



# Examination of the Budapest Party District from the perspective of private and public security<sup>1</sup>

## Zsolt Lippai

assistant professor, police lieutenant colonel  
University of Public Service,  
Faculty of Law Enforcement  
[lippai.zsolt@uni-nke.hu](mailto:lippai.zsolt@uni-nke.hu)



## Kund Regényi

PhD, assistant professor, nat. sec. colonel  
University of Public Service,  
Faculty of Law Enforcement  
[regenyi.kund@uni-nke.hu](mailto:regenyi.kund@uni-nke.hu)



## Károly Csatári

deputy chief of police department,  
police lieutenant colonel  
Budapest Metropolitan Police,  
VII District Police Headquarters  
[csatarika@budapest.police.hu](mailto:csatarika@budapest.police.hu)

## Tamás Nagy

head of subdivision, police captain  
National Bureau of Investigation,  
Rapid Response and Special Police Services,  
Cybercrime Department,  
Criminal Intelligence Division  
[nagy.tommike@gmail.com](mailto:nagy.tommike@gmail.com)

## Abstract

**Aim:** The aim of the study is a presentation of the private and public safety problems of the challenging everyday life of a popular and well-known entertainment district – Budapest VII. District Inner Erzsébetváros, known colloquially as the ‘party district’.

**Methodology:** The authors of this study – law enforcement professionals – focus on the history of the Gozdsu yard, the organizational peculiarities of the preparation of music and dance events accompanied by disaster prevention. They are highlighting via domestic and international examples the role of law enforcement agencies, private security providers, auxiliary police and the municipal police, and examining the added value of supervision activities to create security.

**Findings:** Nowadays, with the outmoded paradigm of policing as a state monopoly, one can witness the necessary pluralization of policing, private security and civil policing coming to the fore, which is tantamount to breaking the monopoly of the state policing. The private security sector of our country began to develop after the regime change and has now become an indispensable

<sup>1</sup> Prepared with the professional support of the Doctoral Student Scholarship Program of the Co-operative Doctoral Program of the Ministry of Innovation and Technology financed from the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund.

player in the maintenance of public order and public safety. One of the most striking examples, in which all of this can be seen in action, is the implementation of intertwining private and public security activities related to the provision of music and dance events.

**Value:** Law enforcement scientists must strive to examine the emerging problems on as many levels and perspectives as possible, with sufficient scientific thoroughness. The methodological approach must be based on an inquisitive attitude that seeks to understand the social phenomena that frame the reality of policing at both an institutional and individual level. Their study helps with this.

**Keywords:** party district; securing music and dance events; private security; complementary policing

## Introduction

According to László Salgó, former national police chief after the regime change in Hungary, *‘The great freedom (...) suddenly fell on the Hungarian police. The organization behaved like a bird that spent most of its life in a cage, and as soon as its new environmentalist owner opened the cage, he was shocked: it is one thing to sing about freedom in relative prosperity (food and drink provided) and another to face life’s challenges (e.g. with a big black cat)...’* (Salgó, 1994). Examining the state actors in the creation of public security in the light of the changed life situation, we can conclude, in agreement with Géza Finszter, that the uncertain content of the issue of ‘official guarantee of public security and public courage, property and life security’ (Szabó, 1980) can result in fierce debates even today (Finszter, 2009). In our article, we examine one of the most striking examples of the official guarantee of the mentioned public security, wealth and security of life, the maintenance of the security of the most well-known domestic ruin pub area, the ‘Party District’ located in the heart of Budapest.

## Ruin pub history

Erzsébetváros, which is a small area in downtown Budapest but has a significant population density, has a registered residence of 51,000 citizens in just two square kilometers. The district includes Külső- and Belső Erzsébetváros and Ligetváros, whose population consists mainly of Hungarians, but there are

also Bulgarian, Gypsy, Greek, Croatian, Polish, German, Armenian, Serbian, Romanian, Ruthenian and Ukrainian ethnic municipalities ([URL1](#)).

In Erzsébetváros, there are 1,207 buildings older than hundred years, most of which are located in the historic Jewish quarter ([URL2](#)). Apart from the Dohány Street Synagogue, dreamed up by Frigyes Feszl, it is also home to several famous buildings, such as the New York Palace Hotel and the University of Veterinary Medicine, but at the same time, it lacks huge spaces that attract large crowds. Despite this, every year millions of foreign and domestic people seeking fun visit the part of the district, the so called 'Party District'. In that part of the city, which had already deteriorated physically and socially in the decades before the system change, many of its buildings became empty and unused. The biggest contemporary risk to public safety in the deteriorating district used to be the appearance of some homeless people and drug users hiding there, but recently, that has changed significantly.

