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TO THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

CRIME PREVENTION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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1. CONTEXT AND DEFINITIONS

1.1. The legal and political context

The **Treaty of Amsterdam**, in force since May 1999, established a legal basis for crime prevention activities at EU level. Article 29 states that the “Union’s objective shall be to provide citizens with a high level of safety within an area of freedom, security and justice”. It lists the prevention of crime, “organised or otherwise”, as one of the means towards the attainment of this goal.

Until the entry into force of the Treaty of Amsterdam in May 1999, attention for crime prevention policies at EU level had mostly been limited to the prevention of organised crime. The Action Plan to Combat Organised Crime of 1997¹ identified some priority areas to prevent organised crime and the Vienna Action Plan of December 1998² also included specific measures in this respect.

The **European Council of Tampere** of October 1999 confirmed the importance of effective crime prevention policies in the Union through its conclusions³ nr. 41 and 42, which call for:

- the integration of crime prevention aspects into actions against crime as well as for the further development of national crime prevention programmes. Common priorities should be developed and identified in crime prevention in the external and internal policy of the Union and be taken into account when preparing new legislation;

- the exchange of best practices should be developed, the network of competent national authorities for crime prevention and co-operation between national crime prevention organisations should be strengthened and the possibility of a Community funded programme should be explored for these purposes. The first priorities for this co-operation could be juvenile, urban and drug-related crime."

On 29 November 2000 the Commission submitted a **Communication** to the Council and the European Parliament "The prevention of crime in the European Union: Reflection on common guidelines and proposals for Community financial support".⁴ This Communication was the first step from the Commission to identify priority areas in crime prevention at EU level and to contribute to developing an effective EU strategy. Following this Communication, important developments have taken place, such as the creation of the European Forum for the Prevention of Organised Crime⁵, the establishment of the European Crime Prevention Network⁶ and the adoption of a Council Decision creating the Hippokrates program to co-fund co-operation projects between Member States.⁷

¹ OJ C 251 of 15 August 1997.

² OJ C 19, 23.1.1999, p. 1. Action Plan of 3 December 1998 of the Council and the Commission on how best to implement the provisions of the Treaty of Amsterdam on an area of freedom, security and justice, the Vienna Action Plan

³ OJ C 124 of 3 May 2000.

⁴ COM(2000) 786 final of 29th November 2000

⁵ The establishment of the Forum was foreseen in the Commission Communication mentioned in footnote 1. A first plenary meeting of the Forum took place on 17th and 18th May 2001.

⁶ Council Decision of 28 May 2001 (OJ L 153 of 8.6.2001)

⁷ OJ L 186 of 7 July 2001.

In addition, a specific research topic on crime prevention has been introduced in the 6th EU Framework Programme RTD (Research and Technological Development). This will inter alia help defining common instruments for measuring the extent and the nature of volume crime, evaluating crime reduction strategies and analysing long-term threats.

Like the 2000 Communication, the current Communication also underlines the primary responsibility of the Member States in the field of prevention, since juvenile, urban and drug-related crime occur at the local level. In order to effectively support prevention activities in the Member States, to avoid duplication of efforts and to use resources more efficiently, certain co-operation activities need to be taken at EU level.

The **draft Constitutional Treaty** prepared by the Convention on the future of Europe reconfirms the need to continue to pay adequate attention to crime prevention with its Article III 173. This states that European laws or framework laws may establish measures to promote and support the action of Member States in the field of crime prevention (except the approximation of legislative and regulatory provisions).

1.2. Definitions

1.2.1. *The concept of volume crime*

This Communication limits itself to the prevention of non-organised crime. The Commission is of the opinion that these types of crime can best be defined as volume crime because this type of crime comprises all ranges of crime, which are committed frequently and where victims are easily identifiable. Volume crime is the number one cause of concern for European citizens⁸. Offences are typically committed against property and do often involve physical violence. Examples are domestic burglary, theft from vehicles, common assault, street robbery, etc. These types of crime are covered by the three broad priority areas identified by the Tampere European Council: juvenile, urban and drug-related crime. An important feature of volume crime is that it shows the contours of normal victimisation against households and citizens. This has implications for preventive policies, especially those concerned more with alleviating the commonplace nuisance of these types of crime than with reducing the number of 'headline' offences that more often are committed in the field of organised crime.⁹

However, its importance in terms of causing financial costs to society should also not be underestimated¹⁰, while taking into account that cost estimates vary between Member States.¹¹ And, studies have shown that such crime is often the first step for young people to

⁸ INRA (May 2003). Public safety, exposure to drug-related problems and crime: Public opinion survey. http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/eucpn/projects.html

⁹ Van Dijk, Jan J.M. (1994). Understanding crime rates: On the interactions between the rational choices of victims and offenders. *British Journal of Criminology*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 105-121.

