

Working title: The study of Criminal Law-Making Policies (How, Who and Where).

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Background:

The study of the conditions under which legislation is made does not have a solid tradition in Civil Law or Continental Europe legal systems. Legal scholars have traditionally preferred to focus their attention on the interpretation of the law as an artifact created by a supposed rational actor: the legislator. Therefore, attention to law-making in recent History has been, at most, deeply uneven.

At the end of the 20th. Century, however, some efforts started to take shape in Legal Philosophy environments, but it wasn't until 2003 that the first work addressed the topic from a Criminal Law perspective.

Ever since then, this discipline has been growing in the number of researchers involved and topics studied. A proof of it is the emergence in 2013 of two working groups on the matter: the Spanish Group on Criminal Law Making Policy and the European version of it, built as a Working Group of the European Society of Criminology (ESC). The latest development is the creation of the Ibero-American Criminal Law Making Policy Group with representatives of Chile, Colombia and Peru.

These Groups have organized meetings and seminars since they were founded, participated in several conferences and, of course, promoted research and publications.

Research questions:

1. What are these Group's topics of interests, activities and connections with the ESELS?
2. What is the overlapping between them?
3. Can we identify common aims?
4. What are the possible collaborations in the short and medium term?

Results:

1. In all these academic initiatives there is an underlying interest in the improvement of communication processes between the scientific world and decision-making environments.
2. The growing number of empirical studies about issues traditionally approached from exclusively legal perspectives represents a new body of knowledge that can improve the design, implementation and evaluation of criminal policy (and other public policies).
3. The management of academic initiatives that partially overlap is challenging and, to a certain extent, is connected with lobbying strategies in which decisions have to be made in order to become relevant in front of specific stakeholders (the public, the

media, central governments, local or regional governments, public officials, other interest groups, international organizations and institutions, etc.).

4. There are homogenizing forces, like international organizations, as well as similar social, political and institutional context when dealing with public policies (partly thanks to globalization). But there are also challenges in dealing with regulation because of the different national legal systems.

Conclusions:

Along with the implementation of academic initiatives that allow a deeper study and debate of scientifically relevant issues, it is equally necessary to maintain an open conversation about the transfer of knowledge and the role of academia in political decision-making scenarios.

Keywords: Criminal Law, Constitutional Law, Administrative Law.