When publisher Stephen Gutierrez approached me with a request to edit a Research Handbook on Comparative Policing from a Legal Perspective in July 2015, my life looked entirely different. In the aftermath of my academic career throughout a succession of different positions, not least at the Police Academy of the Netherlands and the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, I had started a small consultancy and research firm to do undertake a wide variety of assignments in international policing in security in Myanmar, China, the Caribbean and Europe. Also, I was getting my professional life back on the rails after I had made a difficult decision not to start a new career as Head of Department and Professor of Security Studies at what was formerly called the Department of Policing, Intelligence and Terrorism at Macquarie University in Sydney. Not going down that path opened up new avenues, including the purchase of a farmhouse with my beloved husband and allowing myself to present myself as a candidate for the Dutch Parliament. And so it happened: I was sworn in as Member of Parliament on 31 October 2017. Guess what? My portfolio includes national security and policing.

It is with enormous pleasure and satisfaction that I can now close the door of this Handbook behind me. There are many people to whom I owe a great deal of thanks. To Stephen, my publisher, who continued to infuse me with courage and to keep the project going. To Saskia Hufnagel, who has rapidly matured into an eminent academic in ‘my’ field of international policing: she has been a wonderful friend, incredibly inspiring mentor and very reliable co-author, and, last but not least, a wonderfully critical mirror to look into. To all the authors, who have been very patient with me throughout the many revisions of their chapters: they have infused life into this Handbook and have formed a truly global academic community of expert policing scholars. I am deeply grateful to them for allowing police scholars to learn from each other and to share their expertise on a much wider scale with students of policing around the world.

All the employees at Edward Elgar who midwifed this Handbook: many thanks for your patience, understanding and encouragement. Together with your efforts turned the editing of this Handbook into a collective enterprise. At the risk of forgetting many people who have played a role in the production of this Handbook, I would like to pay tribute to my two sons as well as my husband. They saw their mother and partner disappearing into her office for substantial parts of the day or night, and then the manuscript was still not finished… Now that it has been completed, I would like to express my deepest warmth and gratefulness to my ever-patient and understanding husband: without his quiet help and support, this volume would not have been completed. It is to him, my blond but incredibly smart general, to whom I dedicate this publication.