backgrounds.

Student-Centred Learning (SCL) is a process of qualitative transformation for students and other learners in a learning environment, aimed at enhancing their autonomy and critical ability through an outcome-based approach.

The SCL concept can be summarised into the following elements:

- Reliance on active rather than passive learning;
- Emphasis on critical and analytical learning and understanding;
- Increased responsibility and accountability on the part of the student;
- Increased autonomy of the student;
- A reflective approach to the learning and teaching process on the part of both the student and the teacher.

(ETCS Users' Guide 2015 – European Commission; p. 15)

# 4. The SWaPOL – Training Programme

## 4. The SWaPOL Training programme

The SWaPOL Training programme is conceived as a blocked course of 5 days. Experience in pilot trainings showed that holding the course on consecutive days and in one place is more practical than giving the training once a week over a longer period of time and in different cities. Also, to avoid travels and the need of accommodation, participants should work in the same town or region. This eases the organisation of excursions and helps in discussions when participants can refer to local situations and problems. Participants are usually eager to work on solutions for real problems rather than discussing abstract or foreign situations.

The SWaPOL Training is composed of three course modules given on 5 consecutive days:

	DAY 1		DAY 2		DAY 3		DAY 4		DAY 5	
Preparation										
	Module 1									
			Module 2				Module 3			
										Review and Closing

- The **preparation phase** is used for selection, registration and consultation of participants.
- **Module 1: Public order management – Cooperation between Social Work and Police**  
Module 1 starts after an official welcome address and after a general outlook on the course programme for the coming days and ends on day 2 before lunch.
- **Module 2: Substance use among young people: Prevention and harm reduction in nightlife**  
Module 2 starts in the afternoon of day 2 and ends on day 3.
- **Module 3: Homelessness**  
Module 3 starts in the morning of day 4 and ends before lunch on day 5.
- The afternoon of day 5 is reserved for **review, evaluation** and **official closing** of the training.

Coffee-breaks, lunchtimes and break-out sessions at the end of the day are particularly useful and can support group dynamics between participants. The implementation of the entire training in an exclusive seminar hotel can have advantages and disadvantages: Sharing extra time in a relaxed atmosphere may support mutual trust and understanding, but the possibilities for excursions and field visits may be limited in a remote hotel.

## 4. The SWaPOL – Training Programme

### Preparations prior to the training

Several preparation meetings between members of the trainer consortium are recommended to coordinate the schedule. In particular, the Handbook for Trainers must be studied by all members of the consortium.

Preparation activities should not be underestimated: A host organisation must be found to provide the facilities; exercises have to be selected and utensils prepared; guest speakers must be organised; and field visits to service institutions need to be arranged well in advance.

During preparation meetings, selection criteria for participants have to be discussed. It is recommended to limit the maximum number of participants to 30 persons and to guarantee a good balance of professional backgrounds (social workers and police officers), levels of experience (practitioners) and expertise (e.g. community policing officers; drug prevention units). Registration management is required, and participants need to be contacted and consulted prior to the training to inform them about objectives, contents and practical arrangements.

Arrangements for information management to communicate aims and objectives to participants are necessary. Participants should be well informed and provided with online schedules. An e-learning platform shall be arranged prior to the training to provide resources and to facilitate exchange of information. This platform can also be used later as a feed-back forum. Certificates for participation have to be prepared.

Formal support from decision makers in city councils, police academies, and respective vocational training institutions shall be obtained from the start.

## Module 1: Cooperation between Social Work and Police

### Objectives

- Exchange the legal and ethical basis for professional practice
- Raise (self-)awareness about professional cultures of social work and police work
- Learn about working methods in social work and in policing

### Intended competences

- *Cognitive learning outcomes:*

Understand cultural differences in occupations: Organisational structure; internal communication; activities; terminology; professional socialisation (attitudes, opinions, habits).

Understand definition of work orders and legal frameworks.

Understand professional concepts and basic working methods such as “community policing”, “social pedagogy”, “streetwork”, “(crime-)prevention”; “social area analysis”, etc.

Ability to deconstruct a social situation in a Social Area Analysis

- *Affective learning outcomes:*

Understand reasons for misunderstandings and potential conflict between the professions

Change attitudes, values and feelings towards “the other” profession

- *(Psycho-)Motoric learning outcomes:*

Practice particular forms of communication and procedures (action steps) in certain situations when cooperation is required.

