

## **Abstract**

This thesis examines the mental hygiene of police officers in precinct departments and how the profession affects their personal lives. Additionally, how the stigma of seeking psychological help is contributed to in this environment.

The first chapter of theoretical part is devoted to the introduction of the relevant structures of the police forces and their functioning. Next, the topic of mental health among police forces is being presented with a focus on risk factors and occupational stress. The third chapter contains a definition of mental hygiene and a summary of psychological services that are available for police officers.

The empirical part presents research based on interviews with police officers from district departments (n=9). Thematic analysis was used to identify psychohygienic habits and the impact of the profession on personal life. Discourse analysis was used to identify mechanisms contributing to stigma.

The results show that physical activity and social coping is a major component of mental hygiene, with problem-focused strategies being used during acute stress exposure. Mistrust of psychologists and the belief that seeking this type of service is only for extreme cases appeared to be the main reasons for not using psychological care that is being provided for police officers. The prevailing view that the best way to deal with these matters is to deal with them independently was also considered a factor. On the basis of these beliefs, the officers themselves also explicitly and implicitly contributed to stigma. The findings point to the importance of collegial relationships in the police profession as well as the necessity for open discussions in the workplace about mental health.

**Key words: police; mental hygiene; coping strategies; stress; stigma**