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LOCAL SECURITY COUNCILS AND COMMUNITY POLICING IN SERBIA - BETWEEN VISION AND REALITY[1], [2]

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Abstract: The multi-dimensional approach to understanding human and the implementation of the community policing strategy as two complementary parts of the concept of quality of life make it possible to qualitatively consider security in local communities. According to the concept of human security, institutions are obliged to provide citizens with permanent protection, instead of occasional, to act preventively, rather than reactively, whereby all relevant local community actors actively participate in deciding on issues related to their security. One way to actively involve key members of a community in improving (human) security at the local level is the formation of local security councils.

In Serbia, the first local security councils were established in 2002 as a result of the implementation of the pilot project "Police in the local community and a safe community in Serbia". Fifteen years later, there are 119 local security councils in Serbia. In addition to representatives of local self-government and representatives of other institutions (police, judiciary, social welfare centres, school institutions, health services, etc.), the representatives of civil society also participate in their work. Nevertheless, the functioning of local security councils in Serbia is still little known. There is also insufficient knowledge in which manner these bodies contribute to the improvement of human security at the local level.

Theoretical considerations in this paper are focused on the analysis of the conducted quantitative and qualitative research with the aim of reviewing the legislative, security and sociological environment in which local security councils are established and operating.

Key findings point to the necessity and significance of the decentralization of local security, the need for further development of the police in the local community, and the determination of the scope, dynamics and methodology of the work of the local advisory bodies for security.

Keywords: *local councils for security, community policing, Serbia*

1 This paper is the result of the research on project: "Management of police organization in preventing and mitigating threats to security in the Republic of Serbia", which is carried out by the Academy of Criminalistic and Police Studies (2015-2019)
2 This paper is the result of the research on the following project: "Crime in Serbia and instruments of state response", which is carried out by the Academy of Criminalistic and Police Studies in Belgrade (2015-2019).
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INTRODUCTIONHUMAN SECURITY IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The key concept of this research is human security. Human security shares the "conceptual space" with human development, which is also centred, multidimensional and defined in the space of human choices and freedom. While human development strives to "grow with equality", human security focuses on the "decline in security" (Sen, 2000). "That's why the focus of the human security battle is directed at two fronts. The first direction refers to the security field, where victory means *freedom from fear*. The other direction refers to the economic and social front, where victory means *freedom from deprivation*. There is no provision to add to the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and thereby enable the Security Council to create a safe world if men and women do not have security in their homes and workplaces."[4] The syntagm "freedom of fear" was intended to point to *freedom from violence*, while the syntagm "freedom from deprivation" signified *freedom from poverty*.

In analogy to this "security mathematics", the Human Development Report from 1994 has identified its four essential characteristics:

1. Human security is of universal importance. It is important for all people, equally for rich and poor nations.

2. Human security components are interdependent.

3. Human security is easier to ensure with early prevention than with later intervention. It is less expensive to overcome these threats while they are on the rise than when they are on a descending path.

4. Human security is centred on people; it is humanly centred. It is interested in how people live and breathe in society, how much they can freely exercise their choices, how much market and social chances are available to them – whether people live in conflict or in peace.

For this reason, as the starting point, as the broadest framework of research analysis in the assessment of the state of human security is taken the community in which the individual lives (the local community), that is, to which the individual belongs. Hence **the local community** represents the contextual framework through which the real potential for emancipation of citizens can be considered in the best possible way (Đurić, 2009), through which the needs of citizens and the degree of their (non)security can realistically be assessed, and the need for prevention and response to security problems, risks and threats at the local level can be defined. In other words, the state of human security in the local community is a synonym for the quality of life of its citizens.

THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY - THEORETICAL APPROACHES

The local community represents a place, a social and cultural framework in which citizens participate, in the most direct way, in the most direct forms of social life. This is the context in which the real quality of social life can be explored in the best possible way (Đurić, 2008).

