

# An Investigation into Beneficial Urban Policies in Crimes Prevention

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## Abstract

In today's world, growth in urbanization has been regarded as a considerable phenomenon which should have been looked from sociological outlook. If the urban environment is considered and the features of urban living is also considered, it can perceive that why the way has paved for urban crime. To understand what the concept of urban crime is in particular and what the concept of apartment crime is, features of city and concepts of urbanizations should be analyzed deeply; then issue of city neighborhoods and ghettos from perspective of definition for aforementioned concepts, problems to urban neighborhoods should be analyzed as a part of urban environment. The main point is why crimes in urban environment have special features. In this regards, the discussion on density of urban environments and physical condition of urban housing has provided to know whether they cause urban crimes or not. If we assume that violence describes the urban crimes and the physical conditions of city associates to the intensification of urban crime, whether this will pave the way. All these have represented to known what policy is more effective in prevention from urban crimes. Whether urban policies are intended as the criminal policies or the urban policies are intended as the preventive sociocultural policies. In this issue, urban policies have a considerable point in situational prevention. In this research it should consider two issues as follows: Successful urban policies in others countries and expression of their experiences, policies of United Nations in prevention from urban crimes.

**Key words:** Urban policies, Prevention, Crimes

## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, urbanization has appeared as a social phenomenon in all the communities. If we look into the urban population in the world, we can properly perceive that currently half of the world population live in cities and the existing patterns by 2025 indicate that two third of the world population will live in cities by those years. The cities in the world develop with speed of one million people per minute. Nowadays, cities play a major role in development. However concern about growth in urban population is more severe. If we intend to give a clear explanation for growth in urban population, we should say that growth in urban population is 2.5 times more than growth in population of rural regions. It is expected

that cities become the living area for two third of the world population by 2025. Currently, the world requires explanation for urban environment and even the living is increasingly under influence of the changes in the rural villages which raise due to growth of cities. Increase in urban population in developing countries is faster than population growth in developed countries. Nowadays, in contrast to any population in developed countries, there are almost two urban populations in developing countries. This figure will reach to 4 persons by 2025. Fast rate of growth in urban population restricts the governments' ability in supply of early services on one hand and avoidance of social problems on the other hand. Governments' disability results in various problems such as poverty, unemployment, environment pollution, violence and crime. With regard to the studies on California urban studies, population in urban regions in capital of Americas, Asia, Latin America and Russia indicate extension in these regions. Urbanization is a clear issue spontaneously which has existed till three quarters of a century, and today this industrial civilization is a total civilization for western Europe and northern America. In this process, what appears as an unfavorable fact in urban environment is increasing extension of crimes.

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If we refer to this social fact that the crime, poverty and disease are the calamities gripping the communities, urban crime especially the violent crime has had a negative impact in social, human and economic development so that the governments have sought a way to get rid of it. Nowadays, it can be believed that however developed countries have progressed in the context of poverty, disease and ignorance and removed the aforementioned problems, they have progressed so slowly in the context of crime. Increase of crimes in US in 1993 led to prediction of required budget to employ one hundred police, indicated sensitivity of crime especially urban crime. The offices of US statistical studies have predicted crime in 1987 in this country based on the existing data and development of crime in previous years and decades and predicted the crime at the 1921s. *Danny Szabo* has expressed the crime development in the 2000s in international crime journal;

### Different Approaches to Crime Prevention

Crime prevention approaches have developed out of different traditions. North American criminologists, for example, have drawn from public health models of disease prevention to create their own crime prevention typology. As a result, the following typology has been developed:

- Primary crime prevention - universal approaches that aim to prevent crime before it occurs;
- Secondary prevention – approaches that focus on those people who are at the highest risks of victimisation and perpetration of violence;
- Tertiary prevention – approaches that focus on people who have already been victimised or violent.

In addition to the typology presented above, cities can distinguish other approaches, which are not exclusive, but complementary to one another. These include:

- Situational crime prevention: Reduction of crime through the management, design and augmentation of the physical environment. The installation of surveillance cameras in public spaces, controlling access to buildings, car steering locks are some of the examples of situational measures.
- Social crime prevention: Supporting individuals and communities through social, economic, health, educational measures. The aim is to strengthen community bonds, increase levels of informal social control and thus deter actual or potential offenders.
- Prevention of recidivism: Supporting the reintegration of offenders.

