

EDUCATORS ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND EDUCATION

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Abstract. According to democratic ideas, a contemporary, mature, well-functioning, sophisticated, and democratic society honours both law and order and human rights, and, surely, their implementation in the everyday experiences of its citizens. The members of the public of such a society expect all societal institutions to perform their assigned tasks in a professional, reliable, and transparent way, including safeguarding human rights. This paper aims to present some of the regulations and the realities of contemporary police officers' work, as well as the dominant concepts of Emotional Intelligence (EI) with an emphasis on contextualizing these theoretical concepts within the framework of specific empirical data. The paper is based on two research questions: RQ1: What are the aspects of the law enforcement officer's professional activities and recent theoretical considerations regarding communication and EI? RQ2: What are the perspectives of the Lithuanian educators of the future (or current) police officers regarding the communication of law enforcement officers today? The empirical data was collected during the 1 quarter of 2024, under the framework of the POL-COM (KA220-VET - Cooperation partnerships in vocational education and training project: A developmental and educational platform and gamified tools for training police officers and similar professionals, with respect to communications) project, where Lithuanian educators of the future (or current) police officers were invited to share their perspective on contemporary challenges, problem issues regarding communication competencies of law enforcement officers. Methods of critical analyses of references, such as studies, legal documents, theoretical considerations, and argumentation, an empirical study involving respondents – Lithuanian educators of the future (or current) police officers - were used for the development of this paper. Part of the data from this same stage of the multi-stage study, concerning the perspectives of law enforcement officers, was presented in previous publications and also in the pending publication.

Keywords: Lithuanian educators of the future (or current) police officers, Emotional Intelligence (EI), Communication.

Introduction

Following the democracy ideals, formulated more than 200 years ago, a mature, well-functioning, sophisticated, and democratic society honours both law and order, human rights, and, surely, their implementation in the everyday experiences of the citizens of such a society. The members of the public of such, we assume our, contemporary Lithuanian society, expect all institutions to perform their assigned tasks in a professional, reliable, and transparent way,

including safeguarding human rights. These expectations for a state to be governed (including its institutions, such as law enforcement) in a democratic, professional, reliable, and transparent way are considered necessary by most of its members. Suppose an infringement of these expectations is noticed. In that case, the members of such a society immediately use all the legal tools to rectify the situation, such as expressing their disappointment on social IT-based media, in mainstream media, or taking on other, more direct and compelling legal actions. These expectations are thus linked to law enforcement officers' communication skills and their ability to convey requirements, which, in turn, relate to Emotional Intelligence (further referred to as EI). EI is understood as the ability to perceive, interpret, demonstrate, control, evaluate, and use emotions to communicate with and relate to others, with respect, effectively, and constructively.

Research object: the perspectives of Lithuanian educators of the future (or current) police officers regarding the communication and EI of contemporary law enforcement officers.

The **aim** of this paper is to present aspects of the law enforcement officer's professional activities and the dominant concepts of Emotional Intelligence (EI), with an emphasis on contextualizing these theoretical concepts within the framework of empirical data.

The paper is based on two research questions:

RQ1: What are the aspects of the law enforcement officer's professional activities and recent theoretical considerations regarding communication and EI?

RQ2: What are the perspectives of the Lithuanian educators of the future (or current) police officers regarding the communication of law enforcement officers today?

Methods: The data items were collected during the first quarter of 2024, under the framework of the POL-COM (KA220-VET – Cooperation partnerships in vocational education and training project: A developmental and educational platform and gamified tools for training police officers and similar professionals with respect to communication) project, where members of the 1) Lithuanian public, 2) police officers in Lithuania, and 3) Lithuanian educators of the future (or current) police officers were invited to share their opinions on the contemporary communication of law enforcement/police (the terms are used synonymously here) officers.

Part of the data from this same stage of the multi-stages study, concerning the perspectives of law enforcement officers, was presented in previous publications¹ (and in the pending publication: Zuzeviciute V., Jatautaite D., Butrime, E. Enhancing Emotional Intelligence in Students via ICT and Gamification: Insights from the Pol-Com Project); here, the emphasis is on the perspectives of educators.