Data collection and analysis of indicators (indicators) of quality of life in the local community are often based on the premise that new data can lead to solving problems that were previously ignored, which contributes to a better personal and social life of citizens. This means

4 From the report of the US Secretary of State, submitted to the government on the results of the San Francisco Conference in 1945, on which the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms was passed

that the research of any phenomenon, problem or event in the local community, the analysis of the functioning of institutions and agencies of the local community, and the perception of cause-effect relationships, relationships, correlations between occurrences in the community, directly or indirectly aim to improve the quality of life in local community.

Alternatively, this syntagm can also deal with less "tangible qualities", such as freedom of expression or social justice, air quality or access to health services (Land, 2004). Quality of life is more a direct manifestation of sustainability, which refers to the ability of a city or local community to meet the present needs of citizens without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their complete needs (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987: 23; Committee on Identifying Data Needs for Place-Based Decision Making et al., 2002: 23).

Due to different conceptual approaches, quality of life has been the subject of numerous studies in various fields of research, such as economics, sociology, political science, psychology, philosophy and medicine. The first approach sees the quality of life through the means and goods available to the individual – quality of life is based on objective resources that allow people to exist. This approach began to be applied in Sweden during the 1960s, as the so-called *level of access to life* (Erikson, 1974, 1993; Erikson & Uusitalo, 1987). The approach implies the ability of an individual to control resources such as money, property, knowledge, mental and physical energy, social relations and security, on the basis of which he can consciously direct his or her living conditions (Erikson, 1993: 72, 3).

The second, alternative approach to the study of quality of life relies on the notion of subjective well-being (Poggi et al., 2011). In this case, the concept of quality of life corresponds to the concept of a good feeling, that is, a subjective condition in terms of happiness and satisfaction. This approach is rooted in the tradition of American social psychology, developed in the 1960s and deals with the quality of life in terms of meeting needs. The quality of life according to this concept should be defined based on the observed results achieved during an individual's life rather than the availability of social and material resources. Subjective well-being is also a key focus in the development of this approach (Easterlin, 1974; Frey & Stutzer, 2000; Clark, 1996; Clark & Oswald, 1994).

The third conceptual direction was founded by Sen (Sen, 1985, 1992; Nussbaum & Sen, 1993). According to him, the quality of life can be understood in terms of "individual ability to achieve different valuable functionalities". In addition, quality of life does not rely solely on the availability of resources, although this issue has been recognized as a key element for achieving well-being in several domains. On the contrary, quality of life should be related to achieving real freedom, which allows people to achieve their goals, as far as possible, and choose a way of life through which they will prove themselves in all domains. More than funds, the emphasis is placed on agencies and empowerment as the key dimensions of quality of life, that is, on the institutional and cultural context and circumstances that give people the opportunity to independently shape their life course in the community in which they live.

The local community is expected, taking into account the needs of its inhabitants, to create conditions in which they will be satisfied with the quality of life, in which the community will strive to meet their needs. The "ideal" community model does not exist, nor can it be developed, but therefore, in theory and practice, communities in which quality of life is assessed as good and in which conditions are created to meet the greatest number of citizens' needs are called *functional or healthy* communities (Boehm & Cnaan, 2012).

A healthy community provides all people with the possibility of making decisions or making choices in the community by providing them with access to: housing, transport, health and healthy food, recreation, education and employment, health and social services, clean air and water, and a safe environment in conditions of social cohesion (Fellin & Peacock, 1995).

Systems (services, institutions, agencies) for providing services to citizens in functional communities base their activities on defined community priorities, reduce the possibility of risk for citizens, put the focus of their work on outcomes (changes among citizens) rather than the processes themselves, maintain the existing ones and establish new social networks of help and support to individuals, accept and support a wide range of family and social structures while respecting individual rights, include citizens (service users) in decision-making agencies, and others (Checkoway, 1995). In doing so, whenever various forms of community activity and social work are realized, account must be taken of the specificities of the target groups and the characteristics of the community in the community whose needs or deficits must be met (Ife & Fiske, 2006). Based on these principles police organization bases its activities within the concept of work in the local community.

