Policing in a Digital Age: a Balance Between Community-based Strategies and Technological Intelligence

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Summary

1. State of the Art

2. TechPol and TechInt in the Digital Age

3. Community Policing: policing by consent

4. Intelligence Led-Policing and Community Policing

5. Privatization and Militarization: old/new trends

6. Discussion/Conclusions
Context

Globalization (Recassens, 2003)

Liquid times (Bauman, 2007)

Network society (Castells, 2009)

Risk society (Beck, 1992)
From a VUCA world to a BANI world

VOLATILITY

UNCERTAINTY

VUCA

COMPLEXITY

AMBIGUITY

BANI
BRITTLE, ANXIOUS, NON–LINEAR, INCOMPREHensible
Crime Prevention  Public Order  Crime Investigation  Criminal Intelligence  International Cooperation

Elias, L. (2018)
Our investigation seeks to answer the following starting question:

- Will it be possible to build-up an integrated approach between community policing, intelligence led-policing and technological policing?
4.95 billion active internet users (DataReportal, 2022).

4.28 billion unique mobile internet users worldwide, representing around 54.6 percent of the global population (Statista, 2020).

4.62 billion social media users around the world.
The vast majority of the world’s population (79.2%) live in countries with high levels of criminality, and in countries with low resilience (79.4%).

Most prevalent:

- human trafficking
- drugs trafficking
- firearms trafficking

(Global Organized Crime Index, 2021: 40-41).
Close to 40% of the criminal networks active in the EU are involved in the trade in illegal drugs.

40% have a hierarchical structure and 60% are fluid structures.

80% use legal business structures for their criminal activities.

68% use basic money laundering methods

60% use violence as part of their criminal businesses

60% engage in corruption

(SOCTA, 2021)

(IOCTA, 2021)
Militarization and hard policing versus community based policing versus privatization

Techint versus Humint
Tech Policing
Emergent/disruptive technologies

- Civil Rights
- Terrorism
- Organized Crime
- Data Protection

Opportunities

Strengths

Weaknesses

Threats
EU SURVEY

- **89.7% agreed or strongly agreed** that AI should be used for the protection of children and vulnerable groups.

- **87.1% agreed** that AI should be used to detect criminals and criminal organisations.

- **78.6% agreed** that AI is used to predict crimes before they happen.
Community Policing

No academic consensus about Community Policing.

Disagreement about its advantages and disadvantages.

Almost all Police Agencies in Europe have already implemented similar programs.
Community Policing

- **93.1%** positively evaluated the attitude of the PSP police officers
- **69.6%** considered it good or very good;
- **83.9%** positively evaluated the ability of PSP officers to deal with security problems
- **52.2%** considered it good or very good;
Community Policing

- 72.2% positively evaluated the presence of PSP police officers at public areas
- 43.0% considered it good or very good;
- 81.4% positively evaluated the police response in urgent situations
- 51.3% considered it good or very good;
Community Policing

- 80.9% of reported being familiar with the School Safety program;
- 77.5% reported being familiar with the Support Program for Victims of Domestic Violence;
- 55.6% reported being familiar with the Support to Elderly People.
Militarization and Privatization
Discussion/Conclusions

An integrated approach between community policing strategy, intelligence led-policing, techint and humint, may be crucial to prevent and fight crime, to maintain a straight relationship with local communities and to improve the quality of police service.
Discussion/Conclusions

✓ Prioritization of TECHINT may create an **aseptic perspective** of reality and **increase bias** in police and intelligence analyses.

✓ Devaluing of community policing and human intelligence (HUMINT) may generate **distrust and lack of cooperation** from the public

✓ Militarization of law enforcement has the potential to **undermine citizen’s reliance in justice and police**
Discussion/Conclusions

- Evaluation of policing models is fundamental
- Partnerships between Police and communities are a key condition for public’s cooperation
- Police to be held accountable for the way the use AI and other emerging technologies and for the consequences of their use.
- AI should be used for the protection of children and vulnerable groups, and to detect criminals and criminal organizations
Discussion/Conclusions

Technological Policing

Community Policing

Robust Policing

Intelligence Led-Policing
Thank you very much for your attention!

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