Contemporary police officers' professional activities, requirements for them and the realities

The vision, values, mission, tasks, and functions of the Lithuanian police are closely related and complement each other. The mission of the Lithuanian police is to effectively use available resources to defend the rights and freedoms of the Lithuanian people, protect society and the state, and help individuals, families, and communities.² The vision is focused on society, its safety, and the police officer.

¹ Zuzevičiūtė, Vaiva; Jatautaitė, Dileta; Butrimė, Edit. Democracy as a Worth Living Environment and Law Enforcement: What is the Role of Emotional Intelligence? // International Journal of Environmental Sciences. [S.l.] : Integrated Publishing Association. eISSN 2229-7359. 2025, vol. 11, no. 17, p. 2750-2758. <<https://theaspd.com/index.php/ijes/article/view/5707>

² Lietuvos policija, „vizija, misija, vertybės“, (2020), accessed on 31 September, 2025., <https://policija.lrv.lt/lt/apie-mus/vizija-misija-vertybes> (Note - translation of texts in this paper is provided by the authors, thus certain discrepancy between texts in different versions is possible)

The vision is indicated as to strive to have police force that is attractive, motivated, and effective for the people and the state. The document exemplifies that attractive means respect for people, citizens, residents and visitors. Police officers must be respected and trusted, therefore it is important to provide conditions for improvement and the performance of duties. Officers must be motivated, police officers must be honest, loyal to police values, determined, and effective, which means officers must be competent in solving problems of people and society; they must use effective methods of combating crime, strive for concrete results at minimal cost. The police force is for the people, thus police officers unconditionally defend human rights, and it is important to ensure a safety of a person, because that leads to a safe state. Police officers strive for trust and partnership, ensuring public order and public security, which includes prevention of crime.³

The Lithuanian police identifies three core values that reflect the institution – people, family, society. These three values give rise to many positive and motivating qualities that characterize the close relationship between the police and society. Police officers are assigned six tasks, which they carry out during their service. These tasks serve as guidelines for officers on what to focus on and what exactly to do; these tasks are indicated below⁴. Although the tasks assigned to police officers seem achievable, they nevertheless require effort, as they face an officer every day while on duty. In order to implement and foster the above, police officers must perform certain functions. In performing their functions and facing daily challenges, police officers need to reason and react fast, fast information processing skills, patience, and strong psychological and physical astuteness. The Law on Police of the Republic of Lithuania establishes 22 functions of police officers (here we mention only a few that are most relevant to the topic of this article): within their competence, they develop or participate in the preparation of projects for prevention and control, law enforcement strengthening measures, and implement these measures; within their competence, they implement the prevention, detection, and investigation of criminal offenses and administrative violations (misdemeanors); analyze and reveals the causes and conditions of criminal offenses and administrative violations (misdemeanors) and take measures established by law to eliminate them; conduct searches for suspects, accused persons, convicted persons, persons who have absconded, and persons who have left healthcare institutions to whom the court has applied coercive medical measures, and other persons, establish the identity of persons, as well as the identity of unidentified corpses found; implements the provisions of European Union and international legislation within its competence, participate in the activities of European Union institutions, bodies, services, agencies, and international organizations; organize and implement measures to ensure public order and public safety; (one of the most important points in this paper): provide immediate assistance to victims of criminal offences and administrative offences (misdemeanors) or for persons in a helpless state, as necessary to preserve life, health, or property. Article 6(1) (13) of the Law on the Police of the Republic of Lithuania, referred above, also specifies a function of police officers in communicating with victims.