COMMUNITY POLICING AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF CITIZENS

There is no agreement in the literature about defining the concept of police in local community – community policing (CP). The first definitions are mainly emphasizing similar principles: solving local problems, involving the community in decision-making, organizational decentralization of the police (Goldstein, 1990; Mawby, 1990; Trojanowicz, 1990; Murphy, 1994; Kešetović, 2003; Kešetović, & Davidović, 2007).), that is, **crime prevention and increasing quality of life** (Adams et al., 2005; Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce, 2004; Skogan, 2004; Community Policing Consortium, 2006; Skogan, 2006; Simonović, 2006; Nikač, 2010). According to Goldstein (2000), the concept of community policing contains several programs aimed at reducing fear of crime among citizens, deterring criminals from crime, increasing the presence of police in the community, improving police relations with the community, and placing a special emphasis on crime prevention conditions. In this way community policing creates conditions for meeting the security needs and increasing the quality of life of citizens.

The concept of community policing represents the association of citizens and police in the fight against crime, that is, it represents the concept of performing police tasks that places emphasis on the formation of a partnership between the police and the community in order to reduce crime and strengthen the security of citizens (Champion, 2003). When the community policing was experimentally introduced in 1970s into police work in the United States, the concept was meant to provide answers to the problems of crime, disorder and conflicts between citizens and police in the local community (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990; Cordner, 1995; Chappell, 2009). Today it has taken on the characteristics of social-service work in the local community, and is directed primarily to address the needs and needs of the local community (Spasić et al., 2013; Spasić & Milojević, 2016).

INTRODUCTION OF COMMUNITY POLICING AS A STRATEGY OF POLICE WORK IN SERBIA

The modern era of police development in Serbia began in the mid-1960s and continues to this day. In 2001, Serbia emerged from political isolation and conflict. One of the prerequisites for joining the European Union and challenge to the new Government was to establish a competent, professional and publicly acceptable police service and to implement projects related to the work of the police in the local community. That is why the Ministry of Interior has

selected five locations, representative of all communities in Serbia, in rural, industrial, tourist and urban areas. The selected locations are: Novi Bečej (rural area), Kragujevac (industrial zone), Vrnjačka Banja (tourist center), Zvezdara (city municipality) and Požega (traffic hub). The project "Police in the local community" formally started to be implemented in February 2003.

Shortly after the start of implementation, the project changes its name to the "Safe Community". A safe community is a term that has entered the field of research of many institutions in recent years. It was presented as a proactive, coordinated activity of state and social institutions and citizens to improve community security (Aldous & Leishman, 1999). The development of this concept in Serbia has paid attention to those organizations and institutions that are responsible for community security, citizens' safety, public order and peace, and the overall quality of life, above all, to the police organization.

With the introduction of the concept of a safe community and a community police strategy in Serbia, the first local security councils were formed. Designed as the "security forums" of key local institutions, these bodies were supposed to contribute to improving human security and the quality of life in the community. Therefore, theoretical considerations in this paper are directed towards the analysis of the conducted quantitative and qualitative research with the aim of reviewing the legislative, security and sociological environment in which local security councils are established and operating. The subject of research will include formation, activities, positive experiences, but also obstacles and limitations in the work of local security councils. The aim of the research is that through analysis of researches realized in period from 2003 to the present it gets insight into the specificities of the functioning and the results of the functioning of these bodies.

LOCAL SECURITY COUNCILS

The Local Security Council (LSC) in the municipality or city is established when representatives of key authorities, institutions and groups agree to act jointly in order to make their local community a safer place for the lives of citizens and visitors. The Local Security Council exists to provide advice on community safety issues, and to encourage closer cooperation between key local actors – authorities, organizations and citizens. It is important to remember that the Local Security Council is not a political forum (The Safety Management Manual - in cities and municipalities, 2015: 15).

These multi-sectoral bodies are, in their essence, security partnerships and include representatives of local self-government, institutions and groups of citizens working in partnership, agreeing, and deciding on the direction of action on the basis of security needs, in order to achieve a common goal of improving community safety, inter alia, improving the quality of life of its citizens.

