

# Gender and Sexualities in Carabineros: Critical review of the current training.<sup>1</sup>

Rodrigo Andres Azocar Gonzalez<sup>2</sup>, Rodrigo Esteban Donoso Figueroa<sup>3</sup>

Article received on July 7, 2025; article accepted on October 23, 2025

This article may be shared under the [International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/deed.es) license and should be referenced using the following format: Azocar Gonzalez, R. A., & Donoso Figueroa R. E. (2026). Gender and Sexualities in Carabineros: Critical review of the current training. *I+D Revista de Investigaciones*, 21(1), 1-13.

## Abstract

This article analyses critically the training in gender and sexualities in Carabineros de Chile, identifying curricular gaps, institutional reluctance, and challenges for the integration of a gender perspective in the police training process. From a documental analysis of regulations, strategic plans, and specialized literature, it is evident that training in these topics is emerging, with lately normative progresses, but with a lacking concrete pedagogical implementation. It concludes that the transformation for the police training in gender and sexualities requires strengthening the curricular integration, developing participative pedagogical strategies, and promoting the collaboration with external institutions. Incorporating a gender perspective constitutes not only an ethical demand but a requirement to legitimize socially the police function in democratic contexts.

**Keywords:** police training, gender, sexualities, human rights, diversity

## Introduction

For decades, the training of Carabineros de Chile in gender and sexual diversity issues has been virtually nonexistent. While Chilean society advances toward higher standards of equality, the police continue to operate under an institutional framework that only timidly opens to reflection on these topics.

Today, in the 21st century, the curriculum of the Carabineros School remains indebted to the need to incorporate these reflections. This gap is not merely pedagogical: it is political, cultural, and above all, dangerous. Because deficient training in Human Rights does not remain in notebooks; it translates into practices,

omissions, and violences. The social uprising of 2019 exposed an urgent and necessary path to be traveled.

Incorporating a gender perspective in police education is not a matter of political correctness; it is a tool for institutional transformation. It involves sensitizing officers to historically vulnerable groups, preventing biases, and aspiring to a police force that does not discriminate, either by action or omission. It ensures that the uniform does not erase humanity.

The international landscape is not far behind. INTERPOL has also understood that gender matters (INTERPOL, 2023). Its programs include specific modules and promote equality within police forces.

In Latin America, other countries are undertaking bolder reforms. Mexico, for example, has proposed police

<sup>1</sup> Reflective essay article, qualitative approach, resulting from an action research project titled “Training in Gender and Sexualities in Carabineros de Chile,” funded by the research group’s own resources, developed by the Gender and Sexualities in Contexts of Cultural Diversities Research Group (GENSEX) at Universidad Autónoma de Chile (Santiago, Chile). Address: Ramón Subercaseaux 1404, fifth floor, San Miguel, Santiago. +56 22 303 6741. Start date: September 2024. End date: March 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Doctor of Interdisciplinary Gender Studies, University of Huelva, Spain. Gender and Sexualities in Contexts of Cultural Diversities Research Group (GENSEX), Universidad Autónoma de Chile (Santiago, Chile). Address: Ramón Subercaseaux 1404, fifth floor, San Miguel, Santiago. +56223036741. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1940-7743>. Institutional email: [rodrigo.azocar@uautonoma.cl](mailto:rodrigo.azocar@uautonoma.cl). Rol Credit: research.

<sup>3</sup> Master’s in Gender Studies and Psychosocial Intervention, Universidad Central de Chile. Gender and Sexualities in Contexts of Cultural Diversities Research Group (GENSEX), Universidad Autónoma de Chile (Santiago, Chile). Address: Ramón Subercaseaux 1404, fifth floor, San Miguel, Santiago. +5622303674. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6619-7908>. Institutional email: [rodrigo.donosol6@inacapmail.cl](mailto:rodrigo.donosol6@inacapmail.cl). Rol Credit: research.

training with a feminist perspective. Among its axes are the deconstruction of hegemonic masculinity and the prevention of institutional violence against women and dissidents.

Training in gender and sexualities within Carabineros de Chile constitutes a field of research scarcely addressed in academic literature, despite its relevance for democratic legitimacy and respect for human rights in police functions. Although the incorporation of a gender perspective has been internationally recognized as an essential component in the professionalization of police forces, significant gaps persist in Chile at both normative and pedagogical levels.

Various reports and studies have shown that the absence of systematic training in these areas contributes to the reproduction of discriminatory practices and hinders the cultural transformation of the institution. This article aims to critically review the current state of training in gender and sexualities in Carabineros de Chile, identifying the main challenges, advances, and areas for improvement. To this end, a documentary analysis of regulations, strategic plans, and specialized literature is conducted, which allows contextualizing contemporary trends and proposing guidelines to strengthen police training from a human rights and gender equity approach.

### **Carabineros de Chile: Between Inherited Order and the Demand for Dignity.**

Carabineros de Chile was born, like many Latin American institutions of the 20th century, at the intersection of the need for order and the temptation of absolute control. On April 27, 1927, through Decree with Force of Law No. 2,484 (Ministry of the Interior, 1927), the government of Carlos Ibáñez del Campo decided to merge the various fiscal, communal police forces and the Army's Carabineros Corps into a single body. The intention was to unify, but also to discipline, under a military logic, the functions of maintaining order that had been exercised since February 12, 1896.

The birth of this institution, with a military character, was no minor anecdote: it responded to a profoundly vertical conception of power, where security was understood as obedience, and obedience as a civic virtue. This is confirmed by the Organic Law of December 23, 1927 (Prieto, 1990), which establishes Carabineros as a military force responsible for maintaining order, security, and law enforcement throughout the country. The second article of this law introduced, without ambiguity, the military logic: Carabineros would report to the Ministry of the Interior but could temporarily come under the command of the Ministry of War, now the Ministry of Defense, if the President of the Republic deemed it necessary. Not only were armed police institutionalized,

but it was also given dangerous political flexibility for any nascent democracy.

