Privacy, Public Life and Security Technologies
An Urban Perspective

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Privacy, Public Life, Security

- Privacy is a societal value
- Relation between privacy and public life has subtly changed
- Amount of generated personal data has skyrocketed
- More careless handling of personal information
- Most of these phenomena take place in urban settings
- Vulnerability for terrorists attacks is a main driving force for diffusion and adoption of security technologies
- Nevertheless security technologies aim at combating crime in general

Security Expenditures in Germany

- Federal expenditures: 3.5 billion Euro (2008)
- Federal Criminal Police Office: 13% on ICT (2008)
- Electronic safety features and equipment market volume: 2.3 billion Euro (2006)

Safety and Security Features and Equipment in Urban Areas

- Information systems
- Expert systems
- Workflow management systems
- Help systems
- Monitoring networks
- GIS applications
- Data mining
- Augmented reality
- Ubiquitous computing

ICT Supported Security Technologies
Video surveillance

- No attempt to establish a nationwide surveillance scheme
- Video surveillance activities should be restricted to crime hotspots
- German Federal Constitutional Court decided that CCTV schemes are not allowed if this infringes the right of personal information of persons randomly passing monitored areas

ICT Supported Security Technologies
Biometric access systems

- Integrating biometric data in identification documents and using biometric traits for identification and access control
- Number of operational biometric ID systems in Europe increased from around 8,500 (1996) to over 150,000 (2004)
- Using several kinds of biometrics multiplies privacy problems

ICT Supported Security Technologies
RFID

- Microchip technology which enables contact-free data transfer
- Recognize objects, authenticate documents and commercial goods, optimize processes, i.e. automate logistics, support access control and track vehicles and monitor the environment
- Threats concerning privacy: tracking and profiling, personal related tags, tag presence spotting, combination of tag information, following a unique ID

Technological-Organizational Convergence in an Urban Setting

- Combination of a range of technologies
  - Development of complex identification, entry and surveillance systems and multiplying the risks concerning privacy
- Economic changes (e.g. drop-off in prices of computer memory)
- Technological developments (e.g. higher capacity of storage media)
  - Storing and managing data is easier
- Storing information without specific justification or purpose is becoming an increasingly popular precautionary measure
- The public is more inclined to allow their personal data to be filed
  - Ex post access to data which was originally gathered for different purposes
  - Attempts to balance privacy and security should focus across applications

Cities as unsafe places

- „Unmanageable areas“ suspected of harbouring security threats
- Perceived safety of a certain location seems to become a locational factor

➢ Privacy issues are weighed up against the necessity to create safe urban environments

„Fortification“ of cities

- Step-by-step introduction of security measures, security technologies and architectural features which promote safety:
  - Public and investors begin to pay more attention to what happens around
  - Informal surveillance system
  - Upgraded security technology
  - Tightened regulations controlling activities in public places
  - Construction of fences, barricades and gates

➢ Fundamental fortification constitutes a massive infringement in privacy issues

➢ Appropriate implementation may help to minimize interventions in urban structures („intelligence instead of cocrete“)

„Archipelagos“ of safety

- Categorization of urban spaces according to their level of security
- „Undefined areas“ labelled as unsafe
- Technological surveillance supports increased entry restrictions
- Technological surveillance individualizes access regulations („software-sorted geographies“)
- Transformation of the nature of public spaces

➢ As the boundaries between public and private sphere blur the need for appropriate privacy regulations increases

Conclusion

- Security technology is either demonized or uncritically espoused
- Potential benefits and risks of security technology have hardly ever been evaluated in specific contexts
- Urban security regimes are developing - more in response to events and ad hoc security demands than as well thought-out, integrative programmes

➢ Not bargaining privacy for access to public places, to participate in public life and to make cities and towns safe

➢ Balancing privacy, public life and security

Further Information

http://www.difu.de/extranet/edoc.php?id=N403LKI7

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