CONTEMPORARY ASPECTS OF SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL CARRIED OUT BY TECHNICAL SECURITY

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Abstract

The private security has developed significantly throughout the world in the past few decades. The technical security has also flourished, bringing new technologies of surveillance and control that became the landmarks of our security everyday life. Various systems of video surveillance, alarm systems and access control systems have overwhelmed the private households, commercial objects as well as almost every public building. The security science, sociology and philosophy scholars have already accepted and widely used the new term of banopticon, coined by the French scholar Didier Bigo. In actual fact, this term is intended to explain that contemporary technical private security has become symbol of a new powerful surveillance and control mechanism that functions in a way of keeping the people who have not authorization to enter to a certain secured place out of that place. In some wider scientific context, the term banopticon has been different from the terms panopticon and synopticon, used tremendously by the scientific scholars for some other aspects of surveillance and control. The term banopticon is interesting because it has been widely associated with the growth and development of private security, especially technical private security. Within this paper we'll analyse the meaning and importance of this term in the contemporary private security debates as well as in the contemporary Macedonian private security context. The paper will also point to some human and ethical dilemmas of usage of the technical private security in securing certain persons, objects and places. Considering this, the author of the paper will give some proposals and recommendations as to where and to what extent the use of technical private security

could be useful and where it could be considered controversial and interfere the sphere of ethics, humanism and basic human rights and freedoms.

Keywords: private security, technical security, surveillance, control, banopticon

1. Introduction

The private security is considered to be a phenomenon of contemporary way of living, penetrating our everyday lives with constant awareness about the present security risks around us and the urgent need to fight them on a daily basis. We are literary flooded with security risks everywhere around us since as it is well known and affirmed that we are living in a risk society and with culture of fear (Bek, 2001; Furedi, 1997). The proliferation of risks is caused by the dynamics of society and life, which is not stable at all, but intertwined with liquid relations, in an atmosphere that everything changes and is out of real control (Bauman, 2000: 2; Bauman, 1992). Probably, most stark evidence of the omnipresence of private security in our everyday existence is to be found in the realm of the technical private security and all sophisticated technical systems, devices and networks that comprise it. We are simply overwhelmed with the constant feeling of the imminent danger posed by security risks and the constant efforts of the private security industry to convince us in the inevitability of the private security omnipresence. This omnipresence is not so seen in the presence of the so called physical or manned security, but, more evidently, in the overall presence of technical security. Although the private security industry, its professionals and most of the scholars agree on the fact of inevitability of technical security in carrying out the preventive functions of private security, mostly associated with surveillance and control, at the same time, there are fairly grounded opinions, mostly coming from the scholars and some of private security professionals, who call for much more careful and restrained approach towards this sort of technical security omnipresence.

The first and most important goal of private security is to prevent the security risk from happening, i.e., to insure security environment where all security risks, threats and endangerments could be detected and prevented from happening. The private security could prevent security risks by using its various preventative strategies, measures and activities, which are mainly consisted of physical or technical security or

their combination. Although there can be no ideal substitution for physical (manned) security, in terms of its capabilities to detect, survey and control the security risks, nevertheless, technical security can, in many cases, substitute or complement the physical security. Considering the development of the private security so far, the technical security has proven to be quite helpful in prevention of different sorts of risks, threats and endangerments, especially those related with crime. Thus, the science and practice of private security has introduced numerous and various technical strategies, methods and means, which have affirmed their preventive role, by carrying out different preventive functions, mainly seen in surveillance and control. Also, the technical security has affirmed the so called proving function, which comprises the use of recorded materials in clarifying the crimes. All these positive functions of technical private security, coupled with the fear of crime as one of the reasons for the abrupt growth of technical security, have justified the unprecedented growth and development of the whole private security industry in the last few decades. So, nowadays, it is entirely normal and not unusual at all to be living in a security environment filled with sophisticated, numerous and various technical security systems and devices. Among them, those who perform surveillance and control functions of prevention are dominant, such as technical systems and devices for video surveillance, alarm and access control. The practical need for technical private security has also been theoretically grounded within the theories of so called secondary or situational prevention, mostly associated with secondary crime prevention.