³ „Lietuvos Respublikos policijos įstatymas, Nr. VIII-2048“, LRS, žiūrėta 2023 m. rugsėji 2 d., <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.111665/asr>

⁴ „Lietuvos Respublikos vidaus tarnybos statuto pakeitimo įstatymas Nr. XIII-1381“, LRS, žiūrėta 2024 m. vasario 1 d., https://www.infolex.lt/portal/start_ta.asp?act=doc&fr=pop&doc=41119 (1) protection of human rights and freedoms; 2) ensuring the safety of individuals, society, and public order; 3) providing urgent assistance to persons when necessary due to their physical or mental helplessness, as well as to persons who have suffered from criminal acts, administrative offenses (misdemeanors), extreme situations, or similar factors; 4) prevention of criminal offenses and administrative offenses (misdemeanors); 5) detection and investigation of criminal offenses and administrative offenses (misdemeanors); 6) supervision of road traffic).

Police officers must know how to communicate with victims and understand a challenge that victim faces, why a person seeks help. Since police officers spend most of their time at work communicating only with victims, it takes a lot of emotional energy to listen to each person, understand a person, and find a way to help a person. It is important to note that stress is inevitable in police officers' work, because their work involves witnessing human suffering, such as witnessing incidents in which children are abused, where making split-second decisions about life and death, bearing great social responsibility, and complying with strict legal norms describe 'just another day at work'^{5,6}. Taking into account the vision, mission, values, tasks, and functions presented, it is important to note that everything presented applies both to the police community as a whole and to each police officer individually. Police officers are subject to high standards, they are the executors of the listed criteria, their work is mainly focused on ensuring security, even solving social problems, communicating with citizens, which is why officers must know the law, be able to listen, be able to resolve conflicts, and make decisions here and now – all at once!

Sources of stress in the professional activities of contemporary police officers

Almost all able-bodied members of society devote a large part of their lives to their professional activities, which is why people often experience various stressors in the workplace.

Data published by the Police Department reveals that the number of police officers is decreasing every year recently. In 2024, there were 7314 police officers, and in the previous year: 7495, in 2022: 7537⁷. Although the number of reported crimes is decreasing, as was also found in the other study, completed by the author of this paper a previous year⁸, police officers are not expected to have less work and responsibilities. On the contrary, the police system must be strengthened because it is unclear when crime may increase. Due to the current geopolitical setting, situation may shift rapidly, producing new openings for the increase of crime levels, which will cause problematic issues for the Lithuanian public, the economy, and, surely, law enforcement.

There are several sources that cause of stress in each profession, however, they and especially their intensity may vary significantly, depending on the nature of the professional activity. Although studies confirm that representatives of other professions (e.g., teachers, social workers) also experience a lot of stress in their professional activities, however, the stressors affecting teachers or lecturers differ in their intensity from those affecting police officers, firefighters, or emergency medical professionals. First responders in general, including police professionals have to deal with situations that often pose a real and imminent threat to

⁵ Jarašiūnaitė G. et al, Dėmesingų įsisamoninimu paremtos streso mažinimo programos taikymo policijos pareigūnų imtyje galimybės (2021), https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Gabija-Jarasiunaite-Fedosejeva/publication/359742820_Demesingu_isisamoninimu_paremtos_streso_mazinimo_programos_taikymo_policijos_pareigunu_imtyje_galimybes/links/624c5cb6ef01342066596169/Demesingu-isisamoninimu-paremtos-streso-mazinimo-programos-taikymo-policijos-pareigunu-imtyje-galimybes.pdf

⁶ Conflict de-escalation and resolution. Course materials (2025). <https://polcom-training.eu/course/view.php?id=42> [accessed on 28 October, 2025]

⁷ <https://policija.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1740978344/10416/2024%20m.%20policijos%20veiklos%20ataskaita%20fin.pdf>; [accessed on 3 November, 2025]

⁸ Zuzevičiūtė V., Visockas E. (2022). Mažėjantis registruotų nusikalstamų veikų skaičius ir visuomenės santykis su policija. Vertinimai ir įžvalgos <https://policija.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/kriminogenine-situacija-lietuvoje-kas-lieka-nematoma-ir-kodel/> [accessed on 31 October, 2025]

human life⁹. Police officers often find themselves in the thick of disaster, in a conflict situation, where firm and legally valid, as well as sensitive, action is necessary here and now¹⁰.

