

Global Politics SL —Engagement Activity

Title:

Negotiating Security and Rights: Public Surveillance in Darmstadt

RQ:

To what extent does the use of public surveillance in Darmstadt challenge the balance between collective security and individual rights?

Word count:

XXXX

In an increasingly digital and urbanized world, the use of public surveillance technologies in urban spaces has become widely ubiquitous. Justified by the promise of a collective security, the safeguarding of multiple people against threats ranging from domestic crime to international attacks (“SECURITY”, 2025; “Definition of COLLECTIVE”, 2025), these measures are particularly employed in areas marked by high foot traffic or frequent public unrest. However, the proliferation of these surveillance systems provokes concerns about the integrity of individual rights — in particular the right to privacy, to assembly and associate with others and the freedom of expression (Nandy, 2023). Striking an equilibrium between these seemingly incongruous concerns remains a central challenge in modern democracies, notably because freedom of expression constitutes one of their fundamental cornerstones (“Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression”, n.d.). This issue is markedly salient in Germany, where the historical legacy of state surveillance — both under the Nazi regime (mdr.de, n.d.) and later the GDR (Lichter et al., 2016) — continues to shape public conscience.

References

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