

Summaries

Justitiële verkenningen (Judicial explorations) is published eight times a year by the Research and Documentation Centre of the Dutch Ministry of Justice in cooperation with Boom Juridische uitgevers. Each issue focuses on a central theme related to judicial policy. The section Summaries contains abstracts of the internationally most relevant articles of each issue. The central theme of this issue (nr. 1, 2009) is *Nodal governance of security*.

Nodal policing

J. Wood and C.D. Shearing

This paper advances a ‘nodal governance’ perspective, which understands the delivery of security as being accomplished through the thinking and practices of various ‘nodes’ or entities characterized by ways of thinking about problems and influencing events. In this light, policing should be understood sociologically as involving the activities of state and non-state entities (e.g. corporations and well-resourced communities) as well as the public police. The authors argue that it is essential for police to recognize the nodal world within which they live and to locate themselves within ‘nodal assemblages’ for the delivery of security. As illustrations, the paper discusses two practical projects devoted to exploring nodal security governance arrangements in the country contexts of South Africa and Australia. The authors add that the question of what precisely nodal policing can or should look like in concrete terms is an empirical matter to be resolved within site-specific contexts.

Citizen participation in local safety networks; on ‘nodal governance’ and ‘anchored pluralism’

R. van Steden

Safety and security are increasingly provided by public-private partnerships. In this respect, commentators claim that we are witnessing a shift from ‘government’ (a hierarchically organized state) to ‘governance’ (a hybrid network of organizations) in the fight against crime and disorder. Criminologist Clifford Shearing interprets interactions within hybrid – public *and* private – networks in terms of *nodal governance*, implying that state coordination of partnerships is not given a priori significance. The state is but

one actor among many. Ian Loader and Neil Walker criticize his position, taking the diametrically opposed view that the state is indispensable for the democratic regulation of public-private networks (*anchored pluralism*). Despite this fundamental disagreement, the perspectives of Shearing and Loader and Walker share an appreciation of citizen participation in local safety networks. However, at least for the Netherlands, it is hardly imaginable how such participation could flourish without any state interference.

Between people; tackling transport criminality by the police, insurers and loss adjusters

M.B. Schuilenburg, A. Coenraads and P. Van Calster

This article discusses what is left aside in the perspective of *nodal governance*: namely the adaptability and dynamics of social reality itself. The challenge is to research '*what actually happens*' without reducing it to collective structures or specific frameworks in advance. Previous to specific structures ('teams') and frameworks ('meetings', 'contracts') there is constant change, movement and difference. By using the work of the French sociologist Gabriel Tarde (1843-1904) the authors research how the nodes police, insurers and loss adjusters cooperate in the fight against transport criminality and how interactions between these nodes take content and shape. Consequently, their cooperation is not interpreted as a static theme, but rather as a dynamic process that requires constant interpretation in terms of relationships, unexpected events, adaptations and coincidences. On the basis of fifteen in-depth interviews the authors show in which way a 'new language' with 'new mechanisms' originates within the cooperation. As a consequence, 'informal contacts', 'goals and interests', 'mutual confidence' and 'information-exchange', which play an important role between the nodes, are constantly re-defined.

Things change and stay the same

A.B. Hoogenboom

Using the concept of chronocentrism, the doctrine that what is current must somehow be superior to what went on before, that ideas, scholars and scholarship inevitably become stale and discredited over time, the author argues the rise and attraction of nodal governance and nodal security fits the definition of chronocentrism. The recent 'discovery' of a multitude of (semi-)public agencies

and private sector actors performing police functions neglect the fact that many of these agencies and actors have a long standing history (sometimes more than a century) and have been subject of many academic studies. Moreover, these studies are richer in their theoretical foundations because of the explanations they give for different functions, goals, interests, cultures and operational styles of public policing, administrative policing and private policing than much of the current language. In many ways nodal governance and nodal security are new labels for ongoing processes of gradual interweaving of different forms of policing. For this reason the use of these concepts is useful in two ways. First, for policy makers and practitioners. For them the new concepts seem to have a function as a motivational strategy. For instance, what was called increasing cooperation in the justice system (*ketensamenwerking*) and public-private cooperation in the eighties and nineties are revitalized using new labels. Second, nodal governance and nodal security, in the academic community 'forces' us to rethink the very notion of policing. Policing increasingly takes place in hybrid organizations and processes in which boundaries between public administration, public policing, regulatory agencies and private security are blurring.

The unravelling of the nodal orientation; looking for prerequisites and critical factors

A. van Sluis and V. Bekkers

In this article the authors try to analyze the prerequisites and critical factors for the successful implementation of a nodal orientation in law enforcement. Their analysis is based on an exploration of the exemplary case of the Dutch national airport Schiphol, one of the most important multi nodal and infrastructural nodes in the Netherlands, where transport by air, road and rail and streams of people and goods intersect. The authors reject naive instrumentalism that sometimes comes along with the nodal orientation. They discuss the possibilities and limitations of high tech, the stipulation of nodal security governance and the dilemma's with regard to the privacy of citizens. They advocate a balance between the need for safety and personal freedom, based on a dialogue in politics and in broader society, and more accountability in the application of high tech detection equipment.

'Burgernet' from a nodal governance perspective*P. Van Calster and M.B. Schuilenburg*

Since the last decennium, the government has stopped being the only organizer and executor of issues of safety and security. After all, as a result of developments on a social, cultural, economical and geographical level, the way of coping with problems of danger and insecurity changed. These new developments and ways of coping can not be grasped in terms of a devaluation of government competence. Instead, new ways of governance came into existence, with their own dynamics and autonomy. In this contribution, we will elaborate on the concept of 'Burgernet', that is a hybrid network in which civilians, the police and the municipalities come together for tackling problems of insecurity. The concept of nodal governance will turn out to be a helpful tool in the analyses.

Nodal governance of security and local security networks; on the limitations of a perspective*J. Terpstra*

This article focuses on the question whether the nodal governance perspective is a useful and insightful instrument to analyse the growing involvement and responsibilities of a multitude of public and private actors in creating public safety and security. Subsequently the author applies the basics of nodal governance to experiences with local security networks in the Netherlands. His conclusion is that the nodal governance perspective has a number of shortcomings. One of these is an underestimation of the crucial role of the police in local security networks. Also, important obstacles to civilian participation in security networks are overlooked. Moreover, the nodal governance thinking doesn't deal with the problem of democratic control of private actors involved in security networks and the absence of guarantees that they will pursue security not only for themselves but for the community as a whole.