Although the police profession may seem attractive and exciting from the outside, as it is full of action, but behind the facade lies stress and tension, because the police profession is one of the most stressful professions, affecting the physical and mental health and psychosocial well-being of officers¹¹. As stress has been investigated for decades, we know the main characteristics, manifestations and the cause for stress, for example, we know that stress is an individual physiological and psychological reaction of the body to external and, sometimes, internal stimuli¹².

For example, stress can be felt when an officer has to perform assigned functions, but a person is overwhelmed with information that cannot be immediately and adequately processed. Therefore, an officer, experiencing stress, may be unable to make the correct decisions, and the level of stress increases even further, when an officer realizes the possible consequences of the decision made. This leads to occupational stress is defined as a psychological state, caused by work demands that cannot be met. Stress in the professional activities of a police officer can manifest itself in symptoms, such as heart rate, blood pressure, breathing, muscle tone, movement and coordination disorders, emotional tension, fear, and sometimes loss of control¹³.

Sources of stress or tension felt in professional activities do not increase work productivity and results, nor, in most cases, do they provide positive emotions in the work environment. Moreover, extreme or prolonged stress is associated with a negative impact on a person's well-being and health¹⁴. Thus the Emotional Intelligence (EI) of police officers must be developed, as not every officer is able to cope with challenges, experiences, stress, and anxiety. Officers require knowledge, training, emotional collegial and professional support.

High-pressure environment of a police officer's work. The professional activities of a police officer are mainly related to ensuring public order, solving problems encountered by citizens, and preventing criminal acts or administrative offenses. In performing their duties, police officers constantly respond to various reports related to threats to life, traffic safety, violence (including domestic), conflicts, public order violations, and property crimes. Almost universally, officers respond to, are involved in, or participate in interactions with victims, witnesses, or suspects. Therefore, police officers' Emotional Intelligence must be constantly

⁹ Žeriukaitė G. (2024). Emocinis intelektas ir policijos pareigūno profesinė veikla. MRU, magistro darbas. https://vb.mruni.eu/permalink/370LABT_MRU/bl9jnv/alma99985800208756 [accessed on 29 October, 2025]

¹⁰ Conflict de-escalation and resolution (2025). <https://polcom-training.eu/course/view.php?id=42> [accessed on 28 October, 2025]

¹¹ Zuzevičiūtė, Vaiva; Jatautaitė, Dileta; Butrimė, Edita. Teaching emotional intelligence techniques via ICT and gamification: some of the findings of the pol-com project // ICERI 2024: 17th annual International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation, 11-13 November 2024, Seville, Spain: conference Proceedings // Edited by Luis Gómez Chova, Chelo González Martínez, Joanna Lees. [S.l.] : IATED Academy, 2024. eISBN 9788409630103. p. 3309-3315. (ICERI Proceedings, eISSN 2340-1095 ; 17).DOI: 10.21125/iceri.2024.0856.

¹² Zuzevičiūtė, Vaiva. Inteligencja emocjonalna, studenci i Covid = Emotional intelligence, students and Covid // Uniwersytet - raport z rubieży = A University - a report from the frontier / editing by Anna Murawska, Paula Wiażewicz-Wójtowicz. Szczecin : Uniwersytet Szczeciński, 2022. ISBN 9788379725571. eISBN 9788379725588. p. 119-120. (Pedagogika szkoły wyższej, ISSN 2083-4381 ; t.3).

¹³ Conflict de-escalation and resolution. Course materials of the KA220-VET - Cooperation partnerships in vocational education and training project: A developmental and educational platform and gamified tools for training police officers and similar professionals, with respect to communications project (2025). <https://polcom-training.eu/course/view.php?id=42> [accessed on 28 October, 2025]

¹⁴ Bernard S. Mayer. *The Dynamics of Conflict : A Guide to Engagement and Intervention*. Vol 2nd ed. Jossey-Bass; 2012. Accessed May 31, 2024. <https://search-ebscohost-com.skaitykla.mruni.eu/>

developed. Officers must first understand and control themselves, then be able to understand others and manage their communication with other people and between them¹⁵.

