

Capacities and efficiency of prevention of crime - some dilemmas

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Crime prevention is more efficient in traditional or the simplest criminal offences for which physical force is necessary as well as an opportunity and a suitable moment. Opportunities are less important in prevention of other forms of crime, in particular in cases of so-called intellectual crime. However, opportunity nevertheless represents the principal incentive for most crime, which calls for situational prevention and is left to potential victims - in particular to private persons or companies. These can defend themselves either by means of commercial security or self-protection. The state allocates its preventive activities rather selectively; especially in relation to secondary and tertiary victimisation, it mostly depends on crime reporting, while its proactive activities in these areas are considerably limited, due to its incapacity to control victimogenic situations. For this reason, it seems that victims are the most appropriate vehicles of crime prevention. On the other hand, every society has given up the attempts to modify people not to commit criminal offences as an economic category, promising certain profit. Known offenders are mostly handled by formal agencies of repression, using various scientific disciplines, while prevention is mainly a non-legal and lay activity, usually motivated by the fear of crime. When a state is threatened, this is also used for state-organised prevention even in global dimensions (terrorism, corruption, money laundering etc.). The globalised world with its digital revolution is also shaped in the frame of the following conflicting processes: privatisation, commercialisation and state-organised prevention with the associated militarisation.

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