

Analytical Standpoint, no. 14 (May 2010)

ISSN 1819-7116



Changing Perceptions of Citizen Security and Acceptance of Security-enhancing Interventions

Report on the IVth European Security Conference Initiative

**Final Symposium of CPSI Security Research Project
4-5 March 2010**

*Alexander Siedschlag*¹

Introduction

The IVth European Security Conference Initiative (ESCI, www.esci.at) 2010 was the final symposium of the European security research project "Changing Perceptions of Security and Interventions" (CPSI, www.cpsi-fp7.eu) and organised by the CPSI consortium partner CEUSS | Center for European Security Studies at Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna (Austria). In its three-year mission, the CPSI project aimed to provide government law-enforcement agencies, emergency services and other policy makers and

1 *Alexander Siedschlag* is professor for security research at Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna and director of the CEUSS | Center for European Security Studies, which operates ESCI as its conference platform. The author gratefully acknowledges the contributions by Andrea Jerković, Rosemarie Stangl, Christoph Selner and Florian Fritz to this report.





strategy developers with a frame of reference to increase insight into the determinants of factual and perceived security, and into which interventions are effective for increasing security. This was based on a methodology to collect, quantify, organise, analyse and interpret security-related data and a data warehouse to store and extract for analysis data amassed using the methodology. As CPSI co-ordinator *Heather Griffioen-Young* from TNO Defence, Security and Safety (Netherlands) informed the symposium's audience, the CPSI consortium of six

research institutes and three companies yielded a registration system to monitor security-related data and also gained interesting theoretical insights.

Security and information

As Griffioen-Young further explained, in our age of technological advancement things happen faster than ever before. In the realm of security, we are making huge progression in the development of prevention and detection technologies. But while old threats to security are still prevalent, they are being joined by new communication technologies and new and emerging threats to produce a new security landscape. European nations need to deal with both old and new threats to security in order to maintain the standard of living Europeans have worked so hard to achieve. The European approach to security needs to take on an international and integrated nature suited to the increased dynamism of the emerging European security culture. Part of this entails improving the registration of security-related information.

Matching CPSI and external expertise results

Based on its full association with the CPSI project, ESCI's main theme this year was "*Changing Perceptions of Citizen Security and Acceptance of Security-enhancing Interventions.*" Almost 30 speakers from 15 countries, including representation of



the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, brought together perspectives from academics, think tanks, politics and industry. ESCI Chairman *Alexander Siedschlag* from CEUSS | Center for European Security Studies (Austria) explained in his opening

address how the symposium matched representatives from the CPSI project with external experts to critically assess, discuss and expand on project results as well as to investigate new contexts of application of CPSI studies and products. In the course of the symposium, areas like crime and urban security,

international terrorist threats, pandemics, national and European disaster response and selected aspects of critical infrastructure protection, such as aviation security, were addressed most.

From elite think to societal security

As Alexander Siedschlag continued, it is important to bear in mind that the blending of security technology research with social science research as such is



not new but dates back at least to the early years of the cold war. This is also true for the study of perceptions, as well as the role of values and symbols in defining what is threatened and to be secured. However, it is important to place the study of perception into the context of citizen security that the EU is subscribing to. Cold-war strategic studies centred on elites when

analysing perceptions and treated security as an intrinsic asset of its own that could not sensibly be balanced against other values. European security research, as represented by the CPSI project and others, in contrast focuses on the citizens themselves and on gaps between felt and factual security; it stresses the question of acceptance of political and technological solutions for security problems; it addresses security as a value among others, including conflicts about those values; and it searches for acceptable balances between values such as security, freedom and legitimacy.

CPSI-generated knowledge and methods in prevention and response

ESCI 2010 as the CPSI final symposium was organised in two parts: The opening day of the conference was dedicated to panels and discussions related to CPSI-generated knowledge, whereas the second day concentrated on workshop-type activities in order to demonstrate and receive feedback on qualitative social research methods used in the CPSI project and levy from end-users their requirements for applied security research into security perceptions and technology acceptance. This report grasps some highlights of the intellectual and practical interchange that took place. Selected specific contributions are referred to on an exemplary basis.