In most cases, police officers encounter aggressive individuals in conflict situations, where aggression is pronounced both between involved individuals and against police officers. This aggression takes various forms: verbal (non-verbal) insults, threats, and physical violence. Such situations evoke emotions that a police officer must be able to recognize, understand their causes, and deal with situations appropriately. In most conflict situations, people experience negative emotions such as stress, anxiety, anger, rage, or sadness. A person experiencing anxiety finds it more difficult to make reasonable decisions; thus, indecision intensifies, may have a negative impact on the officer's ability to resolve the conflict¹⁶.

High professional demands and public expectations. We have already analyzed that officers are assigned many tasks and functions for their service, which require a high degree of responsibility and competence. Every year, a selection process is carried out for future police officers. For example, the applicants for the Lithuanian Police School must meet certain requirements. Article 2 of the Order of the Lithuanian Police Commissioner General "On the Approval of the Rules for the Selection of Persons for the Lithuanian Police School" states that the purpose of the selection of candidates for the School is to determine the competitive score of the candidates' knowledge, assess their physical fitness, logical thinking, psychological suitability, motivation, and ability to justify their decision to study at the School. The Order also specifies other requirements, as it is intended to select the best-rated candidates for admission to the School¹⁷. Order highlights the most important requirements that every future and current officer must meet: knowledge, physical and psychological fitness, adequate reasoning, and positive attitude. The commission assesses these requirements and takes them into account, thereby fostering competition. These high requirements are not only set for applicants to the Lithuanian Police School, but also accompany police officers in their daily work.

Huge (and ever-increasing) workload. As the number of service members leaving the service in Lithuania is increasing every year and is not being sufficiently replaced by new recruits, the workload of officers is, as a consequence, increasing. The heavy workload and shortage of police officers are becoming a pressing problem, making it difficult for officers to remain motivated and alert, to be empathetic, to listen and to help while performing their duties, which is a part of Emotional Intelligence. An analysis of the literature shows that statements about excessive workload, high demands and increased stress levels are accompanied by examples about poor work performance, mistakes, productivity, and declining motivation. The majority of officers leaving the service have long-term work experience. This creates not only the problem of increased workload, but also another problem, which is the integration of new officers into the system, and familiarization with the specifics of the work. There is a shortage of officers willing to mentor newcomers, and thus, often, due to a lack of experience, a new

¹⁵ Conflict de-escalation and resolution. Course materials of the KA220-VET - Cooperation partnerships in vocational education and training project: A developmental and educational platform and gamified tools for training police officers and similar professionals, with respect to communications project (2025). <https://polcom-training.eu/course/view.php?id=42> [accessed on 28 October, 2025]

¹⁶ Žeriukaitė G. (2024). Emocinis intelektas ir policijos pareigūno profesinė veikla. MRU, magistro darbas. https://vb.mruni.eu/permalink/370LABT_MRU/bl9jnv/alma99985800208756 [accessed on 29 October, 2025]

¹⁷ 2016 m. vasario 21 d. Lietuvos policijos generalinio komisaro įsakymas Nr. 5-V-129 „Dėl Lietuvos policijos generalinio komisaro 2010 m. Birželio 15 d. įsakymo Nr. 5-V-496 „Dėl asmenų atrankos į Lietuvos policijos mokyklą taisyklių pavirtinimo“ pakeitimo, TAR, , [https://lpm.policija.lrv.lt/uploads/lpm.policija/documents/files/Atrankos%20taisykles\(1\).pdf](https://lpm.policija.lrv.lt/uploads/lpm.policija/documents/files/Atrankos%20taisykles(1).pdf) [accessed on 3 November, 2025]

officer's anxiety intensifies, preventing them from trusting the skills they acquired during their studies. This is a vicious cycle: a lack of confidence further intensifies stress. Both mentors and new service mentors experience stress. During the adaptation period, there is tension and stress. Still, there is also the additional problem of assigning a colleague with long-term experience to supervise them during the probationary period. In order to prevent high levels of stress, anxiety, and tension among officers, they need support. Psychological assistance is also necessary¹⁸.

