

“The violent crime in the 21st century”, *Conference organized by Hellenic Society of Criminology, 13-14 January 2017, Athens Greece*

On 13th and 14th of January 2017, the Hellenic Society of Criminology held a conference entitled “The violent crime in the 21st century”. The conference took place in Athens, at the premises of the publishing company Nomiki Bibliothiki. Many experts in Criminology and relevant sciences participated during the five sessions of the conference. The Scientific Committee consisted of the members of the Executive Board of the Society, while the members of its Youth Action Team comprised the organizing committee.

More specifically, the conference began with the opening speech of Aliki Giotopoulou-Marangopoulou, Emeritus Professor in Criminology at Panteion University and President of Marangopoulos Foundation of Human Rights. In addition to that, the President of the Hellenic Society of Criminology Emeritus Professor in Criminology at Panteion University Jackques Farsedakis presented some greetings. Etychios Fytrakis, the General Secretariat of Anti-Criminal Policy at the Greek Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights, extended his greetings too. The first session (entitled “About violence”) focused on different and general aspects regarding the phenomenology of the violent crime, its causes and possible ways of combating it. In particular, Emeritus Professor Farsedakis, as well as Emeritus Professor Ioannis Panousis, set out the core introductory remarks on the general nature of violence. During the following, Professor in Criminology at Panteion University Christina Zarafonitou and Dr. Anastasia Chalkia presented the empirical study that was carried out in order to explore the attitudes of Greek university students towards violent crime, in comparison with the relevant attitudes of pupils (juvenile prisoners) in the special youth detention facility of Avlonas (the research was conducted in terms of the Postgraduate Course in criminology at Panteion University in the special youth detention facility and was scientifically edited by Professor Zarafonitou). The first session was concluded with the Assistant Professor in Criminology at Panteion University Vasiliki Vlachou presenting the points of convergence among the legislative initiatives for dealing with the violent crime and defending the civil fundamental needs.

During the second session, the scientific discussion dealt with cybercrime and terrorism. Dimitra Sorvatzioti, Assistant Professor in Criminal Law and Criminology at University of Nicosia, focused on the role of penalty as combating and preventing measure against the phenomenon of terrorism, while Police Officers Anastasios Papathanasiou and George Germenos presented criminal offences that take place in the deep-web. Then, the Political Scientist and PhD Candidate in Criminology at Panteion University Dora Giannaki presented the role of criminology in interpreting the phenomenon of violent youth radicalization; finally, Theoni Spathi, PhD Candidate at the Law School of National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, focused on cyberbullying as a special form of cybercrime.

The next sessions have dealt with different aspects of violent crime, and the different ways to tackle it. At the beginning, Nestor Courakis, Emeritus Professor in Criminology and Penology and National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, presented some introductory remarks in relation to *crimes of passion*, focusing on the conditions that facilitate such crimes, offenders’ behavior after and before committing the offence and on how the criminal justice system agen-

cies deal with the phenomenon. Then, Dr. Fotini Milioni pointed out the *role of the community in tackling the domestic violence cases*. The next presentations dealt with sex offending; in particular, Dr. Ioannis Tzivaras presented a paper on *secondary victimization of sexually abused victims in the international criminal justice system*, while Dr. Konstantinos Panagos presented a comparative study on the social control of the sexual violence among prisoners in the USA and European jurisdictions in light of the modern criminal justice policies. Finally, Forensic Psychologist Erato-Maria Ioannidou pointed out that Hellenic Police psychologist's role in preventing and combating the sexual victimization of the minors on the Internet, while the Ret. Police Major General of the Hellenic Police and Professor of Policing at Open University of Cyprus Dr. Evangelos Stergioulis presented *the murder of Stephen Lawrence (1993) in the United Kingdom and its impact on the organization of the Metropolitan Police of London*. The session was concluded with three contributions, in relation to the explanation and prevention of the violent crime in light of the environmental criminology (presented by Dr. Apostolos Perperis), the historical development of the social attitudes towards sexual violence (presented by Elena Savva, PhD Candidate in Criminology at Panteion University) and the psychotherapist's role in recovering from rape trauma (presented by Psychologist and Postgraduate Student in Criminology Olga Tzouramani).

Following the tradition, at the end of the first day, the Hellenic Society of Criminology awarded the best theses written by postgraduate students in Greek universities during the previous academic year. The price was awarded to Mr. Eleftherios Karzis, alumni of the Postgraduate Program in Criminology of Panteion University, for his thesis entitled: *"The role of geographical profiling in dealing with recidivists"*. Furthermore, Mrs. Stamatia Malarndri received an honorary mention for her thesis entitled *"The child abuse in contemporary Greece: Methodological points concerning the study of this phenomenon"*.