However, we always have to keep in mind that there can be no ideal or absolute security, or, the tendency to attain maximum security always threatens some other human values, such as freedom. This, in some cases, could even lead to heightened feeling of insecurity, sometimes more problematic than real insecurity (Спасески, Аслимоски, Герасимоски С, 2008: 41). Or, as Zygmunt Bauman wisely puts, the more freedom we enjoy the less secure we are and vice versa. It seems that there has to be some kind of balance between them. Sadly, the contemporary way of living is one filled with constant, numerous and latent security risks, which makes us prone to increasing use of different security services, mostly associated with private security, and, within it, with technical security. This situation opens up a lot of dilemmas, predominantly ethical, social and human, since technical security systems, means and devices do not always follow strict legislation concerning the protection of privacy as they should (Даничић и Пилиповић, 2015: 211). Also, we must not forget that too much technology,

in one or another way, makes us more alienated and means fragmentation of our lives (Бауман, 2005: 338). We will try to give an overview of these dilemmas and concerns regarding the surveillance and control of technical private security and to give some answers and solutions on how they could be addressed and resolved. These dilemmas and concerns could be summarized within the following questions:

- How much technical security do we need?
- Is the omnipresence of technical security always indispensable?
- Is the very presence of technical private security proof of insecurity?
- Does the private security create fear of security?
- Does the technical security industry maintain and incite the need for security?
- Is it possible to find balance between freedom and security?
- Where is the usage of technical private security justified?
- Where the usage of technical private security could be reconsidered?

2. Surveillance and control between panopticon, synopticon and banopticon

In order to explain the nature of surveillance and control as crucial preventive functions of private security, we will discuss the three notions which will help us understand them better. All, of them came from security and social sciences and were part of some of the most profound ideas that shaped security, sociological and philosophical thought in the last decades of previous and first decades of this century. These three notions are panopticon, synopticon and banopticon.

