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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND DEFICIT OF PERSONNEL IN THE ROMANIAN POLICE

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Abstract
Artificial intelligence (AI) is now a fundamental part of daily life, helping with everything from unlocking devices through facial recognition to aiding in healthcare diagnostics. AI's ability to process and analyze vast amounts of data positions it as a valuable resource in law enforcement, particularly in Romania, where challenges in public safety could benefit from AI integration. Despite its potential, citizens remain cautious about ensuring AI's fairness and beneficial use. Staff shortages in Romanian police and border agencies exacerbate public safety issues. Critical vacancies and budget constraints lead to slower response times, increased crime rates, weakened border security, and eroded trust in law enforcement. Additionally, unfair labor practices and restrictive policies make recruitment and retention difficult, highlighting the need for urgent reforms. Making the appeal to AI with its advantages, such as improved productivity and crime prevention, and analyzing data to predict hotspots and identify criminal behaviors. However, risks exist, including biased algorithms and policy gaps that may lead to unfair outcomes. Regulatory frameworks like the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) ensure transparency in data practices, but no universal standard currently governs the fairness of AI applications in law enforcement.
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1. INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) systems have seamlessly integrated into our society, becoming a ubiquitous part of everyday life. Whether acknowledged or not, it's highly probable that the average person interacts with some form of AI regularly. From facial recognition software unlocking mobile devices to virtual assistants in household gadgets, and even diagnostic tools in healthcare.

In Romania, the law enforcement sector faces various challenges that appear well-suited for AI applications. AI, with its ability to identify patterns within extensive datasets, offers law enforcement an opportunity to elevate its capabilities and improve community service. Yet, the question remains: how can citizens trust that AI will be implemented in a way that is both beneficial and fair?

Artificial intelligence can improve workflows, productivity, and effectiveness, but it also carries risks. These risks stem from issues like flawed algorithm design, biased training data, or gaps in policies that fail to address the potential impacts of AI technology.

Research on AI systems is relatively new and focuses mainly on the European Union (EU), where the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) governs data use and transparency. Countries like the United Kingdom have adopted or adapted such regulations, with the General Data Protection Act of 2018 (GDPA) (Ian. 2023) offering individuals the right to know what data is held about them. While these regulations ensure accountability in law enforcement's data practices, there is no standard to guide the use of AI and machine learning algorithms (MLAs) in reducing bias and ensuring fairness, which could negatively impact citizens.

Artificial intelligence in crime presents both risks and benefits. While AI has facilitated the globalization of crime through activities like behaviour-mimicking programs and manipulated media for blackmail, it can also serve as a tool to combat crime. AI's preventive role includes predicting and reducing crime by analysing data, identifying hotspots, and recognizing criminals' behaviours. Its deterrent role focuses on gathering evidence post-crime to assign responsibility and provide proof. AI-equipped surveillance systems and predictive analytics enhance crime detection and prevention, demonstrating both the challenges and opportunities AI brings to the field of law enforcement.

2. REDUCTION IN PERSONNEL AND THE EMERGENCE OF TELE-COPS

Police agencies in the U.S. are facing significant workforce challenges, including a 5% decrease in personnel over the past three years. Increased resignations and retirements, coupled with struggles to fill vacancies, have led to delays in police response times. To address these challenges, the Wichita Police Department (WPD) implemented a Commissioned Call Center (CCC), staffed by light-duty officers, to handle low-risk, low-harm calls via phone.

A study was conducted from March to July 2023 to evaluate the CCC's effectiveness compared to traditional in-person responses. Key findings included:

Satisfaction levels remained high across both phone and in-person responses.

Phone responses significantly reduced response and handling times (7.2 minutes vs. 45 minutes for initial contact and 13 minutes vs. 53 minutes to complete calls) (Birzer and Cory, 2024). Callers appreciated the option for discretion and privacy, particularly for sensitive cases like domestic violence reporting.

The CCC demonstrated efficiency and operational benefits, improving community access to police services. Recommendations for similar implementations include leveraging light-duty officers, equipping centralized locations, targeting peak times, and continuously monitoring performance.

