European Forum *for* Urban Security

EU Street Violence

Youth Groups and Violence in Publics Spaces

"Street violence", to be understood as violence committed by groups of young people in public spaces, is often mentioned as a priority issue in terms of security in many European cities. This publication aims to give local decision makers a better understanding of the issues at stake and of the policy options developed in various EU countries, so that they can invest in holistic strategies for the inclusion of all young people, as individuals and members of groups. ➤

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This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Daphne III Programme of the European Commission. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.

With the support of the French National Agency for Social Cohesion and Equal Opportunity (Acsé)

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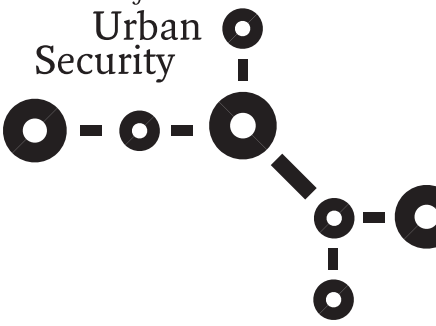

EU Street Violence

Youth Groups and Violence in Public Spaces

This publication is an outcome of the EU Street Violence Project. It was produced by the European Forum for Urban Security. Coordination: Sebastian Sperber. Production: Elsa Fontanille. Under the supervision of Elizabeth Johnston. Editing: Nathalie Bourgeois

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Translated by Charlotte Combe

Designed by Marie Aumont and Thomas Dapon
Printed by STIPA-Montreuil (France) in February 2013
ISBN: 2-913181-42-2
EAN: 9782913181472
Legal deposit: March 2013

Published by
European Forum for Urban Security - Efus
10, rue des Montiboeufs
75020 Paris
FRANCE
contact@efus.eu
www.efus.eu

Acknowledgments

This project and the publication would not have been possible without the dedication of the representatives of the project partners. We would like to thank them for having brought this project to life. Special thanks go to the experts for their valuable contributions, to the hosts of the various meetings, especially the Emilia Romagna Region and the City of Lisbon, as well as to all those who we had the pleasure to meet and hear during the project.

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Contents

p 11. Foreword
Elizabeth Johnston, Executive Director, *European Forum for Urban Security* (Efus)

PART 1
Introduction to the project and the issues at stake

p 14. EU Street Violence: Analyses, Recommendations and Actions
Sebastian Sperber
Contribution of the European Forum for Urban Security

p 40. Content of the online database and an outlook on the institutional responses to collective violence.
Marwan Mohammed, *Centre Maurice Halbwachs, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris*

p 72. Gender issue in the context of street gangs
Marie-Dominique de Suremain
Contribution of Psytel – Partner of the EU Street Violence Project

PART 2
Violence committed by youth groups in public spaces in nine European countries

p 92. Research and practices on urban violence, youth gangs and street crime in Belgium
Denoix Kerger and Laetitia Nolet
Contribution of the Belgian Forum for Prevention and Urban Security (FBPSU) - Partner of the EU Street Violence Project

p 110. Organised youth groups and violence in Spain
Noemí Canelles, Bárbara Scandroglio, Clara Soler

and Josep Mª Lahosa
Contribution of the Spanish Forum for Prevention and Urban Security (FEPSU) - Partner of the EU Street Violence Project

p 131. Youth gangs in France: from research to action
Michel Marcus and Maye Seck
Contribution of the French Forum for Urban Security (FFSU) - Expert for the EU Street Violence Project

p 147. Problematic youth groups in Italy
Stefania Crocitti, Livia Fay Lucianetti, Gian Guido Nobili and Fiamma Terenghi
Contribution of the Emilia-Romagna Region – Partner of the EU Street Violence Project

p 168. UK youth street violence – an overview
Andy Mills
Contribution of the National Community Safety Network (NCSN) – Partner of the EU Street Violence Project

p 187. A look at the situation of street violence in German cities
Elmar G.M. Weitekamp, *University of Tübingen*

p 203. Youth groups and street gangs in the Netherlands
Frank van Gemert, *VU University of Amsterdam* and Frank Weerman *Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement*

p 228. Violent groups and gangs in Portugal – conclusions from the EU Street Violence seminar in Portugal
Francisco Empis, Consultant

p 240. An outlook on street violence in Scandinavian countries
Sebastian Sperber
Contribution of the European Forum for Urban Security

Foreword

The notion that violent, menacing youth groups are endangering the peace and quiet of our neighbourhoods, our school yards and our parks is recurrent. Throughout Europe, public discourses on security abound with figures of such youth gangs, supposedly a new phenomenon, mobilising youth, often from minority backgrounds, into networks of criminal activity. The reality of European cities proves to be quite different, more complex and much more diverse. Contrary to the stereotypes the public discourse can transmit, violence and disturbances committed by youth individually or in groups are long-standing occurrences in many European cities, and cities and their partners have been developing preventative and reactive strategies for many years. True to the European Forum for Urban Security' ambition to organise knowledge and make it accessible to policymakers, practitioners as well as researchers, the EU Street Violence project set out to help policymakers better understand the reality of violent youth groups. Local analyses were shared with EU wide research, practices on the ground and recommendations that had been established by various categories of actors throughout Europe. A new methodology was used to share the broad range of identified initiatives and practices and lead to the creating of a database, which we hope can become a useful tool. This project sought to contribute to a growing body of work both on the ground and within academia: our goal was to give local decision-makers a better understanding of the issues at stake and of the policy options developed in various EU countries, so that they will be able to invest in holistic strategies for the inclusion of all youth, as individuals and members of groups.

Elizabeth Johnston,
Executive Director

Part 1

Introduction to the project and the issues at stake

EU Street Violence: Analyses, Recommendations and Actions

Sebastian Sperber
Contribution of the European Forum for Urban Security

"Street violence", understood as violence committed by groups of young people in public spaces, is often mentioned as a priority issue in terms of security in many European cities. Many cities in Europe have their "troublesome youth groups". In several contexts these youth groups may be responsible for a large proportion of the anti-social behaviour, crime and violence committed[1]. Apart from the danger posed by these groups, whose violence is often directed at peers and other groups/gangs, their presence and visibility in public spaces often create a feeling of insecurity. Regularly, stories of brutal and unexplained outbreaks of violence committed by groups are reported in the media. These articles shock and scare citizens.

For that reason, members and partners of the European Forum for Urban Security have decided to work on this issue. While there are a number of practices and policies as well as academic literature on the subject, this pool of knowledge and know-how has remained largely untapped, because the information is scattered and not easily accessible. It was therefore the aim of the EU co-financed "EU Street Violence" pro-

1- See example provided in Mills' article on the UK situation in this publication

ject, to make this knowledge accessible to practitioners and policy makers as well as academics. To this end, an online knowledge database[2] was developed to gather more than 500 analyses, recommendations and actions (practices) on the issue. This database structures the information around key variables and makes it easily accessible through its search functions.

This publication is the second key outcome of the project and is a first application of the knowledge gathered in the database. It provides insights on what can be learned on the issue in the partner countries Belgium, Spain, France, Italy and the UK, provided by project partners. It also includes observations made in the Netherlands, Portugal, Germany and Scandinavia.

The aim of this first introductory article is to present the EU Street Violence project and summarise a few insights on analyses, recommendations and actions on the issue. In the next article, Marwan Mohammed gives an essentially quantitative overview of the database and provides an outlook on the institutional replies to collective violence in Europe and beyond. Marie-Dominique de Suremain completes this introductory part with an analysis of the gender issue in the context of street gangs, based on the information gathered in the database.

The main part of this book is dedicated to the issue of violence committed by youth groups in the public space in nine European countries. It builds on the contributions from project partners, who have summarised the insights they have gained collecting information for the EU Street Violence database. It is completed by guest contributions by experts who helped shed light on other European countries. Denoix Kerger and Laetitia Nolet provide insights into research and

2- www.streetviolence.eu

practices on urban violence, youth gangs and street crime in Belgium. Noemí Canelles, Bárbara Scandroglio, Clara Soler and Josep Mª Lahosa write about organised youth groups and violence in Spain. Michel Marcus and Maye Seck build on the work of the French Forum to provide an overview "from research to action" on the French situation. Stefania Crocitti, Livia Fay Lucianetti; Gian Guido Nobili, Fiamma Terenghi describe the issue of street violence and problematic youth groups in Italy while Andy Mills gives an overview on UK street violence. Elmar G.M. Weitekamp takes a look at the situation of street violence in German cities and Frank van Gemert & Frank Weerman on youth groups and street gangs in the Netherlands from 1985 – 2012. Francisco Empis gives an insight into the Portuguese situation with the conclusion from the "EU Street Violence" seminar in Portugal. Finally, Sebastian Sperber completes these overviews with an article on Scandinavia.

