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Creating new practices? Police officers as actors in collaborative integration work

Multi-agency collaboration is a working method used in immigrant integration. It involves public authorities and actors from various NGOs and ethnic communities. This article analyses experiences of multi-agency collaboration from the perspective of the police in their role as active partners in local collaboration. In addition, the police officers' expectations of collaboration are examined to determine what added value is brought to their work by engaging in collaboration. The data used in this article consist of interviews with police officers from four different parts in Finland. The officers consider their work to involve interactive and contextual competence and the ability to master a good situational awareness. Theoretically, the article focuses on multi-agency working and characteristics of trust and confidence in police work. Based on a critical close reading of the research data, it seems that collaboration in immigrant integration is sometimes part of everyday police work, but it brings with it various aims and dilemmas. Proactive work is emphasised, and resources are crucial in relation to time and professional competences.