

# **Report from the working group**

## **„Cost-benefit analysis of crime prevention“**

**Chair: Daniel Sansfacon (ICPC)**

**Rapporteur: Radim Bureš (Czech Republic)**

Chair opened the debate by clarification of some concepts:

- Evaluation studies – they provide a base for any cost-benefit analysis but they are not cost-benefit analysis as such.
- Evaluation of the impact.

Then the chair opened a round table in order to describe the situation in participating states regarding cost-effectiveness studies:

First, the question was raised about the state of art of cost-benefit analysis in European countries.

A round table indicated that there is very little real cost-benefit analysis or even impact analysis in European countries. There is some process evaluation and quality control of preventive projects. There have also been effectivity evaluations concerning some areas, namely CCTV projects, urban vandalism projects, general impacts of crime prevention and safety policy in cities.

Secondly, the question was raised why the situation is like that. Numerous reasons were presented:

- Lack of research capacities
- Lack of expertise by researches
- Misunderstandings between central level commissioning the evaluation and local level implementing projects
- Short term political interests
- Unclear theoretical and methodological framework
- Lack of money for evaluation

The third question was about WHAT TO DO. A number of proposals were put forward:

- Develop and standardise process evaluation

- Develop quality standards for prevention projects
- Work closely with implementing organizations
- Exchange of existing cost-benefit analyses among countries as a motivation tool
- Exchange of good practice material
- Use US experience in cost-benefit analysis
- Further develop EUCPN as important exchange network,
- Involve economists in evaluation
- Use integrated community approach and integrate crime prevention in broad policy (employment, urbanism).

Finally some principles were generally agreed upon:

Have reasonable expectations, “less may be more”

Use evaluability assessment, put a right question (what is measurable, what evaluation capacities are available)

***Here there are some remarks as caught up and interpreted by rapporteur:***

### ***Portugal***

- *Lack of the methodology, no replicability of studies, need for clear methodological framework;*

*Why there is a lack of studies:*

- *Crime prevention is dependent on state and thus on politics, not on civic society*
- *Social workers are people of ideas, not science*

### ***Finland***

- *Grant for evaluation programmes are available, but rarely used,*
- *Need for evaluation of e.g. community service, to compare with control groups and what is the future destiny of the projects' target groups.*

### ***Hungary***

- *Results from projects first, only then we can evaluate effectiveness*
- *Basic concepts are not clear (crime prevention or crime reduction)*

### ***Netherlands***

*There are evaluations carried on in the Netherlands:*

- *CCTV programmes evaluation – starting evaluation and ending evaluation,*
- *Safety impact report –victim surveys*
- *Big cities project – once in two years, what is safety impact of adopted measures.*
- *City monitor – fear of crime*
- *Safety in public transport monitoring*

### **Germany**

*No cost-benefit studies as such because of:*

- *Lack of trust (especially in developmental prevention)*
- *No evaluation know-how*

*On the other hand, there are:*

- *Studies on quality standards*
- *Guidance for process evaluation*

### **United Kingdom**

*Generally there is a limited number of evaluation studies, why?*

- *Projects are implemented on the local level but evaluated centrally*
- *There is sometimes a lack of discipline necessary for scientific evaluation on the part of the implementing agencies*
- *Political implication*
- *Lack of experience*

### **France**

- *Some evaluation as apart of local crime prevention contract*
- *Mainly cost of vandalisms and damage are considered against the cost of the project*