1. A project to make knowledge on "problematic youth groups" accessible to policymakers and practitioners

From 2011 to 2013, the EU Street Violence project created an online platform to bring together knowledge and good practices on violence committed by youth groups in public spaces from different European countries. Its goal was to make it accessible to those who work on these issues in the field, as a policy maker or in research. With the financial support of the Daphne III programme from the European Commis-

sion, the EU Street Violence project has been carried out by the European Forum for Urban Security (Efus) with the support of the French Forum for Urban Security (FFSU), the Belgian Forum for Prevention and Urban Security (FBPSU), the Spanish Forum for Prevention and Urban Security (FEPSU), the Emilia Romagna Region, the UK National Community Safety Network (NCSN) and the French non-profit organisation for knowledge engineering Psytel.

1.1 The trouble with youth groups

"Street gangs", "youth gangs", "bandes de jeunes", "pandillas", "jeugdbende", "street gangs", "baby-gangs", "Jugendbanden" - the phenomena that worry European cities have different names and also take various forms. As this project shows, they reflect different social realities and they are in different ways "troublesome" or perceived as such. There are many faces and facets to this phenomenon, which are also reflected in these terms. This can be even true within one single country as shown by the Belgian contribution with the terms "bandes urbaines" and "groepen" or "bendes". It can also evolve over time, as can be seen in most of the articles on the different countries. However, they are all groups of young people, which are the cause of different forms of violence in the streets of European cities.

The challenge for the project was therefore to define its focus, while being sufficiently broad to reflect the different realities that are of interest to European cities. Starting point were "gangs" or "gang-like" groups, but what exactly is a gang? What makes it different from other groups of young people, which represent normal and common forms of socialisation? The English term "gang" itself – also used in other languages - is particularly biased. It usually refers to a specific North

American phenomenon, as described in Westside Story, in numerous movies or certain parts of hip-hop culture. Stereotypical gangs such as the Crisps and the Bloods have become the main model for what is considered a gang all over the world (van Gemert 2012: 70). This model however only rarely applies to European cities. The fact that there are problems with "troublesome" youth groups in European cities but no gangs, has led the American-European research project "Eurogang" to define the Eurogang paradox (Klein et al. 2001). For the American researchers, Europe did have what they called "compressed gangs" which are smaller, less organised, more short lived and amorphous than the "traditional gang"[3] as described in modern media. Years of exchange and discussion has led Eurogang to the following definition, which tries to move away from the traditional idea of a gang and to include a broader reality: "A youth gang or troublesome youth group is a durable, street-oriented youth group whose involvement in illegal activity is part of their group identity." (See e.g. Weitekamp in this publication). However, terms such as gang-like groups or problematic groups continue to be used even in Eurogang literature.

Just as the persistent debate in the gang literature (Esbensen and Maxson 2012: 6), the relevance of involvement in illegal activities was also a matter of discussion in the EU Street Violence project. Aren't "groups of young people hanging around" perceived sometimes as a menace by their simple presence, therefore generating a feeling of insecurity for the general public (see for example Mills or van Gemert and Weerman in this publication)? The Spanish Forum underlined that focusing on the deviant behaviour of these groups often

3- Maxson and Klein have inductively identified five categories of gangs in the US: Traditional gangs, Neo-traditional gangs, Compressed gangs, Collective gangs and Specific gangs. For more details see Klein et al. (2001) or Maxson and Klein (1995)..

leads to ignoring positive dynamics that can be opportunities. These have for example been successfully used in Barcelona to deal with these problems (see Canelles et al. in this publication). Partners agreed that deviant behaviour is what brings these groups to the attention of local authorities and also what characterises them even when that behaviour is not their main purpose.[4]

It was not the goal of the project to solve the complex issue of definitions. As the Eurogang definition did not seem adequate[5], partners deliberately decided to use the broad term "street violence" to summarise the problems these groups can cause and to take into account the diversity of groups and phenomena that can be encountered in European cities. Moreover, the database tool allowed project partners to be very pragmatic and to provide information on a larger perimeter, as a database precisely represents a technical solution for identifying relevant items in larger set of information and searching for different categories and issues.

Project partners therefore decided to look for analyses, recommendations and practices on the issue "violence committed by groups of young people in the public space". They specified that a group gathered a minimum of 3 persons and that young meant under the age of 26. "Street violence" was considered as all violence taking place in the public space. Furthermore, the term violence was interpreted in a large sense to go beyond physical violence, and include violence against objects (vandalism) and forms of psychological violence and intimidation.[6]

4- See e.g. Mohammed (2011).
5- In particular, partners feared that the general use of the label "gang" would contribute to moral panic and labelling effects.
6- The case of girls who are limited in their use of the public space due to threats and intimidation by male dominated youth groups, put forward by Suremain in this publication, is an example that illustrates the reasons behind this choice.

The EU Street Violence project does not take into account hooliganism and motorcycle gangs, all forms of political violence, neo-Nazi groups and terrorism as well as organised crime. Apart from the fact that they do not specifically concern youth, project partners also did not want to include these phenomena as they are quite different in nature. That said, there might still be overlaps between these issues and the problematic youth groups as defined above. Moreover, with its centre of attention on "problematic youth groups" the project finally left aside spontaneous gatherings and did not focus on riots and urban violence as the term "street violence" might suggest.

1.2 Bringing together knowledge and know-how and making it accessible

After defining the operational perimeter, the methodological challenge moved to the way this knowledge would be gathered and structured in a way that makes it accessible.

Who says?
The consortium for the project was set up to bring together partners who are in a good position to provide an overview on the problems in different European countries. The European, Belgian, Spanish and French Forum (for prevention) and urban security, the Emilia Romagna Region (also hosting the secretariat for the Italian Forum for Urban Security (FISU)) and the British NCSN all work with local authorities on urban security and street violence. All were supported by academic experts and the non-profit organisation Psytel which is experienced in knowledge engineering and the issue of violence prevention. The project also received the support of the German Forum for Urban Security (DEFUS) and the new chairman of the Portuguese Forum Lisbon as well as many other cities and organisations (see acknowledgements).

It is important to note that the content of the database does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the project partners on the issue. The first goal of the EU Street Violence project was to make information accessible to those interested. Therefore the variables on "who is talking" and on the assessment of practices are critical to situate the given information. Indeed project partners needed to decide on relevance and pertinence, but tried to take into account a maximum of available data. In principle, they only excluded politically or religiously motivated opinions on the issue.

What are we looking for?
Recommendations produced for example by national governments, international organisations, researchers or NGOs, were considered key elements for a knowledge base on street violence, as they are usually built on a thorough understanding of a problem and of what can be done about it. Though, explicit recommendations are not that frequent. In order to contribute to the understanding of these phenomena, it also seemed appropriate to include the numerous analyses made on the street violence phenomenon to the database. Moreover, the actions taken following these analyses are also very valuable information. All in all, the database includes Analyses, Recommendations and Actions (ARAs). Database entries are therefore also referred to as "ARAs" or "ARA files".

Where is the information taken from?
Project partners considered all types of existing documents that could be of relevance: reports and studies, books and articles, guidelines, studies, papers, grey literature (i.e. internal documents), minutes of conferences or seminars, practice sheets... Various types of authors were included: researchers, local authorities or local safety partnerships, national governments, international organizations, NGOs, researchers, police authorities, foundations, all produced since 2000.

In addition to drawing from existing documents, project partners also documented various practices. They interviewed resource persons and drafted datasheets on interesting practices. The EU Street Violence project closely associated the cities and local authorities of the Efus-network throughout:
The exchange with the academic experts did not take place behind closed doors, but in open seminars. Associating local authorities provided them directly with information and opportunity to exchange and allowed the project to learn more about their experiences. Seminars in Bologna and Lisbon brought together approximately 100 participants each. The project provided the framework for discussing with members of the local safety commission of the Union of Baltic cities as well as with the members of the German Forum.
The project created an online survey to obtain a first overview on the issue in European cities and to get local authorities in touch with the project in order to include in a second step their know-how into the database. The online survey proposed in English, French, Spanish, Italian, Dutch and German was deliberately kept short in order to maximize replies and was largely disseminated by the partners.