The term panopticon was originally coined by British philosopher Jeremy Bentham, but was fully developed by the famous French philosopher and sociologist Michel Foucault. The very term panopticon was actually a kind of prison, which was firstly invented and explained by Jeremy Bentham, in which he explained the different technology of imprisonment that this kind of prison offered compared to the previously known prisons. The whole idea was that the punishment was shifted from the realm of physical punishment, to the realm of spiritual and social punishment. And, it was much more than punishment. The very essence of panopticon actually lied in the surveillance, control and power mechanism through which the discipline, control and power were
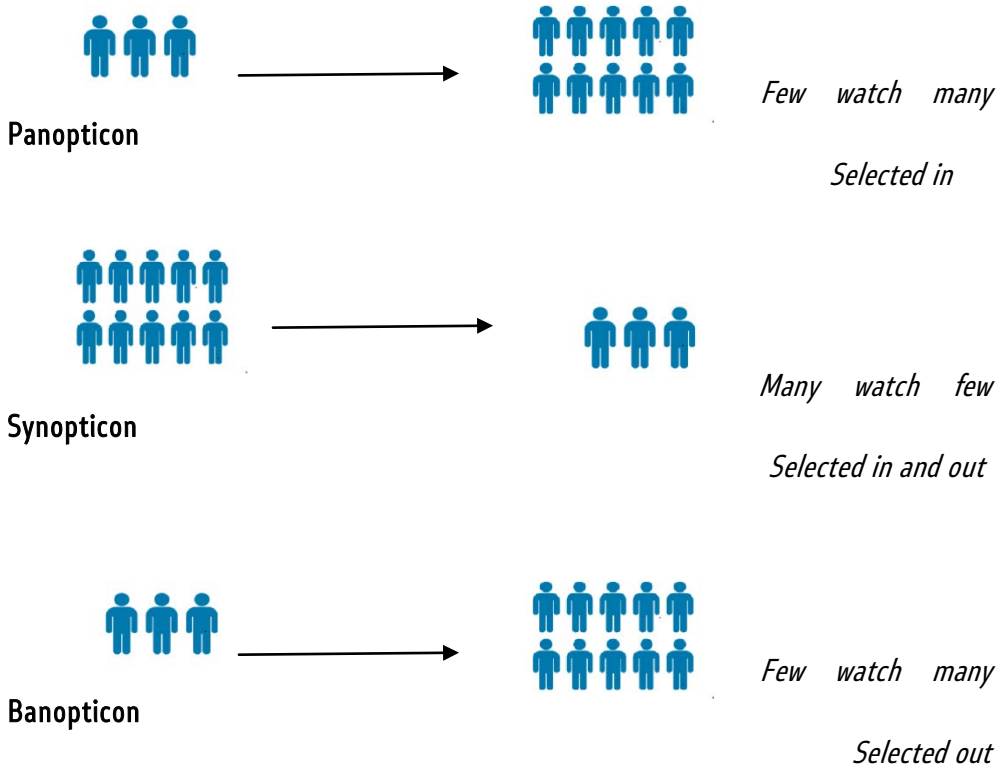
maintained and thus the prison authorities had full assurance that no prisoner would escape them. The whole concept was developed around the technology of watching, based on the idea that the guardians could always see what the prisoners were doing, while they could not be sure at any time where they were being watched and controlled or not. In other words, only watchers (guardians, surveyors) could watch others (prisoners), but, the others (prisoners) could not watch the watchers (guardians). The panopticon worked as a kind of order where to see and to be seen were split apart; the prisoners were fully visible, but they could not see whether they were watched over, and, on a contrary, the guardians could see and watch over the prisoners knowing that the prisoners do not know about them (Фуко, 2004: 208). Later on, Michel Foucault elaborated these ideas and used them to criticise the normalizing, hierarchical and disciplining mechanisms of modern state and society as being oppressive and effective way of getting obedience. Panopticon relied on usage of natural (human) surveillance and control as powerful tools for disciplining the soul instead of disciplining the body.

In the last decade of previous century, Danish political scientist Thomas Mathiesen, closely analysed the idea of panopticon, and subjected this notion to detail reconsideration, mainly within the context of the postmodern society. He developed the notion of synopticon, or also called "the viewer's society" (Mathiesen, 1997: 215-232). Actually, he claimed that the surveillance and control do not work anymore as Bentham and Foucault suggested, but they were changed thanks to the new technical and technological developments in postmodern and globalized societies. He uses the contemporary technical and technological achievements (such as Internet, mobile phones, reality TV shows etc.) and tries to explain in what way they are used as surveillance and control mechanisms. Thus, says Mathiesen, unlike the panopticon who uses the power of threat and punishment and thus insures that the obedience will be attained, in synopticon the obedience is insured on a voluntary basis, simply with the help of forces of temptation and seduction. In other words, the people voluntarily accept to be watched over and controlled, only because they want that. They are driven by the seductive and tempting forces of sophisticated contemporary soft power technologies and technical devices. As Zygmunt Bauman insightfully adds, in panopticon, the few watch the many. In synopticon, the many watch the few. In synopticon the people voluntarily and eagerly participate in their own watching and controlling, without been really aware of that. The reality shows (so called Big Brother) or Facebook, are the most striking examples of synopticon, where we all enjoy watching

over other's lives, but also enjoying our lives being watched over. In synopticon, it seems that there is not a thing in our private lives that remains intimate. Everything is at disposal, offered to the public and everybody enjoys this mutual surveillance and control game. The final result of synopticon is that the separation of private and public life has been wiped out at a large extent (Köse, Han & Bakan, 2010: 525).