The current Budapest ruin pub phenomenon began in 1999, when Pótkulcs ['Spare key'] pub (Kelemen & Mitev, 2016) opened its doors and hosted photography and other art exhibitions by contemporary artists. Pótkulcs created the basic standard for ruin pubs to this day, a catering unit built in old, decaying apartment buildings, with an unique and battered style, representing an inner-city, cultural tourist attraction, which also accommodates concerts and exhibitions. After that, ruin pubs of a similar quality were opened in empty buildings, apartment buildings, or in the courtyards of apartment buildings, many of them are still operating today. From there, a straight road led to the creation of the largest entertainment district in our country, which is accompanied as a shadow by the presence of new problems that threaten public order and public security.

## **Gozsdu-yard**

It has been named after Manó Gozsdu, a Romanian official and lawyer. In 1915, based on Győző Cziegler's plans, a courtyard with 40 apartments and 60 shops was built on the Király Street area he bought ([URL3](#)). During the Second World War, it was part of the Pest Jewish ghetto, UNESCO declared it a part of the world heritage, and after 1947 it was nationalized. Having reached its final form in 2009, it currently consists of seven old buildings and six courtyards, to which a new building was added, connected by a steel bridge. The courtyard, which is easily accessible by public transport, by car and on foot ([URL4](#)), also has a number of popular AirBed & Breakfast, i.e. 'airbnb' apartments ([URL5](#)).

In Gozsdu-yard, there are more than 14 catering units that can accommodate and entertain a significant number of guests and can stay open even after midnight, while another nearly 250 units in the district only have licenses until midnight, not to mention the 5 event holding licenses of larger entertainment venues that can accommodate more than 1,000 visitors at a time. This has a negative effect from the point of view of the population, while from the district council's side, it has a positive effect by establishing supervision fees and business taxes, because the local district council's 46/2013. (IX.6.) decree determines a supervision fee of HUF 20/person/night – for opening hours – which is tied to the capacity or the number of guests registered in the operating license. The municipality can spend the supervision fee to finance additional public safety and public cleanliness tasks, and reports annually on these spendings to the district council. The quarterly supervision fee was set at an amount ranging from HUF 5,000 to HUF 240,000, the collection of which is far from smooth. On the one hand, due to the pandemic situation, the collection of the fee was waived in several cases for the sake of the sustainability of the stores, and on the other hand, the said decree does not prescribe any sanctions in case of failure to pay the fee, so the willingness to pay has also become to be incidentally.

9/2013 (II. 22.) municipal decree on the opening hours of shops at night was created to deal with complaints and problems from the public. This decree does not prescribe specific tasks for the owners of catering establishments to maintain and promote public order and public cleanliness, or only a small number of them. Here we also have to talk about the local referendum of February 18, 2018, initiated by the Élhető Erzsébetváros [An Erzsébetváros to Live] ([URL6](#)) group, which ended without results, in which they sought answers how the population felt about the opening hours of shops between midnight and six in the morning. Out of 43,520 eligible voters, 6,918 went to vote, and of the votes cast, 4,572 said that shops should close at midnight ([URL7](#)). People living outside the area of Inner Erzsébetváros were not bothered by this problem and could have been driven by lack of interest when they did not take advantage of this opportunity. At the same time, it is also a fact that the registered residents with the right to vote do not live according to the way of life in the district, a very large percentage of the apartments are operated as 'airbnb' or sublets.

25/2020 (VI.25.) municipal decree on the night opening hours of shops was also created under pressure from the public. This decree already regulates in detail ([URL8](#)) the operation of catering units that are open between midnight and 6 a.m. – in the event of conditions serving the interests of the population wishing to relax. By this we mean the use of the so-called limited-compressor, a performance control tool for controlling an application within a given interval, which

guarantees the public-friendly nature of the music service. The noise threshold value must be set in such a way that the noise load does not give rise to complaints from the public. This standard also stipulates the use of self-retracting or photocell doors in the case of a capacity of less than 100 people, while for a capacity of 100 people or more, it defines exit and entry with a hatch system.

As practicing law enforcement professionals, we can say that in the case of a music and dance nightclub operating regularly, with adequate security personnel, techniques and measures, the occurrence of a possible disaster – commonly known as the West Balkan – can be reduced to a minimum. On 15 January 2011, the disaster at the West-Balkán nightclub in the former Skála Metro building on Budapest’s Nyugati Square claimed three lives and injured 14 people. A number of regulatory and organizational deficiencies were revealed as the cause of the accident; as a result of this, Government decree 23/2011 (III. 8.) on enhanced safety of music and dance events was created. Unfortunately, the case is far from unique, considering, for example, the tragedy of the nightclub Colectiv in Bucharest on 30 October 2015, where a fire broke out and 26 people died on the spot, while another 38 people died in the hospital from various infections ([URL9](#)). *Gazeta Sporturilor*, a fact-finding Romanian magazine, proved in its documentary that the nightclub did not have an official permit, had no emergency exit and was not suitable for using indoor pyrotechnics, and that the fire was caused by the internal sound isolation material catching fire ([URL10](#)). However, disco tragedies caused by similar fires have occurred in many parts of the world, of which the most serious so far can be called the accident at the Coconut Grove nightclub in Boston on 28 November 1942, where the lack of emergency exits claimed the lives of 492 people ([URL11](#)).