The fourth session took place on Saturday morning the January 14th, and has dealt with a wider range of violent crimes. Athanasios Douzenis, Associate Professor in Forensic Medicine at the School of Medicine at National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, presented on the connection of violence with the most severe mental disorders, as well as, Christos Tsouramanis, Emeritus Professor in Criminology at TEI of West Greece, reviewed empirical studies that point out the contribution of brain dysfunctions in committing violent crimes. Then, Effi Lambropoulou, Professor in Criminology at Panteion University, and Stella Aggeli, PhD Candidate at the same University, focused on organized violence in contemporary armed conflicts, and the Police Officer Vasiliki Sergianni paid attention to the 'imported' violent organized crimes against property in modern Greece. Finally, Dr. Fotios Spyropoulos presented the legal framework of bullying giving special emphasis on the amendment of article 312 of the Greek Penal Code by the article 8 of Law 4322/2015, while Euaggelos Chainas, PhD Candidate in Criminology at Panteion University, highlighted the forms and explanation of violence in sport facilities.

The last session focused on policy issues against violence from the perspective of the police officers, lawyers and experts in criminal justice proceedings. In particular, the Director of the Forensic Investigation Division at the Hellenic Police Pinelopi Miniati paid attention to *the contribution of the applied criminology to solving violent crimes*, while its Director George Papaprodromou focused on *the role of the Computer Crimes Unit of Greek Police in preventing and combating cybercrime*. Following that, George Chassapis, MA in Criminology and Police Officer, focused on *the criminological training of police officers in dealing with violent crimes*, while ex Police Officer Dr. George Papakonstantis presented the *particularities of illegal carrying weapons in Crete*. During the last session, Dr. Eudoxia Fassoula, Forensic Graphologist, highlighted the *contribution of*

graphology to the evaluation of the graphic tracks of the violent crimes and offenders. Moreover, Mr. Dimitrios Papadimitropoulos, Barrister and Associate Professor at the Greek Police Academy, underlined the practical issues that a lawyer has to deal with, when defending victims of domestic violence. At the end of the last session, the General Secretariat of the Hellenic Society of Criminology, Professor Zarafonitou, summarised the main conclusions of the presentations, underlining the submitted proposals for addressing the general phenomenon of violence in Greece.

The conference was concluded by the President's final speech, with Emeritus Professor Farsedakis underlining the need for organizing more relevant events in the future. The warm response of the scientific and student community and of the general public, as well, went beyond any expectation. The conference program can be found at the official website of the Society (www.hscriminology.gr), and the presentations are about to be published in the scientific journal "Criminology", which is issued by Nomiki Bibliothiki Publications.

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Conference on research on the Refugee - Immigrant Issue Regarding the Attitude and Perceptions of the Local Society of Mytilene,

16 June 2016, Mytilene, Greece

Since 2015, the North Aegean islands situated in Greece, and Lesbos in particular, have been hosting mass refugee and migration flows, consisting the main gateway into Europe for fluxes of people fleeing war and poverty amid the ongoing humanitarian crisis. The lack of basic infrastructure and the time-consuming processes of screening refugees and granting the claimed asylum, among other factors, escalate the matter not only among refugees but as far as the local society is concerned as well.

The Department of Sociology of the University of the Aegean taking into consideration the existing social changes and recognizing the intensity of recent refugee and migratory displacement, conducted extensive, primary statistical research during the period April-May 2016. The goal of the study undertaken was to examine the sociological aspects of the major repercussions, which were manifested by the refugee-immigrant phenomenon in the island of Lesbos, where the Department of Sociology of the University of the Aegean is located. More specifically, the scope of the study was to explore the views and attitudes of the local society of Mytilene regarding the refugee-immigrant issue and the way it has affected everyday life. Overall, the research questions addressed specify the impact of mass arrivals on local population, the effect on tourism, the prospects of tackling or perpetuating the problem in addition to the possible means for alleviating it.

The study adhered to the educational needs of the Postgraduate Programs of the Department of Sociology of the University of the Aegean for the academic year 2015-2016, namely "European Societies and European Integration" and "Social Research on Regional Development and

Social Cohesion". In order to ensure means, use tools and expertise, which were indispensable for the accomplishment of this relatively large-scale research, the contribution of the laboratory "Social Informatics, Statistics and Research Infrastructure" is pinpointed.

Research findings were presented in the Conference titled "Research on the refugee - immigrant issue regarding the attitude and perceptions of the local society of Mytilene", which was held on the 16th of June 2016 at the University of the Aegean in Mytilene. It should be stressed that representatives of the Academic Community as well as local government agencies attended the Conference.

The opening speech for the Conference was given by the Chairman of the Department of Sociology and Scientific Coordinator and Principal Researcher, Professor Kostas Rontos, followed by the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Professor Panagiotis Grigoriou, the Directors of the above mentioned Postgraduate Study Programs, Associate Professor Michalis Psimitis and Professor Ioannis Kallas, as well as Associate Professor Nikos Nagopoulos, who himself participated in the research as well.

In Session A of the Conference chaired by Associate Professor Michalis Psimitis, the research design and structure were presented by Professor Kostas Rontos and Associate Professor Nikos Nagopoulos. In particular, Professor Kostas Rontos analyzed the research objectives and the employed methodology. The survey was carried out in the municipal district of Mytilene with the aim to record the beliefs about the refugee-immigrant issue and the way it has affected daily life. The fieldwork was undertaken during the months April-May 2016 concerning a sample of 697 inhabitants, which were all above 18 years old. The questionnaire consisted of 46 questions broken down into six thematic sections, which namely are the comprehension of the problem, the effect on local population and the island's economy, the behavior of local society towards the phenomenon, the perceptions about agencies involved, the prospects for solving the problem, as well as the collection of demographic and social data. Apart from closed-ended questions, the questionnaire also included open-ended questions for further qualitative analysis so as to deeply investigate the root causes and the consequences of the phenomenon. Research results were based on quantitative analysis, whereas the sampling error was estimated to range between 2.1% and 4.5%.