The analysis of studies and the legal regulation documents indicate that the pressures that come from high-pressure situations where our officers operate in, the high requirements set by the legal regulations for the profession, by superiors, and by the public, in conjunction with at times excessive workload, lead to at times excessive pressure our officers endure in performing their professional duties. Thus, sensitive and reasonably targeted attention to officers' EI, along with psychological support for them, is essential to maintain effective law enforcement services.

Emotional Intelligence: history and concepts today

The formal concept of EI emerged in the 1960s (here from Davitz, 1976)¹⁹ and gained global attention with Goleman's seminal work in 1995²⁰. The author defined EI as a cluster of competencies essential for leadership, including self-motivation, impulse control, mood regulation, and empathy. Later, the author expanded this framework to include 25 competencies, including political awareness and an achievement drive.

Since then, three dominant models have shaped EI research: the ability model by Mayer and Salovey offered more than twenty years ago, the mixed model by Bar-On offered almost immediately afterwards²¹, and the most recent trait model offered by Petrides *et al*²². Each of these models conceptualizes EI slightly differently. For example, Mayer and Salovey defined EI as a hierarchy of four competencies: perceiving, facilitating, understanding, and managing emotions. Bar-On, on the other hand, framed it as a collection of non-cognitive skills, such as stress management, adaptability, and interpersonal competence. The level of these skills predict life success more reliably than traditional IQ. Petrides *et al* underlined the connection between strong EI and positive psychological, academic, and relational outcomes.

These theoretical insights are particularly relevant for law enforcement, where officers frequently face high-stress and emotionally charged situations. Black (2022)²³ showcased that EI is not innate but can be enhanced through targeted education and training. For example, skills such as self-regulation are fundamental for de-escalation of a conflict, as they allow officers to control their emotions and replace impulsive reactions with rational judgment. Therefore, the enhancement of Emotional Intelligence and communication skills has – at least

¹⁸ D. Black, The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Public Safety. Cordico. Lexipol Team. May 4, 2022. <https://www.lexipol.com/resources/blog/role-of-emotional-intelligence-in-public-safety/> [accessed on 3 November, 2025]

¹⁹ Davitz, J. R., & Beldoch, M. (1976). *The communication of emotional meaning*. Greenwood Press.

²⁰ Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Bantam Books.

²¹ Bar-On, R. (1997). *BarOn emotional quotient inventory* (Vol. 40). Multi-Health Systems.

²² Petrides, K. V., Sanchez-Ruiz, M. J., Siegling, A. B., Saklofske, D. H., & Mavroveli, S. (2018). Emotional intelligence as personality: Measurement and role of trait emotional intelligence in educational contexts. In *Emotional intelligence in education: Integrating research with practice* (pp. 49–81). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-17879-2_3

²³ Black, D. (2022). The role of emotional intelligence in public safety. Cordico. Lexipol Team. <https://www.lexipol.com/resources/blog/role-of-emotional-intelligence-in-public-safety/>

hypothetically - the potential to add to officers' resilience: officers may get better at communication, and ultimately be more effective in managing conflicts and building positive community relations, thus performing their professional activities in accordance with public expectations better.

Thus, while EI does not provide answers in most of the cases that make the police officer's work so demanding, nevertheless, it may provide an additional source for resilience in high-pressure situations that officers face in their everyday activities.

Lithuanian educators' perspective on future (and current) law enforcement officers. Selected empirical study results

In light of the theoretical considerations we provided above, an empirical study was designed and implemented during the first quarter of 2024 under the framework of the POL-COM (KA220-VET – Cooperation Partnerships in Vocational Education and Training project: A developmental and educational platform and gamified tools for training police officers and similar professionals with respect to communication) project.