## **Making the events of the party district safer**

In locations connected to the party district, crimes against public space, riots, or crimes against persons primarily occur, the causes of which are also related to the presence of entertainment venues. During the COVID–19 pandemic situation, the entertainment venues were temporarily closed, with the introduction of the curfew, the statistical numbers decreased, but the total crime data stagnated. Crimes in public spaces declined, replaced by domestic violence, acts against property – burglary, theft – and internet fraud. In order to reflect human ingenuity, during the curfew, bicycle food couriers committed the most car catalytic converter thefts (they hid the electric saw required for the crime and the stolen items in the box used to transport the food), while prostitution and illicit

drug abuse, which were considered standard crimes so far, were transferred to the walls of private homes.

With the reopening, criminal groups specializing in drug trafficking, prostitution, and organized crime appeared again. The trade in ‘real’ drugs – due to the increased police presence – no longer takes place in or around entertainment venues, while those who sell ‘fake’ drugs, the so-called ‘something’ dealers, are increasingly active. These are criminal groups that primarily try to sell baking powder or marjoram as a drug to foreigners. A small amount of marijuana is added to the upper part of a larger quantity of packaged marjoram, thus deceiving the customer with the characteristic smell. If the chosen victim of ‘Something’ dealers answers in English, offers and prices are listed for him. Although the contact is open on the part of the perpetrators, often ignoring all caution and prudence. The latency of the cases is reinforced by the fact that the injured victims, for understandable reasons, do not contact the authorities and do not even dare to complain about the poor quality goods.

At the same time, one must also talk about the sometimes inadequate level of service provided by the private security providers responsible for the security of the shops in the party district. It is a regrettable fact that personal and property security service providers mostly only manage incidents that occur on private land entrusted to their supervision, and what happens nearby on the open street is considered outside their competence. At the same time, the implementation of effective security measurements within the protected object rarely happens with sufficient empathy and communication skills adequate to the situation.

## **Increased police presence**

There is a clear social expectation towards the police that the public order and public safety of the party district should be maintained, consequently, in order to prevent violations, in addition to the district police, the staff of other police bodies – Rapid Reaction Police Force, Metropolitan Police Public Order Department, Rapid Reaction Police Force National Investigation Bureau – were directed there. Until the outbreak of the COVID–19 pandemic, 50-70 uniformed policemen and -women patrolled the quarter every Thursday, Friday and Saturday. As an interesting result of the police demonstration of force, riotous violent crimes were transferred from the streets to entertainment venues, the legal handling of these crimes often exceeded the preparedness of the security service provider’s staff.

Employees of partner authorities – Municipality, Disaster Management, National Directorate General of Aliens Policing, National Tax and Customs Administration, National Food Chain Safety Office, Labor Inspection – are also involved in the implementation of police inspections. During the COVID–19 pandemic, with the enacting of the curfew and the closing of the country’s border, party tourism also ceased, so the checks also took a backseat, since the criminal circles that previously dealt with drug distribution and prostitution almost completely disappeared from the district. From the second half of 2021 – despite the fact that several high-end restaurants did not reopen – tourism began to show its old face again and criminals well-known to the authorities reappeared, so the police also paid more and more attention to the prevention of crimes, and increased controls. As an interesting point, we would like to point out the inspection of the Blended Sky and Vicky Barcelona entertainment venues in Gozsdu-yard on 21 november 2021, which are highly published by the press ([URL12](#)). In the course of the coordinated action, 452 people were subject to measures, and 20 people were arrested for various crimes – drug consumption, live-in traffic, immigration law violations, violations, etc. – for committing it, as well as numerous infringement reports and on-the-spot fines were imposed.

In addition to classic crimes, new criminal behaviors have also appeared in the party district, the target audience of which is made up of foreign tourists and the presence of entertainment venues. The unique picture of organized crime is shown by the presence of the already mentioned ‘fake’ drug sellers (‘Something’), as well as men and women prostitutes, whose goal is not only to provide physical pleasure, but also to acquire the property of their costumers. People who sell themselves for money are mostly transported to the district by minibus, for which the nearby ‘pimps’ can be held responsible for organized trips. The fact that prostitutes conduct the business of forbidden lust by using door codes purchased from postmen, usually inside buildings, makes it difficult to prosecute the violation of the law.