Role and activities. According to the Handbook for the operation of the Security Council - in cities and municipalities (The Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Serbia and the Standing Conference of Cities and Municipalities, 2015), the activities of the Local Security Council are:

- To define security issues in the community;
- To determine the strategy of action;
- To propose, consider and adopt concrete programs, projects, initiatives for resolving security problems (especially preventive);
- To precise roles and responsibilities in the implementation of activities;

- To form inter-sectoral working groups that will address the identified problems through the development and implementation of specific projects;
- To evaluate activities.

Formation. At the national level, there is no legal basis for the establishment of special local labour or occasional security bodies. The most common legal basis for the establishment of LSC comes from the Law on Local Self-Government and the Statute of the Municipality, as the highest legal act of the local self-government unit. The Law on Local Self-Government enabled the Municipal Assembly to establish permanent or interim working bodies for the consideration of issues within its competence. Statute of the municipality determines the number of working bodies, the election, rights and duties of the president and members of working bodies. The Statute regulates the organization and work of organs and services in the municipality or city. In some statutes of the cities, the establishment of a safety body is foreseen and defined in advance. Thus, the Statute of the City of Novi Sad[5] defines establishment of a Council for Public Order and Security, as a working body at the Assembly. In some other cities (Novi Pazar, Kragujevac, Belgrade), there is no explicit possibility for the establishment of a safety working body (Djordjević & Radovanović, 2014). However, there is a possibility that the City Assembly will establish permanent or interim working bodies. The City Assembly's Rules of Procedure further operationalize the organization and operation of such bodies.

Another possibility is that the president of the municipality establishes the working bodies, which are necessary for the functioning of the municipal administration. The Law on Local Self-Government does not provide for direct competence, or the possibility for the president of the municipality to form such bodies, but it establishes that the president can perform the tasks prescribed by the Municipal Statute or other act.[6] This means that municipalities can also assign additional powers to the president, including the formation of working bodies. For example, in Čukarica, the president of the municipality has the authority to establish commissions and other bodies necessary for more efficient functioning of the municipal administration, in accordance with the law and the Statute. In the municipality of Alibunar, the president can establish expert working bodies responsible for certain tasks within his competence (Djordjević & Radovanović, 2014: 24).

Due to the fact that the possibility of establishing and definition of the form of security council is left to each local community individually, and not to the law, there is no single method of establishment, but the modalities of founding of councils vary. Differences in the establishment of the council essentially arise from whether it is established by the legislative authority or executive power. In case it is established by the legislative authority, or as a working body of the Municipal Assembly, the Assembly shall pass a decision on its establishment. And vice versa, if it is established at the executive branch, then the executive authorities, the president of the municipality or the municipal council, make a decision on his education.

The practice shows that the council can be established as a temporary working body with a limited mandate or as a permanent working body. If the council is established as a temporary working body, it is desirable that its mandate lasts for at least 5 years in order to ensure the continuity of this body and after regular local elections. Choosing the modality of establishing a security council should be guided by the opportunities and needs of the local community, and the institutional mechanism that will be most efficient and most rational in meeting the goal should be chosen (Bjeloš et al., 2011: 10).

Composition. Members of Security Council include different stakeholders that are interested in resolving community security issues. The composition of the Local Security Council is not the same in all municipalities and cities, and there are some differences that are primar-

5 Čl. 26, Statut Grada Novog Sada, „Sl. list Grada Novog Sada", br. 30/2008.
6 Čl. 44, Zakon o lokalnoj samoupravi, „Sl. glasnik RS", br. 129/2007 i 83/2014 – dr. zakon.

ily reflected in the number of members and the functions they perform. Nevertheless, in spite of the existence of certain differences, it is possible to determine the minimum of representatives of the local community who are common to the councils in all places. These are: the mayor of the municipality/mayor, the chief of the police administration or the commander of the police station, representatives of municipal bodies, presidents of local communities, representatives of the Municipal Court, social, health and inspection services, educational institutions, non-governmental sector, owners of local companies and representatives of the local community who reflect ethnic composition of this community.