¹⁰ 1) Van Kesteren, John et al. (2001). *Criminal Victimisation in Seventeen Industrialised Countries: Key Findings from the 2000 International Crime Victims Survey*. The Hague: Ministry of Justice, RDC. 2) Barclay, Gordon & Tavares, Cynthia (July 2003). *International Comparisons of Criminal Justice Statistics 2001*. London: Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate. 3) EUCPN (October 2003). *Crime Trends in the EU*. Brussels: European Commission, DG JAI, EUCPN-Secretariat.

¹¹ The most sophisticated national estimates of the costs are available for England and Wales, where the Home Office has published a well researched and analysed report showing the annual costs of crime to be £60 billion or the equivalent of € 1,700 per citizen in 2000. These costs included the costs of anticipatory measures such as private security (about 9%); consequences, such as the impact on victims of loss, suffering and community decay (about 71%); and responses, such as operating expenditures on

get involved in more serious forms of crime, including organised crime. Investing in volume crime prevention would therefore also contribute to curbing more serious criminality.¹²

1.2.2. *The concept of crime prevention*

For the purpose of this Communication, the Commission proposes to use the definition of crime prevention presented in the Council Decision of May 2001 establishing the European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN). According to that definition, "... crime prevention shall cover all measures that are intended to reduce or otherwise contribute to reducing crime and citizens' feeling of insecurity, both quantitatively and qualitatively, either through directly deterring criminal activities or through policies and interventions designed to reduce the potential for crime and the causes of crime. It includes work by government, competent authorities, criminal justice agencies, local authorities, specialist associations, the private and voluntary sectors, researchers and the public, supported by the media".¹³

Preventive measures should thus not only address crime *stricto sensu*, but also cover "anti-social behaviour", which forms, so to speak, a sort of 'pre-stage' of crime. Examples of such behaviour are noisy neighbourhoods, neighbourhoods characterised by teenagers hanging around, drunk or rowdy people, rubbish or litter lying around, deteriorated environments and housing. Such conditions can affect the regeneration of disadvantaged areas, creating an environment in which crime can take hold. Anti-social behaviour undermines the sense of security and responsibility that is needed for people to participate in their community. From a prevention perspective, it is therefore also an important area to concentrate upon.

Prevention should also address the issue of fear of crime, since research¹⁴ shows that such fear can often be as harmful as crime itself. Fear of crime can lead to withdrawal from social life and loss of trust in police and the rule of law.

There is general agreement with the relevant authorities in the Member States that the prevention of crime constitutes a necessary complement to repressive measures. Experience shows that an unbalanced focus on repressive measures leads to ever increasing costs for the criminal justice system, growing prison populations and recidivism rates. If well conceived and implemented, preventive measures can, to varying degrees, contribute to a considerable reduction of crime. That crime prevention can indeed work is illustrated by the following examples¹⁵.

policing, courts and corrections (about 20%). Brand, Sam & Price, Richard (2000). *The Economic and Social Costs of Crime*. London: Home Office Research and Development Statistics Directorate.

¹² Kleemans, E. & Van De Bunt, H.G. (1999). Social embeddedness of organized crime. *Transnational Organized Crime*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 19-36

Sampson, R.J. (1997). Neighborhoods and violent crime: A multilevel study of collective efficacy. *Science*, vol. 277, 15 August, pp. 2-25.

¹³ See Article 1.3 of the Council Decision of 28 May 2001 setting up a European crime prevention network, OJ L 153, 8.6.2001, p. 1.

¹⁴ Irving, B. (2002). *Fear of crime: Theory, measurement and application*. London: Police Foundation.

¹⁵ During the last years a number of overviews have proven evidence that crime prevention measures offer effective ways of getting or driving crime down:

- Sherman, L.W. et al. (1997). *Preventing crime: What works, what doesn't, what's promising*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice. Available at: <http://www.preventingcrime.org/report/index.htm>
- Goldblatt, Peter & Lewis, Chris (Eds.) (1998). *Reducing offending: An assessment of research evidence on ways of dealing with offending behaviour*. London: Home Office. Available at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors187.pdf>