In the study, three groups of respondents were invited to share their opinions: 1) representatives of the general public, 2) law enforcement/police officers, 3) teachers/educators working in the field of educating future law enforcement officers. Though the total number of respondents, including those from Romania and the Czech Republic, exceeded 300, only responses from the Lithuanian sample are analysed here. Respondents in each group were asked to share their perspectives through respective questionnaires. The questionnaires, developed by the Czech Republic team, comprised both closed and open-ended questions. Here, only a portion of the data shared by the Lithuanian respondents is presented.

Educators of future (and current) law enforcement officers were invited to share their opinions on contemporary communication and other EI aspects of law enforcement officers (as mentioned above, a part of the data from this study concerning the perspectives of law enforcement officers had already been presented in a previous publication). An anonymous online survey was used to address the general research question (RQ2): What are the perspectives of educators regarding the communication and other aspects of EI of law enforcement officers today?

Participants of the study. A total number of respondents was 29, which is not high, and this is a limitation of the study. However, in a small country (Lithuanian population is approximately 2.7 mln), and in the country where we have only two institutions (at tertiary level: one at vocational and one at higher education level) providing education for future law enforcement officers, it is adequate for the identification of specific trends; also, the limitation is to some degree compensated by the anonymous and volunteer participation in the study. Next to educating future law enforcement officers in pre-service, the same educators also often provide in-service training, thus, they participate in in-service professional development, and know the situation in that field expertly.

Process. The respondents were asked in open-ended questions to indicate several issues, such as what techniques they find useful in teaching emotional intelligence, and in closed-type questions, respondents were asked to indicate their assessment (1- the least significant; 5-the most significant) regarding certain aspects.

Results. It was found that there was a significant difference between assessments, please, see Fig1.

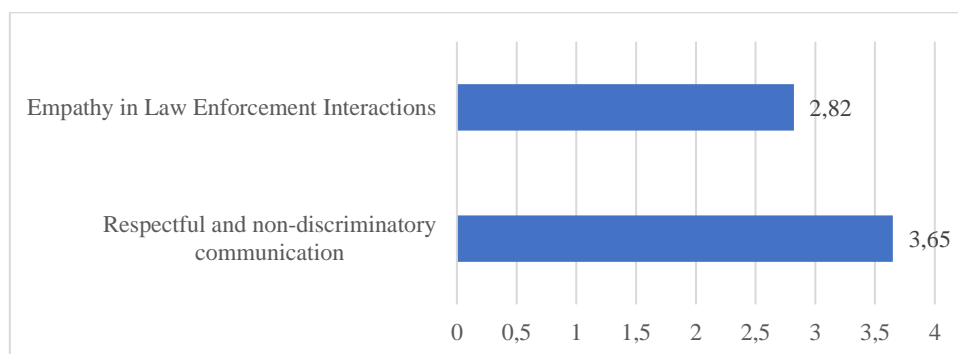


Figure 1. Respondents' (Lithuanian educators of future (and current) law enforcement officers) assessment (highest and lowest on the communication and the EI aspects; average (1- the least significant; 5-the most significant))

These findings are not surprising. It may be reasoned – and some, obviously do - that in the context of strict legal regulations for the profession, empathy may not have a defining role in discharging professional duties, or at times (not always) may even impede. Surely, these finding prompt discussion.

Respondents' assessments on the other aspects are presented in Fig 2.

