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How do characteristics of police departments impact crime? Preliminary report.

Police/civilian interaction has become a highly discussed and controversial issue in the United States. After considering what things impact police/civilian interactions, we became particularly interested in the characteristics and policies of police forces, and how they may impact crime. To answer this question we gathered data on crime rates from the Uniform Crime Reporting database, demographic data from the US Census Bureau, and data on police force personnel and policies from the Law Enforcement Management and Administration Survey. The explanatory variables we looked at include demographics of police forces, number of officers per 10,000 residents, the use of merit pay, residential requirements, and a community policing plan. We used statistical analysis to determine which, if any, of these predictor variables has an effect on crime. (Received September 19, 2016)