- The risk of domestic burglary can be reduced significantly by taking a number of relatively simple prevention measures, such as the ones described in the Police Population Monitoring Programme, a large Dutch victimisation survey. Such research¹⁶ shows that when five of such prevention measures are taken, the risk of burglaries is reduced dramatically (keeping a light on when leaving out; extra locks on doors and windows; extra outside lighting; burglar alarm and/or dog).
- Evidence from well-researched and evaluated initiatives for juveniles in the 10-16 age group strongly suggests that significant long-term benefits will accrue from effective developmental and early intervention programs. 16 years later participants were found to be much less likely arrested than their counterparts in the control group¹⁷.
- Although it may sound simple, enhanced street lighting is a crime prevention measure that has been proven to work. A systematic review of 13 separate studies shows that enhanced street lighting reduces crime by about 20%.¹⁸ It revealed that areas with enhanced lighting at night also experience less crime during daylight hours. The installation of new lighting may have given a signal to potential offenders that there is increased community investment in the area, greater pride, cohesiveness and informal control, 24 hours a day.
- An important example which should also be mentioned, a landmark case in prevention policy, is the Perry Pre-school program. This initiative, started in the United States in the 1970's, provides pre-school enrichment classes for small children (3 and 4 years old) of low income families, combined with weekly home visits by program staff. Long-term follow-ups revealed that program participants have significantly lower juvenile and adult arrest rates, but also significantly higher rates of high school completion, tertiary education, employment and earnings. In addition to its proven effectiveness the program has passed a cost/benefit analysis positively. Total benefits have been estimated at three times the program costs.

The EU Youth Programme¹⁹, which started at the end of the 1980s, focuses on the well-being, inclusion and political respect of young people in society. Through its activities the Programme has important prevention effects.

- Clarke, Ronald V. (Ed.) (1999). *Situational crime prevention: Successful case studies*. Albany: Harrow and Heston.

- Sansfacon, Daniel & Welsh, Brandon (1999). *Crime prevention digest II: Comparative analysis of successful community safety*. <http://www.crime-prevention-intl.org/english/publications/index.html#CrimePDigestII>

- Waller, Irvin & Sansfacon, Daniel (2000). *Investing wisely in crime prevention: International experience*. <http://www.crime-prevention-intl.org/Telechargement/USbjainvstcrimprev182412.pdf>

- Welsh, Brandon C. et al. (Ed.) (2001). *Costs and benefits of preventing crime*. Oxford: Westview Press.

- Sherman, Lawrence W. et al. (Ed.) (2002). *Evidence based crime prevention*. Routledge.

EUCPN (2003). *Exchange of good practice in crime prevention between practitioners in the Member States*. http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/eucpn/docs/aalborgReport200212.pdf

¹⁶ Willemse, Hans M. (1998). Overlooking crime prevention: Ten years of crime prevention in the Netherlands. *Security Journal*, vol. 7, No. 3, pp. 177-184.

¹⁷ Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence / CSPV (2003). Model programs and promising programs. <http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/bleuprints/default.htm>

¹⁸ Farrington, D.P. & Welsh, B.C. (2002). Improved street lighting and crime prevention. *Justice Quarterly*, vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 313-342.

¹⁹ http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/index_en.html

Finally it should be mentioned that education in prison and in the crucial post-release period can play a vital part in helping offenders to make the difficult transition back into the social mainstream and to reduce the recidivism. Grundtvig, the adult education action within the EU education programme Socrates, supports projects and learning partnerships which have a remarkable impact on the participating institutions and beyond²⁰.

Volume crime most often occurs locally, in cities and towns. This means that effective policies can only be implemented at these levels, while adjusting them to the specific local or regional conditions. It is therefore the responsibility of Member States to ensure the implementation of effective crime prevention policies at all levels on their territory. As a consequence of the local emphasis, there is a need to develop preventative action as close as possible to the grass-roots level and to involve many different kinds of actors. A typical characteristic of prevention measures is therefore also the necessary involvement of a variety of actors, including public (e.g. police, local governments, social work, all these with a particular focus on youth) and private (business associations, insurance companies, citizens' organisations).

1.3. General crime trends

Information regarding crime trends and the public opinion on crime is necessary to get a better understanding of the implication for society if preventive action is not taken, and how crime prevention efforts can reduce tangible and non-tangible costs for victims of crime and recidivism among offender populations.

The nature and volume of crime at the EU-level can be measured by two main sources: (1) official crime statistics registered by the police and (2) the International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS). As regards the first source it is not possible to compare absolute and relative numbers between Member States because of the many differences between Member States in legislation and the different ways official crime statistics are produced. However, for trends in time, these data can be useful.

