

## **Sociodemographic characterization of students for Police Patrol Officer of the Antonio Nariño Company, Police Academy Soledad - Atlántico 2025**

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**Abstract**

**Keywords:** *Police education, Sociodemographic characteristics, Social factors, Educational policy, Educational inclusión, Educational equity, Ethnicity*

**Introduction:** Police training in Colombia represents an opportunity for professional development for young people from diverse social backgrounds. **Objective:** To characterize the sociodemographic profile of students applying to become police patrol officers in the Antonio Nariño Company at the Soledad -Atlantic Police School in 2025. **Methodology:** A descriptive study with a quantitative approach was conducted, using data collected through surveys administered to police patrol applicants. Sociodemographic variables such as gender, ethnicity, marital status, educational level, socioeconomic status, and academic benefits received were analyzed. Statistical tests such as the Chi-square test were applied to evaluate relationships between variables. **Results:** The findings show that most students are male (55.9%), of mestizo ethnicity (94.8%), single (85.1%), and have a medium-level academic background. A significant percentage of students are parents, which presents additional challenges in their training process. Regarding socioeconomic profile, the majority belong to strata 1 and 2, and 205 students received the tuition-free benefit under Law 2179. Chi-square tests did not show significant relationships between gender or socioeconomic status and the type of academic benefit received. **Conclusion:** The sociodemographic characterization of police patrol applicants revealed relevant patterns in their personal, family, and social profiles. Furthermore, the effectiveness of tuition-free education policies in facilitating access to police training was demonstrated. These findings are essential for guiding institutional strategies that promote equity, inclusion, and the strengthening of competencies in the training process of future patrol officers.

## INTRODUCTION

Sociodemographic characterization is a methodological tool that allows for the description and analysis of the social, economic, cultural, and educational conditions of a given population. Within the framework of police training, it is especially important because it enables an understanding of the entry profile of police patrol officer students and the development of pedagogical and institutional strategies adjusted to their requirements (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2014).

As social research, sociodemographic characterization facilitates the understanding of segments of the situational reality of a specific human group. It allows for the comprehension of processes of balance and destabilization, as well as dynamics and changes in the formation of a combined organization. The social is conceived as an ethos, an environment in which people interact and share activities, customs, and beliefs that generate collective identity (Gallo, Meneses & Minotta, 2014).

From a sociological perspective, thinkers such as Pierre Bourdieu have provided fundamental notions for understanding police culture and the socialization mechanisms within security entities. Concepts such as habitus, symbolic capital, and field allow for the interpretation of how applicants adjust to the norms, values, and power structures inherent to the police force (Chan, 2011).

In this line, Arias (2012) points out that police training is not limited to technical learning, but also involves the development of a professional identity influenced by previous experiences, family, and the socioeconomic conditions of the applicants. Therefore, sociodemographic characterization must include both quantitative and qualitative variables.

In the Colombian context, Law 2179 of 2021 represents a significant advancement in police education. This regulation establishes the category of Police Patrol Officers and determines a special regime for uniformed personnel, reinforcing the professionalization of public service and directly impacting the pedagogical and curricular processes of training entities.

In Ecuador, Santofimio Fernández (2024) detected that it was necessary to have police officers with university education, professors with higher-level academic degrees, and an appropriate infrastructure for professional practice. These findings underscore the relevance of reinforcing the academic and social profile of applicants to optimize the quality of police service.

In Colombia, the issue of characterizing candidates for the National Police has been addressed from different approaches. Marín et al. (2023) propose competency-based educational models with the objective of transforming the police service toward greater proximity to the citizenry. The Corporación Justicia y Democracia (2022) conducted a state-of-the-art review of police reform, pointing out the need to democratize selection and training processes and include principles of transparency and equity. Similarly, Diario Libre (2025) evidenced that the participation of men in entry procedures is low, which represents challenges in terms of institutional communication and retention. A complementary strategy was developed by Castillo et al. (2023), who focused on identifying individuals with a vocation for service and the capacity to adapt to the institutional mission.

At the local level, at the Soledad Police School, Atlántico, efforts have been made to describe students from an educational and social point of view. Orrego and Salazar (2019) examined the quality of education at the Simón Bolívar Police School, detecting strengths in the facilities and weaknesses in the bond between students and instructors. The sociodemographic profile of patrol officer applicants in the Antonio Nariño company shows a primarily young population, from low socioeconomic strata, with basic education and beneficiaries of programs such as "matrícula cero" (zero tuition). These data evidence

the need to reinforce inclusion policies and institutional support to guarantee the permanence and academic success of future police officers.