How to prepare the information to make it accessible?

The database aims to make an inventory of available information, but also to extract information. The database entries try to provide the key information of the original document in a nutshell. For that purpose, project partners have developed and tested together a set of variables to structure the information and to explain who is talking and about what. Providing the key information implies not being exhaustive: Reference is made to the original document - which already existed or was created by project partners and which is attached to the database - for further information.
The database distinguishes between analyses, recom-

mendations and actions on the issue. It indicates who provides them and who the author is. In addition to information on the country in question and bibliographic information, the database distinguishes between the type of problem of street violence dealt with, the target group of the "ARA", the type of the possible solution discussed or the vector of action taken. In case of actions, it also distinguishes the level of prevention and whether the practice has been evaluated. Moreover, the database provides a written summary of each "ARA", which can also be searched with the full text search option.

2. Analyses, recommendations and actions - some insights

The first objective of the EU Street Violence project was to respond to a demand for information using a database tool. It allows filtering out the type of information that is particularly relevant for a specific problem or to learn about interesting practices. This article deals with the database content and tries to draw preliminary conclusions. The aim of the second part of this introduction is to draw on all this information to provide some insights on analyses, recommendations and practices.

2.1 Analyses

A good analysis is the starting point for dealing effectively with any urban security issue[7]. In January 2013, 179 of the 507 database entries, i.e. 35%, were analyses. 58% were provided by researchers and universities. This publication draws on these analyses for the 9 country studied. The answers to the online survey

7- see for example Efus 2008.

(described in the next article of this publication) provide further information on street violence and problematic youth groups. The aim of this paragraph is to give elements of answers to some recurrent, transversal questions, such as the gender issue, which is discussed in De Suremain's article.

Do European cities have a gang problem?

"It is now undeniable that there are street gangs or gang-like youth groups in European cities", says Weitekamp in his contribution. While all of the 51 respondents of the online survey replied that they encountered problems with youth groups over the last 10 years, the EU Street Violence project cannot provide any empirical overview on the issue. As shown in the articles on the different countries, obtaining reliable numbers on these issues is not necessarily easy.

According to police and intelligence sources, there were in France about 222 youth gangs in 2009, 480 in 2011 and 313 in 2012. The number of gangs varies significantly as well as the number of people involved[8]. The Dutch Shortlist is probably one of the most reliable tools to take inventory of problematic groups available. From 2008 to 2011, the Shortlist counted 1200-1800 groups, of which 65-92 were considered criminal, while 117-324 were considered of nuisance and the rest simply troublesome. In Belgium, the "Urban Gang databank" database was created in 1999 to obtain an overview and to link offenses and offenders to gangs. In 2009, there were 29 gangs in Brussels with circa 300 members involved in 531 incidents.[9] In the UK, the researchers report for example about 60-169 gangs in London, 42 in the West Midlands, 15 Nottinghamshire, 55 in Glasgow.[10], but estimates go as high 50,000 young people affiliated to

8- See Marcus and Seck in this publication.

9- International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (2011): Comparative report on types of intervention used for youth at risk of joining a street gang.

10- See Mills in this publication.

violent youth gangs.[11]
While they are not at all comparable, these numbers in themselves support the thesis that gangs exists in numerous European cities.

This should in fact not be a complete surprise: several articles, notably those on France, Belgium, and Spain in this publication, emphasize that these problematic youth groups are not a new phenomenon, even though the discourse about it being a recent development is prevalent. Mucchielli's and Mohammed's historical overview of gangs in France from the 1950s up to today illustrates this point very well, as Trasher's milestone work on gangs written in 1927. In 1965, Short and Strodtrbeck were already discussing gangs as an ancient and contemporary phenomenon in many countries of the world[12].

Does this in return imply that all cities are or feel concerned by the issue? Here the answer is probably rather negative. By exchanging with local authorities about "gangs" as was done within the EU Street Violence project, it regularly seems that the Eurogang paradox persists: there are still many local authorities that are not or do not feel concerned[13].
This is partly due to the definition issues described above. Municipalities do not necessarily think of their youth causing occasionally trouble when hearing the word gang.
Nevertheless, they feel concerned by the EU Street Violence definition as can be seen in the answers from the online survey. The problems described in the online questionnaire were not primarily serious crime and physical violence associated with gangs or gang-like

11- Centre for Social Justice (2009).
12- Karen Hennigan and Marioja Spanovic (2012): Gang Dynnamics Through the Lens of Social Identity Theory. In : Esbensen, Finn-Aage and Cheryl L. Maxson (Eds): Youth Gangs in International Perspective. Results from the Eurogang Program of Research. New York, Dodrecht, Heidelberg, London: Springer.
13- Canelles et al. also mention cases of denial.

groups. Rather, they were problems of vandalism and graffiti, harassment in the public space, violence at school or in public transport, all committed by youth groups. These phenomena were not continuous either. According to the survey, they occurred on average between several times over ten years and once every year.

Moreover, the distribution of street violence and problematic youth groups across Europe and within countries seems uneven: while the issues seem to have been the subject of a longstanding discussion in the UK, the Netherlands and in France, they seem to have been less of "an issue" in Italy, Portugal, Germany or Scandinavia. Moreover, youth gangs generally seem to be an urban phenomenon, concentrating in large cities and urban areas, as reported for Spain (Barcelona, Madrid), Belgium (Brussels, Antwerpen) or Italy (Milan, Genoa), but also in France, where almost 80% are reported to be from the Paris area. In Italy, these types of problems seem to concentrate in the North and are only rarely heard of in the South[14]. While less of an issue in Scandinavia or Germany, large cities such as Berlin, Frankfurt or Stockholm may have issues with gangs.

All in all, it seems that few European cities have gang problems, but many of them have occasional problems with youth groups. This observation justifies ex post the choice of the EU Street Violence project to widen the scope to "street violence" and "problematic youth groups".

What can be said about gang creation?

Understanding why individuals join gangs and the role and function of gangs are central to the analyses of street violence and problematic youth groups and crucial to devising a strategy. Much has been written on

14- Crocitti et al. suggest this could be due to a higher prevalence of structured organised crime, which leaves no space for "street gangs".

these issues and the idea of summarising key insights into one small paragraph inevitably involves simplification, which can only be justified by the central importance of the question.

Marwan Mohammed (2011), with his book on the creation of gangs in France, provides important insights on these issues. These shall be taken here as an example for such an analysis. He provides a sociological explanation of gangs and gang creation, based on an empirical study undertaken in the Paris region. He shows that gang membership is largely determined by the relationship the individual has with his family, school and the street. In a nutshell, the individual that ultimately becomes a gang member encounters difficulties within his family, his education and is therefore drawn to socialisation on the street. A typical member is a teenage boy of modest origin, usually with many brothers and sisters, having difficulties in school or even dropping out of the system. Under these conditions, he is "inactive" as he does not have access to the labour market and has grown up in a context that is exposed to delinquency. In such a context of difficulties and conflict with mainstream society, a peer group or a gang provides an alternative pathway to socialisation, an "alternative family"[15]. A gang attracts boys with certain characteristics, because it fulfils five functions in areas in which the potential member has deficiencies: a material function (consumption), a symbolic function (power and recognition), a political function (social conflict), a psychological function (self-esteem) and an identity-giving function (being part of a history). Mohammed underlines that deviant or criminal behaviour mainly results from a quest for recognition, to obtain a reputation, to exercise power. Or as Weitekamp (2011) puts it: "You don't join a gang to make money". In his research, Mohammed details

15- Centre for social justice (2009).

the mechanism of socialisation deficiencies and how these are replaced by the gang, how for example reputations and recognition are forged in a regional communication space and how different layers of identity are formed.

The key insight is that the gang provides an alternative form of socialisation - a compensation strategy. It provides identity and recognition that the member does not get elsewhere. Or in the words of the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC): "Street gang involvement often meets one or more of young people's needs that are otherwise unfulfilled" (2011: 4).

In its report on gangs, the ICPC summarises risks and protective factors that have been identified in the literature on the issue of gang membership. It distinguishes five categories, risk factors with respect to individual characteristics, peer influence, school environment, family and community. "Involvement in street gangs may occur when several risk factors are present, as the risks of gang involvement are greater when youths experience risk factors in multiple categories". The report also identifies protective factors in each of these categories that contribute to keeping young people from joining street gangs. Thus there seem to be a multitude of factors, life events or experiences, that need to be taken into account when explaining gang membership, which has important implications on how to deal with the issue and who should deal with it.