While dealing with the situation, the police must also be quite flexible, because new groups of criminals appear more and more, and many innovative tools must be used to detect and eliminate them. Thinking about the use of permanently installed police cameras or the deployment of sectoral patrol districts and uniformed police officers, dividing the incriminated and most infected areas into parts, directing a larger number of police patrols on foot performing preventive tasks to the scene, preventing criminals from gaining ground. However, as a negative result of the measures, we have to consider the transfer of criminal behavior to other parts of the district, even to neighboring districts.

## Complementary policing and party district

In Hungary, the police lost its monopoly position during the identity transformation in the decades following the regime change. As the policing as a state monopoly paradigm is transcended, one can witness the necessary pluralization of law enforcement. That means that private security and civil law enforcement are coming to the fore, breaking the monopoly of the state police (Kerezsi & Nagy, 2017). The free market economy, the advance of private property after the regime change and the amazingly growing demand for protection, necessarily called for the creation of private security companies operating on business basis. The private security service providers whose activities supplement and relieve public security – with the growth of their professional and business experience – are becoming more and more important in all areas of value and asset protection. Nowadays, in addition to the security guaranteed by the state and its law enforcement agencies and provided in the framework of official services, there is security offered as a commodity by the actors of the private security market as a product, the creation – protection and maintenance – of which is a service realized as a result of the purposeful activity of private security (Finszter, 2012).

The police is part of the public administration (Balla, 2017), its mission is to maintain the internal order of the state, as well as public order and public safety, to protect the members of society and its fundamental values by preventing, averting and interrupting illegal acts that violate or threaten them, as a last option even by using legitimate force. Accomplishing the above mission is an extremely complex and diverse activity, which cannot be expected exclusively from a sole state organization dedicated to this. Fulfilling the mission of the police and creating security can only be achieved as a result of social cooperation and collective effort, in which, in addition to law enforcement agencies, municipalities, private security companies, social voluntary crime prevention associations, and auxiliary police also play an important role. This can be called a complementary law enforcement system, in which the activities of state bodies are supplemented, supported, and assisted by market and civil organizations (URL15). In the next part of our study we examine the activities of complementary law enforcement actors contributing to the security of the party district.

### Auxiliary police

In Hungary, more than 60,000 special constables, gathered in approximately 2,000 associations and 20 capital and county associations carry out their crime

prevention tasks voluntarily in their free time (Christián, 2018). However, the operation of the Budapest Auxiliary Police Association shows a particularly interesting picture, because despite their valid cooperation contracts with the Metropolitan Police, and police districts V, VI, VII and VIII, independent, active auxiliary police activities are not carried out (URL13). In the district VII, there are currently six auxiliary police organizations, the number of active members of which does not even reach 10 people per organization.

As an interesting service experience – with the far-reaching recognition of the activities of the members of the auxiliary police – using the joint work of police and auxiliary police in another city district of Budapest, called Zugló. We note that in the absence of adequate foundations, the planning of a joint future without obstacles and expecting excellent results rests on shaky foundations. And in order for an auxiliary police organization to obtain sufficient financial and moral support, it must prove its productive attitude, ability and activity. If its activity falls short of this, then – in the absence of adequate financial and moral support – one will not have the opportunity to reach the level where you can participate effectively in the maintenance public order and public safety of the settlement.

It is very important to point out that the auxiliary police, without any financial compensation, undertakes to maintain public order and public safety on a voluntary basis, primarily in the settlement in which he lives. As we have already mentioned, due to the advance of subletting and AirBnB, the population of the district VII consists of the older age group or young people who have no ties to Erzsébetváros, which is used as a temporary accommodation. The district basically lacks local patriotic young people whose activities could contribute to the prevention of crimes in public areas and the creation of security. For the youth of our materialistic world, financial recognition of their work is very important, so only a few people volunteers to do without financial service for the sake of society and the creation of a safer environment. As a painful point of interest regarding the attitude of today's young generation to public service, the fact that the auxiliary police officers assisting in the implementation of increased inspections of the party district come from other district's associations. As soon as they hear that the task must be performed as a foot patrol (meaning: without a service vehicle), the number of volunteer applicants drops significantly. And the district auxiliary police organizations are represented almost exclusively upon case by case request (although it is also true that their district council support does not carry relevant elements either).

Examining the power of the auxiliary police to relieve the burden in the district, it can be concluded that its role is minimally effective, and they do not

currently take an active role in making the party district safer. At the same time, despite the lack of sufficient personal and material conditions, we consider their participation in crime prevention important and indispensable in the mission of creating our common security.