Over the decades, and on the threshold of a political transition, an attempt was made to review this structure. In 1990, the same year Chile recovered democracy, Law No. 18,961, the Constitutional Organic Law of Carabineros de Chile, was updated. Its publication on March 7, and subsequent amendments, including that of December 26, 2023, aimed at greater institutional probity and transparency. Among other things, the obligation to use audiovisual records in public places was established, a measure that sought, at least on paper, to supervise police actions and make them more traceable to the public (Ministry of National Defense, 1990).

Also in 1990, as a political and symbolic measure, Carabineros was transferred to the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security. The aim was to leave behind the shadow of the dictatorship, orienting the institution toward a more civilian, dialogic, and less authoritarian logic.

Today, more than three decades later, a deep conflict persists between the institution's declared intentions and the social perception it carries. Although initiatives exist to improve ties with the public, the wounds remain open. The distance between the official narrative and the everyday experience of many citizens is expressed in a distrust that neither speeches nor manuals have managed to reverse.

One of the most critical moments for Carabineros' credibility was the scandal known as *Pacogate*, uncovered on March 6, 2017. The magnitude of the case—involving irregular money movements exceeding 37 million dollars, with over 130 individuals charged, including high-ranking officials—made it clear that it was not about isolated bad apples, but a system corrupted to its core (Morales, 2020). Two years later, on October 18, 2019, a massive, spontaneous, and profoundly transversal social movement erupted in Chile. The so-called Social Outburst was more than a protest: it was an accumulated cry of frustration, a challenge to historical structures of inequality. Over a million people took to the streets demanding structural reforms. However, the State's response was brutal. Carabineros responded with violence reminiscent of the worst periods of authoritarianism.

The data are chilling: 3,838 people injured, 460 with eye injuries, including 34 cases of complete eye bursts, and 2,520 complaints against Carabineros for torture, illegitimate coercion, and homicides (García & Basualto, 2020). Added to this were reports of sexual violence, inhuman treatment, and disproportionate use of force, often with lethal ammunition. Images of young people with bandaged eyes became symbols of uncontrolled

repression. For many, it was the darkest episode in public security since the return to democracy (Amnesty International, 2020).

The Social Outburst not only exposed the crisis of political representation but also revealed with stark clarity the ethical fragility of the forces of order. Carabineros appeared not as a guarantor of democratic coexistence but as an overwhelmed actor, disconnected from the society it swore to protect. The olive-green uniform no longer inspires security but fear.

In this context, discussing gender training is not a formality or a simple pedagogical innovation. It is, in fact, an urgent transformation. Because what is at stake is not just the curricular content but the very possibility of reconfiguring the relationship between power and citizenship. Incorporating gender perspectives, Human Rights, and sexual diversity into police training does not mean weakening authority but dignifying it. It is not about softening the police role but redefining it from empathy, justice, and respect for life.

Training in gender also means breaking with centuries of authoritarian masculinity that has confused strength with violence and leadership with imposition. It means understanding that security is not measured by the number of bullets fired but by the ability to anticipate, dialogue, and protect without discrimination. In a society still bleeding from its recent scars, training those who carry weapons in the language of equity may seem like a radical measure. And indeed, it is. But it is the only measure capable of reconciling the State with its people.

Because at the end of the day, a police institution that does not humanize itself ends up dehumanizing. And a country that tolerates dehumanization condemns itself to repeating its tragedies.

### **Conceptual Framework: Gender, Sexualities, and Diversities in Police Culture.**

The study of police culture has found in Robert Reiner one of its main theoretical references. His work *The Politics of the Police* (2012) marked a turning point by proposing an understanding of police culture beyond visible behaviors, situating it as a framework of meanings that orients how agents interpret their environment and their own role. For Reiner, this culture is not reduced to habits or routines but constitutes a structured set of shared interpretations through which police officers face the tensions and demands of their daily work.

Reiner identifies seven dimensions that configure this symbolic and practical universe. Each respond to challenges inherent to police work. Suspicion is

cultivated as a necessary disposition to anticipate risks in potentially dangerous situations. Added to this is a powerful sense of mission, which grants police work a moral and differentiating character, dividing the world between those who protect order and those perceived as threats.

This symbolic division reinforces the isolation of the police force from society, which in turn fosters a marked internal solidarity, where mutual support becomes a norm in the face of an environment perceived as hostile or uncomprehending. Within this logic, a pragmatic thinking emerges, focused on resolving problems immediately, and a conservative orientation that tends to reproduce existing social structures. Finally, Reiner points to the persistence of traditional machismo and racial prejudices, which are linked to the hierarchies and inequalities that the institution itself, consciously or unconsciously, contributes to maintaining.

From an analysis that incorporates the cultural dimension, Reiner's main contribution lies in emphasizing that police culture does not function as an independent factor but is closely tied to the structural conditions of the work. Practices and attitudes are nourished by concrete experiences and the challenges inherent to the police function. The author identifies three pillars that shape this framework: the need to exercise legitimate authority, permanent exposure to risk (both physical and institutional), and constant pressure to demonstrate effectiveness through tangible results.

From this perspective, change strategies must go beyond training or individual ethics. Reiner warns that many problematic attitudes do not derive from isolated personal or institutional failures but from the intrinsic characteristics of the police role in unequal societies. Therefore, reform policies will only be effective if they address the structural roots of inequality and the inherent tensions between maintaining order and perpetuating existing hierarchies. Reforming police culture also requires transforming the social context that sustains it.