Are gangs caused by migration?

Let's start with the answer: no, they are not. However, the fact that migration regularly comes up when talking about troublesome youth groups and gangs in Europe deserves some explanation.

Gangs particularly seem to bring together youth from a migration background. In fact, all country studies on

problematic youth groups in this publication mention migration at some point: The issue in Spain comes from Latin gangs, which also seem to have become an issue in Italy. The gangs in Belgium seem to have many members from African descent, in the Netherlands, from Morocco and Surinam and, in Germany, from Turkey or as "Russian-German". Gangs and gang-like groups in France and in the UK reflect migration in these countries. Of course, all gangs do not have a migration bias (see for example Van Gemert and Weerman in this publication) and ethnic gangs such as Latin gangs are not actually ethnically homogeneous (as for example Canelles et al show in this publication).

The insights gained on gang creation provide a straightforward answer on why troublesome youth groups also reflect the immigration into these countries: youths at the edge of society are most likely to become involved in gangs or create such a group. In most countries, migrants are over-represented in the socio-economically disadvantaged groups and they are more visible. Or as Van Gemert, Peterson and Lien conclude in their book "Street Gangs, Migration and Ethnicity": "migration can lead to an accumulation of risk factors that can particularly target second generation immigrants living in neighbourhoods characterised by social disorganisation..." (p.262)

Furthermore, Mucchielli's and Mohammed's analyses of gangs in France provide an excellent illustration of the fact that "troublesome youth groups" are always associated with the underprivileged of a generation. For a long time, youth gangs were associated with working class youth (blousons noirs). Following the immigration waves, first from North Africa and then from sub-Saharan Africa, the working class has changed, and subsequently that of gangs as well. Mohammed (2011) concludes that the migration background, although regularly observed, seems to be a proxy for low socio-economic situations rather than an actual expla-

natory variable. Unless looking at the "many brothers or sisters" variable, his study shows that there is no effect of the origin of an individuals when determining his/her potential gang membership.

2.2 Recommendations

A good analysis of the phenomenon of street violence and problematic youth groups is a vital condition for formulating recommendations on the issue. However, going from an analysis to formulating recommendations is an important step. To which degree is it possible to generalise an observation or isolate a recommendation from its context? These difficulties could explain why only 14% of all "ARAs" gathered are recommendations. A total of 72 were collected in the database. Project partners had noticed that there are fewer recommendations on the issue than expected and that many documents were cautious with direct recommendations. However, this does not mean that no general conclusions can be drawn from all the information gathered. Several general recommendations do become apparent.

The single most important recommendation is certainly that the issue of street violence and problematic youth groups is a good example of urban security problems that cannot be dealt with without prevention, i.e. social prevention. Understanding that a young person gets involved in these groups not primarily for material reasons but in search of recognition, belonging, prestige that he/she cannot get elsewhere, clearly shows the potential of preventive action and the limits of solutions that only recommend law enforcement.

In his book Mohammed (2011) concludes that it will be difficult for society to limit gang renewal and the appearance of new candidates, as long as the social machinery

producing gangs is working. Or as Marcus and Seck put it in this publication "To imagine that the criminal justice solution is the only one suitable for the current situation is a mistake. Criminal strategy must be part of a more comprehensive strategy that also includes a civil, social and spatial strategy". The outlook on institutional responses to street violence in the following article also points out the limits of strategies only based on law enforcement, even in contexts outside of Europe where the availability of arms and high murder rates require a cease fire before social policy can be implemented. In this sense, the importance of prevention can be identified as a shared priority in this publication. Stressing the importance for prevention does not mean that law enforcement is not needed, but explains why holistic enforcement programmes, as can be found in the UK, the Netherlands or Scandinavia for example, also build on a strong preventive component.

This conclusion is all the more important in a context in which there is a risk of "penal populism" at the expense of addressing the drivers of gangs and violence"[16] and in which the economic crisis has led to spending cuts in several countries. France, the UK or the Netherlands are examples of a trend towards a firmer action on gangs. The UK is also an example, among many others, of the difficulties for preventive action in a context of major spending cuts. Mills underlines that several promising practices put forward in the EU Street Violence database actually have been scaled down recently or ceased altogether [17]. It is for that reason that this recommendation to build on prevention is central to the thematic recommendations of the new Aubervilliers and Saint-Denis manifesto, adopted by European cities in December 2012.
Now if the importance of prevention is the key recom-

16- Centre for social justice 2009: 104, but also see Marcus and Seck in this publication on the penalization of gang membership in France.
17- See for example Mohammed 2011 or Mills in this publication.

mendation for dealing with problematic youth groups, what are other conclusions? Looking at the 72 recommendations or, more precisely, at the 59 recommendations directly addressing gang creation or activities in the database, one can see which vectors for action were mentioned most. As indicated in table 1, 37 of the 59 recommendations mention specialised and varied prevention measures, which are tailored to specific high-risk groups. It appears that the second most important starting point to deal with troublesome youth groups is school (mentioned in 20 recommendations). A third group of measures, which mentioned in more than 10 recommendations seem to emerge. These include leisure time activities, work with the family and mediation, closely followed by work on gender issues and law enforcement.

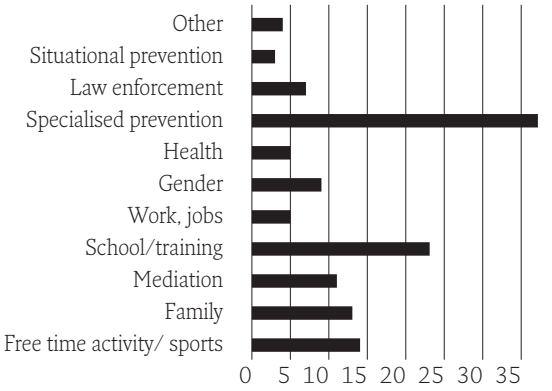

Table 1: Number of recommendations on gang creation and activities (total of 59) that mention the following vector of action

The diversity of vectors for action mentioned in the recommendations and their relatively even distribution (set aside specialised prevention programmes and

school) seem to underline the importance of an inclusive approach that tries to tackle several risk factors at the time. As the EU Street Violence online survey showed: "There are no (or very few) cities that rely on a single strategy of action and security. There is a trend towards hybridisation and finding a balance between the social and situational aspects of prevention."[18] As can be seen in the articles on each country but also in the actions, such a strategy needs to build on a local partnership. It is necessary to combine competences to address the different factors that influence gang membership and make sure all actors work together towards that common goal. Local authorities can and do take on a uniting and coordinating role, as suggested by the online survey. Participation of those concerned by the community but also the involvement of the young seem to be elements that can contribute to building sustainable solutions.

The particularity of the issue of problematic youth groups is that the individual, the group context as well as the territorial context must be taken into account. Dealing with groups therefore requires an approach on these three levels: individual, group, territory.[19] Moreover, given that groups exist over time, prevention can also be done at several stages: preventing group membership, preventing a group from becoming (more) troublesome as well as offering exit strategies and opportunities for that group to channel its energy in a non-deviant way. An inclusive strategy should not be limited to dealing with risk factors, but also include protective factors. Furthermore, it should bring out the skills of the youth and build on positive dynamics[20].

Amongst the different policy fields that need to be taken into account, school and school education play a

18- Mohammed in this publication.
19- See for example Marcus and Seck or the Dutch approach described by Van Gemert and Weerman.
20- See for example Canelles et al. in this publication or ICPC (2011).

particular role. This is particularly true nowadays as the traditional social integrating factors such as entering the labour market or enrolling in military service without qualifications, which often stamped out deviant pathways, have become rarer[21]. In this context, it seems particularly important to look at the integration of children in school before discussing school dropouts and to consider early prevention. Moreover, mediation and restorative justice approaches might be important tools especially when dealing with nuisances and issues in the use of the public space[22].

The recommendations that can be drawn from the EU Street Violence project have also been discussed at the international conference "Security, Democracy and Cities: The Future of Prevention" which took place 12-14 of December 2012. The project discussed the issue of street violence and problematic youth groups. Insights and conclusions from the project were debated and thematic recommendation drafted based on its conclusions. The thematic recommandations of the Aubervilliers and Saint-Denis Manifesto, adopted during the 5th Efus international conference, are directly drawn from the insights gained through the EU Street Violence project and the subsequent discussion in the conference.