## **Private security and law enforcement**

It is a fundamental fact that guaranteeing the security of music and dance events can be classified primarily in the scope of activities of service providers belonging to the private security sector, while the task of the police is the mandatory response to crimes or extraordinary events that take place there. Based on the service experiences related to the district under discussion, it can be said that the members of the security services usually resolve fights and riotous behavior in the entertainment venue by using violence and throwing the inappropriate people out onto the street. And a very large percentage of the victims of fights do not file complaints against the opposing party, but against the staff of the security service, this often legitimately, based on the video footage recorded by the available surveillance center. The fight is often generated by members of the security service, so an increased control by the police should also cover the activities of personnel and property protection employees.

It is a sad fact that the already mentioned increased control extended to the 10 security personnel working there, 6 of whom did not have identity cards and property security badges, and 2 people were subject to criminal proceedings (meaning: they could not have, but still had security badges). 2 out of 10 people were produced for possessing a device particularly dangerous to public safety; devices such as gas sprays, spring knives, unlicensed gas and stun guns, as well as brass knuckles (a device that increases the force of the punch, which is a forbidden weapon in Hungary) were found in their possession. Following their detention, a fine was imposed in an expedited procedure. It is shocking that among property guards that were checked only one was unimpeachable.

The security service of the Gozsdu yard is currently operated by a foreign-owned asset protection company, while some restaurants within the yard employ their own security personnel. These security services compete with each other and sometimes get involved in territorial disputes. The asset protection companies clearly did not aim to make the events safer, rather they wanted to gain an economic advantage in the party district. These companies are solely responsible for the ‘security’ of the restaurants with which they have a contract. In several cases, it happened that they did not intervene in the riotous act that took place

in the nightclub right next to them, saying that the owner did not pay them for the security duties.

The police inspections of the party district showed that these security providers cannot play an active role in making the music and dance events safer, they do not help the police in any meaningful way, and currently no task can be delegated to them. This creates an extremely interesting situation, as already in 2008, Hungary was one of the ten European states in which, as a result of market opening, there were more private security providers than state security agencies (Tóth, 2017). And in 2021, the number of domestic private security companies was 6,371, while the number of issued personal and property security badges was 96,665. (Accumulated data provided by the Administrative Department of National Police Headquarters on 6 September 2021.) In our opinion, with this finding, we pointed to a highly sensitive problem that exceeds the limits of the scope of this study, and its treatment requires special legislative attention.

## **Municipal police**

A guest coming to the Erzsébetváros entertainment district and meeting a large police force may rightly ask the question, is public safety so bad that it requires the involvement of so many policemen to maintain it, or does the Hungarian police have such a large number of human resources? Based on this, it is also a particularly exciting question what effect it would have on the number of crimes in public areas in our country if the police did not strive for increased police presence, but for deeper cooperation with residential communities while minimize police presence.

In our study, we feel it almost obligatory to note that in the spring of 1990, the Hungarian Government, which had left behind the socialist form of government, asked the Swiss multinational TC Team Consult to support the reorganization and democratization of the Hungarian police (Gottlieb, Kröszel & Prestel, 1998). The undeservedly forgotten and only partially realized program – accepted by the government and the police at the time – stated that police organizations are forced to continuously improve. A successful police organization in the future must set competition requirements and put the performance of single security providers in competition with the rivals. Executive performance must be specified where, in accordance with social expectations, the most success can be expected, but at the same time, costly security and escort activities must be transferred to civilian companies. Citizens must be empowered and encouraged to act independently, so that they don't just wait for the actions of

the public administration (and at the same time, control over the bureaucracy is increasingly falling on the citizens). The actors should strive to move from the current reactive situation to a proactive problem-solving role, with the goal of creating safety as a product together with social institutions and the population (Gottlieb, Krözsel & Prestel, 1998).

But returning to today's reality, as we mentioned earlier, the large number of entertainment venues operating in the party district could be a significant, but insufficiently prioritized, source of income for the municipality – from the supervision fees on the one hand, and from the additional taxes on the other hand. However, the supervision fee to be paid is negligible, in addition to the billions of local government revenues received annually from parking and business tax, which enables the maintenance of the nearly hundred people – strong municipal police directorate.

In the following, we will deal with the activities of the Erzsébetváros Municipal Police Directorate (hereafter: ERI) under the professional supervision of the police. The municipal law enforcement body, which was renewed in 2020, takes a special role in maintaining the public safety of the district. Comparing its staff – 94 planned and 70 existing – with the staff of the police department of the district police station, we can see almost the same numbers, of which only 10-12 people occasionally participate in enhanced inspections.