Regarding the literature on police training in gender and sexualities, it highlights the importance of integrating these approaches as cross disciplines for preventing institutional violences and promoting democratic police practices (Bellón, 2022; Dammert & Valenzuela, 2013). At the international level, experiences such as those in Mexico, Argentina, and Finland have demonstrated that curricular changes, accompanied by participatory pedagogical strategies and dialogue with civil society, favor the reduction of discriminatory behaviors and improve police-community relations (Young, 2022; Lillo, 2016).

Mexico has stood out in incorporating efforts for the development of research with a gender perspective in police institutions, which, although emerging late as a

legitimate academic and political line, has generated widely significant contributions in visualizing discrimination and violence against women police officers, as well as in the challenges of their training with a gender perspective (Tena, 2023). Olivia Tena Guerrero, a psychologist and sociologist from UNAM, has substantially contributed to recovering these topics through her leadership in the Interdisciplinary Feminist Research Group on Police Training (GIFFPOL) and the previous Research Group on Women Police. Her work, *Experiences of Feminist Interdisciplinary Research in Police Institutions: Challenges of Police Training*, narrates a series of experiences that question patriarchal police culture, focusing on promoting feminist pedagogies to eradicate institutional limitations and foster equal relationships in security corporations in Mexico (Tena, 2023).

In the Chilean case, recent research has indicated that, although there are normative advances and institutional diagnoses (Carabineros de Chile, 2021), the integration of a gender approach in training remains insufficient, with an implicit curriculum of hegemonic masculinity and hierarchical obedience predominating (Connell, 2015; Resumen, 2022). The absence of a gender perspective in Chilean police training has historically perpetuated hegemonic masculinities, reinforcing patriarchal norms, constructs, and attitudes that have marginalized women both in their police training and in subsequent duties, normalizing gender violence within the order and security institution.

Bard Wigdor (2023) provides a critical and detailed analysis by examining how heteronormative masculinity practices in cisgender men contribute to generating relationships of exploitation and emotional violence toward women, a extrapolated framework to the police hierarchy where culturally masculine authority is reproduced through actions that ignore unequal power dynamics, transmitting limitations and obstacles in the Chilean police context.

The reflection on Bard Wigdor's work (2023) highlights the need to generate more participatory interventions to eliminate hegemonic masculinities in police training, through positive practices such as introducing feminist pedagogies that question heteronormativity and foster equity and transparency in the different institutional processes. The effective integration of these contributions could promote more inclusive, reflective, and collaborative spaces, generating horizontal dialogue among the different actors present during the training process of Carabineros de Chile.

From a methodological standpoint, the critical analysis of institutional discourse allows examining how the gender perspective is expressed, omitted, or tensioned in official documents and training processes (Laborda,

2023). This approach facilitates the identification of barriers and opportunities for the ethical and cultural transformation of the police function (Salamanca, 2024).

Incorporating a gender perspective in institutions like Carabineros de Chile is not just an educational task; it is a subversive act. It means questioning the very foundations on which authority, discipline, and obedience were built.

For a long time, gender was reduced to a simple biological distinction between men and women. But as Judith Butler (2022) said, gender is not what we are; it is what we do over and over, in a repetitive dance of roles, gestures, and silences that construct the fiction of a stable identity. It is an imposed choreography that punishes those who are uncoordinated.

From that view, it is not surprising that police forces have clung to binarism. In their ranks, hegemonic masculinity—that muscular, imperturbable, and heteronormative version of man—stands as the ideal. A masculinity that, as Connell (2015) noted, not only dominates women but also other masculinities that do not fit the mold: the sensitive, the queer, the dissident. That is, everything that challenges the order of control.

And if gender is construction, sexualities are territory. A vast, changing territory full of bifurcations and unexpected paths. It is not enough to talk about sexual orientation; the complete map of desire, expression, affectivity, and body must be opened. How can an institution understand that complexity if it has not reflected on its own cultural patterns that prevent it?

This is where intersectionality bursts in with force, as Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) proposed: we are not a single thing. We are not just gender or just race or just class. We are all at once. And those layers intersect in modes of exclusion that reinforce each other. Thus, a trans Afro-descendant woman does not face a single wall but a labyrinth of overlapping barriers that current police training does not even recognize, much less understand.

Therefore, talking about a gender approach in police education cannot be limited to motivational talk or a review of statistics. It is a deep, uncomfortable, and urgent transformation. A pedagogy that does not indoctrinate but discomfords; that does not pave over but cracks. Because police institutions are not neutral spaces: they are reproducers of a social order that disguises itself as impartiality while perpetuating hierarchies of gender, class, and race.

A recent sociodemographic study conducted by the Carabineros Training School (2025) accounts for the diverse entry contexts of its students, highlighting the large number of Carabineros Students from indigenous peoples (19.3%), with the Mapuche being the predominant people among students nationwide, with a

participation of 15.7% (442 male and female students). These backgrounds prompt reflection on what is currently being done with such diversity, on how the Training School is valuing the cultural and ethnic richness of its applicants to give them space and identity. However, such valuation is null and is lost in the historical events of violence with Indigenous peoples, exacerbated during the 2019 social movements and the search for the incorporation and valuation of this multiculturalism within the subsequent Chilean constitutional process (Reyes et al., 2022).

The challenge is no small feat. Changing the curriculum is necessary, yes, but not sufficient. What is at stake is an epistemic shift, opening doors to other ways of knowing, inhabiting the body, and relating to otherness.

Perhaps the greatest challenge is this: that training schools not only teach students to follow orders but to think them through. Those future police agents do not fear dissent but dogma. They understand that guaranteeing security is not imposing uniformity but protecting diversity. And if that sounds radical, it is because it is. But it is also necessary. Because a police force that does not know how to read the violences it itself reproduces will end up being part of the problem it claims to combat.