The present manuscript addresses the sociodemographic characterization of police patrol officer students of the Antonio Nariño company, Soledad Atlántico Police School, who began their training process in the year 2025. Variables such as gender, ethnicity, marital status, educational level, socioeconomic stratum, and academic benefits received are considered, in order to recognize trends and patterns that influence school performance, institutional adaptation, and educational continuity (Hernández et al., 2014).

The difficulty faced lies in the limited systematization of information regarding the sociodemographic profile of candidates in the Colombian Caribbean. Although research exists on police training in Colombia (Baracaldo, 2018; Borda, 2015), few focus on describing students in the early stages of entry, which makes it difficult to adjust programs to the students' reality.

The importance of this research resides in its capacity to provide valuable information to educational planning, selection, and institutional support processes. Understanding the students' context allows for the reinforcement of inclusion, permanence, and equity tactics, preparing police officers who are more committed to the community and possess greater social sensitivity. Furthermore, this study is framed within an applied research approach that seeks to optimize police educational quality and promote social justice in access to educational opportunities (Borda, 2015). For all the above, the objective is to socio-demographically characterize the police patrol officer students of the Antonio Nariño company, Soledad – Atlántico Police School 2025.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present research was developed under a quantitative, descriptive approach, oriented towards characterizing the sociodemographic conditions of police patrol officer students of the Antonio Nariño company, Soledad - Atlántico Police School 2025. According to the timing of data collection, it was cross-sectional because the data were collected only once, during the entry process of police patrol officer students of the Antonio Nariño company, Soledad - Atlántico Police School 2025.

**Population:** It was composed of 250 police patrol officer students of the Antonio Nariño company, Soledad - Atlántico Police School 2025. The sample was of a census type, consisting of 245 students from the Antonio Nariño company registered in the institutional entry process.

### Data collection

**Instrument:** an institutional questionnaire was used, applied to the Police Patrol officer students during the enrollment process, which gathered information on variables such as gender, ethnicity, marital status, educational level, socioeconomic stratum, and academic benefits. These data were organized into a structured database and processed through descriptive statistical analysis techniques, using absolute and relative frequencies for each category.

The systematization of information allowed for the construction of sociodemographic profiles that serve as input for the design of pedagogical strategies, psychosocial support, and institutional inclusion. The methodology employed is based on ethical principles of confidentiality, respect for personal information, and exclusive use for academic purposes.

**Ethical considerations:** In accordance with Article 5 of Resolution 8430 of 1993, issued by the Ministry of Health of Colombia (1993), measures were adopted to ensure that the procedures respected the scientific and ethical principles justifying the research.

Furthermore, the study was classified as minimal risk, given that participants were not exposed to physical or psychological interventions; rather, general sociodemographic information was collected. The principle of autonomy was applied through verbal informed consent, and equity was guaranteed in the selection of participants, without discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, educational level, or socioeconomic status. Additionally, the principles of non-maleficence and beneficence were followed, seeking to ensure that the study's conclusions help optimize institutional support and instruction processes. Moreover, the study was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Scientific Committee of the Antonio Nariño Police School, as stipulated in Article 2 of Resolution 8430 of 1993.

## RESULTS

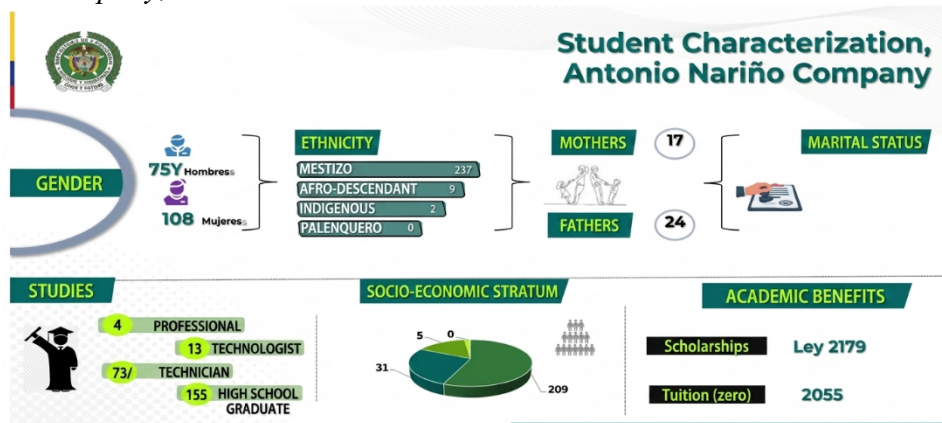
In this sense, when describing the sociodemographic characteristics of the police patrol officer students of the Antonio Nariño Company at the Soledad - Atlántico Police School in the year 2025, it is evident that the majority of the population corresponds to the male gender, of mestizo ethnicity, and with a single marital status, followed by those in common-law marriages. Regarding the educational level, training as high school graduates predominates, while a minority has technical, technological, or professional studies.