Current situation. According to the results of the conducted research on the establishment and functioning of local security councils in Serbia (Bjeloš et al., 2011; Djordjević & Radovanović, 2014), the composition and structure of the existing LSCs is not the same in all municipalities and cities in Serbia. Differences in composition exist, depending on security problems in the territory of local self-government. Thus, the various actors involved in improving community safety are included in the council. They are most often the representatives of local self-government, who establish LSC, and police administrations, or stations, social protection institutions and health institutions.

Local authorities have a key role in the work of the LSC, since they founded them and should govern their activities. The assessment is that police representatives participate in all LSCs, which are currently established. This was confirmed through interviews and consultations with the representatives of local self-government and police (Djordjević & Radovanović, 2014), then follow the representatives of social welfare institutions (89.4%) and health workers (84.2%).

This order is also logical due to the main security problems that local self-governments most often face: domestic violence and drug abuse, according to the representatives of municipalities and cities in Serbia and the police. After that, the highest is the percentage of the representatives of schools (68.4%) and judicial authorities – prosecutors' offices and courts (63.15%). In some cities in Serbia, the army (Pčinj District) is also involved. Golubac planned to include the deputy commander of the police station, the misdemeanour judge, the representative of prosecutor's office (from Gradiste, since there is no prosecutor's office in Golubac), and the representatives of the elementary schools and the Centre for Social Work. In Paracin, in addition to the mentioned institutions, they consider it necessary to include the representatives of all political parties.

The manuals for the work of local advisory bodies on security, or crime prevention, mainly suggest the stated composition of the councils.[7] By deciding on the establishment of LSC, it is not necessary to limit the composition, but to leave the possibility of involving those actors who can help solve a particular problem, which was not planned when it was formed. The number of council members should not exceed 15, due to the efficient functioning of the council. Practice shows that security councils in different municipalities and cities in Serbia usually have from 10 to 15 members (Bjeloš i dr., 2011).

In case there are more than 15 members, it is necessary to divide them into working groups. In some municipalities and towns (Becej, Leskovac, Bujanovac) in Serbia, security councils are divided into working groups, depending on security issues and local government priorities. Thus in Becej there are working groups for general (anthropological) prevention, technical prevention, community policing,[8] and 11 working groups were formed in Lesko-

7 For example, the composition of the Croatian Crime Prevention Councils is similar to that of the LSB in Serbia. Police representatives are involved, along with contact police officers, whose number is currently more than 700. Representatives of schools, social and health care institutions, minority groups, youth associations and civil society organizations are involved.

8 Odluka o imenovanju članova radnih grupa Opštinskog saveta za bezbednost, Opština Bečej, 12. decembar 2010. god.

vac.[9] In operational terms, division into working groups can greatly accelerate the work of the LSC. However, it is always necessary to keep in mind that the establishment of new working groups does not make the LSC work unclear. The focus of the LSB should always be to solve the security problem (Djordjević & Radovanović, 2014).

ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF LOCAL SECURITY

One of the basic tasks of LSC is the analysis of the state of security in the local community. The analysis should be based on the collection and assessment of all available data, as well as on identifying the problems affecting citizens' safety and determining priorities. The assessment of local security is a description of the state of security in the community obtained through a process that involves the analysis of key members of the local community, then collecting and analysing data on issues related to security and citizens' sense of security, as well as making conclusions based on data analysis and proposing measures for problem solving. Assessing local security helps the security council better understand the problems citizens face and the issues that matter to them. Therefore, for a successful assessment of local security, it is important to consult citizens about the reasons and consequences of their concerns.