#### **Absence or Precariousness of Gender Training within Carabineros.**

Following the marked days of violence experienced in the social uprising (Jiménez Yáñez, 2020), criticisms toward the police institution increased to the point of generating an imminent need to establish significant changes. Criticisms from the citizenry fueled the diagnosis of the lack of training and deficiencies in Human Rights topics and the way uniformed officers repressed marches violently, with strong aggression and violations of Human Rights (Vásquez et al., 2021), questioning Carabineros' actions, which pressured the political sector and the institution's high command to create a reform that encompassed the various aspects of the problem, focusing on the foundations of police training through an updated study program in tune with social demands and international policies that safeguard the Human Rights of all people.

In this way, it approaches a debate that brings into dialogue the curriculum reform design process with the institution's values and how they intertwine with the affirmation and implementation of the Human Rights approach and gender perspective. This is because from that place, the visible and invisible sides of the debate can be observed to broaden its understanding. In 2021, and with the aim of aligning the Strategic Plan focused on responding to citizen and government questions, technically supported by the Pontificia Universidad

Católica de Chile (PUC), Carabineros developed an organizational and social diagnosis that considered the institution's current situation, gathering internal and external background information for the development of a modernization proposal divided into fundamental principles that included the Human Rights Approach and Gender Approach, placing people and the protection of their rights at the center of police work (Carabineros de Chile, 2021).

In this framework, Strategic Axis No. 3 of the Carabineros Strategic Plan emphasizes the strengthening of the initial training of the Carabinero, which "corresponds to the first instance in which each training center in the country delivers the necessary competencies to the personnel integrating Carabineros, through the development and fulfillment of the curricula, according to their entry and exit profiles" (Carabineros de Chile, 2021, p. 30). These competencies are embodied in the exit profile of the Training School, where generic and specific competencies are found (Escuela de Formación de Carabineros, 2021). However, in these, there are no explicit allusions to gender, but implicit ones through Human Rights, as gender equality is integrated into these rights. The above has undoubtedly prompted transformations. In fact, in the competencies pointed out by the curricular entry and exit profiles, measures and actions were raised that sought to mitigate problems arising from the conventional and hegemonic view of gender, since future carabineros must be officials capable of supporting and working under the diversity of a changing and increasingly critical society.

#### **Social and Ethical Implications of Training in Gender and Sexualities.**

Gender training cannot continue to be an appendix. It must be part of the institutional skeleton, not a cosmetic patch. Sporadic workshops or optional modules lost among operational classes are not enough; the gender approach must permeate ethics, law, and daily interactions. Training in gender and sexualities in Carabineros de Chile has profound social and ethical implications, as it promotes an institutional culture based on respect for human rights, equity, and non-discrimination. Incorporating these perspectives allows questioning historically patriarchal and heteronormative practices, favoring a more just and empathetic relationship with the citizenry, especially with historically marginalized groups (Salazar et al., 2020).

And when that training is lacking, the consequences do not wait. First, gender stereotypes slip through the corridors, machismos disguised as tradition, homophobia masked as decorum, racism embedded in protocols. Then, those crystallized ideas turn into acts, omissions in

complaints, unpunished harassments, brutalities that do not even know they are such. Insensitivity becomes institutionalized, and symbolic violence becomes structural.

Complaints for human rights violations in police control contexts show an alarming pattern of discrimination toward people belonging to sex-gender diversities, women, and vulnerable groups related to gender. According to data from MOVILH (2020), during the social uprising, 23 cases of police abuse against LGBTI people with a "homophobic or transphobic stamp" were reported, while in Argentina, the National Observatory of LGBT+ Hate Crimes documented a 70% increase in hate crimes in 2025, where trans women represent 70.6% of cases (Agencia Presentes, 2025). The Survey on Discrimination against the LGBTIQA+ Population (MOVILH, 2021) conducted by Chile's Undersecretariat for Crime Prevention revealed that in 11.7% of discrimination cases, the aggressor was a Carabineros official, surpassing even other state agents. These data show how security forces, which should protect, frequently configure themselves as "one of the main agents reproducing violence toward sexual diversity," using their position of power to perpetrate acts of humiliation, illegal detention, torture, and systematic mistreatment based on gender and sexual orientation prejudices. This institutional violence not only violates fundamental rights but also generates critical distrust toward security institutions, leaving victims in a situation of defenselessness by being attacked precisely by those who should provide protection.

According to a recent INDH study (2023), more than 60% of complaints for violations in police control contexts involve people belonging to LGBTIQ+ communities, Indigenous peoples, or young women from popular sectors.

In Chile, examples are not lacking. From the 2019 social uprising to routine controls in marginalized neighborhoods, complaints for Human Rights violations have been an uncomfortable mirror. They do not reflect individual failures but a training system that does not know how to teach the police that human diversity is not a problem but a reality to be protected. Dammert warned as early as 2013 that there is no police modernization without pedagogical transformation. Because the quality of service does not depend only on marksmanship or response speed but on the type of consciousness that inhabits the uniform. Training that does not teach to see inequalities ends up justifying or reinforcing them.

From an ethical viewpoint, teaching gender and sexualities is not indoctrinating. It is, rather, expanding the visual field. Allowing agents to understand that citizenry is not a homogeneous block but a constellation of identities, histories, and wounds. And that protecting does not mean surveilling but caring. Accompanying without prejudices. Intervening without humiliating. In other words: humanizing the uniform. Turning the order agent into a care agent. Because only those who recognize the other's pain can act with proportionality, with real justice, not just legal.

This commitment, of course, is not optional. It is supported by international treaties signed by the State of Chile. The CEDAW Convention (UN, 1979) requires training state forces in respect for women's rights. The Belém do Pará Convention (OAS, 1994) reminds that gender violence is also perpetuated through institutional omissions. Not training in these matters can constitute institutional violence. And this is not just an ethical conclusion but a legal one: according to the Rapporteurship on the Rights of LGBTIQ+ Persons of the IACHR (2021), States that do not adequately train their police forces in sexual and gender diversity incur international responsibility for omission.