When looking at the total number of crime recorded by the police the following picture at EU-level emerges. The development in the crime level from 1950 to 1970 shows a steady, though not disquieting, increase. However, since 1970 crime levels accelerated, with a climax in the mid-nineteen-eighties. Since 1990 the total amount of registered crime has remained fairly stable in the 15 Member States. The average annual percentage increase between 1991 and 2001 is around one percent²¹.

The second source that can be used to give a picture of the nature and volume of crime at EU-level is the ICVS²². This survey is the most far-reaching program of fully standardised sample surveys looking at householders' experience of crime in different countries. An estimate of

²⁰ A broader European network has been launched, and support provided for the European Prison Education Association to consolidate and extend its activities. The training of prison educators (and of prison officers, whose role in creating a positive learning environment is vital) requires particular attention in this regard.

²¹ 1) Van Kesteren, John et al. (2001). *Criminal Victimization in Seventeen Industrialised Countries: Key Findings from the 2000 International Crime Victims Survey*. The Hague: Ministry of Justice, RDC. 2) Barclay, Gordon & Tavares, Cynthia (July 2003). *International Comparisons of Criminal Justice Statistics 2001*. London: Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate. 3) EUCPN (October 2003). *Crime Trends in the EU*. Brussels: European Commission, DG JAI, EUCPN-Secretariat.

²² See http://www.unicri.it/international_crime_victim_survey.htm.

absolute levels of crime can be obtained from the ICVS relating to victims' experience of crime. Generally speaking, the ICVS suggests that crime rose between 1988 and 1991, or fell in 1995, and then fell back more in 1999. Comparison with data on crime recorded by the police suggests that the trends from the victimisation survey data are similar to those from the police data.

1.4. Trends in selected crime areas

In addition to the total number of crimes, two specific types of crime recorded by the police are briefly dealt with: domestic burglary (defined as gaining access to a dwelling by the use of force to steal goods) and violent crime (defined as violence against the person, robbery and sexual offences). These crimes are selected since they are, from the victims' point of view, the most serious and costly types of crime, which cause great concern among urban population and occur frequently in all Member States.

There is a remarkably sharp decrease of domestic burglary in many EU Member States. One of the main reasons for this spectacular fall is probably the influence of increased preventive behaviour among the population. According to the latest outcomes of the International Crime Victims Survey the use of crime preventive measures among the population is increasing in most countries. The proportion of homes with special door locks has generally increased since 1992. Average alarm ownership increased from 8% in 1992 to 14% in 2000, but the problem still exists. Domestic burglary implies a violation of one's personal space. In these cases the negative effects of victimisation are greater than just the damage in material terms.

In the year 2000 the police in the 15 Member States recorded a total number of 1.511.000 domestic burglary cases. This means an average of 4.140 cases per day, 172 per hour and almost 3 cases every minute.

Statistics unfortunately indicate an increase in the level of violent crime at the EU-level. This seems to hold particularly for violence among juveniles. When comparing the trends in violent crimes recorded by the police over the years 1995 to 2000, an increase in violence is observed in twelve of the Member States. Spain, France and the Netherlands show the sharpest increase (+ 50 - + 41 %).

In the year 2000 the police in the 15 Member States recorded a total number of 1.770.000 cases of violent crime. This means an average of 4.850 cases per day, 202 per hour and more than 3 cases every minute.

1.5. Public opinion on crime

Next to statistics derived from police sources and victimisation surveys, public opinion surveys on crime also serve as important tools to measure the fear of crime, risk perception of victimisation, and opinions on crime and crime prevention²³.

These show that the feeling of insecurity has increased slowly but steadily across the EU as a whole between 1996 and 2002. In autumn 2002, women and the elderly are the demographic groups who are most likely to feel insecure. The level of contact with drug-related problems

²³ INRA (2003). Public safety, exposure to drug-related problems and crime: Public opinion survey. For the full report, executive summary and tables:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/eucpn/projects.html.

in the area of residence also increased across the EU over the same period. Younger respondents were most likely to report such contact. In all Member States, over half of all respondents felt that better policing would help reduce crime. Across the EU, respondents were significantly more likely to think that young people would be more effectively deterred from crime by targeted crime prevention programmes than by tougher sentencing. A majority of respondents also thought that poverty and unemployment and lack of discipline were factors that could encourage youth to commit crime.

1.6. Expected future crime trends

Crime is changing continuously. Offenders adapt to countermeasures. Offenders misappropriate, mistreat or misuse new products, services and systems, and misbehave in newly created environments²⁴. This means that the authorities should be permanently scanning for new threats and developments on the crime market. In this way large-scale crime preventive effects can be achieved. However, many past efforts have shown that some developments were entirely unexpected. On the basis of a number of recent initiatives²⁵ that looked ahead to identify new crime threats and developments, a number of major developments from social, technological or economic change can be assessed.