LOCAL SECURITY ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY - SARA MODEL

In the practice of solving security problems at the local level, the most commonly used is the SARA model, which is used for determining security problems and taking measures for their long-term elimination. This model proved to be particularly useful in preventing crime and building a relationship between police and local actors. The SARA model was developed by the National Community Police Team in New Zealand. In addition to this model, the Crime Prevention Assessment Tool of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is also used.[10]

Within the SARA model, there are four phases: Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment.[11]

Model SARA, with key elements (issues, activity description, etc.), looks like this:

S.A.R.A.	
S	SCANING | Regular monitoring of the situation
A	ANALYSIS | Regular analysis of the situation
R	RESPONSE | Making appropriate recommendations and solutions
A	ASSESMENT | Assessment and evaluation of the achieved results

	Questions	Description

9 Odluka o osnivanju Saveta za bezbednost Grada Leskovca, „Sl. glasnik Grada Leskovca", br. 7/2011 i 17/2014.

10 http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/09-82502_Ebook.pdf. Accessed on May15, 2018.

11 http://www.saferworld.org.uk/CSS%20prirucnik%20-%20bos%20reduced. pdf. Accessed on May 15, 2018.

I. SCANING (collecting data about the situation in the local environment, regular monitoring of the situation)	What is the problem at the local level?	A detailed description of the problem that should include the behaviour of an individual or social group, as well as place and time.
	How is the community concerned by the problem?	Identify the actors who initiated the topic (individual, community, local self-government) and the frequency of security issues
	Are there other sources of knowledge about a community problem?	Gather additional information that will prove that the threat is real.
	Why is the security issue a threat?	Determine specificities (cost, cost, vision) that distinguish the security problem from others
	Who is responsible for causing the security problem?	There are many players who should solve the security problem, but the culprit is mostly one.

	Questions	**Description**
II. ANALYSIS (processing of the collected data for the purpose of making the hypothesis about the cause of problems and modeling solutions, regular analysis of the situation	Who?	Determine and understand the behavior of the subject and his/her motives, that led to appearance of security problem, or so called the analysis of environmental actors.
	What?	Processing the collected data to determine the causes, types and consequences of a security problem
	When?	Understand the correct moment that led to appearance of the security problem.
	Why?	Compare the behavior of the subjects that have caused the security problem and determine the basic characteristics for the given community.
	Where?	Determine why this local community is different from the others.
	How?	Overview of possible solutions along with their constraints when applied to a local community

	Questions	**Description**

III. RESPONSE (drafting appropriate recommendations and solutions)	What do you want to achieve?	Determine the initial and final desired goal that you want to achieve by applying the action.
	How to choose the right solution?	Find ways in which similar local security issues have been resolved by other local communities to determine costs and to choose between offered alternatives in accordance with material and human resources.
	Have some actions already been implemented?	Identify past activities in a local community that had a positive or negative outcome.
	Who is responsible?	Based on the plan, select the responsible and responsible for implementation on the basis of the appropriate criteria. In the end, the implementation of the plan.
	Questions	**Description**
IV. ASSESSMENT (evaluating the results achieved)	Have all the goals been achieved?	Measuring results of activities.
	What kind of activities have been implemented and which are not?	Collecting data on the results of the activity and determining the reason for the non-realization of some of them.
	Have all the actors carried out the given activities?	Collecting data on the activities of the involved actors in the local community and the assessment of their impact.
	What activities should be undertaken in the future?	Based on the evaluation of the activities, the conclusion about the extension of the activity should be carried out.

CONCLUSION

In general, the safety assessment is carried out on a monthly basis, during the meetings where the representatives of the police and local self-government are most often involved. This means that there is no strategic consideration of the solution to security problems. During meetings the problems are recognized that affect citizens' safety and define priorities. It often happens that the police and local self-government do not have the same position on the security priority.

Research findings suggest that the SARA model is not used as part of the work of local safety councils. At the same time, the analysis of the state of security in the area of municipalities in Serbia does not have a gender dimension. This means that gender aspects are not

recognized, that is, the different influences and consequences that the security challenges and phenomena have on boys and girls, that is, women and men.

In other words, if the quality and effectiveness of the implementation of the concept of community policing in Serbia is measured, among other things, by the quality and efficiency of the work and functioning of local safety councils, then one can ask if the realization of this concept remains only at the level of "social experiment" or mere promises given in the process of joining the European Union.

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