

Title: Algorithmization at the Dutch National Police. An ethnographic report of street-level bureaucrats enactment with algorithms

Keywords: Algorithmization, discretion, curtailment and enablement, enactment

Governments are inclined to use algorithms, as the technology promises to aid them in more effective processes, better informed decisions and insight in complex organizational processes (Meijer and Grimmelikhuijsen 2020). One central government organization that uses algorithms is the police. Police departments around the world use algorithms in various forms e.g. predictive policing (Brayne 2021; Meijer and Wessels 2019), traffic control (Miller and Keiser 2020), and to process online fraud complaints (Bex, 2019).

Algorithms have a profound impact on the discretion of street-level bureaucrats (SLB). Instead of the SLB, the algorithm partly or fully replaces the SLB in situations where discretion is necessary (Busch and Henriksen 2018). Given the increasing use of algorithms by the police (Brayne 2021) and the influence algorithmic discretion has on decision-making (Young et al. 2019), one can question, are street-level bureaucrats able to counteract their loss of applying discretion? The influence algorithms can have on SLB's is either curtailing or enabling (Buffat 2015) their work practices. Therefore, how do SLB's enact with algorithms? This classic debate concerning automatization gets a new twist as modern algorithms are applied in medium and high discretionary task.

Research to date highlight the need for ethnographic research that elaborate on local situated practices of SLB's enactment with algorithms (Busch and Henriksen 2018; Young et al., 2019; Peeters, 2020; Zouridis et al. 2020), as it is unclear what the impact of algorithms are on discretion and performance (Bullock 2019). Therefore, the research question is: *How do street-level bureaucrats enact with algorithms in local situated practices?*

This paper presents an ethnographic research at the Dutch National Police. The department Operational Information Processing (Dutch acronym: OIV) uses the Intelligent Crime Reporting (ICR) tool to process incoming reports online fraud. The data of this research consist of X h observations, X interviews and archival documentation, this research found [forthcoming].

Literature

Brayne, S. (2021). *Predict and Surveil. Data, Discretion, and the Future of Policing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Buffat, A. (2015). Street-level Bureaucracy and E-Government. *Public Management Review*, 17(1), 149-161.

Bullock, J. (2019). Artificial Intelligence, Discretion, and Bureaucracy. *American Review of public Administration*, 49(7), 751-761.

Busch, P. A., & Henriksen, A. H. (2018). Digital discretion: A systematic literature review of ICT and street-level discretion. *Information Polity*, 23(1), 3-28.

Meijer, A., & Wessels, M. (2019). Predictive Policing: Review of Benefits and Drawbacks. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 42(12), 1031-1039.

Meijer, A., & Grimmelikhuijsen, S. (2021). Responsible and Accountable Algritihmization: How to Generate Citizen Trust in Governmental Usage of Algorithms. In: R. Peeters & M. Schuilenburg (eds), *The Algorithmic Society: Technology, Power, and Knowledge*. London: Routledge.

Miller, S. M., & Keiser, L. R. (2020). Representative Bureaucracy and Attitudes Toward Automated Decision Making. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 31(1), 150-165.

Peeters, R. & Widlak, A. (2018). The digital cage: Administrative exclusion through information architecture - The case of the Dutch civil registry's master data management system. *Government Information Quarterly*, 35(2), 175-183.

Young, M. M., Bullock, J.B., & Lecy, J.D. (2019). Artificial Discretion as a Tool of Governance: A Framework for Understanding the Impact of Artifical Intelligence on Public Administration. *Perspectives on Public management and Governance*, 2(4), 301-313.

Zouridis, S., van Eck, M., & Bovens, M. (2020). Automated discretion. In: Evans, T., & Hupe,

P. (eds.), *Discretion and the Quest for Controlled Freedom*. London: Palgrave Macmillan