Another brilliant social thinker, the French sociologist Didier Bigo, has introduced the notion of banopticon as another concept that should grasp the complex changing nature of surveillance and control (Bigo, 2006: 33-35). He thinks of it as a concept that was directly created by the processes of individualization and privatisation within society. The term and notion of banopticon refer to surveillance and control as ways of insuring that only certain people are allowed to be part of certain secured environment, while the others are denied the access by using the surveillance and control mechanisms of contemporary technology. In actual fact, the banopticon suggests banning something or prohibiting something or somebody from something and is about keeping people outside, instead of panopticon which implies keeping people inside. Here, under this notion, we can recognize the technical private security and all surveillance and control that are being done by using various technical systems and devices, such as video surveillance, alarms and access control. The surge of banopticon can be seen nowadays in the desperate need to feel safer, but, paradoxically enough, that is being happening simply because we are experiencing more and more freedom in our lives. The so called open society has created so much freedom that reached the point where the infinite freedom of choice is felt as uncertainty and insecurity, and that is what throws the people back to reaffirmation of security instead of freedom, but this time, in terms of the negative globalization, as privatised security (Бауман, 2016: 11). Banopticon serves quite a lot purposes, but the major purpose is commercial, such as with privatization of security services, private security and technical private security in specific. It can be seen in establishing the so called gated communities both with natural and technical surveillance and control mechanisms; CCTV (closed circuit television) as complete technical system that constantly supervises and controls the secured areas and is used both as control, as well as proof in case of security events; the alarm systems that prohibit and signal every attempt of unauthorized entry inside the secured areas or places; and, access control systems, that use different technologies of validation of the right of entrance (such as coded locks, magnetic cards and biometrics), thus keeping those people who do not have the right of

entry out of that secured areas and places. The existence of complex and detail technical devices and procedures at airport security is one striking example of how the surveillance, control and proof mechanisms of banopticon function in real life. Detail and in some cases nerve-racking preventive procedures that imply use of metal detectors, X-rays, scanners and multiple controls, are reminders that we are living in an age of banopticon (Даничић и Пилиповић, 2011: 215; Jovanovič, 2008: 10). In order to ease understanding of the three concepts of surveillance and control explained above, we are giving a graphical representation of differences between panopticon, synopticon and banopticon in the graph no.1 below:

Panopticon

Few watch many

Selected in

Synopticon

Many watch few

Selected in and out

Banopticon

Few watch many

Selected out

Graph No. 1. Graphical representation of differences between panopticon, synopticon and banopticon

3. Dilemmas about the role of private security in surveillance and control

The private security sector (subsystem) and private security industry have reached a significant level of development and also have made vital contribution towards security within the last few decades. Frankly speaking, the private security has become an all-present phenomenon (Бакрески, Даничиќ, Кешетовиќ, Митевски, 2015: 50). Considering Europe only, it reached total yearly turnover in 2013 of almost €35 billion, which is a staggering fact of the development of a powerful industry (Co ESS, 2013: 251). Considering the main function of private security, the preventive function, we can undoubtedly conclude that private security exerts very positive influence in the overall societal effort of prevention, and due to its status and character, this contribution of the private security can be seen mostly in what is called secondary prevention, or, situational prevention. This secondary prevention is to a great extent carried out through the technical private security, using the technical systems, means and devices of surveillance and control. There are lot of studies and researches done within the couple of decades that confirm the contribution and positive preventive effects of technical private security and its mechanisms of surveillance and control. They can be seen mainly in some valuable contributions towards prevention and security, such as: increased secondary crime prevention, reduction of crime rates, fostering of cooperation between different security entities (such as private security entities and police), increase in crime control, increased usage of technical devices recordings as proof in criminal investigation processes and strengthening of mutual trust and to some extent feeling of security between people where technical security has been installed (Potokar & Androić, 2016: 160; Haggerty, Wilson & Smith, 2011: 231: 237; Wakefield, 2005: 529-545; Hemsley, 2013: 229-238). There are some studies which claim that electronic means used in technical security are also increasingly replacing informal social control (Koskela, 2003: 294). Also, the studies and researches have shown greater success in implementation of technical private security when it was introduced through some projects within public-private security partnerships than when it was done separately (for instance, private security or police on their own).

