

EDITORIAL**COVID-19 AND URBAN SAFETY: EXPLORING THE EFFECTS OF THE
PANDEMIC ON FEAR OF CRIME, (IN)SECURITY, PENAL AND SAFETY
POLICIES IN URBAN CONTEXT**

Christina Zarafonitou¹ & Nikos Passas²

Two years ago, the global society began to face the serious COVID-19 pandemic. The features of this health emergency and a series of policies and measures introduced by governments around the world to protect against the spread of the virus and to support their economies have shaped a “crisis” situation with significant effects on the crime phenomenon.

This special issue of *Urban Crime-An International Journal* is devoted to studies that aim to examine *the effects of the pandemic on crime, fear of crime and (in)security, penal and safety policies especially in the urban context*, through current research findings and theoretical considerations. The issue comprises eight selected, peer-reviewed articles.

¹ Professor of Criminology, Department of Sociology, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece, email: chrizara@panteion.gr, ORCID ID <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6636-7903>

² Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Northeastern University, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Boston, USA; email n.passas@northeastern.edu

Urban Crime - An International Journal, Vol 3, No 2, ISSN 2732-6187. © Laboratory of Urban Criminology of Panteion University 2020. The content of Urban Crime-An International Journal, first published in 2020, is freely available to download, save, reproduce, and transmit for noncommercial, scholarly, and educational purposes. Reproduction and transmission of journal content for the above purposes should credit the author and original source. Use, reproduction, or distribution of journal content for commercial purposes requires additional permissions from the Laboratory of Urban Criminology of Panteion University 2020.

The first article, titled “*Crime, fear of crime and insecurity during the pandemic: the Greek reality*” by *Christina Zarafonitou, Eleni Kontopoulou, Elli Anitsi and Dimitris Kalamaras* (Panteion University) examines the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictive measures that were imposed to address crime and insecurity in Greece during the year 2020 and the first quarter of the year 2021, pointing out the shifts that were observed both in crime patterns and fear of crime during that period.

The second article, titled “*COVID-19, Quality of Governance and Institutional Corruption*” by *Nikos Passas* (Northeastern University) reviews a host of factors springing from the global pandemic creating opportunities and motives for corruption and other financial crimes, while undermining social control. He outlines a theoretical framework for the analysis of the problem revolving around the concepts of “lawful but awful” practices, institutional corruption and criminogenic asymmetries.

The next article, a contribution by *Vicky Vlachou* (Panteion University), is entitled “*The Covid-19 pandemic in modern cities: the example of criminological theory and history*”. The author discusses the contribution of historical analysis and criminological theories to the management of the challenges that came with the pandemic, as a source of discovering substantial interventions and policies that can turn the crisis into opportunity.

The article that follows authored by *Layla Hashemi, Edward Huang & Louise Shelley* (George Mason University) is entitled “*Counterfeit PPE: Substandard respirators and their entry into supply chains in major cities*” and aims to present the emergence of a different paradigm in urban insecurity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Through their review and analysis of medical supply chains, the researchers point to vulnerabilities of supply chains that enable illicit trade of Personal protective equipment.

The two articles that follow, are devoted to cybercrime. The first article by *Georgios Germanos & Nikolaos Georgiou* (Hellenic Police) entitled “*How did cybercriminals ‘survive’ during the pandemic?*” examines the ways in which cybercriminals adapted and improved their modus operandi in certain types of crimes during the pandemic. Moreover, the authors discuss how law enforcement authorities responded to address the challenges that emerged. The second article by *Nikoletta Papathasopoulou* (National and Kapodistrian University) is entitled “*The explosive rise in cyberbullying behavior and online victimization rates among university students in Athens and the*

role of forced confinement due to the Covid-19 pandemic” examines the effects of the pandemic in cyberbullying and online victimization, indicating a dramatic increase that is explained through Robert Agnew’s General Strain Theory (GST).

The last section discusses crime policy during the COVID-19 pandemic. The first article by *Giorgos Triantafyllou, Anastasios Valvis & Theoni Spathi* (Center for Security Studies, KE.ME.A) is entitled “*Policing during the COVID-19 pandemic: the case of Greece*” and uses Greece as case study in order to map the changes that took place in urban policing during the pandemic and to investigate the impact of these changes in the relationship between civilians and the LEA personnel. The following article by *Gaulithy Konan Georges* (Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny) entitled “*Maintien de l’ordre et surveillance pendant la pandémie de la Covid-19 en Côte d’Ivoire*” presents research findings regarding the practices of policing and surveillance carried out by public security forces during the Covid-19 pandemic in Côte d’Ivoire, indicating the serious issues that emerged, from the perspective of ethics and the respect of human rights.

The special issue is closing with the contribution of John Trimboli (Middle Georgia State University) in the Commentary section, entitled “*Surprising Atlanta Violent Crime Rate Analyses Comparing During COVID to Before COVID*”.

Finally, at this point we would like to thank the authors for their very interesting contributions and the reviewers for their valuable comments and constructive criticism, as well as Ms. Elli Anitsi, for her valuable assistance.