<center>**Plural policing: a state of the art review**</center>

1. Introduction

The concept of plural policing has acquired a central position in the criminological literature since the nineties (Terpstra & van Stokkom, 2015). Although plural policing is not a recent reality in policing (Johnston, 1993), it can be described as a relatively recent subject of research. Still, the term plural policing is defined in different manners and several related terms are used for its meaning, which in its core refers to the presence of multiple actors in policing activities. This 'pluralization of policing' (Bayley & Shearing, 1996, p. 585) has taken place both within (e.g., community support officers in the U.K.) and outside the public police (e.g., civilian policing, private policing) (Crawford, 2008). As such, policing services are now delivered in the public, semi-public and private domain (Terpstra & van Stokkom, 2015) by a complex of public and private bodies and agencies, also referred to as the new security complex (Terpstra, 2010 in Terpstra, Stokkom, & Spreeuwers, 2013a), the policing complex (Hoogenboom, 1991), the police extended family (Johnston, 2003; Johnston, 2005) or the mixed economy of policing (Crawford, 2013).

Different views exist on the magnitude and nature of the (recent) development towards plural policing, amongst other developments in policing systems (Jones & Newburn, 2006). Whereas some argue that policing systems underwent radical changes and that these changes thus entail historic developments of different systems of policing (e.g. Bayley & Shearing, 1996, p. 585), others propose that policing developments are part of a long-term process of formalization of social control (e.g. Jones & Newburn, 2002, p. 129). They thus question the degree to which developments in policing should be interpreted as a sharp qualitative break with policing in the past (Jones & Newburn, 2002). Still others, however, state that policing has always consisted of a varying balance between public, private and hybrid elements (Johnston, 1993). The (recent) rise and growth of non-public police agents in policing can be seen as resulting from complex social, political and economic circumstances and changes (Terpstra et al., 2013a). One frequently mentioned factor is that, as a consequence of constraints on public police expenditures, other forms of provisions have expanded to fill a gap that the police are unable to fill themselves (Crawford, 2008; Jones & Newburn, 2006; Terpstra et al., 2013a). Additionally, some authors point to the increased demand of the public for security (Crawford, 2008; Jones & Newburn, 2006; Terpstra et al., 2013a), for which the state (in terms of the public police) cannot provide for on its own. A more structural factor relates to broader shifts in the structure and nature of late modern societies, which have created a set of circumstances in which plural policing proliferates (Jones & Newburn, 2006). In this respect, Crawford (2008) refers to the neo-liberal inspired dispersal of responsibilities for crime control within and beyond the state. Finally, changes in urban economy and space are also reported to have influenced pluralization (Crawford, 2008; Terpstra et al., 2013a).

2. Plural policing defined

The pluralization of policing implies an increasing disconnection between the public police and policing (Bayley & Shearing, 1996; Loader, 2000; Terpstra & van Stokkom, 2015). Consequently, this pluralisation also implies a shift away from a state-centred policing framework. This shift away – and the resulting changing position of the government in relation to policing (Terpstra et al., 2013a), is also found in notions related to plural policing such as networked governance (Crawford, 2006) and

security governance (Johnston & Shearing, 2003 in Crawford, 2008). For the purposes of this paper, we follow Loader's (2000, pp. 323-324) definition of plural policing:

> *'What we might call a shift from police to policing has seen the sovereign state – hitherto considered focal to both provision and accountability in this field – reconfigured as but one node of a broader, more diverse network of power. Sure enough, this network continues to encompass the direct provision and supervision of policing by institutions of national and local government. But it now also extends – as we shall see – to private policing forms secured through government; to transnational policing arrangements taking place above government; to markets in policing and security services unfolding beyond government; and to policing activities engaged in by citizens below government. We inhabit a world of plural, networked policing.'*

Adhering to this definition implies that we focus on policing activities, carried out by a multiplicity of actors, each on their own initiative and steered and controlled by their specific (or at least different) authorities. This then excludes examples of citizen participation and partnerships, as they are carried out on demand of the police and under police oversight.

