

Criminal and Criminological Aspects of Spreading Disinformation

Abstract

This master thesis focuses on the spread of disinformation within criminal law and criminology. The master thesis analyzes and describes the phenomenon of disinformation, detects criminal offences that may be committed in connection with the spread of disinformation and describes such criminal activity from the criminological point of view.

The text of this thesis is divided into three parts, the core of the thesis is in the second and third part.

The first part of the thesis deals with the term of disinformation and related terms, such as misinformation, fake news, hybrid and information warfare, hybrid threat and propaganda, specifically their definitions and explanations.

The second part of the thesis is criminological, therefore it deals with criminological aspects of spreading disinformation. Within the scope of phenomenology, the state and dynamics of crime are described with the help of police statistics. This chapter also addresses the possible characteristics of perpetrators and victims of criminal activity related to spreading disinformation. The etiological chapter analyzes the causes of the spread of disinformation and criminal activity related to such spread. Last chapter of this part deals with crime control, specifically preventive strategies. It describes various methods used to prevent the spread of disinformation or criminal activity related to the spread of disinformation.

The third part of the thesis focuses on the criminal aspects of spreading disinformation. In this part the crimes that can be committed in relation to spreading disinformation are identified and described. In addition, relevant practical examples that show how such crimes can be committed, are presented. The last chapter of this part contains a consideration of whether it would be appropriate to amend the current legislation by criminalizing the spread of disinformation as such, in particular by introducing a new separate criminal offense.

Key words: disinformation, criminal law, criminology