Therefore, a fundamental research question was raised concerning the way in which the island's residents perceived this volatile situation as they experienced its implications first-hand. In order to deal with issues arising from mass refugee and migration flows in host countries, local residents play a critical role mainly in areas that are entrance gates. In addition, with the institutional recognition and service delivery on behalf of the host State, the role of civil society itself is becoming even more important for a substantial, effective and smooth integration at different levels of organizing social life. Further on, it is argued, as is often attempted when analyzing the results of this research, that the views of local people do not remain steadfast. On the contrary, at crucial questions at least, they are varying and affected mainly by the degree of active presence of State structures and bodies in matters of institutional and legal protection in order to facilitate further policy interventions in the sectors of social care and inclusion.

Associate Professor Nikos Nagopoulos pointed out that due to the seriousness of the issue and the immediate social consequences caused, the attitude of local community is of major importance, not only for managing impressions, but also for the purpose of shaping and implementing policies concerning the immigrant-refugee issue. The perceptions and intention of local society determine in a decisive way the effectiveness of integration policy measures that

are imposed by the State, as well as the success of certain integration programs that are put into public consultation. Research results in this case are essential for outlining distinct parameters of the problem, which are not widely known and express the collective will.

In addition, the utilization of certain data targets at the dissolution of presumably false impressions and misconceived conclusions concerning the attitudes of local population towards immigrants and refugees. Furthermore, the research interest is expanded in order to designate the correct dimensions of the matter that is related to concepts and views, which were presented by the intervention of mass media. Therefore, highlighting in the best possible objective way the issue in question— when the related results arise from valid and reliable research methods – may determine the placement and assessment of the various aspects in the right direction and at the same time search for policy solutions at the micro level at least. In order to reach policy conclusions, it is alleged that it is necessary to investigate the degree of recognizing the problem and the special characteristics of groups along with the acceptance of cultural diversity as the basic and non-negotiable democratic principle and inextricable condition of integration policies. In the spirit of tolerance, the conduct of this research is expected to facilitate policies related to social protection and social rights as well as pertinent policies that ensure social cohesion in local communities and provide a sense of security for inhabitants.

In Session B of the Conference chaired by Professor Ioannis Kallas, some key research findings were emphasized by the Collaborator of the Department of Sociology, Nikolaos Panagos, and the postgraduate students. More extensively, the presented research results established the decrease of Mytilene's inhabitants income. The 52.9% of the population is classified in the clusters 401-800 and 801-1200€, whereas 87.2% gains less than 1.200€. The population that earns no income accounts for 20.7% of the aforementioned percentage. Only 2.1% of respondents stated income more than 2.000€. These outcomes illustrate the effects of the extensive economic crisis that the study area is undergoing as part of the widespread recession prevailing in Greece.

According to 33.09% and 19.45% of local population the greatest responsibility for the refugee-immigrant issue is attributed to the United States of America and the European Union in conjunction with the adopted policies respectively, whereas 17.85% of respondents focused on the extremist action of Jihad. In addition, approximately 10.75% of the population considers that Turkey is mainly responsible for the refugee-immigrant issue, especially due to "facilitating" their access towards Greece.

On the other hand, the answers about the responsibility for the exacerbation of the refugee-immigrant phenomenon over the past few months are differentiated as compared to the previous question. The majority of the population (28%) considers that Turkey is mainly responsible for the increase in the incoming waves of refugees-immigrants followed by the European Union (20%), Jihad (16.7%) and the United States of America (13.5%).

Moreover, the sympathy of the local population towards refugees is apparent, as 82.9% faces with at least enough sympathy their plight. Furthermore, the respondents at a significant proportion (61.6%) feel that public goods or values are threatened because of refugee and immigrant hordes.

Finally, in the selective outline of research results the positive evaluation of the Coast Guard is featured on regarding its efficiency in manipulating the problem gaining median score 9 on the 1 (totally non efficient confrontation) to 10 (totally efficient confrontation) scale. It is characteristic that the Coast Guard is graded with 10 by 48.8% of the population, whereas 76.7% of responses fall between 7 and 10.

All stakeholders concluded that sustaining and advancing this research effort through the use of more complex statistical and qualitative techniques, will further give prominence to the issue at stake, so that the selected quantitative data may be enriched, expanded and be made eligible for continuous monitoring of the phenomenon and the emergence of new strands of research as conditions are rapidly changing together with the views and positions of citizens. The dissemination of research findings will include the publication of special issue, regular publications and the organization of scientific events that may lead relevant discussions in the field with the contribution of the University of the Aegean and local authorities, such as the Region of North Aegean, the Municipality of Mytilene and the Chamber of Lesvos.

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