As Loader's (2000) definition focuses on the 'plural' aspect more than the policing aspect (i.e. who are the actors that undertake policing), it is also necessary to indicate how we understand 'policing'. For the purposes of this paper, we follow Jones and Newburn's (2006, pp. 3-4) definition:

> *'organized forms of order maintenance, peacekeeping, rule or law enforcement, crime investigation and prevention and other forms of investigation and associated information-brokering undertaken by individuals or organizations, where such activities are viewed by them and/or others as a central or key defining part of their purpose.'*

The pluralisation of policing raises important questions in literature, that are related to public safety (Bayley & Shearing, 1996); to the equitable distribution of and access to security (Bayley & Shearing, 1996; Crawford, 2008; Loader, 2000); to formal regulations and the influence on human rights (Bayley & Shearing, 1996; Loader, 2000; Terpstra et al., 2013a); to accountability of plural policing networks (Bayley & Shearing, 1996; Crawford, 2008; Hoogenboom, 1991; Loader, 2000); to the linkages between legitimacy, authority and state power[1] (Crawford, 2008); and to the effective co-ordination and cooperation of diverse policing efforts (Crawford, 2008; Hoogenboom, 1991). Each of these questions contain potential dangers related to the pluralization of policing.

Furthermore, the combination of private and semi-public actors, in addition to the traditional policing actors, leads to an intransparent and complex amalgam of policing activity in the streets and beyond. It results in a situation in which citizens can hardly figure out who is responsible for which tasks. This pluralisation therefore also carries with it the dangers of blurring boundaries, the fact that none of these actors is responsible on the one hand, or that competences will be blurred or trespassed on the other (Loader, 2000).

Although a vast body of contemplative work on these issues exist, our concern lies in the empirical investigation of these dangers. Is there any empirical evidence to substantiate these theoretical ideas? If so, what are the characteristics of these studies and what are the results? Another

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[1] For instance, the transfer of certain 'public' powers to non-police actors raises issues about the legitimate basis of authority and the distinctiveness of the police brand.

important question pertains to the impact of plural policing on the core tasks of the public police. In order to answer these questions, we conducted a systematic review on plural policing in the period January to May 2015. In this article, we report on the general characteristics and contents of the identified literature.

3. Methods

The findings of this study are based on the main principles underlying a systematic literature review[2] on plural policing. A systematic review '*summarizes the best available evidence on a specific question using transparent procedures to locate, evaluate, and integrate the findings of relevant research'* (Collaboration, 2014, p. 6). In order to prevent distorted results, systematic reviews should comply with strict demands which are related to the diverse steps in the execution of a systematic review (see Figure 1). The review, carried out by three researchers, included three initial research questions (Hannes & Claes, 2007; Pearson, 2004):

- RQ 1: What are dangers of blurring boundaries and in which contexts or cases are they recognized?
- RQ2: What are the effects of plural policing on 'core tasks' of the public police with regard to the equal division of safety and security in society?
- RQ3: What are the differences between policing actors regarding the use of discretionary space and how does this affect citizen's legal recourses?

Simultaneously, four inclusion criteria were formulated: empirical research; link with research questions; research published/conducted between 1990-current; and published and unpublished studies (Green et al., 2008; Hammerstrom, Wade, & Klint Jorgensen, 2010; Hannes & Claes, 2007; Pearson, 2004).

An important goal of this systematic review is to disclose research in Dutch to a non-Dutch-speaking research network. This implies that we included both publications in Dutch and in English in this systematic review. On the other hand, we also deliberately excluded certain studies. As stated earlier, for the purpose of this paper, we follow Loader's (2000) and Jones and Newburn's (2006) definitions of (plural) policing. Although included in Loader's (2000) description, we excluded studies focused on partnerships in which the steering function and main policing functions remain in hands of the public police. This decision was made in view of the research question that focused on the blurring boundaries within plural policing. This choice is also grounded in our aim to focus on non-public police agents taking on a policing function, as described by Jones and Newburn (2006). As a result, we excluded studies focusing on third party policing (where the public police retain most policing functions), community oriented policing and neighbourhood policing (where citizens cooperate with the public police without taking prominent policing functions themselves).

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[2] We deliberately write 'main principles underlying a systematic review' instead of 'systematic review' because we adhere to the opinion of Dixon-Woods et al. (2006) that the conventional, rigid systematic review requirements are sometimes hard to obtain when summarizing qualitative research evidence. Given the high amount of qualitative research on plural policing, this review was carried out taking into account the main principles of a systematic review.

