

Police work has been identified as one of society's most stressful occupations. The exposure of police officers to different stress sources over time can lead to several problems affecting their physical and psychological health, impairing their performance and consequently the overall safety of the community. It seems crucial to have a proactive, well trained, dedicated, and healthy police force that performs to the best of their ability. Towards this aim SCOPE investigated stress, coping and engagement levels among Portuguese police recruits and police officers contemplating a longitudinal design and an interdisciplinary approach. The project has received complimentary funding from the Foundation of Science and Technology in Portugal (FCT) and was divided in three main tasks. Two of these, were part of a longitudinal design study, investigating stress, coping and engagement levels among police recruits during academy training and one year later while working as police officers. The third task has received complimentary funding from the FP7 Future Cities project, and contemplated an interdisciplinary approach. The aim of task three was to develop an innovative Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) method incorporating stress (psychophysiology measures) and coping evaluation, suitable for police officers needs/requirements and ready to be used in real world conditions.

In the first two tasks, data was collected among approximately 287 participants in two different moments separated by a period of 12 months. In the first moment, participants were police recruits undergoing their last month of academy training before becoming police officers, and in the second moment, one year after, participants were already police officers working in their first year on duty. The same measures were used in both instances. These included open ended questions to describe the most stressful professional stressor experienced in the last 14 days, *Coping* was assessed using the Brief COPE (Pais-Ribeiro & Rodrigues, 2004); *Engagement* was assessed using the Work Engagement scale (UWES; Schaufeli, Martínez, Marques Pinto, Salanova, & Bakker, 2002). Following ethics approval, voluntary participants completed consent forms, and a web-based survey in two different periods separated by 12 months. Results showed that engaged police recruits and police officers consistently appraised a professional stressor with higher perceptions of control, seem to prefer the use of more active coping, planning and less behavioural disengagement to deal with stressors. Additionally, findings suggest that Portuguese police officers working on their first year on duty, experience higher levels of engagement (e.g., absorption, vigor and dedication)

compared with the year before while undergoing academy training as police recruits. It is recommended that practitioners working with police recruits and police officers, contemplate perceptions of control over a stressor, and coping strategies used when aiming to develop engagement levels.

The third task included the development of an EMA tool, combining psychophysiological measures of stress and coping strategies, using user-friendly, non-intrusive technology, adapted to police officers' needs and requirements during daily life experience. This assessment tool was developed collaboratively by a multidisciplinary research team (e.g., psychologists, electrical and biomedical engineers), it is currently near completion and will be further tested under an FP7 Capacities Project- Future Cities <http://futurecities.up.pt/site/>. The method includes the use of smart phones and the Vital Jacket® (VJ), a wearable bio-monitoring platform in the form of a simple t-shirt that provides real time ECG and 3 axis accelerometer data. The smart phone, acts as a gathering unit, collecting psychological measures of stress and coping, and georeferenced data. This interdisciplinary method is a promising occupational health tool designed for police officers working under real world settings.

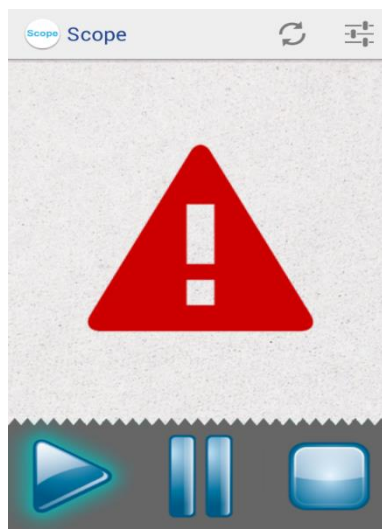
In sum, SCOPE provided a valuable theoretical and applied contribution not only to the advance of the state of the art in the field of stress, coping and engagement among the police force, but also to practitioners working with police recruits and police officers. Hence, the project outcomes will impact the occupational health of the police force and safety of the overall community. The dissemination of the project was made through several sources, reaching different relevant audiences. These included the European scientific and applied community working with police (e.g., publications in European peer reviewed journals and presentations in European Conferences in the area of Police Science, Occupational Health), and the overall Portuguese community (e.g., media contact, outreach activities including organization of a public seminar, presentations to the police force). The management of the project fostered interdisciplinary research collaborations, providing valuable transfer of knowledge within research groups at the host, and also with European police networks. Although, the integration of the fellow at the host was not attained, SCOPE has successfully achieved the proposed scientific objectives for the 21 months' time frame period. Additionally, the project impact clearly contributed to European Excellence and Competitiveness.

Address of project Website: <http://www.fpce.up.pt/scope/index.html>

Project LOGO:



### Task 3: Interdisciplinary Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA)



Scope Scope

Indique a intensidade com que sente cada um dos seguintes sintomas neste momento:

Pouco ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ Muito

6 - Dificuldade em raciocinar, pensar ou responder

Pouco ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ Muito

7 - Aflição ou nervosismo

Pouco ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ Muito

8 - Dificuldade em manter o controlo

Pouco ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ Muito

Ok

## Outreach Activities:

Seminar organized at the host institution for the overall Community