Regarding the family and social factors that may influence the police training process, it is observed that the majority of students identify as fathers, and a smaller proportion as mothers. As an indicator of the family context, the single marital status prevails, followed by common-law marriage and married status. From the social component, the predominance of students with secondary education (high school) stands out, and to a lesser extent, those with technical, technological, and professional training. In the cultural aspect, ethnicities such as Afro-descendants, indigenous, and mestizos are identified, the latter being the most representative.

When analyzing the distribution of academic benefits based on the socioeconomic profile, it is observed that the majority of police patrol officer students belong to strata 1 and 2, followed by strata 3, 4, and 5. Regarding the benefits received, it is noteworthy that the majority entered the institution under the "matrícula cero" (zero tuition) program, which evidences the positive impact of educational support policies on access to police training (See Figure 1).

**Figure 1.**

*Sociodemographic characterization of police patrol officer students of the Antonio Nariño company, Soledad - Atlántico Police School 2025*



Source: Soledad Police School, institutional presentation, 2025.

## Results of significance tests

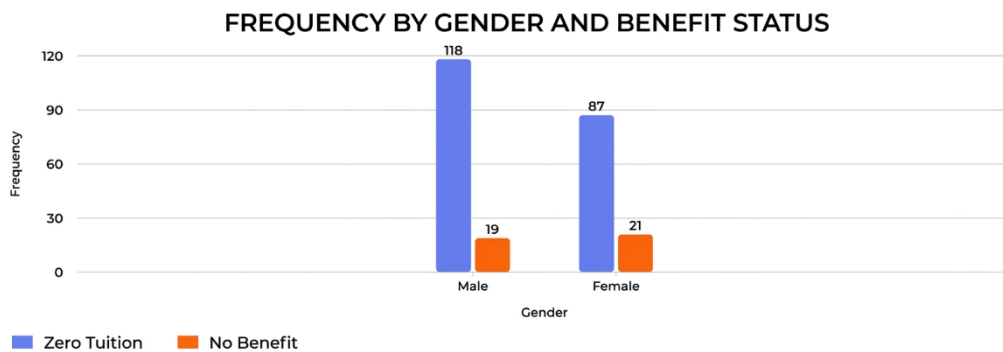
### Chi-square: Gender vs. Academic Benefit

$\chi^2 = 0.997$  p-value = 0.318

This result indicates that there is no statistically significant association between the participants' gender and the type of academic benefit received. In other words, the observed differences in the distribution of academic benefits between men and women could be due to chance and not a systematic relationship between these variables. Therefore, it is concluded that gender does not significantly influence the type of academic benefit granted within the evaluated context (See Graph 1).

### Graph 1.

*Gender vs. Academic Benefit*



Source: Results of significance tests

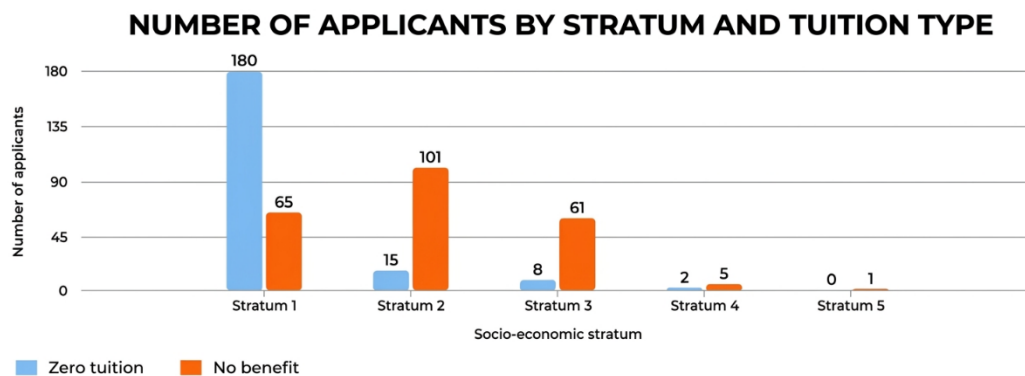
### Chi<sup>2</sup>: Academic Benefit vs. Socioeconomic Stratum

$\chi^2 = 2.380$  p-value = 0.666

No significant relationship was found between socioeconomic stratum and academic benefit in this simulation. It is evident that stratum 1 concentrates the majority of "matrícula cero" beneficiaries, which is consistent with the gratuity policy established by Law 2179. In the higher strata (4 and 5), the proportion of benefits is minimal or null. Although there are visual differences, the statistical analysis indicated that they are not significant (p = 0.666). (Graph 2).