Figure 1: Steps in systematic reviews (Verhage & Boels, 2015)

Studies in English were searched on the basis of 12 keywords[3], used in 16 databases, journals and internet sources. Time constraints made us refrain from searching unpublished research (such as presentations at the ESC and ASC). Studies in Dutch were identified on the basis of ten keywords[4], used in 13 databases, journals and internet sources. . The full selection process (steps 2 & 3) resulted in 31 publications: 25 in the 'English search' and 6 in the 'Dutch search'. Given the need for methodological transparency in conducting systematic reviews (Denyer & Tranfield, 2006; Manning, 2012; Ring, Ritchie, Mandava, & Jepson, 2010), we meticulously registered all steps and choices in the process.

A first step in the content analysis of the shortlist (step four in Figure 1) is the assessment of (methodological) quality of the primary studies (Hannes & Claes, 2007; Pearson, 2004). In line with Dixon-Woods et al. (2004, p.224), we made use of generic prompts to assess the overall quality of the studies featuring on our shortlist. Given that there are no empirically tested methods for excluding qualitative studies from syntheses on the basis of their quality (Thomas & Harden, 2008, p. 8), we included all studies regardless of their quality.

A second core component of the content analysis is the extraction and analysis of information from the studies. This comes down to summarizing qualitative research findings, for which different approaches exist (Denyer & Tranfield, 2006; Dixon-Woods, Fitzpatrick, & Roberts, 2001; Manning, 2012; Noyes et al., 2008; Paterson, 2012; Ring et al., 2010). Given our purposes, we have chosen to use an aggregative method and more specifically a thematic analysis, which is described as '*the systematic identification of significant, reoccurring, or most common themes in the body of primary*

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[3] Blurring AND boundaries OR lines; extended policing family; new security complex; policing AND commodification; policing AND diversification; policing AND fragment*; policing AND hybrid; policing AND network; policing AND third party; polic* AND plural; polic* AND complex; polic* AND function.
[4] Toezicht; handhaving; netwerkstructuur; politie AND plural*; plural AND policing; politiefunctie; veiligheid AND fragmentering; veiligheidscomplex; veiligheidshandhaving; vervagende AND grenzen. We chose to include English key terms to identify studies in Dutch, as we found that these terms are sometimes also used in Dutch publications.

research and summarizing these under thematic headings' (Paterson, 2012, p. 16). More specifically, we followed Thomas and Harden's (2008) methodology for thematic synthesis, albeit limiting us to the two first phases of analysis (excluding developing analytical themes), which resulted in the development of descriptive themes.

4. Findings

Before discussing the main characteristics with regard to content, some general remarks are in place. First, our search revealed that the literature on plural policing is characterised by a high amount of non-empirical, contemplative work. Our impression is that there is even more contemplative than empirical work. Second, several concepts refer to highly related content such as plural policing, nodal governance, security networks, police extended family. In order to capture a comprehensive view on these topics, it is important to include all these concepts into the search strategy (keywords). Third, reading of full texts indicated that many works did not directly address the research question(s), but only provided indirect information. Surprisingly, given the large amount of academic discussion on problems in using discretion by policing agents, information on this third research question was hardly found at all (which is why this is not reported on in this paper). Most information was found on the first research question, albeit indirectly.

4.1. General characteristics of the literature

Studies in our sample were published between 2000 and 2015. The timeframe of the fieldwork ranged between 1997 and 2013. As such, the empirical findings reported in this paper cover the period 1997 to 2013. Overall, the time lag between fieldwork and publication ranged from one year to 12 years. Remarkably, eleven publications do not mention when the fieldwork was conducted. Nevertheless, we did include them in the review, as we did not want to miss relevant information (Booth, 2001).

Although the majority of the studies (20) reported on original research findings, other studies (9) reported findings based on previous research conducted by one of the authors. Due to limited methodological information, two publications did not allow to infer whether or not the results were based on original research.

The majority of the studies are published in high-ranked journals (24). The most popular journals are Policing and Society[5] (17 publications), followed by Policing[6] (2), Public Personnel Management (1), International Journal of the Sociology of Law (1), Policing[7] (1), Police practice and research (1), Police Journal: theory, practice and principles (1). Although we see a high amount of publications in policing-related journal, certainly not all authors have a criminological background or work in a criminology related department/institute. As such, empirical research on plural policing clearly stems from more academic disciplines than criminology. One study is published in book-format, one as a book chapter and five are research reports (of which one is a doctoral dissertation).