A police force knowledgeable in gender can repair bonds with wounded communities, rebuild broken trusts, intervene without aggravating traumas. It can stop being seen as a threat and become an ally. But a police force that ignores diversity, that acts from prejudices, that responds with force when it should do so with listening, only perpetuates the distance between the State and its people. And that distance is called distrust. And when that distrust becomes the norm, institutional legitimacy erodes like a cliff battered by stubborn waves: slowly, but irreversibly.

Moreover, adequate training in gender and sexualities not only benefits the citizenry but also the carabineros themselves. It reduces institutional stress, prevents internal conflicts, and lessens tensions between professional norms and the complex human realities they face daily. That is, far from being a burden, it is an operational and emotional resource. Recent studies in comparable contexts—such as Argentina and Colombia—have shown that agents with diversity training report better levels of job satisfaction and lower propensity for excessive use of force (Dammert et al., 2021).

In short, it is not about adding one more course but redefining from where wearing a uniform is taught.

Because without an ethics of care, security becomes control. And without a deep understanding of the other, justice becomes punishment. Training in gender and sexualities is not a progressive luxury or a concession to political correctness. It is the minimum floor from which to build a police force that protects without discriminating, acts without violating, listens without prejudging. A police force that understands that its duty is not to impose a single order but to safeguard diversity. Because authority, without empathy, is nothing more than an armed shout.

### **Method**

The research adopts a qualitative and documentary approach, oriented toward the critical analysis of training in gender and sexualities in Carabineros de Chile. The analyzed corpus includes institutional regulations (Strategic Plans, exit profiles, and gender-related agreements), reports from public bodies, and specialized academic literature published between 2019 and 2024.

The documents were selected based on criteria of relevance, timeliness, and direct relation to police training and gender perspective. The analysis was developed in two phases: first, a systematic review of curricular and normative contents; second, the application of critical discourse analysis techniques to identify forms of inclusion, omission, or tension of the gender approach in the reviewed documents (Laborda, 2023). This methodology allows not only describing the state of training but also problematizing the normative and cultural assumptions that configure the police curriculum in Chile.

Along with this documentary review, the study adopts a gender approach as a cross-cutting methodological tool. This perspective allows problematizing the normative assumptions that sustain police training practices and visualizing the mechanisms for reproducing structural inequalities based on gender, sexual orientation, or gender expression. The qualitative methodology with a gender approach does not limit itself to describing reality but seeks to denaturalize it, examining power relations, institutional silences, and legitimizing discourses that configure the police curriculum (Salamanca, 2024).

The adopted approach also incorporates tools proper to critical discourse analysis. This technique was applied to the corpus of institutional and academic documents, seeking to identify both explicit forms and omissions in the treatment of sex-gender diversity in police training processes. The use of language, institutional reference frames, and the explicit or implicit integration of the gender approach in exit profiles, curricula, and pedagogical strategies implemented by the Carabineros Training School were analyzed (Laborda, 2023).

This qualitative methodology allowed understanding not only the formal contents of training in Carabineros de Chile but also the cultural, symbolic, and normative frameworks that sustain it. Therefore, the article does not limit itself to describing an institutional reality but seeks to interpret it and open lines of reflection on its transformation.

### **Results**

The conducted analysis allows identifying four central findings on the situation of training in gender and sexualities in Carabineros de Chile:

#### **Institutional Declarations and Normative Framework: Limited Formal Progress.**

Although in the last decade Carabineros de Chile has issued various strategic documents, institutional plans, and agreements that recognize the relevance of the gender approach and human rights, the presence of these principles is limited, in most cases, to general formulations and commitments of good intentions. The institutionalization of policies and the signing of agreements with governmental bodies have contributed to placing the issue on the formal agenda, but they have not implied a deep or mandatory transformation of training programs.

#### **Some References on Curriculum and Gender Contexts.**

The detailed examination of exit profiles, curricula, and initial training programs shows that the inclusion of the gender approach and sexual diversity in curricular contents is marginal, occasional, and frequently dependent on isolated initiatives, short-duration workshops, or extracurricular activities. No transversal curricular development or systematic impact evaluations are observed. In most documents, the reference to gender appears subsumed under the human rights approach, without clarity on specific competencies or effective pedagogical integration mechanisms.

#### **Institutional Obstacles and Cultural Resistances.**

The discursive analysis reveals significant institutional obstacles to incorporating these topics into educational police practice. The perception predominates that the gender approach constitutes an exogenous demand and not an integral part of the police function. At the same time, cultural patterns, hierarchical logics, and hegemonic masculinities persist that reinforce the hidden curriculum, hindering openness to new perspectives and reducing the effectiveness of normative changes.

#### **Pedagogical Shortcomings and Weakness of External Alliances.**

Weaknesses are identified in the training and capacitation of instructors responsible for addressing

gender and sexualities, who mostly lack specialized training or pedagogical resources adapted to the police context. On the other hand, interaction and collaboration with civil society organizations, universities, or expert bodies remain punctual and lack sustained mechanisms for the design, implementation, and evaluation of training activities.

## Discussion

### Good Practices and Proposals for Training Intervention.

Although recent years have not been particularly benevolent to the image of Carabineros de Chile, and there have been no shortage of reasons for criticism, it would be a mistake to focus only on the negative. At the international level, there are inspiring experiences that show how police forces can transform, recover legitimacy, and even become institutions appreciated by their communities.

An example often cited is Japan. There, the *kōban*—those small neighborhood police stations—have achieved something that seems almost utopian in other contexts: bringing citizens closer to their police. More than surveillance centers, they function as community spaces, where listening precedes action and prevention precedes punishment. This closeness, supported by intelligent use of technology and an agile structure, has contributed to reducing crimes and strengthening trust in the Japanese National Police Agency (Young, 2022). For Chile, where the distance between the citizenry and the police still feels like an abyss, this experience offers more than a clue: a possible route.