In general, society will be more diverse, networked, better educated, more prosperous and better informed, but with potentially more people at risk. The increased movement of people, services, goods and new technologies brings enormous opportunities for prosperity and growth, but it can also provide new opportunities to commit crimes. Some groups remain excluded from the trends of prosperity and learning: one-parent families, drug and alcohol abusers, people living anonymously alone in households and marginalised areas, immigrants, and second and third-generation migrants. New technology might create more opportunity for crime by: providing easier access to systems, premises, goods and information; removing geographical obstacles to crime; increasing the scale of potential rewards; and increasing anonymity in committing crime or consuming its proceeds.

Due to these developments, the authorities need to prevent and respond to more specialised crimes, such as electronic theft, whose scale and speed may be increased by new technologies. In the years to come governments will need to develop prevention policies to adapt to societal changes and to emerging crime patterns. National crime prevention policies need to be able to respond in an innovative way to the challenges that such developments bring.

2. DEVELOPMENTS AT EU LEVEL

Due to the fact that volume crime occurs at the local level, effective policies can only be taken at that level, with support from the national one. Certain co-operation activities need to be taken at EU level, however, in order to effectively support activities at national level, to avoid duplication of efforts and to use resources more efficiently.

²⁴ Ekblom, Paul (2002). Future Imperfect: Preparing for the Crimes to Come. Criminal Justice Matters, Winter 2002, pp. 38-40.

²⁵ In 2002 the U.K. Foresight Programme produced the report Turning the Corner (available from www.foresight.gov.uk) Dutch Ministry of Justice (2001), Justitie Over Morgen: een Strategische Verkenning, The Hague.

2.1. Achievements in the Member States

Different Member States have had varying degrees of success in the field of volume crime prevention²⁶.

Despite the positive developments in a majority of Member States there are still a number of obstacles, which hinder the effective prevention of volume crime. These can be briefly described as follows.

Implementation difficulties

There is growing evidence that successful crime prevention measures do exist and can be applied to many forms of delinquent behaviour. However, the challenge is how to put this knowledge into practice. Often, existing good or best practices are not used in official crime prevention policies and practices. There seems to be a gap between the results from research and crime prevention policies and practices, which can be explained by the following.

There are many different partners and organisations operating in the crime prevention field, which often do not operate in a co-ordinated manner as would be desired. Another difficulty is related to insufficient inter-linkage between information of the many authorities and organisations involved in crime prevention (police, youth workers, chambers of commerce, municipal social services departments, etc.). The limited use of the large amount of information contributes to the measures taken not being in accordance with the actual problem.

There is still not very much knowledge for quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis and of all possible preventive measures, their relevance, limitations and successes.

There are ample cases of crime prevention still getting limited attention compared with the other chains of the criminal justice system. The limited means and human resources lead to the fact that necessary long-term planning is often replaced by a short-term approach and that insufficient attention is paid to the proper implementation of prevention projects.

How to bridge the gap

A number of measures can remove the above obstacles. Descriptions of best and good practices should be more user friendly particularly for those working in daily practice. In case of the recruiting, selection and promotion of management staff and personnel implementing the crime prevention policy, greater importance should be attached to the knowledge of professional literature and analysing methods and their application in crime prevention practice. Subsidising authorities should draw the attention of those implementing prevention programs to existing best and good practices and to the possibilities of making use of them. Adequate process and impact evaluation should be a standard condition for agreement with or support of any crime prevention scheme. The exchange of information between various partners should be rewarded. There are Member States which place obligations on local authorities, the police, police authorities, health authorities and probation committees (amongst others) to co-operate in the

²⁶ Over the last years a majority of them has developed crime prevention policies. Determining factors behind successful policies are usually a political commitment at the highest level, making available adequate resources for prevention, guidance to local and regional governments, and a close co-operation between public authorities and society, including the private sector. It is important to note that these factors are included in the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime of 2002 (see also footnote no.33).

development and implementation of a strategy for tackling crime and disorder in their area (including exchanging information)²⁷. These organisations have to consider changed working practices, internal priorities and their relationships both with other agencies and with the wider community.

Properly implemented schemes that fail in terms of product target, but contribute to the knowledge of the causes of this failure should be rewarded as successes. Governments should set up dedicated professional units that take the responsibility for leadership on crime prevention and for the application and implementation of evidence-based crime prevention interventions. Crime prevention measures need time to be implemented and require a number of years to fully develop and be evaluated. Because many of today's crime problems require solutions that extend beyond traditional criminal justice boundaries, new system wide responses must be encouraged by government having the same political status as other chains in the criminal justice system.