Overall, this approach showcases the potential of innovative methods in modern policing.

3. REDUCTION IN PERSONNEL IN ROMANIAN POLICE AND BORDER POLICE

Critical staff shortages faced by the Romanian Police and Border Police, which severely impact their operations and working conditions due to:

- Alarming Vacancy Rates where some police units operate with nearly a quarter of positions unfilled; in Teleorman County, the vacancy rate exceeds 28% (SPRD, 2025). Border counties like Constanța and Satu Mare, along with Bucharest, have significant deficits, affecting public safety and cross-border crime prevention.
- Government and MAI Leadership Inaction: Budgetary constraints and austerity measures lead to vacancy freezes and insufficient hiring. Deliberate policies, such as restrictive salary incentives and discriminatory performance requirements, limit the benefits for officers under recent ordinances.

Consequences of staff shortages will lead to: overburdened officers working beyond legal limits; abuse of unpaid, forced standby duty to compensate for the lack of personnel; increased operational risks due to longer response times and insufficient resources.

An urgent reform is needed with proposals including hiring enough officers, eliminating abusive practices, and ensuring compliance with European labour laws.

The consequences of these staffing shortages on public safety are both significant and complex:

- Rising Crime Rates: A reduced police presence on the streets and slower response to incidents may lead to increased criminal activity, particularly in areas heavily impacted by vacancies.
- Delayed Emergency Responses: Longer wait times for urgent interventions, such as accidents or violent crimes, could allow situations to escalate unnecessarily.
- Weakened Border Security: Insufficient staff in border police departments hampers efforts to combat cross-border crime and illegal trafficking, raising security concerns.
- Eroding Community Trust: Ineffective policing and slow responses can diminish public confidence in law enforcement agencies and their ability to maintain safety.
- Greater Risks for Officers: Officers face higher workloads, leading to stress, fatigue, potential judgment errors, and increased personal risk.

- Lapses in Law Enforcement: Limited personnel may result in selective or less rigorous enforcement of laws, undermining justice and accountability.
- Reduced Preventative Efforts: Resource constraints may deprioritize proactive policing, such as community engagement and crime prevention programs.

The staffing issues in the Romanian Police and Border Police arise from several overlapping factors:

- Budget Constraints: Austerity measures restrict funds for hiring and competitive salaries.
- Frozen Vacancies: Positions are deliberately left unfilled to cut costs, worsening the shortage.
- Restrictive Salary Policies: Ordinances like OUG 26/2024 offer raises but impose exclusionary criteria, such as high-performance ratings, leaving many officers ineligible.
- Unfair Practices: Forced unpaid standby duties frustrate officers by compensating for the personnel shortfall without proper remuneration.
- Leadership Actions: Decisions by central leadership to limit benefits deter recruitment and retention efforts.
- Demographic Trends: Aging populations and emigration reduce the pool of qualified candidates.

Together, these issues present significant challenges for law enforcement, making it harder to recruit and retain talented officers.

4. CAN AI SUPPORT POLICE DEPARTMENTS IN KEEPING COMMUNITIES SAFE?

AI has proven to be a powerful crime-solving tool. Over 3,000 police departments worldwide are already utilizing image recognition technology to automatically identify license plates, car models, and even modifications such as aftermarket wheels or ski racks. This technology has been instrumental in various cases, including apprehending a mass murder suspect in Cobb County (May 2023) (Murphy, 2023), dismantling a catalytic converter theft operation (Flock Safety, 2022), and rescuing over 80 victims of human trafficking.

By enabling collaborative image-sharing between police departments, AI fosters seamless cooperation across jurisdictions, improving crime resolution outcomes. However, like body-worn cameras, the adoption of AI technologies requires thoughtful policy development. Key considerations include image retention periods, access to location data, and ensuring public awareness. A well-crafted policy framework can significantly enhance crime prevention by improving the efficiency and success of criminal apprehension.