Also in Asia, though with a different focus, Singapore has managed to integrate technology and efficiency notably. Through the SINGPASS system, public services, including the police, have gained agility and coherence. This model reduces bureaucracies, allows more efficient data management, and, most importantly, strengthens the perception of order and justice (Sipahi & Saayi, 2024). Because yes, justice must not only be done but also appear just. And systems that enable traceability and timely response undoubtedly contribute to that purpose.

Further north, in Europe, Finland shows that modernization and Human Rights are not contradictory terms. Its police model, based on clear protocols and the use of technological tools like the TUOMAS system, demonstrates that complex crimes can be investigated and prevented without renouncing respect for people (Lillo, 2016). But none of this has been accidental: behind it is political will, technical planning, and a deep conviction that institutions must serve the citizenry.

And in Chile? Following the 2019 social uprising, Carabineros initiated a reform process that, although still

facing questions, has begun to incorporate good international practices. A concrete step was the expansion of the curriculum at the Escuela de Formación de Carabineros (ESFOCAR), which went from two to four semesters. This change is no small matter: it means taking seriously the ethical, legal, and social training of future carabineros (Directorate of Education, Doctrine and History of Carabineros, 2021). And if we add the official recognition as a Technical Training Center (Diario Oficial, 2023), the ground for deepening Human Rights and gender approach begins to be better sown.

In the same vein, internal norms against sexual harassment, gender violence, and discrimination have been established, following Law 21,369. This, along with inclusion and diversity policies, seeks to oxygenate an institution that for decades operated under hierarchical and strongly masculinized logics (Carabineros de Chile, 2021). Of course, being written does not guarantee compliance. Therefore, the challenge now is to implement, monitor, and evaluate these norms with seriousness and real participation.

Since 2024, another crucial step has been taken: massive training in gender topics. The idea is that all students in training go through modules addressing everything from gender violence to feminist economics. A fundamental change that breaks with previous tradition and has been possible thanks to joint work with the Ministry of Women and Gender Equity (Carabineros de Chile, 2021). Added to this is collaboration with local universities, where spaces for critical conversation on masculinities and stereotypes are opening. It is not just about forming better carabineros but better citizens in uniform.

However, all this effort has a problem: most of the citizenry does not know about it. Institutional transformation, no matter how genuine, needs to be told, explained, shared. Otherwise, it remains hidden. Today, the public visibility of these advances is low, and institutional communication still fails to generate the needed trust. Therefore, including civil society in the training process is not a luxury: it is a necessity. It is not just about informing but inviting participation.

What is needed, then, are sustained strategies for collaboration between Carabineros, universities, municipalities, and social organizations. Because training cannot be thought from a single side. Including technical knowledge and community experience allows building a more human, closer, more real security. The citizenry should not be in the gallery observing changes but seated at the table where they are decided.

In summary, extending academic training and updating contents is an advance. But as long as society does not know, validate, or feel part of these changes,

distrust will persist. The police need to transform, yes, but they also need to tell their process, open up, explain themselves. Only then can they build legitimacy that comes not by decree but by shared conviction.

### Conclusion

The critical review of training in gender and sexualities in Carabineros de Chile allows understanding the depth and persistence of the challenges the institution faces to advance toward a training model coherent with democratic standards and human rights. Although in the last decade advances have been made in adopting discourses and normative frameworks that recognize the importance of integrating the gender perspective, the evidence gathered throughout this article shows that such advances are more formal than substantive. The gender approach appears in strategic documents and declarations of principles, but its translation to the explicit curriculum, pedagogical practices, and institutional culture is still limited and fragmented (Carabineros de Chile, 2021; ESFOCAR, 2021).

The conducted analysis accounts for the existence of a hidden curriculum that, through hierarchical logics and patterns of hegemonic masculinity, strongly conditions the possibilities of transformation and hinders the genuine appropriation of diversity as an institutional value (Connell, 2015). Thus, the absence of mandatory modules, the lack of specific competencies on gender and sexual diversity in exit profiles, and the scarce specialized training of instructors reinforce the distance between normative commitments and daily educational practice.

The comparison with international experiences and the evidence collected by national and international bodies reinforce the idea that transforming police training requires, in addition to political will, an articulated curricular design, innovative pedagogical strategies, and sustained work with external actors (Young, 2022; Lillo, 2016; Dammert & Valenzuela, 2013; Bellón, 2022). As shown by INDH data (2023) and analyses by Dammert et al. (2021), the absence of solid training in gender and human rights directly impacts institutional legitimacy and the police's capacity to respond ethically, proportionally, and respectfully to a diverse and demanding citizenry.

In this sense, training in gender and sexualities cannot be considered an optional complement or a symbolic response to external demands. It constitutes a structural component for democratic strengthening, the prevention of institutional violences, and the humanization of the police function. The review shows that the measures implemented so far, such as punctual workshops or the signing of agreements, although relevant, are insufficient to consolidate a deep and sustainable change.

It is essential to recognize that the analysis presented here has an exploratory and pioneering character in the national academic context, as research on training in gender and sexualities within the Chilean police has been a scarcely addressed field until now. This review not only provides empirical and reflective evidence on the gaps and tensions characterizing the current situation but also contributes to visualizing a structural problem that has direct repercussions on the legitimacy, ethics, and institutional efficacy of Carabineros de Chile. In a context marked by social demands for greater equity and transparency, addressing this topic allows opening new lines of inquiry and debate, fundamental for advancing toward a more integral understanding of public security and respect for human rights.

The exploratory character of this work also lies in the systematization of sources and approaches that had not been previously integrated in the analysis of Chilean police training. Using critical discourse analysis and documentary review, the article provides a cross-cutting view that transcends simple normative description, allowing understanding the symbolic, pedagogical, and cultural dynamics that perpetuate or challenge gender inequalities within armed institutions. This approach invites the academic and professional community to deepen the study of these phenomena, promoting future empirical research that considers both the experience of involved actors and the impact of implemented policies.

