



## **"Challenging but rewarding- the impressions of being a female police officer"**

Kerstin – Policewoman

### **1. When and how did you decide to become a policewoman?**

I decided in 2016 that I wanted to become a police officer. I was studying at the University of Regensburg at that time and didn't see any sense in why I was doing it, because I had no idea what I wanted to do after I was finished.

The job of a police officer offers a lot of things I'm looking for in a job. It's secure, because you are employed by the state. So, it's quite unlikely that your employment is terminated. Also, after you were on maternity leave your job is still there waiting for you. You can pick up where you left off. And of course, it's something new every day. You never know what the day will have in store for you. So I sent in an application, took several tests (math, German language, physical education...) and got picked to take the two and a half years training.

### **2. Did you have a person who inspired you? If yes, who?**

There are several police officers either part of my family or close to it. I think it's a combination of these people. I can't really pick the one person who inspired me to become a police officer.



### **3. What is the best part of being a policewoman?**

Every day is new and different.

### **4. What characteristics do you think you need most for being a policewoman?**

What you really need is patience. You're part of a team and you work with difficult people. You can't step out however often you might feel like it. You also can't let everything get to you. You see a lot of things you often wish you hadn't seen or experienced. You have to be able to turn off your feelings and just do your job. Humor helps a lot to deal with difficult stuff. So maybe that's the most important thing you need. But when is it not actually?

### **5. Have you ever been prejudiced by society for choosing this profession?**

I have often been asked if I was really sure I wanted to work in an environment so obviously dominated by men. I can't think of a situation I have actually been prejudiced for my choice.

### **6. Do you have characteristics, which make it hard sometimes to be a policewoman?**

Our biggest weakness - women tend to feel too much - that makes it sometimes hard to do this job, is also our biggest strength. Women often have a different approach to handling difficult situations.

Personally, I have the problem that I'm too quick to say what I'm thinking. Sometimes it's just better to shut up and give the thought you've just had another minute, so you can compose a more profound sentence that gets you into less trouble.

**7. Have you ever had the feeling that you want to quit? If so, why?**

No, I have never had that feeling.

**8. What challenges have you experienced as a female police?**

Dealing with colleagues can be challenging at times. There's always one making a sexist joke right to your face, or telling you about how you just can't be as good as a male police officer. Gladly those are very few bad examples and the majority is grown up enough to not be intimidated by strong women. Sometimes it happens that you're not taken seriously by the people you're dealing with because you're a woman. But it can often be changed by doing your job correctly and acting with self-assurance.

**9. Do you think it makes any difference to be a policewoman and not a policeman?**

The difference is often made by male colleagues. But as I said before, those are fortunately becoming extinct little by little. For me personally it does not make any difference. I have to do the same work and I earn the same money for it as a male police officer does. Policewomen are also there in dangerous situations, we also get beaten up in cases of resistance against police forces and we also risk our lives every day doing what we do.

**10. What advices would you give to the other women that want to be policewomen in the future?**

This is not a job for highly sensitive women. You really see and have to deal with a lot of shit. (Sorry, can't sugarcoat it). You have to be thick-skinned and quick at repartee. Police officers have a special kind of humor, so dark that it might freeze the blood in onlookers' veins. The training takes a lot of effort and strength but if you get through that you're rewarded with the best job I could ever think of.

**Interview: Donjetë Bryma**

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