Traditionally, plural policing receives a lot of attention in the Anglo-Saxon countries (Terpstra & van Stokkom, 2015). This is also reflected in our review, with 14 publications covering research in the

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[5] Full journal name is Policing and Society: an international journal of research and policy.
[6] Full journal name is Policing: an international journal of police strategies and management.
[7] Full journal name is Policing: a journal of policy and practice.

U.K.[8] , five covering Canada, two covering Australia and one covering the U.S.A.. Other countries represented in our review include Austria, Belgium, Kosovo, Liberia, Sweden, South Africa, southern Sudan, the Netherlands and South Korea.

4.2. Topics in the literature

As mentioned above, most studies do not address the research questions of this paper directly. That is, most studies for instance do not focus on the potential dangers of plural policing or blurring boundaries, but focus on other topics and discuss the dangers in the margin. A range of topics are covered, of which some can be clustered into overarching categories.

Relations between policing agents

This category clusters research on the relations between different policing agents. These studies are focused on partnerships, cooperation or the position of different agents vis-à-vis each other. For instance, one study focused on the evaluation of partnerships between the police and local groups engaged in policing in fragile African states (Baker, 2009). Another one identified police officers' perspectives on the barriers and opportunities to working with private security and on subcontracting policing functions to the private sector (Gill, 2013). Similarly, police officer's attitudes towards cooperation with private investigators has also been explored in South-Korea (Lee & Yun, 2014).

Equally under the heading of 'relations' is the exploration into the functions and roles of police and private stakeholders and their mutual relation in providing art security (Kerr, 2012). Likewise, the position and use of police liaison officers within the police extended family, and the dilemmas and difficulties this brings about has been scrutinized (Cherney & Chui, 2010). In the Netherlands, Terpstra (2008) analysed the position of the police, local government and (groups) of citizens in local security networks. Relatedly, Martin (2012) explored how informal security networks (e.g., vigilante associations, juvenile gangs, militias) operate in areas that are inadequately policed by formal security networks. The nature of security networks has also been studied in a totally different area, namely stadiums (Rodas, 2011).

Patrolling schemes

The common denominator in this category is the focus on specific patrolling schemes in delineated (residential) areas. For instance, studies capture experiences of citizens with private security in residential areas and their partnership with public police (more specifically private residential patrolling scheme) (Noaks, 2000, 2004, 2008). Another study focused on additional (contracted) security patrol schemes in residential areas and their implications (Crawford & Lister, 2006). In one study, a community warden scheme involving a partnership between local authority and a private security company is used as a case to illustrate the governance of community policing (Johnston, 2003).

Diverse

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[8] Including England & Wales and northern-Ireland.

Other studies are more difficult to categorize given the broad range of topics they cover, such as police officers' off-duty employment by private employers (Brunet, 2008); plural policing of environmental protests, and more specifically the complex coalition of agencies involved in policing these protests, their activities and (formal and informal) cooperation (Button & John, 2002); the impact of civilian policing on the legitimacy of the public police, the extent of public support for civilian policing and their impact upon crime reduction (Sharp et al., 2008); private security policing by ethnic matching (Löfstrand Hansen, 2015); public compliance with private security demands (Mopasa & Stenning, 2001); the role of private sector financial investigative agencies in combating money laundering (Schneider, 2006); the governability and accountability of forensic accounting and corporate investigation industry (Williams, 2005); the legitimate involvement in shadow policing (i.e. non-state, networked policing delivered at grass-roots community levels) (Topping & Byrne, 2014); state-building and the nature and use of plural policing in transitional areas (Janssens, 2015); the evaluation of *buitengewoon opsporingsambtenaren* (BOA's) in shops, a specific type of surveillants in the Netherlands (Kruize & Gruter, 2013); an evaluation of changes into the BOA system (Mein & Hartmann, 2013); an international comparison of non-public police agents in semi-public spaces (Terpstra et al., 2013b); the benefits of participation in local security networks for the core police tasks (Groenendaal & Helsloot, 2015); the policing function of service providers in skid-row districts (Huey, 2008); a corporate security program operating on a mass private property (Hutchinson & O'Connor, 2005); public distinction between various sorts of uniformed patrolling officers and the effect of patrollers on feelings of safety, security and anxieties (Rowland & Coupe, 2013); an exploration of the future of the police function (van den Berg et al., 2012); and an international comparison of the methods used by private security organisations (Verhage, 2005).