### Learning activities

- *Inputs and presentations:*

International definition of social work and social pedagogy

International concepts of community policing and crime prevention (and national interpretations)

Streetwork, outreach work, social case work and group work, and Social Area Analysis

- *Exercises and games:*

“Meeting at the marketplace” – introducing each other

“The Dardians” – metaphor game to understand cultural differences between professions

“Menti-meter” – to collect stereotypes and prejudice

“Kahoot” – quiz format to test knowledge about the other profession

Pictures and photographs to discuss social area analysis

- *Excursions and field visits:*

Social Area Analysis: Field visit to (crime) hotspots and deprived areas in the city with clear instructions for observation.

### Module 2: Substance use among young people: Prevention and harm reduction in nightlife

#### Objectives

- Learn about substances and classification, harm reduction and drug prevention
- Consider different perspectives on nightlife activities (youth, social work, police)
- Improve collaboration between professions in the nightlife economy

#### Intended competences

- *Cognitive learning outcomes:*

Understand youth cultures and motivation for substance use among young people (curiosity, fun, frustration, etc)

Understand the relation between legalization / criminalization and health risk (harmfulness)

Understand regulations in the drug law and respective policing methods

Learn to recognise effects of drugs and understand the interaction between the substance, the user and the environment

Participants understand prevention methods (on the basis of risk factors and protective factors), and they can apply them in specific situations

- *Affective learning outcomes:*

Reconsider attitudes about the cultural framing of substance use (e.g. alcohol) and the effect of cultural and economic globalisation (e.g. music scenes).

Exchange ideas on the relationship between drug-related crime and substance use

- *(Psycho-)Motoric learning outcomes:*

Develop a new basis for collaboration in practice, e.g. collaboration projects on “repression + prevention + harm reduction”

Creating networks: local authorities, bars and clubs, police, social work and residents

Participants can act in critical medical situations of a possible overdose in nightlife settings.

### Learning activities

- *Inputs and presentations:*

Recreational use versus substance use disorder

Different forms of addiction and poly-drug use: Legal and illegal behaviour, legal and illegal substances

Health-related measures and diversion in the criminal justice system

Terminology of prevention: Universal / selective / indicated

- *Exercises and games:*

“Drug-wheel” as a training tool to discuss the classification and effect of substances

Newspaper reports or existing short training-movies on consumption of alcohol, tobacco, other substances as input for discussion

Kahoot-Quiz to test knowledge about substances: Prevalence, incidence, “true-or-false questions”

Group-work: Creating an “ideal legal framework” on substance use

Group-work: Collection and discussion of local examples of prevention-intervention projects

Group-work / poster session / carousel: Perspectives on nightlife (youth / social work / police)

Group-work: Case analysis on collaboration - working on real cases of substance use in nightlife

- *Excursions and field visits:*

Excursion to a successful local collaboration project

Excursion to a health centre to hear experts on drug-related first-aid measures



### Module 3: Homelessness

#### Objectives

- Explore the multidimensional processes of exclusion and marginalisation in public space
- Introduction to “Problem-oriented policing”: Case management, conflict resolution, care work
- Focus on risk factors: Housing, gentrification, displacement, mental illness

#### Intended competences

- *Cognitive learning outcomes:*

Know the categories of the European typology of homelessness and housing exclusion (FEANTSA)

Ability to critically discuss forms and consequences of social exclusion, marginalisation and homelessness

Understand codes of conduct of police officers in cases of complaints against homeless persons

Understand the formal responsibilities and ethical codes of conduct of professional groups working with homeless people

Ability to enhance or redefine channels of communication with other professions

- *Affective learning outcomes:*

Show understanding for duties of other professions

Be aware of verbal and body language of vulnerable people as well as their daily rituals and routines in street life

Develop empathy and tolerance towards homeless persons and their appropriation of public space

- *(Psycho-)Motoric learning outcomes:*

Understand and use the vocabulary of other professions

Develop skills in conflict management between user groups in public space

Ability to develop a manual of common procedures in coping with homeless persons in terms of ethics and modes of conduct

### Learning activities

- *Inputs and presentations:*

European typology of homelessness and housing exclusion (FEANTSA)

Presentation on national initiatives and services for homeless people and respective concepts such as *Housing First* (including contact addresses)

Problem-oriented Policing: Forms of communication and new possibilities of exchange between stakeholders, including limitations such as data protection, misunderstandings, and legal frameworks

Legal provisions that the police must observe

- *Exercises and games:*

“Improvisation theatre”: Role play of scenarios

“Playing the other” in a fictitious court hearing

Listen to / watch a national documentary (radio or TV programme) and analyse cases

Role-play in class: Prepare interview questions for a fictitious meeting with homeless people

Group work: Develop a code of conduct for collaboration between social work and police (guideline for interventions, wider prevention activities, etc.)