A cross-cutting topic frequently addressed throughout the event by both academics and end-users was the role of knowledge in prevention and response. This was already clear in the opening addresses. Speaking on behalf of the Spanish EU Presidency, *Oscar Jaime* from the Cabinet of Internal

Security Studies in the Spanish Ministry of the Interior attested ESCI and the CPSI project a relevant intellectual contribution to the construction of an internal security strategy for the European Union. He highlighted the need for joint policing, information exchange and police training to substantiate policies centred on citizens. As subsequent speakers did, Jaime stressed the need to learn more about citizens' needs and perceptions and make the results comparable on a cross-country scale. He commended CPSI for its effort to provide the EU with research-based capabilities to cope with citizen demands. Results from country case studies about political as compared to citizen security cultures in EU member states as presented by *Andrea Jerković* from the CEUSS | Center for European Security Studies at Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna (Austria) represent an important step in that direction.

Communicating (in)security to the public

In the context of citizen demands as well as beyond, the role of knowledge and information was emphasised by panellists and in contributions from the floor. This on the one hand refers to professional training, for example in order to enhance the social crime competence of police professionals. On the other hand, it relates to training of civil protection volunteers and to acquiring



empirical knowledge of how EU citizens practically handle disaster, as *Wolf Dombrowsky* from the Steinbeis Hochschule Berlin (Germany) explained. A further important aspect is communication with and within the public (e.g. based on new-media promoted citizen journalism) about threats and risk as well as about perceptions of insecurity. This theme

was addressed by *Frank Furedi* and *Hayley Watson* from the School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research at the University of Kent (United Kingdom). Referring to their research within the CPSI project, they explained how new media show that technology is not only something people react to and something that they will accept or not. Especially when talking about citizen security, technologies such as new media enable citizens to participate in the production of news. Thus, what has been critically termed the social production of fear is not restricted to the realm of the mass media but involves IT-mediated grassroots discourse.

Florian Fritz from the Institute for Security Research at Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna (Austria) linked the discussions up to the overarching European context and perspectives for future research about citizens' security awareness, stressing the relevance of an ongoing paradigm shift that, expressly

formulated in the European Security Strategy (2003), progressively turns towards the growing interdependency between threats and crises outside the EU and its internal security. The CPSI concept has been designed to address various levels of citizens' perceptions of (in)security and interventions and is apt to also grasp the internal–external security continuum. This could be an important test case in follow-up work of the consortium partners.

Need for multi-level security governance and co-ordination



Speakers and audience agreed that there is still much need to establish further platforms for structured dialogue as well as international workshops and conduct educational training on the European level to prepare staff of responsible national and international agencies as well as EU citizens for the upcoming challenges. It was also discussed that

the question of citizens' security perceptions is influenced by the public appearance of the relevant organisational setting of the EU itself (up to the Nice treaty regime adequately captured by the notion of the “inter-pillar struggle” and currently still characterised by a twofold, namely intergovernmental and community, approach). This relationship should be further explored and explained to the public because adequate understanding of political structures may contribute to narrow gaps between citizens' security perceptions and the more objective state of security, also defined by available institutional provisions.

The EU will require both closer civil-military and public private co-ordination and cooperation to achieve coherence of means and strategies, especially when it comes to security interventions. We need to know how citizens will see this and how this may alter their perception of the EU as a comprehensive security provider to themselves and its legitimacy to do so.

Panellists also urged to include new topics into the European security research agenda and address them in research about factual vs. perceived security. As *Irene Schwier* from the Department of Chemistry of the University of Hamburg (Germany) illustrated, counterfeit medicines (medicines deliberately and fraudulently mislabelled with respect to identity and/or source) belong to those topics. She alerted the audience that more people have been killed by counterfeit medicines than by terrorist incidents in the last 40 years.

