The criminology of place addresses the question of why crime occurs in certain places and attempts to identify possible risk and protective factors. It pushes us to examine very small geographic areas within cities for their contribution to the crime problem (Weisburd, 2015, p. 134). Studies usually show that 50 percent of the crime occurs in about 4 to 5 percent of the street segments (Weisburd, 2004, p. 294). Looking at the distribution of emergency calls among micro places, the international literature shows similar distributions (e.g. Pierce, Spaar & Briggs, 1988; Sherman, Gartin & Buerger, 1989).

There have been no comparable studies for cities in North Rhine-Westphalia or Germany to date, which means that the transferability of these findings to German cities is not automatically given. Also studies are mostly concerned with the spatial distribution of crime without looking at offense-specific differences.

Our study addresses this research desideratum and examines the distribution of crime in micro-segments in German cities. We focus on the concentration of crime in cities with different structures, such as small and large cities. Furthermore, we show differences and similarities in terms of crime-specific distribution and compare these with the distribution and concentration of police measures. The initial results show a similar concentration in micro-segments for residential burglaries. Thus, 50 percent of residential burglaries in 2016 occurred in only 4.6 percent of segments of the cities of Essen and Mülheim a. d. Ruhr (Seidensticker, 2017). The distribution of street crime in Wuppertal, a major German city, is similar: 50 percent is spread over only 3.5 percent of street sections (Dudda, 2021).

With our study, we show connections between socio-structural data, police operations, and offense-specific events, contributing to a better understanding regarding the occurrence of crime in space.