



Multidimensionale Risks in the XXI Century

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The Discourse of Urban Security: Comparison of Policies and the Opinions of Urban Security NGOs in Budapest and Milan

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Previous studies show that there might be a discrepancy between the urban security discourses generated by policies and the ones generated by NGOs (Colombo, 2018; Göbl, Szalai, 2015). Therefore, this work aims to compare the problems connected to urban security in the policies and NGOs' discourses in two different contexts within Europe, Budapest and Milan. The cities were selected based on the approach of maximum variability. To study urban security policies, we drew a complete list of laws and policies issued by State bodies of different levels in power by December 31, 2019. To investigate the perspective of urban security NGOs, we conducted eight interviews with their workers and volunteers (four in each city).

Our study shows that there are principal differences between the cities in discussing problems included in the urban security discourse. The Hungarian policies tend to ignore existing problems focusing on achieving such general goals as maintaining public order and cleanliness of the streets. Simultaneously, some renovation projects implemented in Budapest focused only on solving situational problems without any attention to the social side of the problem. The same inclination towards situational problems is traceable in the discourse generated by Hungarian NGOs. In contrast, the Italian policies aim at dealing with existing situational and social problems. NGOs' representatives working in Milan mainly built their discourse of urban security around deeper social problems associated with life in metropolises (vulnerability, the disintegration of traditional social ties, etc.). We argue that the difference can be attributed to the variation in political and social environments between the cities, in particular, to the different models of governance (hierarchical in Hungary and co-governance in Italy) (Kooiman, 2003), and the dominance of one of the approaches to crime prevention (social or situational).

References

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