4.3. Methods used to study plural policing

Both quantitative and qualitative methods are used in studying plural policing, although the majority of the selected studies (23) was based on a qualitative research design. Only two[9] studies made use of a mixed design, including both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection (Kruize & Gruter, 2013; Noaks, 2000; 2004; 2008). Methods used in the empirical studies include (semi-structured) interviews (25), document analyses[10] (11 studies), observations (11), surveys (8) telephone interviews (2), focus groups (2), informal field based interviews (1), workshops (1) and case studies[11] (1) (see appendix 1).

Although most - but not all - studies directly[12] report the methods of data-collection, a great deal of variation is found regarding the extent to which they report other methodological aspects (e.g., research questions). Clearly, limited information on these aspects seriously hampers a thorough assessment of the (methodological) quality of the studies. Most studies do not even contain sufficient information to answer the general prompts outlined above. Although it is fully understandable that researchers have their own preferences as to what they focus on (e.g. empirical

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[9] But one of these two resulted in three publications, each reporting different research results.

[10] For instance, internal police policies, press stories, private industry documents, legal cases.

[11] However, it is not fully clear what these case studies comprise. The authors state that the case studies comprised contextual data which detail activities of relevant organisations, but it is not clear how these data were collected.

[12] Meaning that the methods used are mentioned by the authors in the introduction and/or methods-section.

results, theoretical framing of results), we would nevertheless argue the need to offer sufficient (methodological) information in order to be able to assess the quality of the research.

4.4. Thematic analysis

The variety in countries, topics and methods seriously complicates cross analysis and comparison of empirical results. For instance, comparing partnerships in post-war Africa with U.S. police off-duty employment is perhaps even more difficult and less informative than comparing apples with pears. For this reason, we chose to identify the main themes in the empirical literature, which are explained and briefly illustrated in this paragraph.

RQ1: The dangers of blurring boundaries
This research question is divided into two sub-questions. The first one refers to the potential dangers related to plural policing as such, whereas the second one refers to the potential dangers of blurred boundaries between public, private and semi-public agents and places.

a) **Potential dangers of plural policing**
Lack of cooperation between different policing agents
A lack of cooperation between different policing agents is mentioned in several studies. Although detailed information on the nature of this cooperation is often missing we can infer that limited information sharing is a main obstacle in the relation between the agents. This can be deliberate (lack of will to share information) or due to technical or privacy-related issues. The danger lies in the fact that this can compromise the work of different policing actors, with implications for effectiveness and subsequent public satisfaction. In a U.K. study on residents' perceptions on private residential patrols, Noaks (2000, p. 164) for instance argues that the diversion of information towards the private agents (residents saw private guards as their first point of contact) and the lack of communication with the public police can contribute to the increasing marginalisation of the role of the public police, possibly resulting in undermining their authority.

Regulatory frameworks, training, professionalization and (mis)conduct
The actions and powers of the public police are guided and restricted by an extensive legal, regulatory framework. In contrast, our review indicates not all non-public police agents can rely on a similar regulatory framework to steer their actions and limit their powers. Some can, but are faced with restrictions in this framework. Situations are mentioned where non-public police agents can rely on a regulatory framework, but with limited effect (e.g. need for further professionalization, paper inspections, too limited powers). This embodies potential dangers such as a lack of training, limited professionalization, limitations in formal accountability mechanisms and (a risk of) misconduct (e.g. exploitation of employees, racketeering, violence, intimidations and threats, nepotism, questionable investigative strategies). Importantly however, misconduct of agents does not result in all situations from an absence of regulatory framework. In some cases, it may also spring from commercial business interests (e.g. private security officers not resisting customers' demands to engage in unlawful practices). Likewise, five studies also point to dangers related to training, professionalization and misconduct without explicitly linking this to a regulatory framework.