In the future, it is fundamental to strengthen the transversal integration of the gender approach in the police curriculum, developing specific modules, updating exit profiles, and promoting continuous and specialized training of teaching teams. Parallely, it is key to enhance collaboration with universities, civil society organizations, and international bodies, so that police training is nourished by diverse perspectives and promotes an institutional culture respectful of plurality (Carabineros de Chile, 2021; Resumen, 2022; INDH, 2023).

In closing, it is recommended to advance in the systematic monitoring and evaluation of implemented policies and programs, incorporating impact indicators and feedback mechanisms with the community, to ensure that training in gender and sexualities ceases to be a promise and becomes a real axis of transformation. Only thus can Carabineros de Chile advance toward renewed legitimacy, founded on equity, respect for human rights, and the capacity to build trust with all the citizenries. The development and deepening of research in this area will contribute not only to improving police training but also to consolidating a more just, plural, and democratic society, capable of facing contemporary challenges of security and coexistence from an ethical, inclusive, and respectful perspective of diversity.

## Acknowledgments

This work has been possible thanks to the collaborative effort between the Carabineros Training School ESFOCAR, the Social Work program of the Universidad Autónoma de Chile, and the research group Gender and Sexualities in Contexts of Cultural Diversities GENSEX of the same institution.

## Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest are identified in the preparation of this article.

## Referencias

Amnistía Internacional. (2020). Ojos sobre Chile: Violencia policial y responsabilidad de mando durante el estallido social. Recuperado de <https://www.amnesty.org/es/documents/amr/22/3133/2020/es/>

Agencia Presentes (2025). Argentina: Crímenes de odio contra personas LGBT aumentaron 70 % en el primer semestre. [<https://agenciapresentes.org/2025/08/04/argentina-crimenes-de-odio-contra-personas-lgbt-aumentaron-70-en-el-primer-semestre/>]

Bard Wigdor, G. (2023). Hacer masculinidad heteronormativa: Prácticas de explotación y violencia de género en varones cisgénero.

Bellón, T. (2022). Formación policial con perspectiva de género [Tesis de doctorado, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid]. [https://repositorio.uam.es/bitstream/handle/10486/706212/bellon\\_cardenas\\_blanca\\_rocio.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=n](https://repositorio.uam.es/bitstream/handle/10486/706212/bellon_cardenas_blanca_rocio.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=n)

Butler, J. (2022). El género en disputa. Barcelona: Paidós.

Carabineros de Chile. (2021). Convenio C\_RESOLEX\_32\_27012021. Recuperado de [https://www.carabineros.cl/transparencia/convenios/2021/C\\_RESOLEX\\_32\\_27012021.pdf](https://www.carabineros.cl/transparencia/convenios/2021/C_RESOLEX_32_27012021.pdf)

Carabineros de Chile. (2021). Enfoque de género en la reforma institucional. Revista de Carabineros, (55).

Carabineros de Chile. (2021). *Plan Estratégico 2021–2028*. [https://www.carabineros.cl/pdfs/plan\\_estrategico\\_2021-2028.pdf](https://www.carabineros.cl/pdfs/plan_estrategico_2021-2028.pdf)

Centro UC Políticas Públicas. (2021). Desarrollo y fortalecimiento del currículo en ética y Derechos Humanos de Carabineros de Chile: Una propuesta integral. Recuperado de <https://politicaspublicas.uc.cl/publicacion/capitulo-viii-desarrollo-y-fortalecimiento-del-curriculum-de-educacion-y-formacion-continua-en-etica-y-derechos-humanos-de-carabineros-de-chile-una-propuesta-integral/>

Connell, R. (2015). *Masculinidades*. UNAM.

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. University of Chicago Legal Forum, (1), 139–167.

Dammert, L., & Valenzuela, C. (2013). Chile: Desafíos en la formación policial. *Revista de Estudios Políticos y Estratégicos*, 1(2), 63–76. [https://fahu.usach.cl/site-assets/uploads/2023/06/Chile-desafios-en-la-formacion-policial\\_Dammert-Valenzuela.pdf](https://fahu.usach.cl/site-assets/uploads/2023/06/Chile-desafios-en-la-formacion-policial_Dammert-Valenzuela.pdf)

Diario Oficial. (2023, noviembre 21). Aprueba informe favorable que verifica cumplimiento de requisitos establecidos en el artículo cuarto transitorio de la Ley N°21.427, para la Escuela de Formación de Carabineros.

Dirección de Educación, Doctrina e Historia de Carabineros. (2021). Reforma a las Policías. Recuperado de <https://reformapolicias.interior.gob.cl/media/2022/08/ESFOCA1.pdf>

Escuela de Formación de Carabineros. (2021). *Perfil de egreso Carabinero de Orden y Seguridad (Ajuste 2021)*

Escuela de Formación de Carabineros. (2025) *Informe Sociodemográfico: Perfil de los Participantes de la Escuela de Formación*.

García, V., & Basualto, L. (2020). Vulneración de Derechos Humanos en las movilizaciones de octubre de 2019 en Chile. *Revista Española de Salud Pública*, 94.

