

Background

Especially since the terror attacks of 9/11, the issue of an adequate proportion between freedom and security is in the center of public debate. At the same time it is undisputed, that the increasing application of security measures shifts the balance between civil rights and public security towards the latter. Additionally, regarding the acceptance of such public security measures, various differences in societal acceptance can be observed whilst performing an international comparison.

Research Goals and Approach

The project seeks to analyze the factors that contribute towards public acceptance or disapproval of security measures in public space. For the purpose of researching this phenomenon case studies in two distinct fields of interest will be conducted. The first field of research concentrates on security measures in connection with public air transport (air transport security), whilst the second field of interest is dedicated to the collection and storage of private data by governmental institutions (information security) in order to generate public security.

Innovations and Perspectives

It is expected that the results of the research project will have implications that reach beyond scientific relevance, for it seeks to provide a better understanding of the complex relation of acceptance of security measures, political decision-making and socio-cultural background of societal actors. Furthermore on the basis of the research results security measures may prove to be more effective and cost-efficient, based on broad acceptance by the public.

Security in Public Spaces (SIRA)

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TP1: Theoretical Framework

The primary focus of TP1 is the development of a theoretical and analytical framework in order to research the impact of socio-cultural factors on the acceptance or disapproval of security measures in public space. As a starting point the project concentrates on the securitization theory of the Copenhagen School.

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TP 3: EBS Business School

The primary scope of TP3 is the development of guidelines that determine which socio-cultural factors matter in planning, configuration and implementation of security measures in air-traffic. These guidelines seek to increase the acceptance of security measures by affected groups.

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TP 6: Cultural Anthropology

This project examines the significance of data protection as part of socio-cultural constructions of security in the case of airport and aviation security. It asks to what extent the collection of data is seen as either irritating, or as a necessary part of a cultural practice that is given no further attention, or whether it is seen as a vital part to establish and maintain security.

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TP2: Sociology

Project TP2 covers the structure and socio-cultural differences in organizing, perceiving and assessing security measures within the range of air-traffic security. Two different subjects are examined with regard to one major German airport: On the one hand the system of luggage check, passengers check (frontier check) shall be described in its structure and development in a detailed way. On the other hand generating and applying personal information from booking the flight up to leaving the airport.

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TP 4: Innovations Evaluation

The project focuses on the development of methods to evaluate security technology (SIRA-Value) and an analysis of the acceptance and disapproval of security technology by different audiences. Additionally a generalizeable procedure (SIRA-Value in Use) that supports the implementation of new security techniques in air-traffic will be designed.

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TP 7: Institutional Regimes

This project tests the hypothesis that the populace's attitude towards security measures is strongly influenced by the institutional regime and its guiding principles. The analysis of institutional regimes aims to clarify reasons for acceptance of security measures. This analysis will hopefully improve understanding of the causes and reasons for the (mis-)perception of security measures, and should also enlighten political actors as to how they might implement security measures in public spaces in consensus with a democratic public.

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TP 5: Law

The project investigates security strategies and technologies in the field of airport and flight security from a jurisprudential perspective. New security measures are analysed regarding to appropriateness, rule of law, and constitutionality.

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TP 8: Fraunhofer IOSB

The sub-project will evaluate how different technologies are perceived by (an) inhomogeneous audience(s) and their influence on the success of securitization efforts. In the process, the interdependency of social, legal and political factors in connection with security technology will be examined in-depth.

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