Some of the practices presented throughout this report have privileged a particular approach, by e.g. targeting a specific area or a specific group of the population considered at-risk of being victims or perpetrators. Community is highlighted as important for the success

of crime prevention with the issues of equality and social inclusion manifested in the wider social context.

### Comparative Study on Crime Prevention in Various Countries *Crime prevention in Europe*

The emergence of a European crime prevention policy.

The European Urban Charter<sup>6</sup>, proclaimed in 1992 and which brings together a series of principles on proper urban management, is a precursory document. Indeed, it constitutes a major effort in the elaboration of a body of action principles concerning crime prevention meant to transcend national policies by basing itself on the pertinence of this policy at the city level. Concerning the European Union, the development of a crime prevention model came later. While the Stockholm Conference (1996) examined the link between crime prevention and social exclusion, it was the Amsterdam Treaty (1997) that marked an important step in the area of crime prevention at the European Union level. Indeed, in its Article 29 it mentions crime prevention amongst the policies of the European Union working towards an area of freedom, security and justice. Subsequently, the European Council of Tampere (1999) stressed the importance of this objective in its conclusions, calling for the integration of crime prevention in the strategies for combating crime and setting study priorities.

### Crime Prevention Policies in the Countries Represented in the Project

In the implementation of a crime prevention policy, it is not only the rate or the types of crime which are the only factors determining the choice of priorities for action. Eleven project partners come from eight different countries where frameworks for action differ to a lesser or greater degree. It is therefore necessary to present the correlations between national, intermediate and local level in the area of crime prevention in each of the Member States represented in order to understand the main differences and similarities and identify the potential for the transferability of implemented programmes and activities.

#### *Crime prevention policies in France*

In France, a preoccupation for prevention and a discussion on a 'feeling of insecurity' began with the Peyrefitte Report (1977). A few years later (in 1982), a Mayors' Commission on Security, chaired by G. Bonnemaïson, turned in the report entitled *Face à la délinquance: Prévention, répression, solidarité*<sup>9</sup>. The report recommended a prevention policy that was to be applied, first and foremost before violence and crime, to the initial causes of criminality. With the Bonnemaïson Report, a new era dawned, wherein public policies in the face of criminality sought to strike a fair balance between repression and prevention. The State

remains a central player in the sphere of security and prevention. In keeping with the principle of security co-production inscribed in the law in 1995, several ministries are competent as regards the fight against insecurity: The Ministries of the Interior, Defence, Employment, the City, Justice and Education

For a long time, prevention policy has remained within the competence of a more overall policy, the City Policy, coordinated by a specially-dedicated body created in 1988, the DIV (partner of the project), endowed with a prevention unit and now placed under the authority of the Ministry for Social Cohesion in charge of the city. At the département, or intermediate, level, a reform that started in July 2002 established Departmental Security Conferences and modified the Departmental Prevention Councils, which propose and encourage prevention initiatives and aide to victims. For the local level, the decree of 28 October 1997, created new instruments for ensuring the relation of the State with the municipalities: The Local Security Contract (CLS). This was a contractual arrangement established by the mayor and representatives of the State (the Prefect) and Justice (Public Prosecutor) and eventually extended to other partners. These contracts whose methodology was specified in a practical guide intended for local players<sup>10</sup>, is based on a preliminary analysis of crime and the feeling of insecurity. They define a concerted plan of prevention and security actions to be carried out on a territory. They are distinguishable from British and Belgian partnerships owing to less-strict supervision on the part of the supralocal authorities, especially due to their not allocating financing to the cities as directly.

