

EDITORIALChristina Zarafonitou¹

The papers published in the seventh issue of *Urban Crime-An International Journal* cover a variety of topics in the field of Environmental Criminology and urban safety concerning the role of gender on fear of crime, the fear of crime in the public transportation, the crime patterns within the built environment, the activists' use of protest stickers in the urban context, the relationship between protest stickers and radicalisation in university campuses, the relationship between urban commodification and the erosion of spatial security, the spatial and temporal analysis of robbery in Greece and finally, the crime-preventive value of local crime prevention policy plans.

The opening article of this issue, titled "*Fear of crime and gender: The case of the BeSecure-FeelSecure project in Piraeus*", was authored by Christina Zarafonitou (Panteion University), Eleni Kontopoulou (Panteion University) and Dimitrios Kalamaras (Panteion University). The authors examine the role of gender in fear of crime in combination with other demographic factors. This correlation is examined in the case of the BeSecure-FeelSecure Project, in which research was conducted with a representative sample of residents from two municipal departments in the city of Piraeus, Greece. More specifically, the research data on fear of crime, perception of safety, direct victimisation, and citizens' attitudes towards the police and the local authorities were analysed, considering gender alongside other individual characteristics such as age, education, and income.

The second article was authored by Meha Shukla (UCL), Shane Johnson (UCL), Peter Jones (UCL) and is titled "*Study of crime patterns within the built environment – a systematic review and meta-analysis*". The article explores the academic literature to understand how the criminogenic properties in micro places of various urban elements, such as the configuration of the street network, parks, bus stops and schools, have been found to influence crime through a systematic review and a statistical meta-analysis. As a standalone exploratory study, the study contributes to the academic literature by presenting the state of the art regarding the effects of traditional physical urban elements on crime.

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The third article is authored by Steve Hill and is titled “*A qualitative study of activists' use of protest stickers*”. Drawing on cultural criminology and semi-structured interviews with five UK-based individuals from across the ideological spectrum, this paper investigates the motivations of sticker activists. The author highlights how sticker activism functions as a tool for contesting social control and facilitating subcultural identity construction in the urban environment.

The fourth article, titled “*Protest stickers in the vicinity of UK university spaces: A breach of the PREVENT duty?*”, is the second contribution by Steve Hill. The article demonstrates that the protest sticker can serve as a potent and often underestimated catalyst for radicalisation within the vicinities of university campuses. By applying the theoretical framework of microradicalisation and reciprocal radicalisation, this study demonstrates how the acts of constructing, placing, viewing, defacing or removing a protest sticker can constitute a journey towards radicalisation by arguing that protest stickers are not merely symptoms of pre-existing social tensions but are active agents that can shape such a journey by functioning as educational tools and territorial markers to gateways for recruitment into extremist ecosystems.

Finally, the fifth article of this issue, titled “*The right to the Safe City: commodification, spatial injustice and urban vulnerability in Athens*”, is authored by Ilias Theodoropoulos (National Technical University of Athens). The author examines the relationship between urban commodification and the erosion of spatial security, situated at the intersection of critical urban theory and environmental criminology. Drawing on Henri Lefebvre's "Right to the City" and David Harvey's framework of accumulation by dispossession, the author argues that processes of commodification do not merely produce spatial injustice in the abstract but generate concrete conditions of urban vulnerability that undermine residents' sense of safety and erode the social fabric of neighbourhoods.

The section of Commentary hosts the contributions of: (a) David – Vasileios Ntanos (Panteion University), (b) Amanjot-Kaur Singh (Panteion University) and c) Charalampos Karagiannidis (Aristotle University). The first contribution is titled “*The evolution of robbery in Greece during 2013–2023: a spatial analysis*” and focuses on the spatial distribution and temporal evolution of robbery in Greece during 2013–2023. Using official data and GIS-based spatial and statistical analyses, it identifies a general decline in robbery incidents during the period examined. The article also underscores the importance of spatial analysis in understanding crime patterns and supporting more targeted and evidence-based crime prevention policies.

The second contribution, titled “*Fear of crime in public transport - A qualitative research in the Athens region*”, examines fear of crime in public transportation in

specific major areas of Attica, a topic based on the latest regulations about the “Transit Police” in Greece. The main purpose of the research was to undertake an empirical approach, so as to study citizens’ fear of crime when using transportation in specific areas of Athens, through face-to-face interviews. In this context, previous victimisation was examined while using several modes of transit, as well as the factors that reinforce feelings of unsafety.

The third contribution, titled “*Decentralisation and local crime prevention policy plans*”, presents the crime-preventive value of local crime prevention policy plans based on the notion of decentralisation, as demonstrated by international experience, which are part of a participatory crime prevention policy focused on the local community and its development.

Finally, I would like to thank the authors for their very interesting contributions. and their thorough response to comments and recommendations, and the reviewers for their valuable comments and constructive criticism, as well as the managing editor, Dr. Eleni Kontopoulou, for her assistance with production-related issues.