2.3 Actions

Practices or "actions" are of great interest for those who work on street violence and troublesome youth groups. Indeed, there is a multitude of activities in this field that are worth looking at. In January 2013, the database contained 264 actions, slightly more than half of all entries. There are actions from 9 countries, primarily those of the project partners. Two thirds, i.e.

21- See for example Mohammed (2011).
22- See for example Weitekamp in this publication.

179 out of 264 actions, are provided by local authorities or involve them as partners. 44% of them have been assessed.

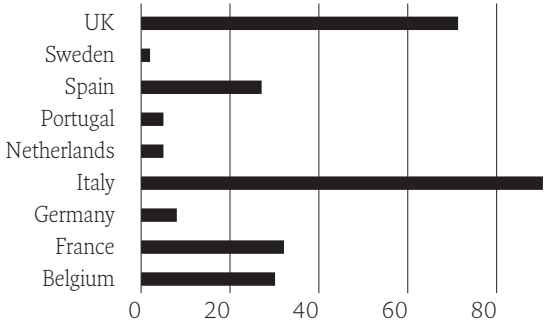

Table 2: Number of practices (actions) in the database (total 264)

These actions are described in greater detail in the next article of the introductory part of this publication. Interesting practices are also highlighted in the different articles on the approaches for dealing with street violence in different European countries. This introduction briefly looks into the question, whether there is a particular methodology to address issues of street violence and problematic youth.

As put forward by Marcus and Seck, it seems there is much research on gangs and troublesome youth groups. However, only few actions directly address gang issues and deal with these as an issue sui generis. The quantitative analysis of the database entries seems to contradict this hypothesis: two thirds, i.e. 176 actions, deal with the creation and/or activities of gangs and problematic groups. However, addressing these issues does not say anything about the methodology employed. It is first of all an indicator of the relevance

of the action for the database. On the other hand, when examining these actions, few are specifically addressing gangs: many of these actions are also used to deal with gangs, but are not limited to them. In particular, it seems hard to differentiate between actions addressing individuals and those addressing gangs. In the end, isn't a gang more than the sum of its members? Is there a methodological monism, which at the end of the day always focuses on the individual?

In its 2006 study on gangs in France, the French Forum already observed that actions aimed at prevention and containment of the gang phenomenon were usually of the same type as those aimed at addressing individual delinquent behaviour. The reports also add that this has not always been the case and regrets, for example, that approaches on a collective level have been abandoned in the training of specialised educators. It fears that concentrating too much on the individual when trying to find solutions may not sufficiently take into account the risk factors linked to the territory and the group. (FFSU 2006: 75)

When wondering about a particular method for actions to address problematic youth groups, examples from outside Europe come to mind, such as the "Comprehensive Community-Wide Gang Model" from the US Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention or the Boston Gun Project's "Operation Ceasefire", which have been considered successful in the American context[23]. Although the American context is quite different with organised, "traditional" gangs and the availability of firearms, these programmes combine enforcement (particularly targeting gang leaders thereby aiming at the gang as an organisation), as well as numerous prevention and intervention projects.

23- See for example Mohammed in this publication.

While European cities are significantly less concerned by gang issues, specific "approaches" to deal with troublesome youth groups have also appeared in Europe. The "Tackling Gangs Action Programme" from the UK Home Office, the "Shortlistmethodik"by Beke applied nationally by the Dutch Ministry of Justice and Home affairs, the "Stockholm Gang Intervention Project", or the "Multi-dimensional urban violence Prevention Program" used in Brussels, which are mentioned in the articles on the different countries in this publication are examples of combining measures on the individual, group and territorial level.

Do we have the emergence of a specific gang methodology in Europe after all? Given that these approaches are finally more characterised by an inclusive and integrated multi-actor approach, which has also been widely used on other issues of urban security, rather than by group and territorial aspects, it would certainly be over-ambitious to talk about a new and specific methodology. However, these approaches offer a whole strategy of various measures at different levels and can therefore be considered particularly interesting practices.

The EU Street Violence database provides a large array of examples of actions conducted throughout Europe. Such experiences can thus be used to inspire holistic local safety strategies aimed at tackling troublesome youth groups. Moreover, the database has the potential to be a living resource, one which can be added to as new practice, research and policy development takes place.

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Content of the online database and an outlook on the institutional responses to collective violence

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1 - Statistical report on collective violence

The online database

Description of the sample

The EU Street Violence project database is compiled of institutional or academic information regarding prevention actions implemented in Europe. These 476 documents[24] describe the measures from 11 different countries: Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Great Britain, France, Italy and the Netherlands (and "Other", i.e. four measures without geographical information). Information on measures in the Netherlands and Denmark, and to a lesser extent on Spain, is insufficient compared to the information regarding French, Italian, British and Belgian measures (approx. 100 documents per country). We will carry out more in-depth analyses of public action in these four countries (see figure 1).

24- Content of the database in October 2012.

We do not have much information to enable us to assess the representativeness of the modes of public action collected.

	Number	Percentage
Belgium	99	20.8%
Denmark	1	0.2%
Spain	48	10.1%
France	109	22.9%
Great Britain	103	21.7%
Italy	108	22.7%
Netherlands	3	0.6%
Other	4	0.8%
Total	**476**	**100%**

Figure 1: Composition of the sample.

Target audiences

In terms of the targets of crime prevention actions, several general observations can be made about target audiences and areas of action. Firstly, prevention measures are more directly aimed at "gangs" and "violent groups" (58.2%), then at the general public (35.3%) and members of entourage (20.8%).

Few measures directly apply to the ethnic and cultural aspects of the target audiences.

The centrality of targeting gangs and other "violent groups" does not reflect either the prevalence of these entities in society, or in prevention policies. It reflects the way in which the basis for explicitly targeting this phenomenon is constructed.

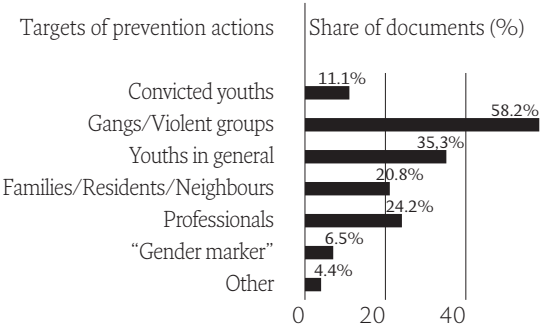

Figure 2: Target audiences

Actions carried out related to gangs, per country
Consistent with the aim of the EU Street Violence project, "gangs" and "violent groups" are the main target of measures registered in the database. It is quite hard to assess the meaning and categories used by those involved in the project, designing the project or evaluating the project. The expressions "gangs" and "violent groups" come from a categorisation a posteriori, by the creators of the database. This is important to point out because it explains in part the variations in frequency and content that emerged from the initial information. In the French, Italian, British and Belgian cases, an independent test shows that the interest shown specifically in gangs differs greatly from one country to another.

	Number	Frequency
Belgium	25	25%
Great Britain	49	47.5%
France	90	82%
Italy	78	72%
Total	**242**	

Figure 3: Number and frequency of measures dedicated to gangs and violent groups.

The share of French (N=90) and Italian measures (N=78) specifically dealing with or primarily dealing with "gangs" and "violent groups" contrasts with the British (N=49) and Belgian priorities (N=25). We must remember that the database was constructed using various kinds of information and not through developing a standard collection process.

Types of crime targeted

In addition to the targeted populations, the database contains information on areas of crime. The following figure shows the frequency of security issues found and dealt with by institutional actors. This overall picture presents the different items, some regarding spaces, others regarding forms and then people involved in crime. Regarding space, disturbances and "local" violence represent one of the main configurations to be managed: violence in disadvantaged neighbourhoods (16.2%), harassment in public spaces (12.2%) and occupation of living spaces (4.2%) provide information about the social climate that the public authorities have

to manage. Then there is the more specific kind of violence in schools (16%), in recreational areas (11.6%) and on public transport (5.7%). It should be noted that these different places are not restricted to the spaces previously mentioned: the school environment and that of the neighbourhood are often closely linked. There are basically two types of disturbances identified: oppositional behaviours and revolt that are very localised, such as violence against the police (2.9%), joyriding (0.4%) and riots (2.9%), as well as sexual assault (8.8%). Other types of use of violence are nor addressed, which limits any analysis from this point of view.

