Perceptions of Social Processes, Security Issues and the Police in Rural and Urban Local Communities - A Pilot Study

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This paper focuses on discovering the differences of social processes, perceptions of security issues, feelings of safety, and perceptions of police among rural and urban areas, and on the examination of factors influencing social cohesion, perceptions of crime and perceptions of police effectiveness in rural and urban areas. The research was conducted on a sample of criminal justice and security students in Slovenia in 2019. Data analyses show that students living in rural areas perceive less youth deviance and more social cohesion, social ties and community (informal) responses to security issues. Regarding the perceptions of security issues, respondents from rural areas perceive less crime and disorder, and see the police to be more procedurally just and effective than respondents from urban areas.

Further analysis shows different factors influencing social cohesion, feelings of safety and the perceptions of police effectiveness. In the discussion, the authors summarise findings, present limitations of their study, and propose further research.