### Graph 2:

*Academic Benefit vs. Socioeconomic Stratum Chi-square*



Source: Significance test results

Source: Results of significance tests

## DISCUSSION

The analysis of the sociodemographic characteristics of the police patrol officer students of the Antonio Nariño company in 2025 reveals a predominance of the male gender (55.9%), which agrees with studies showing the historical masculinization of police forces in Latin America (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2023). Regarding ethnic composition, 94.8% identify as mestizo, while Afro-descendants (3.6%) and indigenous people (0.8%) have a minority representation, which could reflect structural barriers in access to police training (Leon Diaz, 2020).

Regarding marital status, 85.1% of the police patrol officer students are single, followed by 12.1% in common-law marriages and 1.6% married. This tendency is related to the average age of entry into police training, which usually coincides with early stages of adult life (Baracaldo Méndez, 2018), facilitating availability to assume the commitments required by this career.

From the social component, it is observed that the majority of patrol officer students have secondary education (high school), while a minority possesses technical, technological, or professional studies. This educational profile responds to the minimum requirements established by the Police Educational System (SEP), which prioritizes the entry of young people with basic training (Londoño Pórtela et al., 2018). Nonetheless, the low proportion of students with higher education poses challenges regarding the development of cognitive and socio-emotional competencies necessary for police work (Camacho Barón & Céspedes Prieto, 2018).

In the family aspect, it was identified that several students are parents (17 men and 24 women), which implies additional responsibilities that may influence their academic performance. Robledo & García (2008) highlight that the family context acts as a primary socializing agent, affecting personal and professional development.

The limited ethnic diversity within the institution, with a mestizo predominance, has been the subject of analysis in studies on inclusion in security forces. Herrán Pinzón (2009) points out that, despite the constitutional recognition of the rights of ethnic minorities, their participation in state institutions such as the National Police remains marginal, which evidences the need for more effective inclusion policies.

In relation to academic benefits, it is highlighted that 205 police patrol officer students accessed the "matrícula cero" program, established by Law 2179 of 2021. According to the Ministry of National Education (2021), this policy has been identified as an effective tactic to reduce disparities in access to higher education among vulnerable populations. The analysis of the distribution of these benefits indicates that the majority of the beneficiaries are from stratum 1 and 2, which demonstrates consistency between implementation and public policies.

Although differences are visually observed in the distribution of academic benefits by stratum, the statistical analysis through the Chi-square test ( $\text{Chi}^2 = 2.380$ ;  $p = 0.666$ ) did not show a significant relationship between the socioeconomic stratum and the type of benefit received. This apparent contradiction can be explained by the unequal distribution of data, where low strata predominate. Studies such as those by Melo-Becerra et al. (2017) and Echeverría Higuera et al. (2022) have pointed out that, although socioeconomic factors influence access to education, public policies such as "matrícula cero" can mitigate these inequalities.

Similarly, the analysis between gender and academic benefit ( $\text{Chi}^2 = 0.997$ ;  $p = 0.318$ ) did not show a significant association. This result suggests that access to academic benefits is not conditioned by gender, which can be interpreted as a positive sign in terms of equity (Barrera Machado & Duque Monsalve, 2025). Nevertheless, Ruiz (2021) warns that women still face challenges related to social roles that can affect their permanence

and academic performance, for which reason it is recommended to continue monitoring equity indicators in police training.

## CONCLUSIONS

Police training in the Antonio Nariño company is mostly composed of young, single, mestizo men, reflecting historical trends in the composition of police forces in Colombia. The low representation of ethnic minorities and of police patrol officer students with technical or professional training poses challenges for inclusion and the strengthening of competencies within the police force. Furthermore, the "matrícula cero" policy has had a positive impact on access to police training, primarily benefiting students from low socioeconomic strata.

Statistical analyses did not show significant relationships between gender or socioeconomic stratum and the type of academic benefit received, suggesting an equitable distribution of institutional support. Therefore, it is necessary to continue strengthening inclusion and equity policies in police training, monitoring other indicators that may reveal structural inequalities not evidenced in the statistical analyses.

It is concluded that sociodemographically characterizing the police patrol officer students of the Antonio Nariño company provided a comprehensive view of their personal, family, and social conditions, allowing for a better understanding of the profile of those accessing police training, as well as an evaluation of the impact of public policies on educational equity. These findings offer valuable input for the design of institutional strategies aimed at strengthening the inclusion, permanence, and academic success of future patrol officers.

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