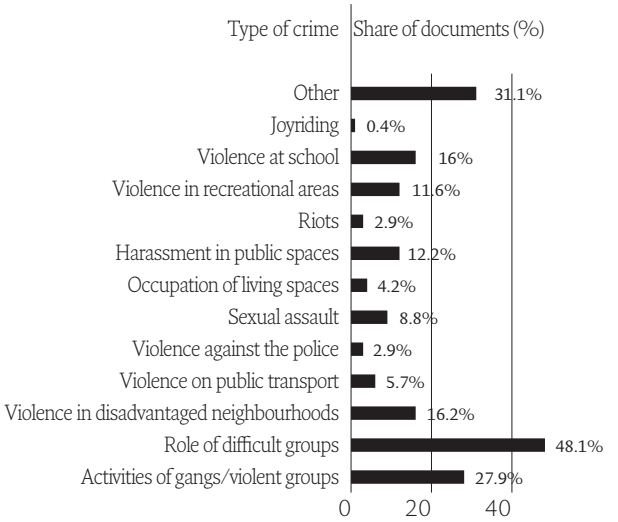

Figure 4: Share of documents targeting different kinds of crime (%).

Finally, more interesting information regarding the profile of authors is also shown. 48.1% of documents identified highlight the role of "difficult groups" and 27.9% the activity of "gangs". By concentrating on these two profiles

"difficult groups" and "gang activities" - the analyses reveal significant differences from country to country.[25] More specifically, we note that the resources on the French and Italian contexts (68.8% and 63.9% respectively) indicate the existence of "difficult groups" more than those for the English (36.9% of English documents) and Belgian societies (18.2% of Belgian documents). The weight of reference to "difficult groups" is inversely proportional to that of reference to "gangs". The explanation is based less on radical departures from reality than in the cultural and political status of terms used (Figure 5).

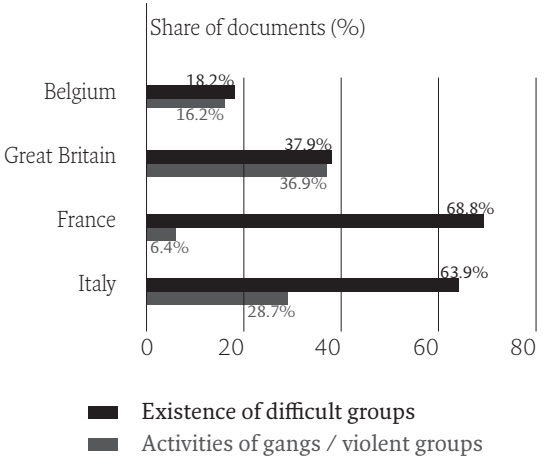

Figure 5: Share of measures making reference to "gangs" according to country (in %).

Actors in prevention and the implementation of actions

While the first part was devoted to the population and violent behaviours as the objects of prevention actions,

25- For the reasons mentioned previously, the analysis only deals with four countries: Belgium, France, Great Britain, Italy.

the second part focuses on content (prevention strategies and vectors).

Prevention strategies

The prevention of delinquency can be composed of three levels:

-*Primary (PP):* concerns prevention towards youth in general.

-*Secondary (SP):* concerns prevention towards youth who are "at risk".

-*Tertiary (TP):* concerns prevention towards convicted youths or young offenders.

On the basis of the 476 documents identified, we can see that they deal mainly with secondary prevention (46.6% of the documents analyzed), followed by primary prevention (32.4% of the documents analyzed) and tertiary (22.7%) (see figure 9)

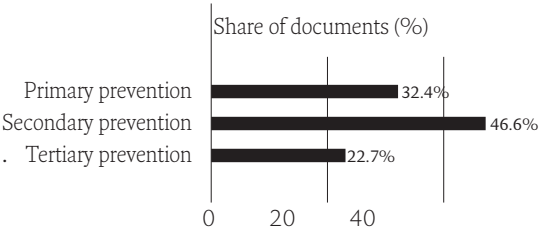

Figure 6: Type of prevention

This is an orientation that does not necessarily reflect the actual distribution of prevention policies.

The geographic distribution of types of action shows significant distortions: France is characterised by a predominance of PP actions (51.4%) compared to SP (10.1%); Great Britain shows more of a balance between PP (33%), SP (39.8%) and TP (42.7%). This

is the country that, according to the Street Violence data, invests most in prevention of reoffending. Belgium favours more general actions and early prevention (PP: 43.4% - SP: 22.2% - TP: 19.2%). And finally, Italy opts for mixed actions involving PP (54.2%) and SP (56.5%) compared to TP (25%).

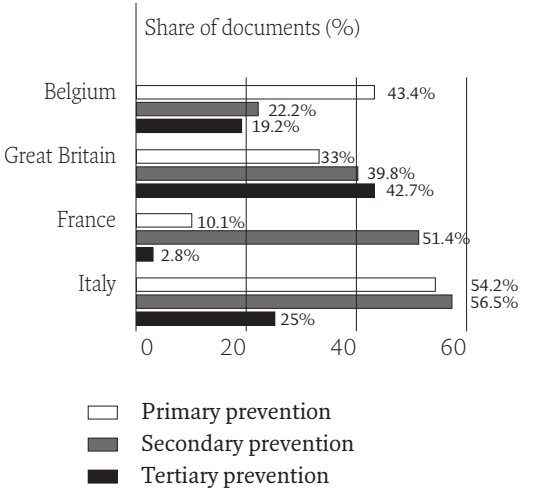

Figure 7: Share of measures making reference to "gangs" according to country (in %).

Prevention vectors and implementation methods
What are the violence prevention vectors? The database enables an analysis of the modes of action and the profiles of those involved in combating violent behaviours. Three spaces of actions are favoured by the public authorities: prevention in schools (30.9%), through sports and leisure (28.2%) and using specialised prevention schemes (26, 5%).

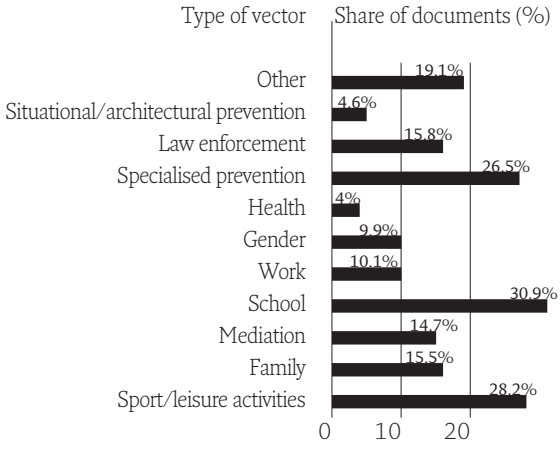

Figure 8: Prevention vectors

A second tranche of measures includes social mediation actions (14.7%) and family mediation (15.5%). More specifically, measures focused on employment (10.1%) and the relationship between men and women (9.9%) are highlighted in this prevention actions graph. From a more repressive perspective, production of legislation (15.8%) or situational prevention actions (4.6%) are clearly in the minority.

Again, national preferences are clear: the Italians favour school-based actions (62% occurrence), sport (49.1%) and regularly target the family (29.6%).
Specialised prevention is favoured more by Great Britain (51.5%), than by Belgium (22.2%) or France (21.1%). Repressive measures are also more frequently cited in Great Britain (35.5%) than in Belgium (19.2%), in Italy (6.5%) or in France (3.7%). The difference in the French and British scores relating to the prevalence of repressive measures and the role occupied by the place is linked to the traditional nature of their security policies (see above).

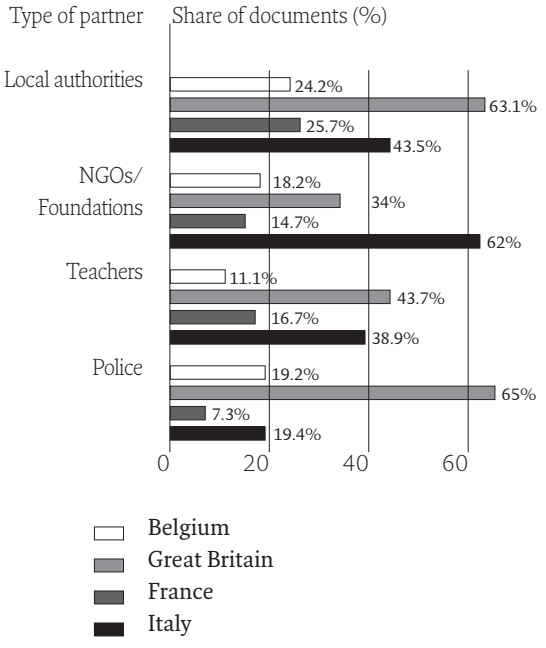

Figure 9: Partnership framework

The online questionnaire

Description of the sample

To get an idea of the systems implemented by the cities in its network, the European Forum for Urban Security circulated a questionnaire, the main results of which we present here. The sample consists of 51 local authorities who responded to the "EU Street Violence" online questionnaire[26]. They are divided among thirteen different countries. Given the narrowness of the sample and the disparities found in

26- The majority of those who responded to this questionnaire created and distributed by the European Forum for Urban Security are coordinators or jointly responsible for prevention and security. They therefore have good knowledge of the measures in place.

it, as well as for ease of reading, we have grouped these countries into four European areas as defined by the United Nations: Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Northern Europe and Southern Europe (see Table 1).