### ***Crime prevention policies in the United Kingdom***

Five Towns Initiative of 1985 marked the beginning of a crime prevention policy in the UK, under the impetus of the government of Margaret Thatcher. It was followed, two years later, by the Safer Cities program, which consisted of financing crime prevention activities at the local level. It was primarily a question of developing a cross-disciplinary approach in the fight against crime on the part of administrations, of making populations aware of their responsibilities and promoting the involvement of the private sector in prevention (given concrete expression the same year by the setting up of the Crime Concern organisation) without giving more powers to the local government. The Morgan Report of 1991 introduced the concept of ‘community safety’ and emphasised that crime reduction should be ‘holistic’ covering both situational and social approaches. It noted that crime reduction was a peripheral issue for major agencies and a core activity of none of them and advocated the development of multi-agency crime prevention co-ordinated by local authorities. Six elements were identified, crucial to multi-agency crime

reduction work: Structure, leadership, information, identity, durability and resources.

At the regional level, nine crime reduction units for England and one for Wales are in charge of handling crime prevention by organizing partnerships and coordinating the regional players in order to apply the major national orientations. At the local level, the authorities in England and Wales are responsible for many key local services with a significant impact on community safety, including education, fire and rescue, housing, social services and others. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act (CDA, 1998) placed a statutory duty on local authorities, police authorities and fire and rescue authorities to take account of the need to prevent crime and disorder when exercising all of their functions. With this Act, 376 local partnerships corresponding to districts were set up (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) or Community Safety Partnerships in Wales). A new legal obligation imposed on the local authorities concerned the development, co-ordination and promotion of a ‘local neighbourhood security partnership’. An assessment of the actions undertaken allows for stressing that these local partnerships reflect more the orientations defined at the national level (fight against domestic violence, burglaries and drug-related crime) than at the local level, notably because the financing came in large part from the national level, which thereby maintained control over the priorities. In fact, one could say the national government acts as a financing, programming as well as managing institution. In total, around 70% of the financing of local security polices is provided from the State.

### **Evaluation of Local Safety Strategies**

Concerning evaluation of local safety strategies and activities, this can differ considerably from one country to another. The city of Fidenza organises annual polls. An ‘U.P.R.’ counter lists citizens’ opinions daily and produces reports on the activities carried out by the municipality. Evaluation of activities in the field of security in Hungary is done each year in the form of annual reports prepared by the local police. They are subsequently discussed and accepted by the Board of Local Governments and published so that local communities can be informed of the current crime situation. In Germany, more and more money is spent on the evaluation of crime prevention efforts. Nonetheless, it only started systematically with the Düsseldorf Report<sup>30</sup> prepared by the police and some Universities in the south of Germany who have worked on a standard questionnaire for surveys on the feeling of insecurity.

In the city of Brussels, on the level of the preventive part of the Security and Prevention Contract, evaluation

is much more structured and can take several forms such as:

- Setting up and feeding the permanent database by gathering the most specific indicators in terms of evaluation of impact;
- An annual project evaluation by the internal evaluator and the project coordinator, and inclusion of the evaluation form in the annual report;
- Turning in performance indicators every four months by the project coordinator (and feedback meeting with the teams);
- An annual visit of the project by the advisor from the Ministry;
- An annual evolution interview of the personnel by the coordinator.

### Existing and Potential Partnerships in Crime Prevention

A wide range of partnership institutions has been determined by project partners with whom local authorities have the possibility and sometimes obligation to co-operate in the area of crime prevention.

On the local level a particular importance is attached to the role of the mayor who acts as a local coordinator facilitating the collaboration between various stakeholders within the city. A successful mayor can efficiently organize cooperation with different actors in the city itself (e.g., the police), around the city (e.g., universities) and outside the city (e.g., organisations and institutions on the national and international level).

### CONCLUSION

One of the fundamental objectives of the Cultures of prevention project was development of the conditions and recommendations for the transfer of policies and

practices in the area of crime prevention taking into account the cultural differences and preparation of a basis for a European model of crime prevention.

Numerous discussions held during working seminars in Liverpool, Budapest and Brussels shed light on similarities across Europe and facilitated determination of a set of recommendations built around 6 priority themes presented in details below, common to all cities/regions/countries represented in this project.

Without masking the prevalence of certain types of crime from one country to another (more or less significant occurrences of violence with weapons, urban violence, organised crime or even domestic violence), these different European countries are equally exposed to an increase in crime which particularly affects cities and is often expressed in the form of juvenile delinquency and drug-related crimes. It should consider two issues as follows: Successful urban policies in other countries and expression of their experiences, policies of United Nations in prevention from urban crimes.

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