PREFACE

One of the fundamental necessities for man is safety, without which a well-functioning society can hardly be imagined. The basic need of individuals and communities is to feel safe in the places of their everyday lives. The image of security is shaped by a number of factors, such as fear of crime, possible previous victim experiences, the quality of the living environment, the orderliness of the neighbourhood and transparent and illuminated spaces as well as a predictable economic environment, fear of unemployment and illness, social relations, or even a marginalized social situation.

The perception of insecurity is an important problem for today's European societies. This is especially true of large cities, where a large proportion of the population live and therefore where the problems are concentrated. Cities are home to more than half of the world's population and are expected to grow with 2.5 billion new residents by 2050, while more than two-thirds of crimes are committed in urban environments.[1] At the same time, these areas are the least affected by social and community cohesion and members of the local community looking out for and supporting each other. Lack of cohesion further increases unsafety, along with real social and daily individual problems.

The need for security, therefore, is becoming ever stronger nowadays, while globalization challenges the authorities and citizens alike in new and previously unknown situations. All this leads to a situation where crime continues to decline in the official statistics in Europe, yet the perception of insecurity not only does not improve, but actually increases, as pointed out by the research findings. This phenomenon was the starting point for the MARGIN[2] project, which deals with the primary topic of this book.

This is a book dealing with one of the most urgent and most controversial issues for European countries, by addressing the questions related to the perception of insecurity among the populations of big cities.

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1   https://goo.gl/AjtgWi
2   The *Tackle Insecurity in Marginalized Areas No. 653004* research was funded within the framework of the Horizon 2020 program, with funding from the European Commission.

The first part of the book provides an insight into the main achievements of the MARGIN Project supported by the EU Horizon 2020 program, examining the questions related to the perception of insecurity in the marginalized areas of big cities. The second part of the book presents the findings of those research projects conducted in Europe's major cities that are closely related to the issues of insecurity in everyday life. Finally, we get to know the work of the European Forum for Urban Security (EFUS) organization, which focuses on urban crime.

The project entitled *Tackle Insecurity in Marginalized Areas*, (abbreviated name: MARGIN project) was conducted by a consortium headed by the University of Barcelona, and its members included the National Institute of Criminology (OKRI), the National Observatory of Crime and Criminal Justice from France, the University of Milano-Bicocca (UNIMIB), EuroCrime, as a non-profit independent international research, training and consultancy institute from Italy, University College London (UCL), and the Department of Interior of the Government of Catalonia.

The starting point was that the perception of insecurity arises as a very heterogeneous concept, not limited to actual crime rates but encompassing a wide range of other aspects including personal well-being, trust in public institutions, justice and social integration. MARGIN addresses the topic of insecurity by taking into account this heterogeneity.

The MARGIN project's aim was to coordinate and support public intervention in the field of (in)security by providing policy makers with high quality tools for creating and evaluating strategies targeted at the reduction of insecurity among different demographic groups. To achieve this general objective, the project has been designed to establish an international environment for knowledge exchange that enables the identification and analysis of factors influencing public and personal perceptions of (in)security.[3]

The research that took place in Barcelona, London, Milan, Paris and Budapest, in two selected districts each, combined quantitative (data processing and questionnaires) and qualitative (depth interviews, participant observation and focus group discussions) research methods. In the first part of the book we can read about the research findings.

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3   http://marginproject.eu/

IN THE FIRST CHAPTER, a study by *Sonia Stefanizzi and Valeria Verdolini* provides an overview of the issues related to the perception of insecurity and urban security in Europe, using an example from Italy. This chapter presents the theories that served as the basis for the MARGIN research. The study devotes special attention to the city of Milan, where immigration from the Mediterranean Sea is currently causing social conflicts. In Milan, as in other cities in Italy, the presence of immigrants is closely linked to the perception of insecurity and the stigmatization of immigrants. Regular changes make the residents of the neighbourhood distrustful and distant, which then may trigger conflicts.

IN THE SECOND CHAPTER, *Riccardo Valente,* the leader of the MARGIN project, and *Lucrezia Crescenzi Lanna* provide an overview of the mix method approach model for assessing the perception of insecurity in an urban environment. Their study describe the main objectives and phases of the project, and define the four dimensions of insecurity. The MARGIN project examined multiple dimensions of the perception of insecurity: the objective dimension (victimization), the subjective dimension (fear of crime), the socio-economic dimension (social vulnerability) and the socio-geographic dimension (the impact of the neighbourhood).

The research took place in an urban environment and aimed at establishing a link between the spatial and social dimensions of the perception of insecurity. Focusing on these contexts, the study presents its findings to the reader. In order to provide more comprehensive knowledge on security issues and to identify the factors influencing the perception of insecurity, the project has employed a special methodology. This newly developed and tested methodology can be helpful for future research projects on similar topics.