	Country	Number of subjects
Eastern Europe	Germany	**3**
	Belgium	**12**
	France	**13**
Western Europe	Latvia	**2**
	Lithuania	**1**
	Poland	**1**
	Czech Republic	**1**
Northern Europe	United Kingdom	**3**
	Denmark	**1**
	Sweden	**1**
Southern Europe	Croatia	**1**
	Spain	**3**
	Italy	**6**

Table 1: Number and frequency of measures dedicated to gangs and violent groups.

Apart from two French cities, La Rochelle and Villiers-le-Bel, that were identified twice in the database (for different measures), each entry represents a community.
In addition, the size of the cities varies, with the number of inhabitants ranging from 2,381 (Nogueira de Ramuin in Spain) to 7,825,000 (London, United Kingdom). Also, two entries relate to regional territories. Thus, the data presented here are based on information provided by administrative bodies of varying size and status. 55% of the cities that responded to questions about collective violence are located in Western Europe, 19% in Southern Europe, 10% in Northern Europe. In addition, 6% of respondents

did not enter the country or city in question (see Figure 10).

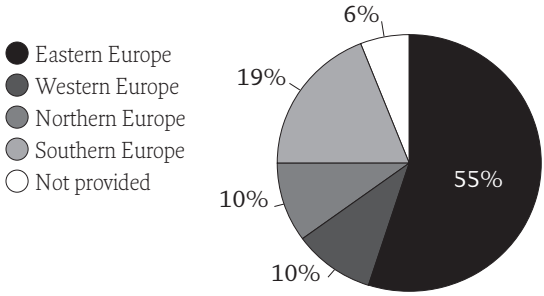

Figure 10: Geographical distribution of respondents

The limited size of the sample and its poor representativeness prevent us from making generalisations from the results obtained. However, these analyses provide a snapshot of trends that subsequently can be enriched by other studies. We can then identify the geographic distribution of prevention and security measures implemented to fight against collective violence.

Cities and collective violence

The first observation is that the 51 respondents face delinquent groups that are relatively anchored to their territory (in this study, a group consists of at least three persons under the age of 26 years). To explain the main categories of collective deviance and their average frequency in the 13 countries represented in the sample, we have developed a scale ranging from 0 (no exposure or infrequent exposure) to 6 (permanent exposure).

The analysis of the overall sample (see Figure 11) shows the pervasiveness of disorders of "low intensity" which are distinguished by being embedded in social relations. Respondents reported that their territory encounter more violence linked to the degradation of objects and graffiti (Fm

= 3.67), harassment in the public space (Fm = 2.63), violence on public transport (Fm = 2.63), in schools (Fm = 2.47), collective violence (gang activities Fm = 2.41; Fm collective petty crime = 2.31) and violence in recreational areas (Fm = 2.18). These are acts directed at the population, linked to mobile entities, which fuel demand for security from local authorities. Meanwhile, violence in disadvantaged areas (Fm = 1.86), occupation of residential areas (Fm = 1.76), joy riding (Fm = 1.71) and violence against the police (Fm = 1.37) are logically less frequent: either the categories are too vague, or the acts in question reveal, above all, the state of tension with institutions and gives clearer indications of the general mood of an area. More specific situations than the previous disorders, the most frequently cited, which fall into social exclusion routines. Finally, the reported incidence of sexual violence (Fm = 0.96) and riots (Fm = 0.55) is low compared to other types of collective violence.

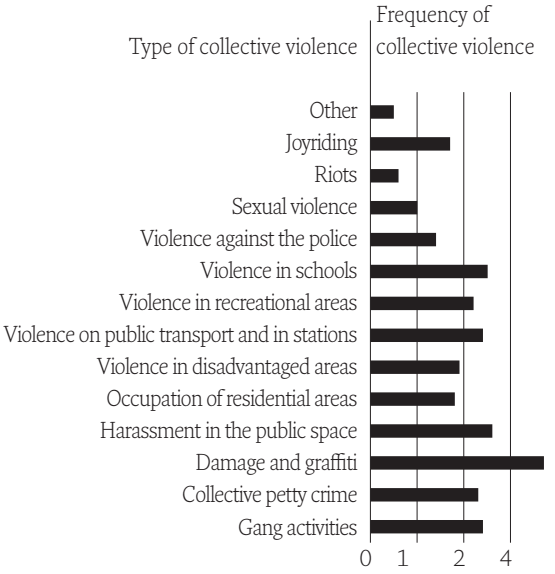

Figure 11: Frequency of types of collective violence

Without a satisfactory correspondence factor analysis (due to a small number of items), we cannot combine variables, or compare the average delinquency rate to the average of the different variables (these are not all interrelated). Our study of the forms of delinquency proposed here will focus primarily on the analysis of the characteristics of recurring forms of collective violence. On the one hand it disregards the "sexual violence" variable, because of the large number of non-responses (51%) and secondly, the "other" variable because of the poor scores as well as its vagueness, with respondents not specifying the nature of collective violence making up this category.

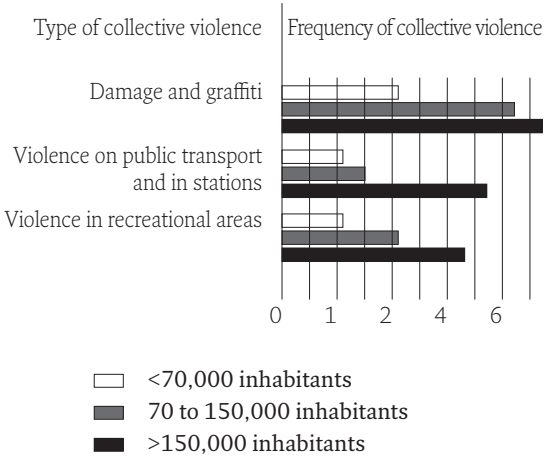

Figure 12. Frequency of types of collective violence according to the size of the city (1)

City size and collective violence: key findings

Regarding the link between collective forms of violence and territory size, we can see a particular breakdown: cities are more often confronted with damage and graffiti ($p < .01$), violence on public transport and in stations ($p < .01$), and violence in recreational areas ($p < .01$) than towns (see Figure 12).

Similarly they are more likely to face violence in schools (M=3.27), petty crimes committed by groups of youths (M=3.20) and riots (M=.80) than in towns (respectively, M=2, M=1.60 and M=.40) (see Figure 13). Results on the variables "gang activity" (or violent groups), "occupation of residential areas", "violence in disadvantaged areas", "joy riding", and the variable "harassment" do not show any significant differences or trends according to the size of the cities.

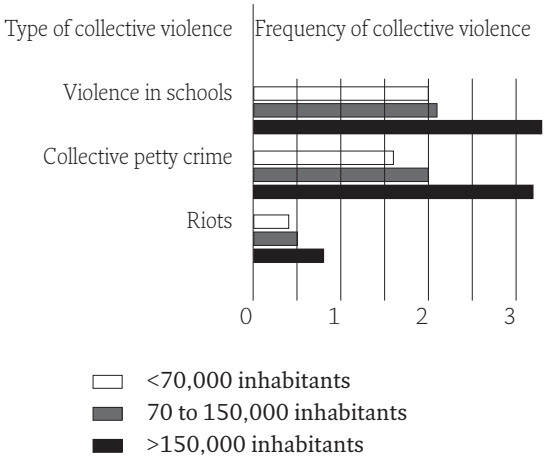

Figure 13. Frequency of types of collective violence according to the size of the city (2)

Types of stakeholders in the prevention of collective violence

For the question of "who leads the actions", the questionnaire proposes seven types of stakeholders in crime prevention: national government, regional/federal state, the municipality, justice, police, school, NGOs (foundations and associations). The questionnaire also aims to clarify whether local partnerships exist between these different operators. The results are presented in Figure 14 and focus on 44 local authorities that have confirmed that there are actions in their city to prevent collective violence (86.3% of the total sample). A setup in which the municipality occupies a central role is clearly in the majority (68.2% of the sample), followed by the police (45.5%). The existence of a local partnership was mentioned in 45.5% of cases. Other stakeholders in preventing violence (NGOs, schools, justice, regional/federal government, national government) are, surprisingly enough, very rarely mentioned.

