Governance of security in mass events.
In-depth study on steering processes and dynamics in occasional security networks

Studies on mass events predominantly focus on crowd control (Still, 2014), practical organization (Saerens, 2011), regulations (Schaap, 2014) and have less attention for governance arrangements (Whelan, 2012). However a networked organization is generally perceived as the most appropriate structure to coordinate safety and security (Hayes, 2007). Within mass events, this kind of networks are generally mixed-sector networks and often collaborate within an occasional structure. Mixed-sector networks are often characterized by mixed orientations and perceptions in the sense that the values and strategic orientations of the actors may differ (Klijn & Koppejan, 2016).

The aim of this research is driven by the work of Stenning & Shearing (1981, 1983), Wakefield (2003) & Whelan & Palmer (2007) and starts form the 'mass private property' hypothesis which is identified as a key factor in the growth of private security. Within the 'new spaces', public order by public police was constrained, therefore the property owners provide in their own security measures and agents. Wakefield observed that private security has a different style of policing than state police concerning objectives, core functions and methods of operation. Palmer & Whelan (2007) conclude that the main game within massa event venues is the 'internal' struggle concerned with who controls the auspicing of the different policing forms.

Taking this into account, the purpose of this explorative study is to understand the functioning of an occasional governance arrangement created in a hybrid public space (mass event) by studying how actors who are involved in the event organizations give meaning to the network processes and the common interest. This goal of this project is to study whether these values have an influence on how an occasional network unfolds (formation, development, goalsetting,…) and if this kind of network needs steering and how this steering processes develop.

This presentation provides a conceptual framework and analytical tools to study the complexities involved in occasional security networks. Using the concepts of public administration literature on meta governance and the network perspective, this work contributes to the current security network literature.