If European crime prevention policies want to improve justice and security, the implementation and application of successful and evidence-based crime prevention is an absolute pre-condition.

2.2. Achievements at EU-level

Following the November 2000 Communication, the Union has adopted important instruments to contribute to more effective crime prevention throughout the Union, such as the European Crime Prevention Network and the Hippokrates and AGIS funding programmes.

2.2.1. The European Crime Prevention Network

On 28 May 2001, the Council adopted a Decision establishing the European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN)²⁸. The objectives of the network are to contribute to developing the various aspects of crime prevention at Union level and to support crime prevention activities at local and national level. Although covering all types of criminality, the Network shall pay particular attention to the fields of juvenile, urban and drug-related crime. In this respect the Network should facilitate co-operation, contacts and exchanges of information and experience between Member States, national organisations, the Commission and other networks specialising in crime prevention matters. Another important task of the Network is the collection and analysis of information on existing crime prevention activities.

Achievements so far

The Network has achieved good results since its beginning in 2001. For the first time ever, Member States representatives and experts have begun meeting regularly to exchange experiences, set a common strategy and priorities for action and research on the basis of annual programs. A beginning has been made to inventarise prevention policies which have proven to be effective (good practices). The first conference for the exchange of good practices on the issues of youth crime/ethnic minorities, domestic burglaries and drug-related robberies was organised on 7-8 October 2002 in Denmark with co-funding from the Hippokrates programme. A second conference held in Rome on 11-12 November 2003 represented a further important step in building up an EU-wide body of good prevention practices.

²⁷ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs/cdaindex.html>

²⁸ OJ L 153, 8.6.2001, p. 1.

Progress has been achieved in the development of a common methodology to prepare, implement and monitor prevention projects. The establishment of expert groups has enabled progress as for example in tackling the problem of theft of mobile phones as a serious form of street crime²⁹ and improving co-operation between the public and the private sector. Expert meetings have also led to a better view on gaps in research and ways to fill these. In this context the Network Secretary is currently preparing the implementation of five studies on subjects like juvenile violence, car-theft index, fear of crime, bullying in schools and the costs and benefits of crime prevention.

Considerable work has been done in collecting, describing and improving the quality and comparability of Member States criminal justice statistics. The EUCPN Subgroup on Crime and Victimisation established an inventory of the information available on national and cross-national crime statistics to provide easy reference for policymakers in the Member States. The group focused on (street) robbery, domestic burglary and car theft. In May 2003 it produced a report recommending how to improve and apply cross-national statistics in prevention policies.

The website of the EUCPN has become an effective tool for providing information, both to practitioners and the general public, on Member States' prevention policies, the activities of the EUCPN. The Network has established co-operation links with the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction in Lisbon and with Europol.

Good progress was achieved also as regards the development of a common methodology to prepare, implement and evaluate concrete crime prevention projects. Such a methodology is necessary to improve the quality of prevention projects wherever carried out in the Union and to enable a standardised comparison between countries. The discussions in the EUCPN focused on the so-called '5 I's approach. The 5 'I's refer to the five steps to be taken in the description and evaluation of each crime prevention project/measure.³⁰ The EUCPN plans to have agreement on the 5 I's approach between the Member States in the next few months. It is important to formalise such agreement so that its effective application is ensured.

Difficulties faced by the EUCPN

The Council Decision establishing the Network calls for an evaluation of its activities in the three years following the adoption of the Decision³¹, i.e. before the end of 2004. In order to assist the Council in making its evaluation next year the Commission considers it necessary that the institutional structure of the EUCPN needs to be subject of a thorough assessment. Despite the results achieved so far, the functioning of the Network needs to be improved considerably. Major difficulties stem from the facts that the network does not have any

²⁹ The expert meeting on mobile phone theft has led to a meeting between the Commission, manufacturers, providers and interested Member States in June 2003 to clarify actions that should be taken at national and EU level. Discussions are continuing, on the basis of a questionnaire, to determine, normally before the end of 2003, which actions are most effective at each level and who should take concrete initiatives.