AI's potential extends even further, offering predictive analytics to pinpoint areas at risk of criminal activity, social media monitoring to address emerging

community concerns, and DNA analysis to link individuals to evidence or crime scenes.

5. AI-GENERATED REPORTS IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

About half of a law enforcement officer's work is spent writing reports, which are required by law to be truthful, thorough, and objective. Reports are entered into computerized records management systems and contain details on occurrences, witnesses, victims, and suspects.

By automatically filling in report fields with speech-to-text, GPS alignment, and computer vision from bodycam footage, artificial intelligence (AI) can expedite this procedure. By evaluating previous report data, large language models (LLMs) may provide event summaries and classify participants, assisting in the creation of thorough, effective, and consistent reports while lessening the administrative burden on the officers.

Because AI-generated reports improve data analysis and decision-making, they have the potential to completely transform law enforcement (LE). Officers can find patterns, trends, and anomalies for investigations and crime prevention with their assistance because to their ability to handle massive datasets more efficiently. AI saves time by automating data input and report writing, freeing up officers to concentrate on important duties like complicated issues and community participation.

Furthermore, reports produced by AI can enhance comprehension of local populations, promoting improved communication and making it possible to create effective crime prevention measures. Officer efficacy, community trust, and general public safety are all improved by an all-encompassing strategy.

Despite the potential advantages of AI-generated reports, biases and legal problems are still present. Because AI uses pre-existing data, disparities in law enforcement (LE) may be sustained. Inaccurate or biased source data can lead to poor analysis, which can cause population misrepresentation, diminished community trust, and erroneous arrests.

Furthermore, there are issues with AI-generated reports' admissibility in court, particularly for opaque systems. Such reports might not fulfil validity and reliability criteria if private data and development details are not disclosed, which might hurt LE efforts if they are found to be inadmissible for prosecution.

For law enforcement (LE) to appropriately use AI-generated reports, interpretability is essential. It includes explainability, transparency, dependability, and auditing of AI systems to make sure their results are reliable and compliant with the law. Prior to deployment, the public, LE experts, and policymakers must carefully examine AI decision-making procedures.

Models ought to be built using counterfactual explanations or LIME-like approaches to explain their outputs. To evaluate dependability and correct biases, transparency regarding data sources, methods, and assumptions is essential. In

order to guarantee consistent results, reliability also necessitates training on representative data and conducting frequent audits to track performance and address problems like model drift.

However, it can be difficult to achieve interpretability, particularly when dealing with intricate algorithms like deep learning models. For AI to be successfully integrated into LE policies, trade-offs between interpretability and performance may need to be carefully balanced.

6. WHAT IS THE LATEST GENERATIVE AI, AND HOW DOES IT DIFFER FROM A SEARCH ENGINE?

Generative AI represents a specialized branch of artificial intelligence that creates entirely new content – such as text, images, music, or videos – by learning from extensive datasets. It identifies patterns and uses them to produce original outputs.

Examples of generative AI include:

- Chatbots: Tools like OpenAI's ChatGPT, Microsoft Bing, and Google Bard, which generate cohesive, context-aware text.
- Creative Platforms: Applications such as Midjourney for creating art or photorealistic images; Character.ai for developing conversational agents that emulate real individuals (e.g., Stephen Hawking), historical figures (e.g., Rosa Parks), or fictional characters (e.g., Luigi from Super Mario Brothers); and Eleven Labs for producing natural-sounding speech.

The fundamental difference between generative AI and search engines lies in their functionality:

- Search Engines: Designed to locate and retrieve information from the web by indexing pages and displaying a list of relevant results based on user queries.
- Generative AI: Developed to hold conversations, solve problems, and create unique content. For instance, you could ask a chatbot to write an essay, compose a melody, or generate a computer program – tasks that extend beyond simply retrieving pre-existing information.

Generative AI is revolutionizing how we interact with technology, offering remarkable versatility and becoming a powerful tool for creative, professional, and everyday activities.