Act LXIII of 1999 on public space supervision (hereinafter: Kftv.) § 1 (6) states: 'The task of the supervision, or the supervisor acting on behalf of the supervision, may be established by law, government decree, or the decree of the municipality. The decree of the local council may establish a task that is not referred to the competence of another body by law or government decree.' As a result, the primary task of the so-called public area supervision is to protect the order and cleanliness of public areas, as well as to more effectively prevent and sanction violations of the law that disrupt the order, and to protect municipal property, so this is primarily the purpose of municipal regulations:

- regulation of the legal use of public lands owned by the municipality;
- regulation of the order of operation of catering terraces located on public land owned by the municipality;
- regulating the opening hours of catering shops/entertainment venues;
- regulation of the basic rules of community coexistence and the legal consequences of failure to comply with them due to the application of sanctions if the regulations of the municipality are not followed.

In addition, according to Szabs. tv. (Act II of 2012 on infringements, infringement procedures and the system for registering infringements), in the case of a local

government provision prohibiting the consumption of alcoholic beverages in public areas, sanctions can only be imposed according to Szabs. tv. Violation of the ban on the consumption of alcoholic beverages is classified according to 200 § 1a.

Based on local council regulations, the public area inspectors cooperate with the commercial authority (municipal clerk) in checking the opening hours of entertainment venues and catering establishments if they observe a violation of the rules, and initiate administrative proceedings at the local government due to the violation of the regulation. Primarily, the existence of a public space use permit for the establishment of catering terraces, the control of compliance with the provisions of the permit, their authority, and measures in the event of terrace construction without a permit and expansion beyond the scope of the permit. At the same time, if they experience an illegal act or behavior that gives rise to action regarding the operation of shops and terraces, including illegal acts committed in connection with the operation of shops, such as consumption of alcoholic beverages in public areas, violations of public cleanliness rules, disturbing the peace, they will take the measures within their competence – imposing on-the-spot fines, and reporting. Taking these tasks into account, it can be seen that the ERI has no obligation to take action or control in relation to entertainment venues that organize music and dance events located in the party district.

The tasks of the public area supervision are carried out together with the police or in parallel – by performing the tasks assigned to them – alongside or under the control of the police. When making music and dance events safer, public space supervision could only be entrusted with a specific task if the law currently defining their task system were amended. The legislator specifically assigned only those powers to the public space supervision that are necessary for the execution of our basic activities. With a possible amendment to the law, their authority to take action could be extended, for example, to additional traffic violations, to those that are currently only the responsibility of the police (e.g. bus lane, walking on the sidewalk, residential-rest zone, etc.). Additional powers could be given to the public area supervision, speaking about problems arising in the vicinity of real estate affected by construction, which occur on public land. According to the current regulations – since they arise from the violation or failure to comply with the obligation contained in the building permit – they fall under the control of the construction authority. At the same time, it seems advisable to find a solution – in the direction of expanding the powers of public area supervision – for cases, where the criminal behavior does not take place on public space, but its undesirable results occur on public space (e.g. littering through the window of a house, dust pollution resulting from work inside the property, illegal burning of rubbish, etc).

As long as the law specifically framing the basic activity is not amended, the staff of public area inspectors can only participate in the implementation in cooperation with the control tasks of the Police. The fundamental obstacle to the fulfillment of the control tasks is the name ‘public area supervision’ itself, since the Police is responsible for the protection of the order and cleanliness of public spaces, as well as the more effective prevention and sanctioning of violations of the law that disturb the order, the protection of municipal property. Consequently, the implementation of control activities related to music and dance events is not possible within the current legal framework.

Overall, it can be said that the current legal regulations do not allow ERI to take an active part in making music and dance events safer. The tasks assigned to them are regulated by law and regulations, and they cannot exceed them. Thanks to the legal regulations, there are violations of the law that mean that the two organizations are obliged to take action in parallel, but there is no such violation, or only a system of tasks, that can only be delegated to the supervision of public areas.

## Summary

In our study, we gave a non-exhaustive look at one of the most visited areas of Hungary and the police duties that are associated with it, and which are little known to many. We highlighted the fact that it is high time to share the tasks of maintaining public order and public safety falling on the police with complementary law enforcement agencies and service providers belonging to the private security sector. We examined the possibility of whether the current legal regulations are suitable for delegating police tasks, as well as whether the existing legislation is ripe for change, which also includes making events safer.

In our opinion, the creators of the council decree on making music and dance events safer remained in debt by including specific sanctions in the norm. We recommend that by revising the 23/2011 council decree, in addition to the safety plan, the content requirements of the fire protection regulations should also be determined. Further changes are also needed in relation to the handling of deficiencies encountered during the inspection, as we do not consider it sufficient that the authority can only use the suspension of the event or the banning of the event after non-compliance. The amount of the fine should definitely be adjusted to the income of the event and not determined in general, since the amount of income varies between events, so the imposed fine should also be proportional to that.