³⁰ Ekblom, Paul (2003). The 5I's Framework (the Five 'I's refer to: 1) Intelligence: gathering and analysing information. 2) Intervention: blocking, disrupting or weakening the causes of crime. 3) Implementation: converting the intervention principles into practical methods. 4) Involvement: mobilising other agencies, companies and individuals to play their part in implementing the intervention or acting in partnership. 5) Impact and process evaluation.
http://europa.eu.int/com/justice_home/eucpn/practices.html

³¹ Article 6 of the Council Decision on the establishment of the European Crime Prevention Network of 28 May 2001, OJ L 153, 8.6.2001, p. 1.

institutional structure, that the budget is not adequate and no clear financial rules exist. In addition the Secretariat with a staff of 1,5 person is too small to fulfil its tasks properly, also in view of the fact that the Network will comprise 25 full members from 1 May 2004 onwards. The Commission therefore strongly believes that in order to become fully effective the EUCPN should profit from the Community budget, possess financial rules, which stipulate clearly how the budget should be used and a Secretariat staffed with an adequate number of persons. Options in this respect are either to give the Network legal personality or to incorporate the Network into the Commission services.

Another problem is that the full potential of the Network can not be realised as long as not all Member States have committed themselves to formally adopting and implementing national general crime prevention policies. As long as not all Member States have such policies, there is the risk that the activities of the Network, however useful they may be in themselves, will take place in partial isolation, without an adequate follow-up in the national crime prevention practice in the Member States.

2.2.2. The Hippokrates and AGIS programmes

Following the November 2000 Communication on crime prevention, the Union has adopted two instruments to co-fund co-operation projects between Member States in the field of crime prevention, Hippokrates in 2001 and AGIS in 2002.

The “Hippokrates”-programme³² aims at encouraging co-operation between all the public and private organisations in the Member States involved in the prevention of crime. It was established for a period of two years, 2001 and 2002. The priorities for general crime prevention were based on the three main issues identified by the Tampere European Council and the work programme of the EUCPN, namely juvenile -, urban- and drugs-related crime. In 2001 23 projects out of 60 project proposals were funded. In 2002 the programme³³ received 44 projects of which 14 got financial support. Examples of successful project proposals were co-operation between the public and the private sector in crime prevention, football hooliganism and designing out of crime.

At the proposal of the Commission the Council, on 22 July 2002, adopted a framework programme to co-fund co-operation projects in police and judicial co-operation in criminal matters³⁴, the AGIS programme which inter alia replaced the Hippokrates programme.

In 2003 30 out of 54 crime prevention projects were co-funded. Examples of successful proposal include the design of secure urban environments, the exchange of best practices on juvenile and urban crime as well as costs of crime and their distribution.

2.3. The European Crime Prevention Award

The European Crime Prevention Award (ECPA) is an initiative from the Netherlands, Belgium and the UK from 1997. The idea behind it was to give an incentive to crime prevention actors by selecting for the European award, on a yearly basis, the two best crime prevention projects. The projects had to be chosen on the basis of established criteria, such as their repeatability, respect for local conditions, and effectiveness in actually reducing crime.

³² OJ L 186, 7.7.2001, p. 11.

³³ 2002 Report for the Hippokrates programme, SEC(2003) 1176 of 23 October 2003.

³⁴ OJ L 203, 1.8.2002, p. 5.

Since then, six other Member States have joined the ECPA, which was born as an initiative from six Member States (Denmark, France, Sweden, Portugal, Greece, and Finland).

The objectives of the Award are to contribute to the reduction of crime and the fear of crime, the sharing of good practices on an international level and the further encouragement of crime prevention activities. The Award offers a unique possibility to raise awareness of crime prevention in a very broad context including field workers as well as official representatives from both Member States and Candidate Countries.

In order to make the ECPA better known and hopefully accepted by all Member States, the EU has co-financed the initiative through the Hippokrates programme. Thanks to this financial aid, the ECPA of 2002 was not only limited to the presentation of best and most promising practices, but also comprised an in-depth discussion on the implementation and the evaluation of the participating projects. The Commission is considering that, in order to provide for better coherence and stability, in the future the ECPA should become an integral part of the EUCPN and include all EU Member States.

3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Volume crime prevention is a relatively new, but potentially effective, policy instrument to reduce crime. It should therefore constitute a policy area in its own right within the European Union. In order to ensure more effective crime prevention throughout the Union, the Commission considers it essential that the following conditions are fulfilled, both in the Member States and at EU level.

3.1. Essential conditions in the Member States

Local authorities first

Volume crime typically occurs at local level. Thus the authorities at those level are first of all responsible for addressing the problem, ideally supported by the national level. Co-operation at EU level can provide an important facilitating and supporting role, without, however, substituting national policies of the Member States.

National crime prevention policies are key

The majority of Member States has developed volume crime prevention policies, but a considerable minority of them not yet. The Commission therefore proposes that all Member States formally declare their commitment to establishing effective volume crime prevention policies.