7. CAN THIS TECHNOLOGY ASSIST IN CRIME-SOLVING?

Maybe. Chatbots and generative AI tools are already proving useful in supporting officers with documentation tasks, such as drafting incident reports or creating presentations for city offices. These tools enhance communication by generating preliminary drafts, producing supplementary content like images, music, or videos, and customizing presentations for specific audiences. For

example, an officer could request a chatbot to "explain these ideas to elementary school students," ensuring the message is both age-appropriate and engaging.

An emerging trend involves equipping generative AI systems with specific documents, enabling users to ask precise questions about the content. Google's Talk To Books platform exemplifies this, allowing users to query databases with questions like "When was a convicted killer later exonerated based on new evidence?" to uncover relevant insights (Chen, 2023).

Looking ahead, these tools could revolutionize law enforcement by transforming vast data repositories – including police reports, depositions, and forensic evidence – into actionable intelligence. This technology holds the potential to greatly enhance investigative efficiency and accuracy, setting a new standard for crime-solving.

Across various nations intelligence (AI) in law enforcement is evident, for instance, in the United States, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) employs AI to analyse real-time surveillance camera footage, enabling the identification of criminals. AI also aids FBI agents in processing vast amounts of data to track individuals and forecast potential crime locations and timings (Zachek *et al.,* 2023). In the United Kingdom, law enforcement leverages AI to monitor social media and other open data sources to detect threats to national security. Similarly, in Germany, AI is utilized to uncover crimes involving financial transactions.

AI-powered facial recognition technology plays a significant role in identifying and verifying individuals. This technology is a vital asset for law enforcement, used in public spaces and airports to assist with investigations, tracking suspects, and confirming identities. For example, the Miami Police Department employs Clearview AI software to solve crimes by matching photos of individuals against a database and retrieving related online images. Clearview AI also supplied its technology to Ukraine to support its defence efforts against the Russian invasion. Initially deployed to Ukraine's Ministry of Defence, the technology was later made accessible to various other agencies, including the National Police of Ukraine.

Companies like Axon and Vievu have recently acquired AI technology to streamline tasks such as video analysis and redaction, saving time and effort for officers.

Law enforcement agencies face significant challenges in managing the sheer volume of video footage captured by body-worn cameras, in-vehicle systems, civilian devices, and surveillance cameras, especially during major incidents like the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombing. Reviewing such vast amounts of evidence is time-intensive, making AI an essential tool for easing this burden (Griffith, 2017).

Companies like Axon, through its acquisition of Dextro, have developed AI-powered tools that can scan videos for specific objects, actions, and even transcribe audio. Likewise, Veritone offers advanced video and audio search

technologies capable of quickly processing large quantities of footage to identify faces, objects, words, and more. These innovations significantly enhance investigative efficiency, allowing machines to assist in analysing footage and expediting evidence review. Axon and Veritone's systems are expected to reduce video review times by as much as 70–80%, improving law enforcement agencies' operational effectiveness. Law enforcement agencies face difficulties in video redaction, as body-worn cameras often capture sensitive individuals like minors, witnesses, or undercover officers. Redaction safeguards privacy by modifying video copies without altering the originals. Current tools require manual identification and tracking, but Axon aims to transform this process with its AI, promising improved accuracy and efficiency.

Additionally, Axon is advancing automated report generation from video evidence, reducing the time officers spend on data entry and streamlining operations. While full automation is still in development, the company is creating tools to extract data from videos, such as scanning IDs for record management systems (Griffith, 2017). These innovations could enable officers to dedicate more time to crime-fighting, boosting overall operational effectiveness in law enforcement.

Law enforcement AI integration encompasses a variety of uses, benefits, challenges, and anticipated advancements:

- Predictive policing: Artificial intelligence (AI) is widely used in surveillance, including behavioural analysis, object identification, and facial recognition. Proactive law enforcement activities are made possible by the analysis of historical crime data to identify possible hotspots.
- Task automation: AI increases productivity and frees up police personnel to work on more complex cases by automating routine chores like paperwork, data processing, and evidence analysis.
- Crime prevention and investigation: AI's ability to recognize intricate patterns in large datasets aids law enforcement in spotting trends, illegal tactics, and impending dangers.
- Virtual assistance: To increase public interaction, disseminate information, and expedite administrative tasks, police agencies are implementing AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants.
- Enhanced efficiency: AI lowers resource costs and promotes more effective operations within law enforcement agencies by streamlining processes like data processing and documentation.
- Improved judgment: AI that has been trained on pertinent data helps law enforcement make fair, data-driven choices, which results in more effective and efficient policing.
- Enhanced public safety: By facilitating quick reactions to threats and illegal activity, surveillance and predictive policing improve public safety.