A further train of discussion was the increasing relevance of and attention to ethical issues in security research. CPSI results related to this issue were presented by *Anke van Gorp* from the Institute for Security, University of Applied Sciences Utrecht (Netherlands), who was in charge of CPSI ethical parallel research, and then discussed, focusing on different methods to identify and address the issues. Anke van Gorp introduced the different methods have been developed to address ethical issues during research. Most of these methods were developed at universities. In CPSI, in contrast, the ethical issues were identified by ethicists cooperating directly in the project: As Anke van Gorp summarised, several issues could be addressed by choices with regard to the design of the validation study, in this case a survey. While some issues were already identified during the writing of the proposal, others were only identified during the research. Participating in the research gave the ethicists access to all relevant information. As Anke van Gorp concluded, this made it possible to address the ethical issues when they became relevant.

In a keynote speech, *Manfred Busko* from Gunnebo Deutschland GmbH (Germany) introduced demands for and expectations from a security research project such as CPSI from an industrial end-user perspective, such as:



as: What will be the psychological and social development and in which way will it have impact on security? Are the people aware of the realistic security situation? Do technological solutions contribute to the creation of fear? CPSI case studies and the reporting system as well as the results

of the ethical parallel research show that the project has substantial answers to offer to those questions. In the future, it will be important to frame these answers in a form that makes them easy to grasp for interested end-users from industry.

It was also generally discussed how to better bridge the interests of the research community and the end-user community. Like other projects, also CPSI experienced the fact that researchers in and outside the project consortium were interested in gaining new insights while involved industry and end-users were looking for practical tools. The continuation of this discussion notwithstanding, CPSI stoke a practicable balance by producing both scientific analyses and an IT-based tool, the data warehouse. The data warehouse in turn may also serve further scientific inquiry, for example host results of data-mining based research into security perceptions and the role of traditional and new media in shaping those perceptions.

Work beyond the duration of the CPSI project

In the closing session, *Heather Griffioen-Young* as the project co-ordinator of CPSI sketched the next steps that are intended to make results sustainable



after the conclusion of the project itself. In particular, the consortium will look for opportunities to implement the CPSI system (model, warehouse and tool) in large cities. Moreover, the CPSI-type culture analysis, based on the security culture model developed by CPSI, will be carried further to reflect new issues and include more European countries. Sigmund

Freud Private University will hold at least one international workshop or conference in the analysis of European security culture(s) following the CPSI model and also teach this model and results of its application in new academic courses which are currently under development. Given the role of textual information about risks and insecurity, as discussed during the symposium, the CPSI partners will also address the question of how to detect security perceptions through text mining technologies.

Future themes for the European security research and innovation agenda

As an important look into the future, the symposium yielded the following themes that appear to have special relevance for future expansion on CPSI results as well as for the further development of the agenda for European security research and innovation:

- Strategies for the EU to cope with growing citizen demands in the security realm;
- Risk communication and risk exaggeration in modern society and its new media, including addressing data gaps;
- Paths and limits for the delivery of security knowledge, including increased awareness of the need to preclude unintended delivery to security spoilers such as terrorists;
- Structured comparison of national developments in security concerns and solutions for security problems;
- Permanent structured involvement of end-users as operational partners in security projects as well as facilitated information exchange between researchers and practitioners.

Outreach

The CPSI final symposium had media partnerships with *SECURITY EUROPE* and *The European – Security and Defence Union*, and both media will publish reports and articles about the conference and the CPSI research project. The conference was also covered by regional German media and a radio interview with the organiser Alexander Siedschlag broadcast by Radio Oberland (Bavaria). Online content about CPSI research results as presented on the conference is available on both the CPSI (www.cpsi-fp7.eu) and the ESCI (www.esci.at) website. Also e-lectures were produced from presentations on the CPSI final symposium and are as well available on the CPSI website, which will continue to be hosted to report CPSI follow-ups and upcoming publications.

ESCI 2011 will take place in Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 27 and 28 June 2010, dedicated to the Comprehensive Approach that also has been increasingly applied to the area of the internal security of the European Union and its neighbourhood. This conference is planned to include presentations on the continuation of CPSI-related work. More information will be timely published on the ESCI website.

Summary of changes

Ver 1.0, 14 May 2010 – Initial release

Ver 1.1, 01 Jun 2010 – Correction of formal mistakes

<http://analysestandpunkt.european-security.info> / <http://www.cpsi-fp7.eu>