

Experiences with the Greek CCTV approach and citizens' perspectives

Lilian Mitrou, Associate Professor
University of the Aegean
Center for Security Studies (KEMEA)
Greece

CCTV as routine

- ⚡ **No more an exceptional or occasional phenomenon:** Increasingly common in spaces dedicated to public transport, public gatherings/ assemblies, public areas and shopping centres but also small shops, schools, playgrounds...
- ⚡ CCTV regarded as a "**panacea**" - to "promptly deal with security concerns".
- ⚡ Perceived more as **ad hoc "safety and security tool"** for "protection" and "crime prevention and enforcement" and **less as a form of surveillance.**
- ⚡ *Routinisation of CCTV influences **trade-off argumentation** as well as the **perception of proportionality** (legitimate, necessary, proportional, transparent?)*

A Short History of CCTV in Greece/1

- **2004** -The **first massive use** of CCTV systems in public places was related to the **security challenges of Athens Olympic Games**
- **After 2004**- Request for the **extension of the processing purposes**, the scope, the activities and the targets. In 2005 the **DPA** has permitted the **use only for the primary purpose of “traffic management “**
- **2008**- **Extending CCTV uses** for the “**revelation of essential truth”** and the “**punishment of crime”** “...a value of constitutional statute” higher than data protection which is to be guaranteed only “if manifested through a legal activity....”.
- **Abolition of the competence of the DPA** to supervise data processing via CCTV by law enforcement authorities for the purposes of state security, defense and public safety

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A Short History of CCTV in Greece/2

- **2011**- A **more specific legal ground** for the use of the CCTV in public places
 - for the protection of national defense, democratic regime, prevention and prosecution of crimes related to a threat to public order, crimes concerning property, drugs etc, traffic control)
- **Emphasis on proportionality**
- ..to be specified and entered into force by issuing a “**presidential decree”** which is still missing

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Privacy in public and security

- Privacy in public is accepted by jurisprudence and legal theory
- Video-monitoring as **implication with fundamental freedoms** and the right to free development of participation to social and political activities
- Security is accepted as **restriction to fundamental rights** and as resultant of the **demand for the state to undertake positive obligations and actions** for the protection of rights such right to life, ownership, personality
- The “right to security”, does not have a distinct, self-existent *ground* in the Greek Constitution

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Statistics

- (Greek) Survey of 2007 : **Only one in three respondents** said that they **feel CCTV systems intrude** more than they protect
- Greeks were in favour of CCTV systems use in banks (92%), football stadiums (87%), public services buildings (71%), streets in towns' centers (67%), shops (66%), schools (59%), universities (53%), parks and squares (51%) και public transport (50%).

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PACT Survey

- ✦ **Travel survey** : respondents were asked to consider scenarios relating to the presence of CCTV cameras in metro and public transport stations.
- ✦ In contrast to all other countries respondents from Greece prefer **unarmed police personnel** and **reject the idea of private personnel**
- ✦ Contrary to the preferences in most EU27 countries, respondents in Greece indicate a **strong disinclination for storage of CCTV data, preferring real-time monitoring**

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History and Privacy Perception

- ✦ Citizens are influenced by a multitude of factors. Privacy and security may be experienced differently in different political and socio-cultural contexts
- ✦ A “**negative surveillance culture** : Popular sensitivity and vigilance **against any state monitoring and filling.**
- ✦ Due –among other parameters – to **experiences from repressive state surveillance in the recent history** (civil conflicts/wars/ dictatorships)

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Watching but not “filing”

- ✦ However the **main problem is not watching** (*parakolouthisi*) (i.e., “face- to-face surveillance”) **but “filing”** (“*fakeloma*”) of personal data
- ✦ **Importance of (lack of) Trust - Mistrust** towards even **legitimate “institutional surveillance”**
- ✦ To discuss the **role of historical/social context in determining societal impact as well as privacy impact**

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Tolerance towards private CCTV systems

- ✦ Greeks are generally **unconcerned with non-state, private** video surveillance and data collection
- ✦ A kind of “**privacy paradox**” ? Disregarding of private videosurveillance “fits well into a society where most things are marketable” (G. Marx, 2013)
- ✦ **Driving force of technology:** Availability of cheap systems and intensive use
 - change slightly but steadily the social perception of what is acceptable or excessive in relation to security measures,
 - Influence inevitably the regulatory content of core principles such as the principle of proportionality

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A “function creep”

- Information gained through **privately deployed CCTV** systems is **increasingly placed at the disposal of the State**
- We witness a **gradual but regular** (and apparently acceptable by citizens) “**function creep**”
- a system of “**distributed surveillance**” by folding private organizations into a government’s surveillance network thus allowing the state to overcome the practical limits on its resources

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Crisis and CCTV

- Public fears about property and violent crime** appear to have risen dramatically
- Concerns expressed about the **relationship between economic crisis and lawbreaking/ political violence**
- Tolerance and/or acceptance of CCTV mirror risk perceptions and fears and the sense that “**somebody has to look after you**”
- A *symbol of “safety”* in a society in which almost everything is seen as a potential source of risk!

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Some concluding thoughts/1

- CCTV as **symbol of surveillance and safety**
- Public perceptions of security and privacy can be politically emotive and thus mixed up in **dominant political discourses**
- Cultural/Societal characteristics determine
 - the level of privacy concerns.
 - the way and level of awareness and “stakeholders’ capacity”
 - the way and level of involvement in public debate and decision making

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Some concluding thoughts/2

- ⚡ Definition of “public” especially in societies in crisis with contrasts, contradictions and conflicts?
- ⚡ Impacts of surveillance differ widely: different social groups identify and value privacy and security in different ways
- ⚡ Contradictions and inconsistencies concerning the perception of surveillance reflect exactly the controversies, conflicts and expectations that spread and tantalize the Greek society

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