Traffic safety and operational efficiency by leveraging real-time data and sensor technology, it improves road condition assessment, predicts traffic patterns, and optimizes public safety efforts. This includes applications like predictive traffic and crime mapping, as well as assisting police and first responders through machine learning and in-vehicle AI systems. AI systems can enhance decision-making, optimize patrol routes, and provide insights during high-speed pursuits or emergencies. NASA's TruePAL (Lu *et al.,* 2022). TruePAL– an AI Assistant for First Responder Safety. system exemplifies this, offering real-time feedback to ensure safer, faster responses and even predicting potential accidents near stopped emergency vehicles. Roadway sensor technologies and AI tools, such as de-icing sensors and analytics for signage, contribute significantly to reducing traffic crashes and improving roadway safety. AI combines data collection, real-time analytics, and predictive capabilities to set new standards for public and traffic safety, adapting to trends like autonomous vehicles and ensuring a proactive approach to potential hazards.

Based on the aspect above the following topics need to be addressed:

- Discrimination and bias: AI systems may produce discriminating results if they reflect biases in the training data. Reducing algorithmic bias and maintaining fairness are necessary to meet this challenge.
- Privacy considerations: There are serious privacy concerns with the widespread usage of AI for spying. It's still difficult to strike a balance between the necessity for public safety and respect for personal privacy.
- Ethical issues: Careful thought must be given to the ethical issues raised by AI in law enforcement, including accountability, transparency, and the possibility of abuse. The need to create and follow ethical frameworks that address biases, privacy concerns, and other relevant ethical issues will only grow as AI technology advances.

The acquisition of AI by police in the future emphasizes how urgently strong governance regulations are needed. In order to improve resource management and emergency call priority, companies are incorporating AI into already-existing technologies, such as CAD systems, rather than launching whole new AI solutions. AI advancements are also spreading into fields including real-time field support through mobile devices, digital evidence processing, and investigation tools. The use of AI has been further hastened by cloud hosting, particularly in smaller police agencies. These agencies may swiftly access state-of-the-art AI technology without having to manage complicated infrastructure, frequently surpassing larger departments in deploying new capabilities.

Given the rapid development of AI's capabilities and its expanding impact, police chiefs have to take proactive steps to ensure that AI is used appropriately. These actions are in line with new developments in AI regulation, even if they are not yet required.

- Clear Purpose in AI Use: It's critical to have clear objectives for the use of AI. To guarantee safety and effectiveness, leaders must determine the issues AI seeks to solve and assess its goals. The basis for evaluating and controlling the technology is a well-defined goal.
- Risk Assessment of AI's Human Impacts: In addition to the dangers of not implementing AI solutions, policymakers must assess how AI may affect privacy, discrimination, and civil liberties. The use of personal data and the possible consequences of inactivity should receive particular consideration.
- Procedures for Technology Assessment: To gauge the efficacy, precision, and security of AI, police agencies require strong assessment frameworks. The technology lifecycle should include audits, metrics generation, and ongoing monitoring. Human interaction and transparency in design are essential.
- Protocols for Human Review: Human judgment must continue to be essential, particularly when making judgments pertaining to basic rights. By putting in place transparent review procedures, AI is guaranteed to enhance human skill rather than take its place. Biases in AI systems must be addressed.
- Transparency in AI Use: Law enforcement organizations need to be aware of and explain how AI systems work. Gaining the public's trust and demythologizing the workings of AI depend heavily on transparency and explainability.
- Formal Governance Structure: To handle AI responsibly, comprehensive governance is required. In order to support regulatory trends and promote community trust, policymakers should include stakeholders and follow established norms. These actions give law enforcement officials the frameworks they need to successfully handle the challenges posed by the application of AI.