IN THE THIRD CHAPTER, a study by *Francesc Guillén Lasierra* entitled *Detecting and tackling the different levels of subjective security* describes different key factors of subjective security, including the components of subjective security, and the possible means of measuring it through the methods and results of the MARGIN research. It deals in detail with the issue of groups, territories and the approach to their security and provides several examples as illustrations. Finally, it describes the process by which research can be used to develop preventive strategies based on the diagnosis and reports on good practices based on them.

In the fourth chapter, *Hugo d'Arbois de Jubainville* presents the second work package of the MARGIN project measuring crime and the perception of insecurity (Collecting data on crime and perceptions of insecurity across Europe). The data come mainly from two sources, Police Recorded Crime Statistics (PCR) and Crime Victimization Surveys (CVS). One of the objectives of the research was to provide decision-makers, other researchers and the general public with the right tools and know-how to understand the multiple dimensions of the perception of insecurity. The data collection resulted in the MARGIN database being created, as well as an up-to-date report on the tools and resources to help evaluate data. The study presents data selection, country-specific problems, and the process of developing databases.

In the fifth chapter, a study by *Sonia Stefanizzi and Valeria Verdolini* compares the findings of the MARGIN research from the perspectives of well-off and marginalized communities. The authors present the characteristics of the areas of the countries participating in the research on the basis of the results of the anthropological study, and summarize, along the four dimensions of the research, the factors that play a role in developing a perception of insecurity at each location. In the second part, they portray the links between socio-economic divisions and subjective insecurity. They point to the role of marginalization in the development of a perception of insecurity, and they finally examine the role of social cohesion and make recommendations.

In the sixth chapter, *Andrea Tünde Barabás*, *Gergely Koplányi and Ákos Szigeti* report on the findings of the Hungarian research: The chapter presents a summary and the conclusions of the research methods and findings on two respective neighbourhoods in two different districts of Budapest. The authors point out significant differences in terms of the perception of insecurity measured in the areas inhabited by the socially disadvantaged on one hand and by those of a high social status, examine their causes and origins, and confirm the notion that marginalization, lack of cohesion, and socio-economic and socio-geographic factors play a significant role in the development of people's feelings. The study presents all these issues through the results of the fieldwork in Hungary.

Following the presentation of the findings of the MARGIN project, chapter seven examines a specific local security issue: *Camille Vanier and Hugo d'Arbois de Jubainville* explore Unsafe Feeling on French Public Transport. Their starting

point is that public transport is a community space that participants can use to their liking, yet they must also comply with certain social standards. In most cases, public transport is supposed to be a closed environment, which may create fear in passengers under certain circumstances, so this area is particularly interesting for criminological research. The research gives a glimpse into the fears of people using French public transport.

IN THE EIGHTH CHAPTER, *Sandra Appleby-Arnold, Noellie Brockdorff, Simon Dobrišek, Sveva Avveduto and Lucio Pisacane* report on the results of the *Rules, Expectations and Security through Privacy-Enhanced Convenient Technologies (RESPECT)* project in their study entitled *Citizens' Perception of Security and Surveillance.*

The RESPECT Project is a comprehensive study aimed at examining the effectiveness of the surveillance systems and procedures for preventing and reducing crime in the European Union. The project explored the phenomenon of the perception of security using a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach. An important aspect of the research is the creation of a decision-making toolkit for policy-makers that enables the proper monitoring of surveillance systems, while taking legal, economic and social considerations into account. The study presents this research, built upon three pillars, to the reader.

IN THE NINTH CHAPTER, *Carla Napolano's* study entitled *The experience of the European Forum for Urban Security (EFUS)* describes the work of the organization, which was established in 1988 with the support of the Council of Europe, and serves as a knowledgebase that provides opportunities for a dialogue between cities to clarify local public security issues, and to outline security directives. Over the last thirty years, the Forum has been active in many areas of work and has contributed to the development of security. The study describes these activities of the organization.

We live in a changing world where people and authorities need to adapt continuously to changing circumstances. As *Sonia Stefanizzi and Valeria Verdolini* state, regular changes make people distrustful and distant, which can lead to conflicts. The public is increasingly self-reliant and, in the absence of the usual social net, they have to create security for themselves. In this situation, some already marginalized social groups are excluded even more and declared to be

scapegoats. The most common example of this is the criminalisation of immigrants and the poor, as the study points out. The perception of security, or the lack thereof, i.e. the perception of insecurity, is subjective, i.e. it depends largely on people's perceptions and feelings. Although the number of crimes and the risks are objectively measurable, their impact on society is influenced by a number of factors.

Exploring these factors is indispensable when formulating policies aimed at reducing fear. The findings of the MARGIN project and the studies in this book can contribute to that effort by providing validated research methods for diagnosing and by assisting in the development and application of the appropriate tools.

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Finally, I would like to express my appreciation for support in our participation in the MARGIN project by the National Institute of Criminology, and specifically its director, Prof. em. Dr. György Vókó DSc, as well as by Hungary's Prosecutor's Office. In addition, I would like to express my special thanks to my Hungarian colleague Ákos Szigeti for his dedicated work throughout the research and the authoring phases of this book.

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The Editor