

Title: (II)legal organisations in the rural idyll

Rural crime is rising inexorably across Europe and beyond. A leading rural insurer in the UK estimates that rural crime cost the UK £49.9m (€60.1m) in 2018. It is a common misconception that rural areas are a crime free idyll. In reality, rural crime is evolving rapidly making crime prevention increasingly difficult. With Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) targeting rural communities in an ever more business-like, market driven manner, how can rural communities, the police, and victim services aid each other to become more agile in their response to this ever-increasing issue.

At the same time, the countryside is the scene of the rapid growth of crime prevention initiatives such as community alert groups, community-wide CCTV systems or Facebook pages where anxious rural communities share information about suspicious activity in their village. While those initiatives can be seen as a direct response to the problem of crime, research from Ireland suggests that they are often related more to the fear of crime than the crime itself as they are present in rural communities regardless of their level of victimisation. Therefore, rural safety requires a nuanced approach as it is affected by issues such as crime, fear of crime, rural isolation, lack of services, access to police or state interventions, and community mobilisation.

This panel aims to address the roles of legal and illegal organisations in shaping the sphere of rural security.

This session welcomes abstracts that explore any of the following issues:

1. The role that legal organisations such as the police, victim services, rural community groups play in tackling crime and insecurities in rural communities.
2. How Organised Crime Groups are using those rural communities to advance their own illegal enterprises;
3. The role of rural communities in both legal and illegal organisations;
4. Interactions between such illegal organisations and legal organisations
5. Rural crime prevention initiatives – issues and challenges;
6. Marginalised communities: victims or offenders; and
7. An international perspective on any of these, or other related issues are welcomed.

Session organisers

Dr Kreseda Smith, Harper Adams University
Mr Artur Pytlarz, Technological University Dublin

Instructions for prospective presenters

If you would like to propose a paper presentation, please send abstracts of up to 250 words to Kreseda Smith, kresedasmith@harper-adams.ac.uk and Artur Pytlarz, D13122709@mytudublin.ie by Friday 27th March 2020.

Call for papers deadline

27th March 2020