Following internationally agreed standards is important

Achievement of successful crime prevention policies requires a number of essential conditions. Many of them figure on the list of the **United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime**³⁵. These include *inter alia* the existence of a political commitment at the highest level, adequate resources including funding for structures and activities, guidance

³⁵ See United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Report on the eleventh session (16-25 April 2002) – Economic and Social Council, Official Records, 2002; Supplement No. 10.

from the national level to local level as well as efficient public-private partnership. Crime prevention strategies should also, when appropriate, pay due regard to the different needs of men and women and consider the special needs of vulnerable members of society. Differentiation is also important to both in relation to offenders and victims. The Commission is of the opinion that, in the interest of effective crime prevention, throughout the Union, it is necessary to incorporate the UN crime prevention principles into Member States' national prevention policies.

3.2. Essential conditions at EU level

In order to effectively support activities at national level, to avoid duplication of efforts and use resources more efficiently, co-operation activities regarding volume crime prevention need to be taken at EU level also.

In the Commission's view, the main tasks and activities to be performed at the EU level are: exchange of experience between policy makers and experts in prevention; define and agree priorities for action; agree on crime prevention policies/measures which have proven to work (good practices); agree on uniform methodologies to prepare, implement and evaluate prevention policies; enhance awareness throughout the Union on the relevance of general crime prevention; agree on joint research to be undertaken to fill research gaps; undertake joint prevention projects; monitor and evaluate national prevention policies; improve the comparability of national statistics to identify differences in the level of crime (so as to be able to identify causes for successful/unsuccessful policies).

These tasks and activities would benefit from the support of the Member States, while keeping in mind that the activities which the Member States undertake jointly in the context of the EUCPN can never substitute concrete national crime prevention activities.

In order to enable the EUCPN to function more effectively and to address the difficulties explained in section 2.2.1, the Commission intends to submit a formal proposal regarding the future institutional structure of the Network following its evaluation in 2004.

The Commission proposes that in the next few years Member States and the Commission, in the context of the EUCPN, focus in particular on the following five main areas for priority action, in order to achieve concrete progress more rapidly:

Priority types of crime

First of all there is a need to identify and find formal agreement on the exact types of volume crime on which the Member States should focus their attention. The European Council conclusions of Tampere and the Council Decision establishing the EUCPN have selected juvenile, urban and drugs related crime as priority areas. These are too broad categories, however. The Commission therefore proposes to subdivide them, exhaustively, into all the various types of crime which fall under these three categories (e.g. street robberies, theft from vehicles, burglaries,). On the basis of that list priority types of crime should be selected for particular attention.

Good practices inventory

Secondly and in parallel, an inventory should be made and agreed upon of all existing good practices to tackle each of the selected types of crime. Member States should subsequently

agree on which of the good practices are most effective and then commit themselves to begin implementing each of the good practices for the relevant type of crime

A common methodology – the 5 I's approach

A third priority area is to find agreement on a common methodology to prepare, implement and evaluate concrete crime prevention projects. This is necessary to improve the quality of prevention projects and to enable a standardised comparison between countries. The Commission proposes to build on the good progress that has been achieved in this area in the past few years in the Union as regards the so-called '5 I's approach and to find formal agreement in the next few months.

Monitoring and evaluation

An important activity to be undertaken at EU level is also the regular monitoring and evaluation of Member States' general crime prevention policies. Experiences with the joint evaluation mechanism established under the Joint Action of 5 December 1997³⁶ in the area of organised crime have shown that this can play a useful role in monitoring progress, comparing experiences, drawing policy conclusions and informing the European citizen. Such a solution should therefore be proposed regarding volume crime prevention as well.

Statistics

Finally, European co-operation is hindered by differences in definition, recording procedures and the structure of crime and criminal justice statistics. Member States need to have sound statistics on the occurrence of priority types of crime. Only an increase in the comparability of statistical data on crime can help to identify differences between the level and type of crimes at national, regional and city-level and to identify effective measures for targeted interventions and policies at EU-level.

Final remarks

On the basis of a discussion of this Communication with the European Parliament and the Council and taking into account the conclusions of the EUCPN evaluation to be carried out by the Council in mid-2004, the Commission intends to put forward by the end of 2004 proposals to implement the above recommendations in order to achieve quicker and more tangible progress regarding the prevention of volume crime in the Union.

³⁶ OJ L 344 of 15.12.1997, p. 7-9. In the Joint Action the Member States agree on a mechanism for a regular peer evaluation of the application at national levels of legislative instruments in the fight against organised crime.