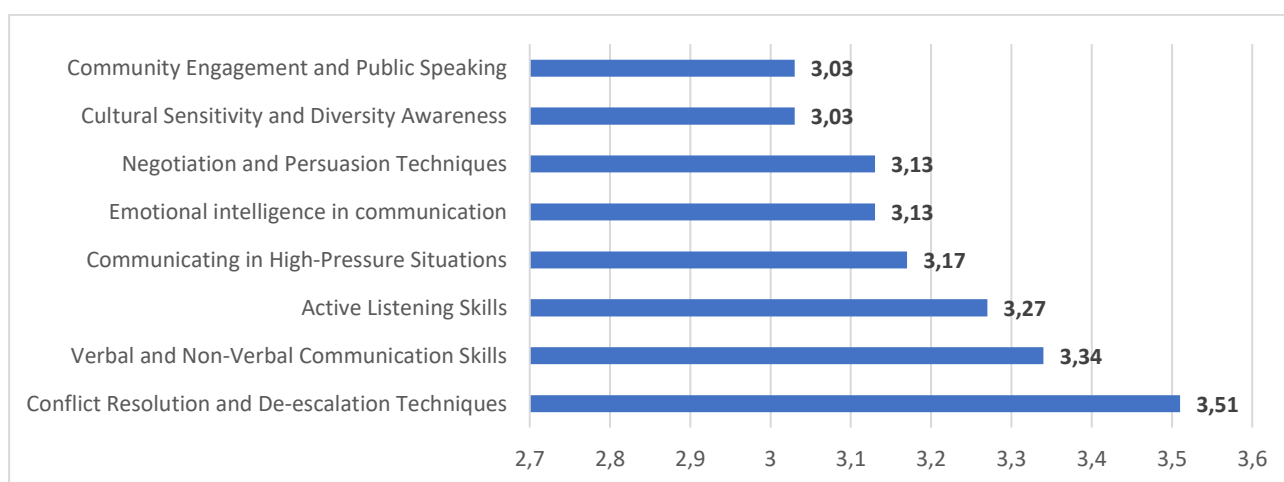


Figure 2. Figure 1. Respondents' (Lithuanian educators of future (and current) law enforcement officers) assessments on communication and EI aspects; average (1- the least significant; 5-the most significant))

Findings illustrate that educators think conflict resolution is one of the main competencies in this regard (following right after respectful and non-discriminatory communication).

Out of 29 respondents, 25 provided answers to an open-ended question (*In your experience, what are the challenges cadets face when learning about effective communication?*); the generalized reasons are as follows (Table 1):

Table 1. Respondents on: *In your experience, what are the challenges cadets face when learning about effective communication?*

Contributions (answers were generalized for conveying a general idea)	No. of contributions allocated
Lack of practice and experience, backed up by excessive enthusiasm and excitement	7
Lack of general communicative competences, empathy, broader cultural awareness	6
Conflict situations, especially in domestic violence cases	4
General lack of communication skills, such as listening	4
The challenges can be very different, depending on the personality of the police officer	2
Lack of time in studies, too much other material (legal, tactics)	1

The findings indicate that the educators are rather worried that lack of experience in conjunction with the youthful – though commendable – enthusiasm may lead to unfavorable consequences, which may (and are) adverse to an officer and the service. The step-by-step, supervised learning seems to be in the background of the expressed anxiety. However, even if educators in most cases agree that the communication and EI aspects are essential in contemporary police officers' work, the general workload in the studies at both levels (tertiary vocational and tertiary higher) prevents them from emphasizing these aspects sufficiently (the findings seem to indicate).

Conclusions

While answering the first RQ (RQ1: What are the aspects of the law enforcement officer's professional activities and recent theoretical considerations regarding communication and EI?), the following conclusions may be formulated. The analysis of recent studies, the other studies completed by the authors of this paper, and the analysis of legal regulation documents indicate that the pressures that come from high-pressure situations in which our officers operate, the high requirements set by the legal regulations for the profession, by superiors, and by the public, in conjunction with at times excessive workload, lead to at times excessive pressure our officers endure in performing their professional duties. Thus, a sensitive and reasonably targeted attention to the EI of officers and the psychological support for them is essential in order to maintain effective law enforcement service. While EI does not provide answers in most cases that make the police officer's work so demanding, yet, it may provide an additional source for resilience in high-pressure situations that officers face in their everyday activities.

While answering the second RQ (RQ2: What are the perspectives of the Lithuanian educators of the future (or current) police officers regarding the communication of law enforcement officers today?), it may be stated that even if the limitations of the studies are considered, the educators seem to place a high significance on the following communication and the EI aspects: Respectful and non-discriminatory communication (average assessment: 3.65), Conflict resolution and de-escalation techniques (av. assessment: 3.51).

Educators also indicated a lack of experience and the high study load as reasons preventing them from addressing communication and EI aspects more extensively in studies.

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