Conflicting expectations and extended responsibilities

Some publications report on the possibility that policing agents experience conflicting expectations and responsibilities in certain instances or cases. For instance, being part of a network with multiple policing agents, may make it difficult for the agents to act in such a way that all co-actors and the public are satisfied (Button & John, 2002). Another example is found in a study on challenges associated with the implementation of police auxiliaries in Australian (Queensland) public police agencies (Cherney & Chui, 2010). Interviews with police liaison officers (PLO) and focus groups with PLO program managers and PLO trainers suggested that PLO's were given jobs that they considered as inappropriate or not within the PLO remit of responsibilities. A minority of the respondents believed that it placed PLO's in situations they were ill-prepared to deal with and that threatened their personal safety. Furthermore, they experienced conflicts between their loyalty for and responsibility to the public police (as their employer) on the one hand and their sense of identification with the community and a sense of accountability to their community on the other hand.

Influence on citizens' rights & accountability
Some studies indicate that plural policing can jeopardise citizens' rights in various ways. Importantly, it is usually not the existence of different policing actors in se that jeopardises some rights. It is the way in which plural policing is implemented that can entail this danger.
For instance, Verhage (2005)'s study on methods used by private security revealed that several private companies refrain from declaring criminal offenses - detected in the course of their activities - to the police or the Public Prosecutor. Consequently, private investigations are not or hardly publically assessed (e.g., brought to court). As a result, 'suspects' in private investigations have less rights than suspects in a public (police) investigation, which will always be assessed by the public prosecutor or a judge. In their international comparative study, Terpstra et al. (2013b) found that although in most countries under investigation citizens have the possibility to act against decisions (and their consequences) of plural policing agents, practical issues sometimes stand effective legal recourses in the way.

Potential negative consequences of plural policing
Lastly, the identified literature shows that plural policing can have some (unintended) negative outcomes that cannot be categorized under the abovementioned headings. First of all, the provision of additional policing - for instance in the context of residential patrols - may entail the risk that local problems are increasingly seen through a policing and security lens. The quest for policing solutions to local problems of order may fail to tackle the more fundamental social issues that often lie behind these problems (Crawford & Lister, 2006). Furthermore, additional policing may foster unrealistic expectations, which in turn can heighten levels of anxiety, particularly in places with low levels of crime. Relatedly, physical presence of private security guards does not always dispel residents' fear nor does it always increase a sense of personal security (Noaks, 2000, 2004). Finally, additional policing can also lead to a raise in the security threshold whereby previously tolerated behaviour is no longer deemed acceptable, thus increasing the demand for crime control and policing interventions and heightening expectations of what these can achieve (Crawford & Lister, 2006).

Some concern also exists about the risk that too heavy reliance on plural policing could lead to a two-tier police service: one for those who can afford it and one for those who cannot (Crawford & Lister,

2006; Gill, 2013). What is more, one study found that some respondents believed that the perception that a two-tier system might occur could undermine effective police work (Gill, 2013).

b) **Potential dangers of blurring boundaries**

Remarkably less information is found on this sub-question than on the first one. Nevertheless, some themes can be identified from the literature.

Conflicts of interest: public versus private interests

Conflicts of interest can arise on the individual and the police-corps level. On the individual level, police officers working off-duty for private security companies can experience moral dilemmas when asked to follow a directive that requires him or her to exercise his or her public authority for private benefit (Brunet, 2008, p. 170). On the corps level, selling additional policing hours inherently affects public police capacity: this capacity cannot be used for public goals. The conflict of interest is the following: either contracted police hours are diverted to public services, leading to unhappy purchasers[13] (e.g. Crawford & Lister, 2006) or public police capacity is devoted to commercial duties, leading to less capacity for public services (Rodas, 2011).

Mission creep - delineation of role

In his study on community warden schemes in the U.K., Johnston (2003) found that some interviewed wardens experience difficulties in delineating their role. Carrying out regular street patrols could lead to wardens having demands placed on them that might generate a so-called mission creep. On the other hand, in the Netherlands Kruize and Gruter (2013) found that certain surveillants have some overlapping powers with the police regarding traffic issues, but without the authority that police officers possess. This was perceived by surveillants as confusing for the public. Both studies illustrate non-public police agents experiencing difficulties in delineating their role and powers.

Disagreement about responsibility for policing

When both public police and other agents co-deliver policing services, disagreement can arise about who has to police certain areas. This danger is illustrated by a study on security networks in U.K. and Australian stadiums (Rodas, 2011). In the U.K. stadium, three of the four sides of the stadium were on public land, but they were heavily used by the club because patrons congregate there to access the stadium on match days. The club refused to pay for the police deployed to these areas because they are classified as public domain and hence are the responsibility of the police. The police argued that football clubs should be held liable for the safety of the fans their matches attract, both inside and outside the club.

