

# **Mental Health NeuroForce: Assessing and Promoting Mental Health Among Police Forces**

**Ana Moreno & Patrícia Oliveira-Silva**

Human Neurobehavioral Laboratory (HNL), Research Center for Human Development (CEDH), Faculdade de Educação e Psicologia da Universidade Católica Portuguesa (FEP-UCP), Porto, Portugal

## **Abstract**

Police officers are continuously exposed to different stress sources, involving unpredictable, potentially dangerous, and traumatic situations that threaten these professionals' mental health and increase the likelihood of developing mental health problems. Although there are some programmes and training concerning police officers' psychological well-being, Portugal still needs to develop further initiatives regarding this topic. Given our current pandemic situation, this concern has become even more prominent. Thus, the present project is divided into Plan ALPHA and Plan BETA. Plan ALPHA will be carried out in Portugal, Spain, and the UK and it aims to compare the training available concerning mental health for police officers; and assess and compare police officer's stress, and emotional regulation and coping strategies. As to the latter, we aim to design, validate and implement in Portugal a program focused on promoting police officers' mental health and relevant skills for their intervention in society and risk/crisis situations, using fNIRS in a virtual reality setting.

**Keywords:** Mental Health, Police Forces, Emotional Regulation, Stress Resilience, Prevention Programme