On a contrary to that, there is considerable body of scholars who view the contribution of private security and especially technical private security with scepticism and point out to some negative aspects of its wide usage and omnipresence. They are especially criticizing the technical means of surveillance and control which can be both

used and abused, which could produce increase in feeling of insecurity instead of the opposite, which could not mean decrease in crime rates in every case of their usage, which can turn out to be used in abuse of power and in breaching of the privacy and the basic human rights and freedoms, particularly the freedom of movement. We can see that some of the critics are being headed towards security issues, while some others are being headed towards certain ethical, humanistic, societal and even philosophical issues. Thus, for instance, the renowned Norwegian theorist Lars Svendsen complains that "the point of the development of private security is that its market logic creates a need for security that goes beyond the actual need through sowing fear of the presence of new and more dangerous security risks. This leads to a constant increase in the resources of the private security industry, which when once absolved one are looking for other risk and fear of it and so it goes indefinitely, as long as it increases the economic benefit from the growth of the industry. Therefore, concludes Svendsen, the world has become preoccupied with ever new and more sophisticated methods, techniques, tools and measures for physical and technical security, whose application, especially in situational crime prevention experienced an unprecedented scale". He stresses the fact in Norway itself, the number of households that installed systems of technical security (video surveillance, access control or alarm systems) is extremely high and reaches over 70% in some parts of the country, but that researches have not confirmed in full the justification of this massive usage of technical security. Svendsen, summarizing this issue ironically concludes that the alleged progress of modern society to create a safer social environment for living is seen in the fact that "the wall (meaning medieval walls erected to protect the medieval towns from threats) which is supposed to protect us from threats 'outside', has moved up to the walls of our homes". In addition, "alarms and security locks in our houses confirm the image of the dangerous world in which we live (Свендсен, 2010: 109)".

The British scholar Stephen Whattam believes that the researches conducted in Great Britain in this field show that in recent decades after applying the situational prevention of crime, especially through private security, in fact, the Great Britain became a place of heightened uncertainty, anxiety and fear of crime. Paradoxically, he sais, "the visible signs of security hardware (technical security) made considerable part of the people more frightened, and with a feeling that the higher level of security in certain place or area must indicate a higher security risk". The official statistics shows that between 1992 and 2000 there were 4.2 million security cameras installed in Great

Britain, which means one security camera was installed on every fourteenth British. Again paradoxically, "unprecedented growth of the private security industry cannot take place without, in one way or another, creating a need for security services many times greater than the actual needs. These needs are accompanied by fear of threats, which themselves represent the 'industry of fear'". The studies that were done, admits Whattam, do not dispute the fact that the introduction of techniques and measures of situational crime prevention through technical private security contributed to actual reduction of crime rates, and that they led to crime control, but also undeniably increased the fear of crime and insecurity. Common example frequently stated within this context, is the installing of video surveillance, which, when used as recorded evidence, contributes to the efficient identification, capture, conviction and imprisonment of the perpetrators, but when assessed through the possibility of immediate protection of people from physical assault, then proves useless, even on a contrary, reminds people of an unsafe place with high security risk and makes them feel insecure (Whattam, 2011: 1-52).

The private security in Republic of Macedonia developed both in size and quality of services within the last two decades. Technical private security, together with physical private security, is the most frequently used sort of private security by clients. According to the official statistical data, by the end of 2015 there were 38 private security entities that were registered for providing technical private security out of 112 total registered private security entities (for physical security and private detective agencies), which employed 1134 persons (Комора на Република Македонија за приватно обезбедување, 2016: 13). Moreover, there are almost no clients who do not require technical private security within the contracts with the private security companies (agencies) or within their security services as part of the organizations (proprietary security). The systems, means and devices installed within the technical security are various and can be found in various objects and even in public spaces. The dilemmas that were mentioned could be stated in the case of technical private security in Republic of Macedonia, with some reserve considering the lesser usage of technical private security compared to some Western countries for example. Nevertheless, we will try to point out to some sensitive questions and dilemmas concerning the surveillance and control function of private security in Republic of Macedonia.