RQ2: The effects of plural policing on core tasks of the public police

Although not one study had this question as main focus, some information can be inferred, both directly (i.e. reference to tasks of the police) and indirectly (e.g., through discussion of activities, functions, powers and authorities of non-public police agents). The functions of non-public police agents seem often related to patrolling the streets, handling small offenses and nuisance, and

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[13] In this study, public demands received higher importance than private demands, which means that public police service was not hampered by the buying of additional policing hours.

reducing anti-social behaviour. In part, this is linked to the core task 'order maintenance'. However, when looking at the powers of these agents (if they are regulated), we see that they are often more limited than the ones of the public police. In turn, this affects what they can actually do on the streets. In this respect, they may not necessarily take over order maintenance of the police.

Direct information on the impact of plural policing on the core tasks of the public police can be categorized into three themes.

Filling a void

Some studies illustrate that some policing tasks are taken up by non-public police as a result of the absence of public police (e.g. lack of manpower) (Baker, 2009; Janssens, 2015). As such, there is no clear impact of plural policing on core tasks; non-public police agents step in where the public police is absent. Related to this, in one study interviewed police officers pointed to the added-value of private security in areas for which the public police do not have enough resources to cover (Gill, 2013).

More police capacity for (core) tasks

Four studies suggest that the presence of non-public police agents - focused on other tasks than police core tasks - allows the public police to devote more time to their core tasks. For instance, in a U.K. study, some interviewed chief police officers justified private security work in terms of allowing police officers to focus on core areas where police powers are necessary (e.g., engaging with the public and dealing with major crime)[14]. In a U.K. study on residential patrols, a somewhat ambivalent position of public police was found, characterized by unwillingness to formally acknowledge an input to community safety from private guards while at the same time taking account of their presence in determining allocation of police personnel resources (Noaks, 2008, p. 161).

In a study on policing football stadiums, public and private police were able to work well together in Australia, in part because their functions were complimentary. There was an acknowledgment that public police did not have the resources to dedicate to events policing and that the private security was an available resource (Rodas, 2011, p. 210). In the UK part of the study, some police officers were satisfied that the 'crowd control duties' related to football stadiums is increasingly taken over by private security and that the police can withdraw increasingly from the policing of football stadia (Rodas, 2011, p. 209). In the Netherlands, an increase in BOA's has been observed, which is linked to the fact that the public police is more focused on its core tasks, leaving actions towards small nuisance to non-police agents (Mein & Hartmann, 2013). However, a pilot study on the use of BOA's to handle shoplifting suggests that this would not alleviate the workload of the public police (Kruize & Gruter, 2013).

Non-public police agents assisting in police core tasks

Some studies also indicate that non-public police agents may assist the public police in carrying out their core tasks. For instance, in a study on PLO's in Australia, an inappropriate use of PLO's was discovered: uniform police could legitimately request PLO's to assist them in the performance of their normal police duties, which was accepted as appropriate by a majority of PLO respondents. This

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[14] Similarly, in South-Korea police officers tended to think that the police should focus on high profile criminal investigative cases and/or violent crime cases, leaving the trivial and/or non-violent cases to private investigators (Lee & Yun, 2014).

lead the authors to raise the question if '*plural forms of policing are being usurped by the actions of public police agencies to push them in directions that ensure they argument traditional policing roles'* (Cherney & Chui, 2010, p. 288). In a totally different context, combating anti-money laundering, financial private investigative agencies were found to significantly assist in criminal investigations by conducting intelligence gathering activities (Schneider, 2006). Interestingly, in a study on the role and functions of private police in a U.K. residential area (delivering foot and vehicle patrols), Noaks (2004, p. 155) found that citizens, although welcoming the input from private security, were resistant to private security taking over the role of the public police.

5. Conclusions

Before we turn to our final conclusions, we consider the limitations of the current study. First of all, as stated earlier, we were not able to include all available information in this review. Secondly, this study was carried out by three researchers, which is both a strength and a weakness in the sense that we should be aware of potential differences in interpretations and decisions on the one hand, but that working with multiple researchers also implies the need for transparent procedures and allows for regular contemplation and coordination between the researchers involved. Thirdly, but this is inherent to the nature of a review of literature, the use of inclusion criteria can of course lead to the exclusion of studies that might have been interesting for our research questions. And finally, we did not give lower weight to studies of which the quality was difficult to determine. The problems in appraising the methodology that was used – due to unclear reporting on the methodology and research objectives, was the main difficulty in this review.

