



WORKING PAPER

EURO COP PRINCIPLES ON POLICE AND PRIVATE SECURITY IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

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Role of private security services in a democracy

- The protection of fundamental rights and freedoms is the task of public bodies that perform their task in public and under scrutiny of parliament.
- Private security providers have a clear role to play on private premises and in safeguarding legitimate private interests of individuals or groups.
- While private security providers can not sustain public security, their activities may contribute to overall security in a democratic community, if they are regulated precisely and efficiently controlled.
- Private security providers are private companies and are driven by economic interest. They must not be put into a role where their legitimate interest of achieving economic profits may conflict with the public interest to protect fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. Whether to provide security in an individual case or not must in particular never be subject to the interest of achieving economic gains.
- The protection of fundamental rights and freedoms must not be subject to the resources available to an individual.
- Wherever the activities of private security providers intersect with activities of the police, cooperation should occur on clear terms and without affecting the ability of the police to perform their duty. The primacy of the police has to be preserved under all circumstances. The provision of public security must not be subject to any particular interest.
- Private security providers or their employees should only be given powers beyond those of any other citizen under strictly limited circumstances i.e. in the immediate vicinity of private premises that are particularly endangered or if their own security cannot be guaranteed otherwise.



Standards of private security services

- Private security agents should as a general rule be obliged to wear a uniform that is clearly and obviously distinguishable from that of any public service, the police and emergency services in particular. Exceptions may only be made with regard to specific roles, such as personal protection.
- An unblemished personal criminal and commercial record should be required to be allowed to own and run a private security business.
- An unblemished personal criminal and commercial record should be required to be allowed to work in the private security industry.
- Specific personal and company insurance against possible damage claims should be mandatory for private security providers. This insurance has to go beyond standard commercial requirements.

Regulation of private security services

- The allowance to operate a private security business should be subject to obtaining a license after the successful completion of a publicly certified training course, including examination.
- Taking up an occupation in the private security industry should be subject to obtaining a license after the successful completion of a publicly certified training course, including examination.
- The tasks of private security providers should be clearly defined by law.
- Initial training and continued training should take place under public control. Failure to comply with training requirements should ultimately lead to the withdrawal of the license.
- The competent authorities should keep a register of complaints against private security firms or their agents.
- Cross border activities of private security providers should be regulated and adequately controlled
- Regulation has to include efficient monitoring and control procedures that make sure that rules are adhered to
- Public control of private security providers should be exerted via the police or the government authority responsible for internal security.