In most of the cases where we have private security in Republic of Macedonia, the physical and technical security are used together, but there are cases where only

technical private security has been provided. Sophisticated technical security systems such as video surveillance, alarm systems and access control systems can be found both in economic entities (for instance in shopping malls, factories, hotels and restaurants, banks and savings banks etc.), as well as non-economic entities (for instance in cultural buildings such as museums, galleries, protected religious objects, archeological sites and so on, than in educational institutions, in healthcare institutions, public institutions such as municipality buildings, as well as public spaces such as streets, parks, squares etc.). According to the Macedonian legislation, the usage of technical private security is regulated with provisions in the Law on private security, but considering the video surveillance, protection of personal data and privacy, the provisions from the Law on protection of personal data must also be observed (Бакрески, Герасимоски, Ванковска, Стојановски, Деаноска-Трендафилова, Славески, Кузев, 2014: 114-119; Комора на Република Македонија за приватно обезбедување, 2013: 19). The places or areas must be clearly marked with signs that the areas or places are under video surveillance. But, in reality there are cases when this is not fully and consistently observed. Namely, due to various reasons, sometimes there are no signs; in some cases they are not visible or have been worn, blurred or damaged and are unclear; in some other cases the signs have been put on wrong places and are not identifiable nor visible etc. Also, there are cases where abuse of the data from video surveillance has been noted, which clearly indicate possible breach of privacy of clients or other persons. The question of effectiveness of video recordings have been less questioned, compared with possible surveillance and control abuses that tackle or more seriously, endanger somebody's privacy. This is especially case when video surveillance has been installed in public spaces or on the border of private and public spaces. Some complaints from clients and other people also go to unprofessional installation of technical devices of surveillance and control, thus causing breach of privacy (for instance, the camera of video surveillance partly overlooks neighbors' courtyard besides the courtyard of the client who required camera or video surveillance).

Another important issue referred to surveillance and control functions of technical security could be encompassed within the questions of how much technical security do we need and is there any criteria that could help us determine the optimal level of presence and usage of technical private security? Not an easy questions to answer at all, even an intriguing and challenging ones. But, nonetheless, it seems that we have to be strongly aware of the fact that too much technical private security

around us could bring us a lot more problems and could make our lives uneasy and much more stressful. That is because of the absolved fact that it could create an atmosphere where everyone have to feel as potential offenders of deviance or crime, that could make the places and areas with over-surveillance and control suspicious in terms of security from the very start, it could also penetrate our right to privacy and at last, but not least important, it could mean an unjustified spending of money in an attempt to create an all-supervised society. That is why, we have to consider the so called optimal level of technical private security and with that, the optimal level of surveillance and control that will prevent deviance and crime, and will not produce any undesired side effects, in terms of instigation of deviance and crime or increase in fear of crime, insecurity or any breach of right to privacy. We believe, that the right thing to attain this is through implementation of comprehensive, thorough and science based risk assessment as part of wider risk management process, which has to be done every time prior to risk treatment and installation of any kind of technical private security systems, means and devices in certain areas or places (Фишер, Хелибозек и Грин, 2013: 148-149). Within that, we have to encourage the private security entities mostly, to seriously consider the necessity of implementation of scientifically based methods of risk assessment prior to bringing decisions concerning the need of technical private security, its scope and types of technical security systems, means and devices that have to be put in place. This is a kind of must, both within the Republic of Macedonia and wider, since, especially in Republic of Macedonia, the private security entities rely heavily on personal experience rather than on usage of scientifically based methods of risk assessment prior to installation of technical private security. Among many scientific methods that could be of use in risk assessment of technical private security usage, we could mention the integral method of risk assessment by Zoran Keković and its associates, Kinney method and AUVA method (Gerasimoski, 2016: 327-338; Кековиќ, Бакрески, Стефановски, Павловиќ, 2016: 190-197).

