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Political Culture as a Basis for Local Security and Crime Prevention: A Comparison of the Conditions in Germany and The Netherlands

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In the present discussion about the actual and supposed necessity of new concepts of local security, one fact is often neglected: the success of these concepts strongly depends – apart from the legal and institutional circumstances, the amount of resources and the qualification of the staff involved – on the adaptation of these strategies to the respective national political culture. How pronounced is the citizens' need for safety and order? Which role, in the people's opinion, should the state play with regard to the maintenance and restoration of safety and order? Do the governmental institutions measure up to the citizens' expectations concerning security and does the population have trust in these institutions to fulfil the task properly? Are the citizens willing to participate or do they even wish to? What are their conditions for participation? We will analyse and compare the national shapings of the political culture of Germany and the Netherlands with regard to four distinctive elements in the following article: the comprehensions of state, democracy, citizenship and safety and order. The aim of this article is to demonstrate the relevance of these elements with respect to concepts of local security using an example of a two-nations-comparison.

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