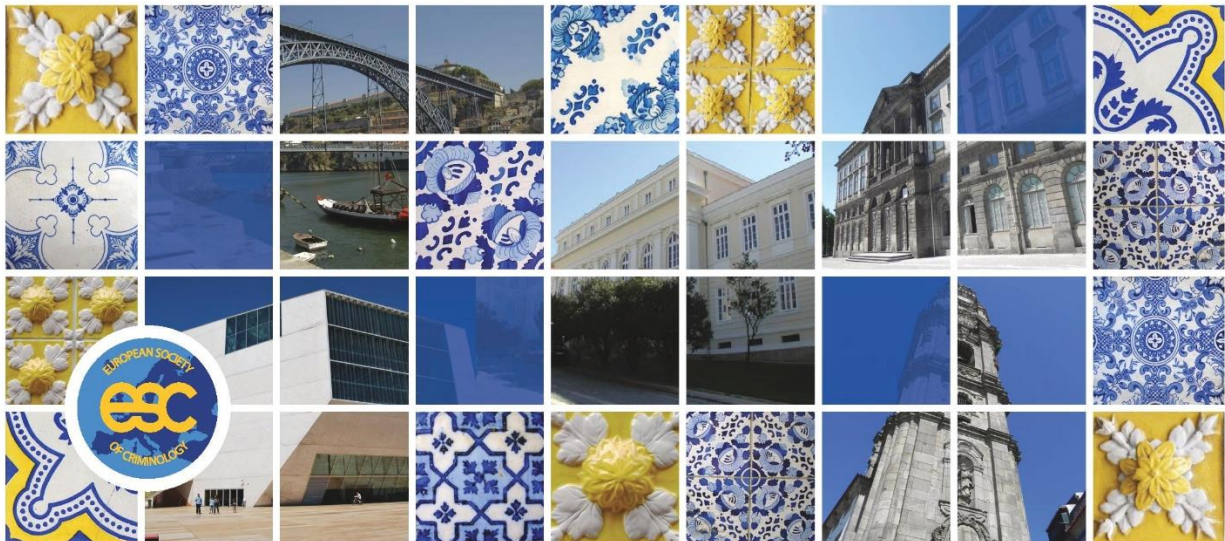




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Book of Abstracts

15th Annual Conference of the European Society of Criminology

Criminology as *unitas multiplex*:

Theoretical, epistemological and methodological developments

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Porto, 2-5 September 2015

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Chair: Quentin Liger

0327 - USING POLICE REGISTER DATA AS RESEARCH DATA

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In this presentation we will discuss the use of police registers as quantitative research data. Three different police registers will be discussed: the national criminal register STRASAK, the police's internal case procedure register BL and the national DNA database eDNA.

BL contains information of all cases reported to the Norwegian police. The registers thus hold detailed information of for example case proceedings, such as the file reports, information on crime scene investigation, police interrogations of suspects, victims, and witnesses as well as all documents linked to the cases. This includes particularly sensitive information about the persons involved in the cases. As the national criminal register, STRASAK contains a range of different facts about the reported criminal cases such as case characteristics, case outcome and information and duration of the case procedures. eDNA contains, among other things, information about crime scene investigation, DNA profiles from suspects and convicts, as well as unidentified DNA profiles from crime scenes.

The discussion will include reflections regarding the use of police registers for research purposes. This includes, for instance, to extract qualitative police data with the purpose of performing subsequent quantitative analyses. Further, the discussion will include reflections about what kind of information the police registers contain and what kind of benefits they provide for quantitative research. We will also discuss potential disadvantages in using data that are not registered for research purposes.

0328 - EFFECTS OF QUESTION ORDER ON THE ASSESSMENT OF POLICE PERFORMANCE

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Background

Answering questions in a survey is a complex cognitive process. The question order plays a key role in this process: Preceding questions may activate information that may not have come to the respondents' minds if other question had been asked. The activated information in turn can influence how respondents answer subsequent questions ("priming").

An example: Asking questions about victimization in the past 5 years may make non-victims realize *that* they were not victimized in the past 5 years. Realizing this may “prime” the subsequent answers of non-victims resulting for example in a very positive assessment of police performance.

Experimental approach

In the International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) 2005, the respondents were first asked whether they had fallen victim to different crimes in the past 5 years. Crime victims, who had reported the crime to the police, were asked to rate their satisfaction with the way the police handled the crime. After these specific questions addressing the victims only, all respondents were asked the following question to assess police performance in general “Taking everything into account, how good do you think the police in your area are at controlling crime?” We wondered whether this question order affected the assessment of police performance.

To discover a potential question-order effect, a split-ballot experiment was conducted within a follow-up of the ICVS – the Luxembourgish “Enquête sur la sécurité 2013” (N = 3025). Half of the respondents were asked the general question regarding police performance at the beginning of the questionnaire *before* the questions concerning victimization and victimization details (Group 1). The other half answered the general question *after* the specific questions (Group 2).