- *Excursions and field visits:*

Field visits in interdisciplinary pairs

Guided field walk with former homeless person (e.g. [www.shades-tours.com](http://www.shades-tours.com), [www.supertramps.at](http://www.supertramps.at))

# 4. The SWaPOL – Training Programme

## Review and evaluation

It is recommended to save sufficient time on the last day of the training for a comprehensive review and an evaluation.

The evaluation phase of the training should consist of three parts:

1. Reflection on elements of the course in class: Participants give feedback in an open discussion. Here it is important for trainers and the organising committee to listen and take note of what participants have to say (without having to justify).
2. Individual feedback: Participants fill in a feedback-form in class. Additionally, the training committee provides an electronic platform with a review-section for participants to enter ideas on the course shortly after the course terminated.
3. Review and documentary of the training: Trainers shall be interviewed about their impressions upon learning outcomes. The training consortium shall reflect on thematic inputs, exercises and excursions and draw conclusions for future trainings. This documentary can be sent to the SWaPOL Project Team and their data bank, where follow-up SWaPOL-trainings are being collected <http://www.swapol.eu/>

# 5. Example of Time Schedule

## 5. Example for time schedule

	Morning	Afternoon
DAY 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome and general introduction to SWaPOL</li> <li>M1: Inputs "Understanding the professions: Cultural and organisational backgrounds"</li> <li>M1: "Menti.meter" or "Kahoot Quiz" or "The Derdians"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M1: Input "Methods of social work and community policing"</li> <li>M1: Input "Social Area Analysis" and exercise instructions</li> <li>M1: Social Area Analysis Excursion</li> </ul>
DAY 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M1: Review and discussion on Social Area Analysis Excursion</li> <li>M1: Group work on cooperation in public order management</li> <li>M1: Discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M2: Input "Substance use in public space"</li> <li>M2: Exercise: Drug-Wheel or Kahoot-Quiz</li> <li>M2: Group work: Perspectives on night life</li> <li>M2: Excursion to nightlife district</li> </ul>
DAY 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M2: Excursion with input from social work on drug prevention</li> <li>M2: Input from police on drug prevention activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M2: Discussion</li> <li>M2: Group-work: Improving cooperation in a real case scenario</li> </ul>
DAY 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M3: Input on social dimensions of homelessness (Guest-speaker, e.g. "Housing First")</li> <li>M3: Input "Homelessness from a police perspective"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M3: Exercise: "Improvisation theatre" or "playing the other" or watch documentary</li> <li>M3: Excursion: Homelessness-Tour or city council project</li> </ul>
DAY 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M3: Discussion on Excursion</li> <li>M3: Final discussion on cooperation: Develop a code of conduct</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General feedback and evaluation on SWaPOL</li> </ul>

# 6. Flexibility of the Schedule

## 6. Flexibility of the schedule

This training schedule provides a core structure for the SWaPOL Training and at the same time wants to give future consortia as much flexibility as possible in implementing the programme. On the side of the core elements, there is the limited timeline of 5 days, the adherence to the three module topics, and a dedication to student centred learning and constructive alignment (European Commission 2015; Biggs and Tang 2011) and the concepts in high school didactics that integrate knowledge inputs, exercises and excursions in a most interesting and playful way.

On the side of flexibility, there is freedom to invite local guest speakers from dedicated organisations, select exercises from the exercise pool provided in the Handbook, and chose locations and service facilities for excursions during the training programme. The training content needs to be adapted to national law (juvenile law, drug law; police act; administrative law) and also to the administrative system of service providers (drug prevention facilities, homelessness shelters). Also, organisational structures in the police (national/regional police and special police units) and in social work (link to city council, private associations, health services) need to be taken into account in conceptualising trainings.

Finally, training consortia in a country may point to its own history of collaboration between stakeholders and discuss national experiences and strategies in coping with local problems of public order management.

# 7. Bibliography

## 7. Bibliography

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