

Presentation title:

Situational perspectives on shootings in Sweden: A panel discussion

Speakers: Jerry Ratcliffe (Temple University in Philadelphia, USA), Tamara Herold (University of Nevada, USA), Manne Gerell (Malmö University, Sweden), Spencer Chainey (University College London, UK), Vania Ceccato (KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden)

Gun violence by crime gangs has increased substantially during the last decade in Sweden: 62 people were shot dead in Sweden in 2022, while in 2012, the total was 17, according to the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention. Interstitial spaces close to where people live in most deprived areas are often associated with hot spots of fire-gun violence. A contributing factor could be the increased use of automatic firearms but what do we know about the situational conditions of shootings in Sweden? Are they linked to organized crime? Can situational perspectives inform crime prevention practices? Which lessons can be learned from international cases? These are questions we want to discuss in this panel with support from external research colleagues. Vania Ceccato introduces the session by reporting a few facts about the landscape of fire-arm violence in Sweden. She is followed by Manne Gerell who shows how the risk of shootings increases substantially after a first shooting and the potential for law enforcement to focus on such times and places to make arrests, disrupt retaliations and cool down conflicts. This is then followed by Spencer Chainey who comments about similar patterns being observed in countries such as Brazil and Jamaica and how these observations have been used to introduce new programmes to reduce shootings. Looking at his long experience in policing in Philadelphia, Jerry Ratcliffe reflects upon the increase in lethal violence in Sweden. Finally, Tamara Herold discusses how place-based investigative policing strategies with larger city-driven initiatives can be used to reduce violence, build community resilience and prevent gun-related crime. This is not an ordinary session – it is a panel discussion motivated by research in the area.