Results

Respondents in group 2 (general question at the end) were less likely to choose the extreme categories “very good job” (G2: 6.7% vs G1: 11.5%) and “very bad job” (G2: 1.3% vs G1: 2.6%) and instead were more likely to choose “don’t know” (G2: 7.7% vs G1: 3.4%; Sig. <.001).

Furthermore, the question order had a strong effect on the sub-group of respondents who were dissatisfied with the way the police handled a crime. Respondents who had already expressed dissatisfaction (group 2) were much more likely to say the police in Luxembourg are doing a “very good/good job” than respondents with the opposite question order (G2: 62.6% vs G1: 39.8%; Sig. = .002). This result suggests a “contrast effect” of asking the more specific question first; i.e., respondents did *not* consider the negative information regarding their dissatisfaction with the way the police handled a specific crime when they answered the general question regarding police performance.

Conclusion

The question order affects the assessment of police performance by activating information that is relevant for the assessment. Researcher should conduct split-ballot experiments if they think that preceding questions “prime” subsequent answers.

0329 - HOW CAN QUANTITATIVE CRIMINAL JUSTICE DATA BE USED FOR POLICY-MAKING AT EU LEVEL?

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1 - Optimity Matrix

How can quantitative criminal justice data be used for policy-making at EU level?

For the past few years, the European Commission has driven the concept of “scoreboards” in different policy areas, including justice, in order to assess the efficiency of national judicial systems. The idea of a “criminal justice scoreboard” was floated during the 2014 Assises de la Justice in Brussels. In parallel, the European Commission requires quantitative data in order to develop policies and assess their impacts. This paper will build on Optimity Matrix’s expertise in the collection and analysis of criminal justice data and conducting Impact Assessments for the European Commission in general.

The paper will examine existing sources of quantitative data used at the European level to compare Member States and their jurisdictions (such as the CEPEJ, the European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics). While these data are extremely useful at national level, can they be compared across jurisdictions and therefore be useful when designing policies at EU level? This question is particularly important since the Lisbon Treaty has set out provisions for the European Commission to propose legislation on the establishment of minimum standards in the field of criminal justice at the core of the creation of an Area of Justice, Freedom and Security in the EU.

After examining the merits and shortcomings of the available data, the paper will identify the need for these to be interpreted in light of the jurisdictions they relate to, i.e. using qualitative data. Quantitative data alone cannot provide the answer as qualitative information is necessary to understand the differences and subtleties in the national judicial systems. This will be illustrated by examining concrete examples of the Commission’s Impact Assessments and the relative importance given to the different types of data.

Finally, the paper will identify possible avenues to challenge the dichotomy between a purely “quantitative approach” and a more qualitative approach to evidence-based policy making in a polity such as the EU, where Member States have very different legal cultures. The paper will argue for the need to integrate quantitative data with a thorough understanding of the legal setting in order to develop a robust evaluative framework for policy making.

0330 - MONITORING CRIME AND VIOLENCE TO PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES: AN EXPLORATORY EXERCISE

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The promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, the access to justice, and accountable institutions is the sixteenth among the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) proposed by the Open Working Group of the United Nations Secretary General. Each goal is accompanied by a set of targets to set measurable outcomes to monitor the SDGs' implementation. These targets are now under the scrutiny of the international community and at the core of dynamic consultations involving a multitude of actors. At the centre of the ongoing dialogues there is the question on how to take stock of the bulk of collective experiences in collecting and analysing data. The reflection on the means of implementation is of utmost importance considering the challenges of sustaining efficient monitoring systems in settings affected by poverty and instability. Nevertheless monitoring systems already exist and they are implemented in a range of settings. Population based surveys, for example, are widely used to collect a set of comparable information across different contexts to monitor crime and violence and support decision-making processes. How many of the already well-established surveys' indicators could be used to monitor Goal 16 and promote peaceful and inclusive societies? This presentation aims at discussing the results of an exploratory exercise based on the review and identification of security, crime, and violence indicators included within existing population based surveys across conflict and non-conflict settings.

4.14 LOCAL SECURITY, NEIGHBORHOODS AND GHETTOIZATION PROCESSES

Chair: Rossella Selmini

0331 - LOCAL SECURITY DIAGNOSIS IN PORTUGAL: A PRIMARY NEED FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND CITIZENS?

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Actually, crime is an integral part of our society. In Garofalo's words "The relationship between crime and its consequences is neither obvious nor simple". The feeling of insecurity has cognitive, emotional and behavioural components that can act impairing the quality of life at both the individual and community levels.

However, in Portugal, there are few studies which report the reality of fear of crime and insecurity. To explore this situation, this paper aims to make an overview about the success of new urban security strategies, based on the diagnosis of local community problems and fear of crime.