

## Research Project

# The Economics of Camera Surveillance and Public Security

### Third-party funded project

**Project title** The Economics of Camera Surveillance and Public Security

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**Organisation / Research unit**

Departement Wirtschaftswissenschaften / Politische Ökonomie (Stutzer)

**Department**

**Project start** 01.07.2009

**Probable end** 30.06.2011

**Status** Completed

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<!-- /\* Style Definitions \*/ p.MsoNormal, li.MsoNormal, div.MsoNormal {mso-style-parent:""; margin:0pt; margin-bottom:.0001pt; mso-pagination:widow-orphan; font-size:12.0pt; font-family:"Times New Roman"; mso-fareast-font-family:"Times New Roman"; mso-ansi-language:DE; mso-fareast-language:DE;} @page Section1 {size:612.0pt 792.0pt; margin:70.85pt 70.85pt 56.7pt 70.85pt; mso-header-margin:36.0pt; mso-footer-margin:36.0pt; mso-paper-source:0;} div.Section1 {page:Section1;} --> Security or the protection against infringements against life and limb are important human needs. Moreover, public security has become a salient policy issue in the context of terrorism and now features prominently in the news. This project seeks to contribute to a better understanding of providing public security. In particular, we address in a broad analytical context the contribution of camera surveillance to public security.

Camera surveillance of public and private spaces is probably the most rapidly spreading and, at the same time, one of the most controversial instruments in security policy today. Previous scientific coverage of the topic lacks a comprehensive, systematic analysis of the behavioral reactions of the involved actors as well as the resulting consequences from a rational choice perspective, incorporating insights from other behavioral sciences.

There exist a number of studies evaluating the impact of camera surveillance on crime. However, they are concentrated on the United Kingdom, often do not meet scientific standards and present conflicting evidence of effectiveness. The core block of our research seeks to provide a theoretical and empirical analysis of the impact of camera surveillance on public security based on the following questions: (i) How effectively does camera surveillance reduce illegitimate or indecent behavior? (ii) How is camera surveillance perceived by the public and how effectively does it contribute to subjective security? (iii) Is this form of institutionalized control accompanied by undesired substitution effects and adverse behavioral responses?

In Switzerland, camera surveillance is rapidly spreading in public transportation. In the project, new evidence will be generated from an evaluation of camera surveillance in major Swiss railway stations and trains. This evaluation is possible due to the collaboration with the Swiss Federal Railways (SBB). The analysis will be based on extensive data sources: (i) Data on all recorded security-related incidents in trains and railway stations; (ii) survey data on subjective security of users of the Swiss public transportation system; and (iii) survey data gathered continuously on various quality-related aspects, including safety and cleanliness, in trains and railway stations.

Additional hypotheses will be approached in a systematic field study following the introduction of camera surveillance in a further railway station as well as in a case study covering the introduction of camera

surveillance in a Swiss city center. For the evaluation as well as the experimental study, the tool kit of applied econometrics will be used. The sequential introduction of camera surveillance will allow a study design that identifies the effect of camera surveillance based on variation between locations over time.

The proposed research will rely on a behavioral economics perspective rooted in rational choice theory and social psychology. It draws on existing research in the economic analysis of crime. The planned project is seen both as a contribution to high-level scientific research as well as to important ongoing policy debates.ä

**Keywords** public security, surveillance, closed-circuit television (CCTV), crime prevention, subjective security, program evaluation, field study, economics and psychology

**Financed by**

Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)

**Add publication**

**Published results**

106960, Stutzer, Alois; Zehnder, Michael, Ökonomische Überlegungen zur Kameraüberwachung als Massnahme gegen den Terrorismus, Ökonomie der Sicherheit, Publication: JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)

417913, Stutzer, Alois; Zehnder, Michael, Herausforderungen bei der Evaluation von Kameraüberwachung als Präventionsinstrument – eine ökonomische Perspektive, 978-3-7255-6204-6, 3. Zürcher Präventionsforum - Videoüberwachung als Prävention?, Publication: Book Item (Buchkap., Lexikonartikel, jur. Kommentierung, Beiträge in Sammelbänden etc.)

1430073, Stutzer, Alois; Zehnder, Michael, Is Camera Surveillance an Effective Measure of Counterterrorism?, 1024-2694, Defence and peace economics, Publication: JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)

**Add documents**

**Specify cooperation partners**