The current legal environment does not tie the organization of the event to a school or professional qualification. It is a fact that there are already specialized training courses in this field, but at the moment learning how to organize an event is an empirical process, anyone can do it if they consider themselves suitable for it and have sufficient personal knowledge. The organization of an event expected to be attended by at least 150 people at the same time would be tied to a state-recognized qualification, taking into account that the organizer assumes civil liability for damage or personal injury in the area of the event.

We would expect auxiliary police, who take an increasing part in assisting the professional work of the police, to have the same legal knowledge as the police, therefore we feel that it is particularly necessary to transform the theoretical and practical training of special constables for joint and effective cooperation between police officers. For the time being, the special constable functions as a signal, he uses signals to the members of the authority in the field of social crime prevention, but he is not armed with anything other than his civil rights. We recommend that the special constables join the police training within the framework of a modular training, and acquire the basic legal knowledge that can be tested on them together with the police. An opportunity should be created so that the new special constables can provide practical service together with the police students participating in the practical training, so that a high-quality contact system could be formed from the very beginning.

It would also be necessary to rethink the legal background and operation of the private security services, which plays a prominent role in organizing events, maintaining order, and managing situations that arise there. In order for these service providers to be able to operate efficiently and effectively in relation to the task system, the related training would also need to be transformed. We would certainly take the theoretical training out of the hands of private schools with an unverified background, even lacking professionalism, and refer it to the competence of the National Police or the University of Public Service. In this way, we would close the loopholes that create the opportunity for some property guards to obtain a certificate of qualification even without training, so we could also contribute to making the market profile clean.

During the theoretical training, property guards should also be given the opportunity to receive specific training, for example event insurance, value transport, or property security training. We would make it mandatory for security guards who are involved in the security of events with a capacity of more than 150 people to have a professional qualification, and we would also stipulate that only event security guards can be contracted for such events. The practical training should be carried out at a state-accredited asset protection company or at state organizations with extensive experience in event insurance.

The employment of event security guards with language skills and communication training in entertainment venues in party districts would put property protection and the perception of Hungary in a new perspective.

By expending sufficient energy and creating the appropriate funding background, with legislative amendments, the municipal police could take a huge burden off the police's shoulders, and legally and professionally functioning personal and property protection would significantly improve the public security situation by more effectively protecting private property. However, as long as it is not possible for the legislators to meaningfully deal with these problems that are present on a daily basis and the appropriate level of real professional management and control is waiting for them, the current situation will remain and the execution of the tasks will remain within the competence of the police.

The scientific demand for change and improvement, the combination of dogmatics and practice, was discussed at the III. Faculty Day of the Faculty of Law Enforcement of University of Public Service (URL14). The above-mentioned motto is echoed in many of the lectures of the conference entitled 'Position evaluation in law enforcement'. During the presentation of the article 'Ockham's Razor and the Police', Zoltán Balla emphasized and urged the need for better changes that cannot be postponed any longer. In agreement with him, we close our material with his words: *'For this reason, within the framework of this study, my efforts can only be limited to raising some of the questions I consider controversial here and now, and as a result of this confrontation, by recording the legislative and theoretical problems of the subject area, I can provide further research and solution alternatives to develop it – with sufficient professional humility – to stimulate those who are open to the development of the emerging law enforcement science.'* (Balla, 2020).

## References

---

- Balla, Z. (2017). *A rendészet alapjai és egyes ágazatai* [Fundamentals and branches of policing]. Dialóg Campus. <https://doi.org/10.32577/mr.2020.3.1>
- Balla, Z. (2020). Ockham borotvája és a rendészet [Ockham's razor and the policing]. *Magyar Rendészet*, 20(3), 15–26.
- Christián, L. (2014). Két új ág a rendészettudomány fáján. In Gaál, Gy. & Hautzinger, Z. (Eds.), *Rendészettudományi gondolatok: Írások a Magyar Rendészettudományi Társaság megalapításának egy évtizedes jubileuma alkalmából* [Reflections on Law Enforcement: writings on the occasion of the one-decade anniversary of the founding of Hungarian Association of Police Science] (pp. 85–91). Magyar Rendészettudományi Társaság.