We started this review based on the hypothesis that there is a need of empirical investigation. The idea was to make an inventory of empirical research, focused on three specific research questions. Our first conclusion is however, that there is only limited empirical research directly addressing our research questions. Instead, other topics related to plural policing are the focal point. Our review has given us insight into the domain of empirical plural policing research, but has revealed that this domain has a high level of fragmentation. A diversity of topics is studied, looking at different actors in very different (national and phenomenological) settings. This diversity makes it very difficult to make general statements given the variation between nation states in extent of pluralization, nature of pluralization, … As such, the identified themes cannot be generalized to all countries.

Although with regard to the topic of plural policing one of the main concerns that is raised in theoretical discussions focuses on precisely the *dangers* of the presence of plural policing agents and their different competences, diversity in activities, regulation and enforcement, these blurring boundaries are not the focal points in plural policing research today. The dangers are touched upon in studies, but are rarely the research question that sets off the study[15]. Some of these identified dangers are addressed in contemplative literature such as the lack of cooperation between policing agents and limited formal regulations. The fact that studies only indirectly addressed dangers makes it problematic to develop detailed discussions and conclusions.

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[15] For instance, the lack of cooperation between agents is touched upon, without explaining what cooperation means, etc.

The difference between the more contemplative publications on this topic and the focus of empirical studies is striking. There is indeed a strong need for more empirical research in this domain, that is more in pace with the questions and problems that are raised by contemplative research. In our opinion, the optimal way to do research in this domain (to map blurring boundaries between policing actors and the way they make use of their competences) is by using qualitative methods such as observations and interviewing methods. These will allow for in depth insights in daily practices by policing agents.

Hardly any empirical research focuses on the impact of plural policing on the core tasks of the public police although this is a key question. The limited information we found in the literature suggests that the relation is complex and nuanced, and needs further research attention. Especially in view of the debate on the core tasks of the public police and diminishing resources, more specific evaluative research is necessary. How can non-public police agents diminish the work load of police officers, so that they can concentrate on their core tasks? To what extent is this desirable? And is 'extra time' devoted to core tasks? Here again, we belief qualitative research and more specifically case studies in different countries and settings could offer valuable information.

The fragmented nature of plural policing research is a large impetus for the development of a global vision on the problems that are related to plural policing. Our suggestion therefore is the development of a research agenda on this topic. This review has identified some important gaps in the empirical literature, and we sincerely hope that this is one of the starting points for future research.

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Appendix 1: Methods used to study plural policing

Method used	Studies
document analyses[16]	Brunet (2008); Button & John (2002); Janssens (2015); Kruize & Gruter (2013); Mein & Hartmann (2013); Schneider (2006); Sharp et al. (2008); Terpstra (2008); Terpstra et al. (2013); Verhage (2005); Williams (2005)
(semi-structured) interviews	Baker (2009); Button & John (2002); Cherney & Chui (2010); Gill (2013); Groenendaal & Helsloot (2015); Huey (2008); Janssens (2015); Johnston (2003); Kerr (2012); Kruize & Gruter (2013); Löfstrand Hansen (2015); Martin (2012); Mein & Hartmann (2013); Noaks (2000, 2004, 2008); Rodas (2011); Schneider (2006); Sharp et al. (2008); Terpstra (2008); Terpstra et al. (2013); Topping & Byrne (2014); van den Berg et al. (2012); Verhage (2005); Williams (2005)
telephone interviews	Brunet (2008); Gill (2013)
informal field-based interviews	Löfstrand Hansen (2015)
focus groups	Baker (2009); Cherney & Chui (2010)
workshops	Baker (2009)
observations	Baker (2009); Groenendaal & Helsloot (2015); Johnston (2003); Kerr (2012); Kruize & Gruter (2013); Löfstrand Hansen (2015); Noaks (2000, 2004, 2008); Rodas (2011); Sharp et al. (2008)
surveys	Crawford & Lister (2006); Kruize & Gruter (2013); Lee & Yun (2014); Mopasa & Stenning (2001); Noaks (2000, 2004, 2008); Rowland & Coupe (2013)
case studies[17]	Topping & Byrne (2014)