And finally, we come to the issue that also deserves our due attention, and that is the adequacy of usage of technical security surveillance and control functions within different areas, objects and institutions. According to the experiences so far, we can say that the use of surveillance and control through technical private security has proven to be very useful and successful in crime prevention when applied in economic kind of institutions (such as manufacture, trade, tourism, finance and so on). But, the real question is what about the adequacy when applied in non-economic kind of

institutions. The answers here could be much more stratified and we cannot give so much positive answer. In some cases, such as in securing healthcare, cultural and even some political and governing institutions, the technical private security has proved to be useful in crime prevention, reduction and control, so to say indispensible. But when applied in some other institutions, primarily educational, it proved to be not so much adequate, since it contradicts some ethical, human and societal norms, as one recent study in Republic of Macedonia has shown (Ванковска, 2016: 45-46). Namely, the educational institutions are expected to be environments in which primary prevention will be focus and that there'll be no need for secondary and situational crime and risk prevention which is characteristic of private security. The private security deals with potential offenders and no one wants to see and treat the kids and youngsters as potential offenders. If it is so, than it shows the defeat of primary prevention policies and their substitution with secondary prevention policies can never give a desired effects. On a contrary, they can even worse the situations and can develop a society where kids and young people will be treated as criminals from their young age. In these terms, the surveillance and control functions of technical private security can create an inadequate, artificial and potentially detrimental atmosphere for future development and maturation of pupils and students. It could produce fear, unease feelings and wrong understanding of security and could even foster some types of deviant and criminal behavior. In other words, if we are to apply the technical security measures and devices on children and youngsters, we are treating them as potentially deviant and crime suspects at the very beginning, or so to say, we are labeling them. To say the least, all of this is considered as inhuman, unethical and unsocial environment in which the socialization process has to be carried out.

4. Conclusions

The private security plays active role in carrying out of surveillance and control functions of prevention nowadays. Though we can give a positive assessment of this role in general, there are also much grounded critics addressed mainly to some ethical, humanistic and social dilemmas that emerge due to the all-encompassing and inadequate use of technical systems, measures and devices, such as video surveillance, alarm systems and access control. These dilemmas go louder and are more justified if

analysed within the paradigms of panopticon, synopticon and especially banopticon. The positive effects of surveillance and control functions of technical private security could be seen primarily in so called secondary and situational prevention strategies, measures and activities, which result in: reduction and control of crime rates, increased usage of technical devices' recordings as proof in criminal investigation processes, fostering of cooperation between different security entities, and to some extent in increased feeling of security between people where technical security has been installed or decreased fear of crime, but only in certain cases. On the other hand, criticism and negative attitudes are mainly seen in: breaching of the privacy and the basic human rights and freedoms (particularly the freedom of movement), increase of insecurity and fear of crime when technical security is being massively used without prior appropriate risk assessment, confirmation of the image of the dangerous world in which we live and inadequacy of technical private security when used in securing certain areas, places or institutions, such as in the educational institutions.

In order to overcome the weaknesses of surveillance and control functions of technical private security, we believe that these recommendations could prove to be helpful in strengthening the strong and eliminating or reducing the weak sides of technical security:

- Optimization of surveillance and control functions through installation of technical security only in areas, places and institutions where it is necessary and does not contradict some ethical, human or moral dilemmas;
- Making out of risk assessment analysis based on usage of scientific method of risk analysis and adequate measures and activities of security treatment prior to implementation of technical security;
- Consistent respect and implementation of the rules regarding installation, maintaining and use of technical security systems and devices;
- Avoiding too much technical security in cases and situations when security can be reached using physical security or other primary prevention strategies, policies and measures, related to possible increase of fear of insecurity;
- Balancing freedom and security in order to avoid the banopticon effect, only when this is possible and not at the detriment of minimal security.

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