

9TH INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CONFERENCE ON LOCAL SAFETY AND SECURITY



University of Maribor

Faculty of
Criminal Justice and Security



Erasmus+



Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency

PERCEPTION OF SAFETY AND ROLE OF MEDIA IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Manca Velikovrh & Pia Miletić

1. Perception of safety

- Perception of safety = subjective feeling of safety
- Not always linked to actual crime rates
- People may feel unsafe despite low crime
- Influenced by:
 - Age, gender
 - Personal experiences
 - Environment
- Social cohesion (trust, connections) → higher safety



2. Limitations of the article & role of media

- Article explains key factors of safety perception
- Does **not include media influence**
- Limitation in modern society
- People get most information from media
- Media = important factor in shaping perception



3. Media as a source of crime information

- Media = main source of information
- Most people rely on media
- Traditional media (focus on violent and dramatic crimes, selective reporting)
- Creates distorted reality
- Crime seems more frequent and dangerous
- Sensationalism (exaggeration and emotional language)
- Social media (fast spread, often unverified information)

4. Social Media & Information Bubbles

- Algorithms show personalized content
- Repeated exposure to similar content
- “Information bubbles”
- One-sided information
- Perception \neq reality



5. Theoretical Explanations of Media Influence

- **Cultivation theory** (more media → world seems more dangerous)
- **Agenda-setting theory** (media defines important topics)
- **Indirect victimization** (fear without direct experience; based on media & others)



6. Local Facebook Groups & Community Perception

- Sharing dangers, suspicious people and incidents
- Often unverified information
- Fast spread → strong impact
- Comments = emotional → increase fear
- Collective perception of danger
- Also positive (communication, support, community connection)



7. Conclusion: What Shapes Perception of Safety

- Perception \neq actual crime
- Influenced by individual factors, social environment, media
- Important to consider broader context