- Finszter, G. (2009). Közbiztonság és közbátorság. In Németh, Zs. (Ed.), *Írások Tauber István emlékére: (1949-2003)* [In memory of István Tauber: (1949-2003)] (pp. 177–178). Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem, Állam- és Jogtudományi Kar, Magyar Kriminológiai Társaság, Rendőrtiszti Főiskola.
- Finszter, G. (2012). *A rendőrség joga* [The law of the police]. Duna Mix Kft.
- Gottlieb, G., Krözsel, K. & Prestel, B. (1998). *A magyar rendőrség reformja. Eljárás, módszerek, eredmények* [The transformation of the Hungarian police. Method, process, results]. FelixVerlag, Holzkirchen.
- Kelemen, E. A. & Mitev, A. (2016). Holisztikus szolgáltatásélmény – vendég-utazás és kölcsönös értékteremtés dimenziói az art- és romkocsmák példáján [The holistic service experience - dimensions of guest-travel and mutual value creation in art and ruin pubs]. *Marketing és menedzsment*, 50(3-4), 88–101.
- Kerezsi, K. & Nagy, V. (2017). A rendészettudomány kritikai megközelítése. In Boda, J., Felkai, L. & Patyi, A. (Eds.), *Ünnepi kötet a 70 éves Janza Frigyes tiszteletére* [Jubilee volume in honour of Frigyes Janza, 70 years old] (pp. 273–282). Dialóg Campus.
- Salgó, L. (1994). *Az új típusú közbiztonság* [The new model public security]. Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó.
- Szabó, A. (1980). *Bűnözés-ember-társadalom* [Crime-human-society]. Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó.
- Tóth, J. (1938). *A rendészetfogalom a nemzeti szocialista államban* [The notion of policing in the national socialistic state]. Szent István Nyomda.
- Tóth, J. (2017). Közrendészeti magánbiztonság és magánrendészet közpénzből [Private security in public policing vs. community founded private police]. *Belügyi Szemle*, 65(5), 5–24. <https://doi.org/10.38146/BSZ.2017.5.1>

## Online links in the article

---

URL1: *Általános közzétételi lista*. <https://www.erzsebetvaros.hu/page/altalanos-kozzeteteli-lista>

URL2: *Házak és építészek*. <https://boklaszok.hu/2017/09/17/erzsebetvarosi-latnivalok/>

URL3: *Ki volt valójában Gozsdu Manó, akiről a leghíresebb belvárosi udvar a nevét kapta?* <https://www.szeretlekmagyarorszag.hu/multunk/ki-volt-valojaban-gozsdu-mano-akiorol-a-leghiresebb-belvarosi-udvar-a-nevet-kapta/>

URL4: *Kevesebb autó – tisztább levegő*. <http://www.xn--erzsbevros-r7a3h.hu/nyilvanossag/forgalomcsillapitas/kevesebb-auto--tisztabb-levego>

URL5: *Mi az az airbnb?* <https://travellina.hu/mi-az-airbnb/>

URL6: *Ne hagyd, hogy nélküled döntsenek!* <http://7ker.hu/egyeselet/egyeselet/>

URL7: *Érvénytelen lett a bulinegyedről szóló népszavazás*. [https://index.hu/belfold/2018/02/18/bulinegyed\\_nepszavazas\\_eredmeny/](https://index.hu/belfold/2018/02/18/bulinegyed_nepszavazas_eredmeny/)

- URL8: *Önkormányzati rendeletek*. <https://erzsebetvaros.hu/page/oenkormanyzati-jogszabalyok-es-rendeletek>
- URL9: *Amikor a korrupció emberéletekbe kerül*. <https://444.hu/2019/11/10/amikor-a-korrupcio-emberletekbe-kerul>
- URL10: *‘Colectiv’, documentarul realizat cu contribuția investigațiilor Gazetei Sporturilor, propus la două secțiuni ale premiilor Oscar! Vezi trailerul din SUA*. <https://www.gsp.ro/gsp-special/media/colectiv-documentarul-realizat-cu-contributia-investigatiilor-gazetei-sporturilor-propus-la-doua-sectiuni-ale-premiilor-oscar-vezi-trailerul-din-sua-613192.html>
- URL11: *Világszerte történtek már a bukarestihez hasonló tragédiák*. <https://maszol.ro/belfold/55358-vilagszerte-tortentek-mar-a-bukarestihez-hasonlo-tragediak>
- URL12: *Rendet tettek*. <http://www.police.hu/hu/hirek-es-informaciok/legfrissebb-hireink/bunugyek/rendet-tettek>
- URL13: *Egyesületek*. <https://www.opsz.hu/egyesuletek>
- URL14: *A jövőformáló rendészettudomány*. <https://rtk.uni-nke.hu/hirek/2020/11/23/a-jovoformalo-rendeszettudomany-kari-nap-online-konferenciaival>
- URL15: *Rendészeti szervezetek*. <http://ijoten.hu/szocikk/rendeszeti-szervek>

## Laws and Regulations

---

1999. évi LXIII. törvény a közterület-felügyeletről

2012. évi II. törvény a szabálysértésekről, a szabálysértési eljárásról és a szabálysértési nyilvántartási rendszerről

## Reference of the article according to APA regulation

---

Lippai, Zs., Regényi, K., Csatári, K. & Nagy, T. (2023). Examination of the Budapest Party District from the perspective of private and public security. *Belügyi Szemle*, 71(S12), 29–46. <https://doi.org/10.38146/BSZ.SPEC.2023.2.2>