Instituto Nacional de Derechos Humanos (INDH). (2023). *Informe anual sobre Derechos Humanos en Chile*, <https://bibliotecadigital.indh.cl/items/4f69f396-6914-48b7-8e15-b9702fde6d13>

INTERPOL. (2023). Un servicio policial con perspectiva de género: Extracto de discurso de Glenn Martindale. Recuperado de <https://www.interpol.int/es/content/download>

- d/19781/file/Compendium%20AC%20-%20ES-%20V18%20WEB.pdf
- Jiménez, C. (2020). #Chiledespertó: Causas del estallido social en Chile. *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, 82(4), 949–957.
- Laborda, X. (2023). Análisis del discurso: ¿Qué es el análisis del discurso? y Métodos de análisis crítico del discurso. *Círculo de Lingüística Aplicada a la Comunicación*, 15, 52-58. <https://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/CLAC/article/view/88451>
- Lillo, R. (2016). *El uso de nuevas tecnologías en el sistema judicial: Experiencias y precauciones*. Centro de Estudios de Justicia de las Américas.
- Martínez Corona, J. I., Palacios Almón, G. E., & Oliva Garza, D. B. (2023). Guía para la revisión y el análisis documental: propuesta desde el enfoque investigativo. *Revista Ra Ximhai*, 19(1), 67–83. <https://doi.org/10.35197/rx.19.01.2023.03.jm>
- Ministerio de Defensa Nacional. (1990). Ley N.º 18.948, Orgánica Constitucional de las Fuerzas Armadas. Recuperado de <https://www.bcn.cl/leychile/navegar?idNorma=30329>
- Ministerio del Interior. (1927). Ley N.º 5.109, Crea los Servicios de Policía de Carabineros. Recuperado de <https://www.bcn.cl/leychile/navegar?idNorma=5632> y <https://www.interior.gob.cl/noticias/2020/09/29/ministro-del-interior-anuncia-creacion-de-la-unidad-coordinadora-de-la-reforma-a-carabineros/>
- Morales, M. (2020). Estallido social en Chile 2019: Participación, representación, confianza institucional y escándalos públicos. *Revista de Ciencia Política*, 383–414.
- MOVILH (2020). *Movilh reporta a la CIDH 23 abusos policiales contra personas LGBTI en el marco el estallido social*. <https://www.movilh.cl/movilh-reporta-a-la-cidh-23-abusos-policiales-contr-personas-lgbti-en-el-marco-el-estallido-social/>
- MOVILH (2021). Primer estudio estatal sobre LGBTIQ+: el 89 % ha sufrido discriminación y el 62 % delitos relacionados con su identidad. <https://www.movilh.cl/primer-estudio-estatal-sobre-lgbtiq-el-89-ha-sufrido-discriminacion-y-el-62-delitos-relacionados-con-su-identidad/>
- Organización de las Naciones Unidas. (1979). Convención sobre la Eliminación de Todas las Formas de Discriminación contra la Mujer – CEDAW. Recuperado de <https://www.ohchr.org/es/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>
- Organización de los Estados Americanos (OEA), Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH). (2021). *Cuadernillo de Jurisprudencia de la Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos No. 19 : Derechos Humanos de las personas LGBT*. [https://www.corteidh.or.cr/sitios/libros/todos/docs/cuadernillo19\\_2021.pdf](https://www.corteidh.or.cr/sitios/libros/todos/docs/cuadernillo19_2021.pdf)
- Organización de los Estados Americanos. (1994). Convención Interamericana para Prevenir, Sancionar y Erradicar la Violencia contra la Mujer – Convención de Belém do Pará. Recuperado de <https://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/tratados/a-61.html>
- Prieto, C. (1990). Los Carabineros de Chile: Historia de una policía militarizada. *Iberoamericana–Nordic Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 20(3), 15–16.
- Reiner, R. (2012). *La política de la policía* (L. Lassaque, Trad.). Prometeo Libros.
- Resumen (2022). *Escuela de Oficiales de Carabineros posee escasa formación en materias de género y disidencias sexuales*. <https://resumen.cl/articulos/escuela-de-oficiales-de-carabineros-posee-escasa-formacion-en-materias-de-genero-y-disidencias-sexuales>
- Reyes, A. L., Risør, H., & Martínez, W. (2022). Policía militarizada en Chile: claves para comprender la violencia policial estatal en la relación al conflicto mapuche. *Anuario del Conflicto Social*, (13).
- Salamanca, A. (2024). ¿Por qué lo llaman género cuando quieren decir sexo? Recomendaciones para integrar la perspectiva de género en estudios de investigación. *Nure*

- investigación*, 21(132).  
<https://doi.org/10.58722/nure.v21i132.2616>
- Salazar Fernández, M., Corredor Pinzón, N. E., Mejía Ulloa, S. E., & Quintero García, N. F. (2020). *Comportamiento ético policial de egresados de la Escuela de Policía Simón Bolívar*. Policía Nacional de Colombia. <https://doi.org/10.22335/EDNE.16>
- Sipahi, E., & Saayi, Z. (2024). The world's first "Smart Nation" vision: The case of Singapore. *Smart Cities and Regional Development (SCRD) Journal*, 8(1), 41–58.
- Tena, O. (Ed.). (2023). *Experiencias de investigación interdisciplinaria feminista en instituciones policiales: desafíos de la formación policial*. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Centro de Investigaciones Interdisciplinarias en Ciencias y Humanidades.
- Vásquez, O., Amado, J. L., & Porras, P. (2024). La Investigación Cualitativa como Enfoque para la Investigación Criminal. *Revista Ciencia & Sociedad*, 4(2), 112–120. Recuperado a partir de <https://cienciaysociedaduatf.com/index.php/iesocieuatf/article/view/126>
- Vásquez, P., Ricardo, M., & Pizarro, S. (2021). Carabineros y autonomía policial en Chile: Una aproximación legal-institucional. *Revista de Derecho Público*, (94), 69–97.
- Young, A. (2022). Architecture as affective law enforcement: Theorising the Japanese Koban. *Crime, Media, Culture*, 18(2), 183–202. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741659021993527>

17.858.176-7, [rodrigo.donoso16@inacapmail.cl](mailto:rodrigo.donoso16@inacapmail.cl), +56956738824, Rodrigo Esteban Donoso Figueroa. This translation is reliable according to the original.