

# CUPP

Critical Understanding  
of Predictive Policing



**LATVIA**

**Controlling road traffic  
with digital tools**

CUPP project meeting  
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**BSC** – ANDA ĀDAMSONE-FISKOVIČA, EMĪLS KĪLIS, MIĶELIS GRĪVIŅŠ  
**LU** – IRĒNA BRAKĀNE, LOLITA BUKA

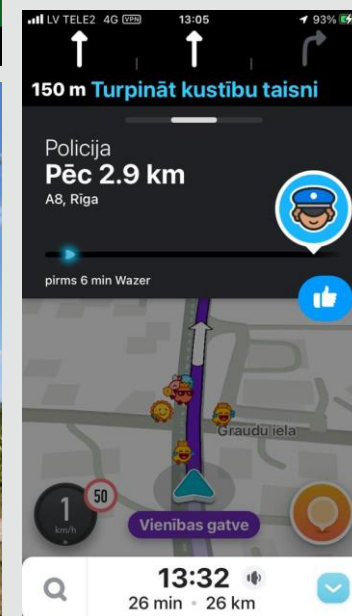
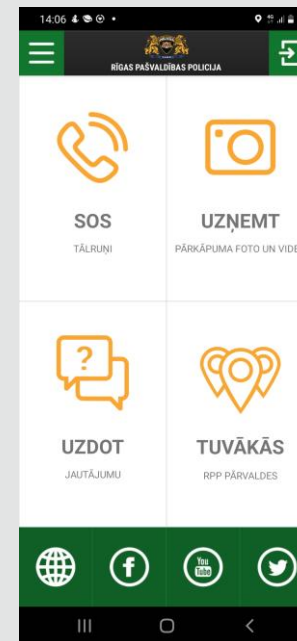
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# Controlling road traffic with digital tools

- Fixed and portable **speed cameras**
- Unmarked police car with a **360-degree camera**
- Traffic **drones**
- Public **police application** for reporting crimes and incidents

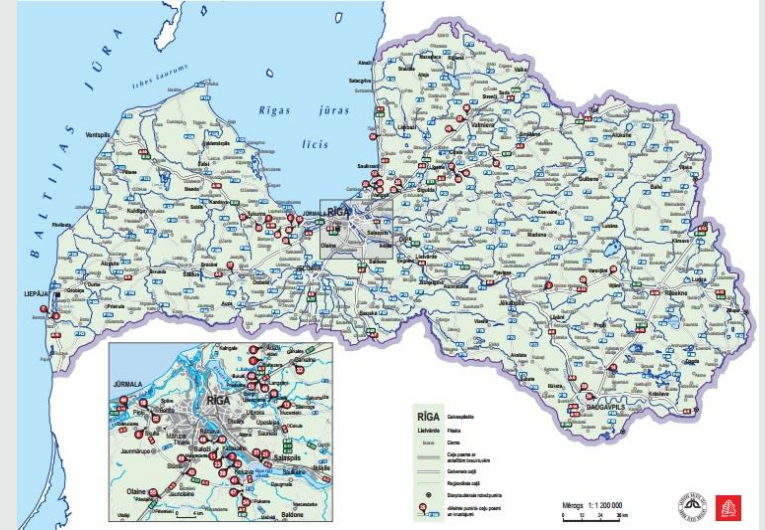


# Overview on the empirical work

- **Desk research**
  - **Laws and regulations** governing the use of digital tools in traffic control
  - **Press coverage** (1999-2021, 50 articles) of the introduction and employment of speed cameras
- Six **expert interviews** with 18 individuals [September 2021 - February 2022]
  - Road Traffic Safety Directorate (CSDD) [07/09/2021]
  - Technology company “WeAreDots” [24/09/2021]
  - Association “City for People” [12/11/2021]
  - Latvian State Police [08/12/2021]
  - Safe Driving School [30/11/2021]
  - Riga Municipal Police [08/02/2022]
  - *To be continued...*
- **Citizen focus group** with eight participants representing different age groups, genders, roles in road traffic, and places of residence [26/01/2022]
- **Citizen workshop** «Welfare, traffic safety and privacy in the city» [13/06/2022]
- Observations from **political discourse** during parliamentary elections [01/10/2022]

# Elements of predictive policing in road traffic control

- Placement of speed cameras based on data analytics (historical records on the occurrence of incidents) and requests by local authorities
- Adjustments in police patrol routes or timings based on the pattern of reported traffic violations through the mobile app



# Citizen workshop

## «Welfare, traffic safety and privacy in the city»

### ● TRAFFIC SAFETY CULTURE

- comparatively **underdeveloped** in the Latvian society
- **short-term** orientation towards meeting formal requirements
- fundamental role of **mutual respect** among road traffic participants

### ● GROUPS OF TRAFFIC PARTICIPANTS

- group-specific **diverging perspectives** on traffic safety
- differentiated levels of **vulnerability and responsibility** (victims and offenders)
- law-abiding majority & **aggressive drivers**/regular infringers (high safety risks but limited penalisation)
- users of **electric scooters** as an emerging problematised group – fuzzy status

### ● THE ROLE OF POLICE

- **self-regulation** capacity of traffic participants
- external control for **prevention and punishment**
- *ad hoc* social campaigns vs. **systematic control**
- bureaucratic and technological **obstacles in penalisation**



# Citizen workshop

## «Welfare, traffic safety and privacy in the city»

### ● OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITATIONS OF DIGITAL TOOLS

- no panacea for traffic safety
- technological fix for the lack of police resources
- smart solutions for optimising traffic flows
- monitoring the spread of offences
- limited spatio-temporal effects of digital control tools
- discriminating between official and actual infringers
- privacy vs. public safety

### ● ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

- preventive infrastructural solutions as a viable alternative
- avoiding forced change of participant identity in traffic arrangements

### ● PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- need for both organised and individual civic activism
- NGOs as lobby groups
- direct and technology-mediated peer control



# Parliamentary elections 2022: views on traffic safety

- **Aim:** Zero or reduced number of fatal accidents as a goal postulated by majority of the running parties
- **Solutions:**
  - Main emphasis on the **development of infrastructure**, incl. road reconstruction, and wider use of technical means (red light cameras, average speed cameras) in ensuring road traffic control
  - None of the running parties prioritised **preventive measures** in terms of long-term investments in the education on driver responsibility in ensuring traffic safety



# (In)visibility in digital policing *[possibilities for a joint publication?]*

- **Varying conceptions** of visibility and invisibility in the use of different digital traffic control tools.
- Four groups of **research objects of traffic control** that can be looked at through this seeming dichotomy:
  - (1) traffic surveillance **tools**
  - (2) police **officers** involved in ensuring traffic control
  - (3) individual **infringers** of road traffic safety regulations
  - (4) **citizens** reporting to police on road traffic safety/rule violations
- In-between conditions with a **blurred boundaries between visibility and invisibility of the same object**:
  - The mobile speed cameras can go by unnoticed in situ by the driver, but become visible through the use of social road traffic apps such as Waze;
  - Simultaneous use of real and dummy speed cameras – visible and present vs. visible but not present;
  - The use of autonomous digital tools makes police officers invisible to the traffic participants (no longer physically present on the road);
  - The smartphone app use both disguises the person from his/her vocal reporting actions, but it can make the informer visible to others through the action of taking a photo (visual evidence) of the violation;
  - Some road traffic participants are being more visible to digital traffic control tools than others, with systems discriminating between different types of vehicles, on the one hand, and with traffic participants taking specific conscious measures to avoid becoming “visible” to those.