8. ROMANIAN POLICE STATUS OF USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Using artificial intelligence (AI), the Bucharest Police have started a creative online fraud prevention campaign. An instructional song with catchy lyrics that warns users about typical frauds like phishing and false communications was made with AI techniques as part of the campaign. Vigilance is emphasized in the advertisement, which cautions against sharing personal information such as verification codes or clicking on dubious websites.

The "Vote for Adeline" (Ion, 2025) scam is one instance that has been brought to light, in which victims are duped into granting hackers access to their WhatsApp accounts. To stop fraud, the police advise taking precautions like turning on two-factor authentication and confirming the legitimacy of messages.

Nearly 80% of Romanians experience frauds within a year, and the average cash loss from online fraud in 2024 was $512 (Greening, 2022). Over $1 trillion in damages have been caused by internet fraud worldwide, making this a pressing problem. Through creative and memorable approaches, the campaign seeks to decrease vulnerabilities and educate the public.

In order to improve emergency response, border security, and public safety, Romania's Ministry of Internal Affairs (MAI) will use cutting-edge technology including drones, robotics, and artificial intelligence (AI). By creating a digital centre for civil services, the MAI hopes to further its digitalization efforts. It is also considering partnering with Qatar (Penescu, 2025) to share best practices in AI applications and digital governance.

The strategy, which emphasizes innovation to address issues like personnel shortages while upholding high safety standards, involves the use of AI in police and civil defence services. The partnership aims to capitalize on Qatar's proficiency in digitization, which was proved by its sophisticated technologies used during the FIFA World Cup 2022, which showed effective crowd control and security procedures.

The implementation of artificial intelligence within the Romanian police force is not as advanced as in some other countries. However, with the ongoing evolution of the European Union's regulations on artificial intelligence, there is significant potential for improvement. These changes could drive the adoption of more sophisticated AI technologies, enhancing law enforcement capabilities while prioritizing the security and privacy of ordinary citizens. As the legal framework develops, it may foster greater accountability, transparency, and efficiency in AI usage, ultimately contributing to more effective public safety measures and building trust within the community.

9. IN CONCLUSION

Predicting the future is always a challenge, however, it’s likely that within a few years, AI technology will be integrated into every aspect of policing, with personalized AI coaches becoming a standard tool for officers across all roles.

- For Patrol police: Artificial intelligence (AI) built into smart glasses or contact lenses may provide augmented reality overlays that let police recognize items like cars or buildings, evaluate dangers instantly, and retrieve past crime statistics for certain areas.
- For crime analysts and detectives: AI systems will expedite the examination of evidence, allowing investigators to make targeted queries such as "How compelling is this evidence for trial purposes?" or "What should I ask this informant based on previous cases?" AI may also arrange suspects and rank leads, emphasizing opportunities and motivations.

- For Police Leadership: AI has the potential to transform management by assisting leaders in finding exceptional candidates, providing individualized coaching, and making well-informed choices on hiring, promotions, and job modifications that are in line with community requirements.
- For public information officers, AI will improve public communication by offering knowledgeable and sympathetic answers. Already hailed for its practicality and compassion in the medical field, chatbot technology may be customized to promote trust and productive communication between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

By combating crime, increasing productivity, and building community trust, AI is already revolutionizing law enforcement. Designing systems that satisfy contemporary police demands while guaranteeing equal results is essential as this technology develops. In order to preserve safety and ethics, AI solutions should be seen as iterative, needing constant planning, observation, and modification. Police may utilize AI to improve their work without replacing qualified personnel if they have defined goals, measure effectiveness, and deal with reliable vendors. The development of AI programs that fairly benefit all stakeholders requires careful community interaction.

This vision demonstrates how AI has the potential to improve policing's efficiency while also making it more flexible and sensitive to societal demands.

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