This is a trend that resonates with the trend towards the reconciliation of prevention models in Europe and the central role given to local authorities.

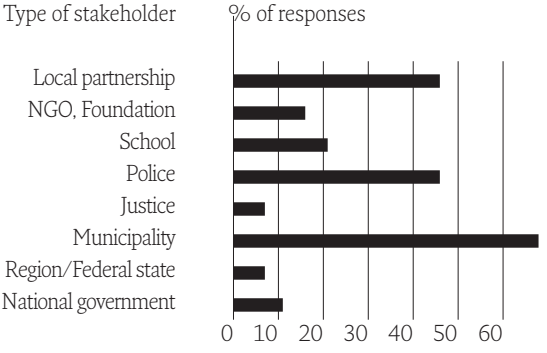

Figure 14. Distribution of stakeholders in prevention

In addition, the types of actions appear to be different depending on the size of cities. Although the municipality generally remains a key player in crime prevention, the role played by other local partners, the police, schools and NGOs varies depending on the size of the cities represented in the sample. Indeed, city representatives mention the involvement of these stakeholders more frequently than the inhabitants of towns (see Figure 15). It should be noted that the bigger the cities, the more resources they have and thus the variety of stakeholders involved may also be more numerous. Moreover, the structure of the questionnaire and the sample probably led to some inconsistencies, such as the lack of associations and schools in prevention schemes of cities with 70,000 to 150,000 inhabitants.

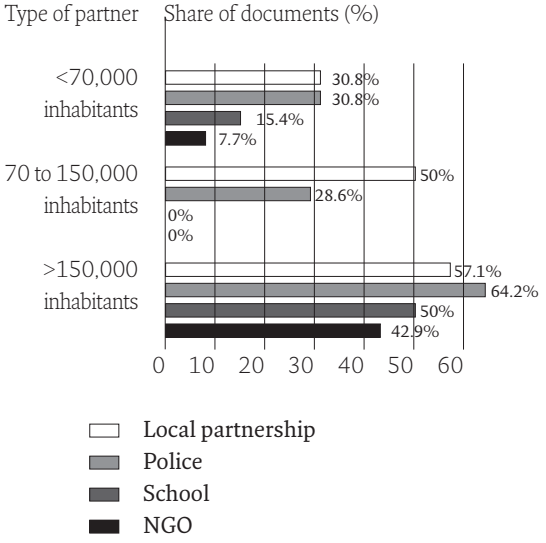

Figure 15. Prevention schemes according to the size of cities (%).

Type of actions implemented

Regarding the actions carried out, the responses are contrasting both with regard to types of territory and to the content of the actions. From the descriptions given by respondents, we have devised the following groups:

- *Socio-cultural, sports, school or family projects.* This includes both socio-cultural and sports activities, parenting support and educational support which, through daily monitoring and organising public events, aims at strengthening the social and cultural resources of families and the educational skills of parents. Some projects aimed at families fall into a more therapeutic approach, which is the case, for example, of the systemic therapies mentioned by one respondent.
- *Setting up prevention and urban mediation teams.* This involves teams which may be composed of specialised educators, development or mediation workers (sometimes volunteers) whose mission is to regulate juvenile behaviour, to fight against their exclusion and promote social cohesion. These stakeholders also participate in organising monitoring units. In other words, it is as much about support as it is social and community mediation.
- *Raising public awareness.* This is to inform young people of the risks and consequences caused by violent and, more generally, antisocial or delinquent behaviours. Several tools are mentioned, mostly school-based interventions or publicity campaigns.
- *Research and working groups.* This fourth type of action includes academic research, working groups (or dialogue) organised between different stakeholders in crime prevention, with a goal of analysis, diagnosis and evaluation.
- *Situational prevention.* This is based on deterrence through strategies ranging from the rationalisation of police presence, to the use of CCTV. It aims at increasing the difficulties and risks involved with committing crimes.

• *Governance strategies (or political agreements).* These aim at developing cooperation and partnerships between different public stakeholders (local, regional, national) and sometimes private, in order to improve the circulation and sharing of expertise and information.

Within the sample, respondents indicated the presence of more prevention teams (50% of the sample) coupled with police deterrence (40.5%) and the implementation of socio-cultural projects (47.7%). At a second level, more than a third of representatives of local authorities indicated the existence of local partnerships (36.4%) as well as focus and discussion groups (31.8%). Awareness raising actions, use of video surveillance and the implementation of information-sharing schemes are considerably less mentioned (see Figure 16).

Figure 16. Type of schemes mentioned (%).

Although we need to be very careful when handling the results of the questionnaire, we can observe some main focal points that we wish to summarize in a few points:

- Firstly, there are no (or very few) cities that rely on a

single strategy of action and security. There is a trend towards hybridization and finding a balance between the social and situational aspects of prevention.
- Even if there is a bias induced by the profile of the respondents and the organisation that produced the survey, local authorities are at the heart of public policy for prevention and security.
- Finally, the partnership aspect seems necessary, especially for larger cities, where there are a higher number of stakeholders.

2 - Outlook on the prevention of collective violence

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Since the late 1970s the security of goods and people has gradually become a major concern in many European territories. It now represents a social risk that is constantly present in the media, a popular concern fuelled by decades of public discourse and an increasingly degraded social reality[27]. Even though changing fears and concerns are sometimes at odds with measurable changes in crime, governments - whether local or national - face constant security demands. In fact, in parallel to traditional social prevention practices, we are in an era of increased privatisation and use of technology in the fight against crime, particularly in its more visible and exposed forms. These often take the form of gatherings of youths, that are more or less lasting and structured, whose collective behaviours embody public disorder. This is the case with gangs of youths[28] and more generally, different groups involved in violent behaviours. Numerous publications

27- Garland (D.), *The Culture of Control. Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001.
28- Mohammed (M.), *La formation des bandes. Entre la famille, l'école et la rue*. Paris, PUF.

- as outlined by the Street violence database recently made available online by the European Forum for Urban Security[29] - have helped us to establish a social profile of the people in question: it is often teenagers and young adults, male, from a modest background, facing several social disadvantages, particularly in terms of school, training and employability.
Public action aimed at managing public disorder takes various forms and relies on several stakeholders. The specific legal, political and administrative vary greatly from country to country. We will give a summary of the main trends of public policy in the prevention of gang phenomena and collective violence in different parts of the American continent - the birthplace of action programmes aimed at these groups. The differences identified in public action between South and North America and will enable hitherto dominant European plans to be completed, as well as those identified in the EU Street Violence database.

A) Prevention and combating gangs: trends in public policy

Thanks to a report by the World Bank, Dennis Rodgers has identified four approaches of public policies for managing youth gangs in Latin America[30]: community organisation projects that aim to change the context in which youth gangs operate by mobilising and organising the communities that are "affected" by their presence. The aim is to limit their space and sphere of influence through greater involvement from other neighbourhood stakeholders; social intervention projects including assistance programmes, social actions (educational, professional, etc.) and morality and advisory practices. The aim is to prevent youth delinquency, reduce the participation of young people in

29- www.streetviolence.eu

30- Rodgers D., 1999, *Youth Gangs and Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Literature Survey*, The World Bank, Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office, Urban Peace Program Series, Sustainable Development Working Paper nº4.

gangs, all through work in the field; the opportunities programmes aim to, downstream, direct the activities of gangs towards a constructive process, to include actions aimed at getting young people into employment through various preparation or placement actions; finally the law enforcement programmes attempt to reduce gang activity through repressive and punitive means, involving all stakeholders in the legal chain. They are intended to importune gangs (increasing the cost of their existence), to neutralize or eliminate the groups in question. They are based on three stakeholders - surveillance, arrest and imprisonment of gangs - are most often perceived as the most effective solutions, as public opinion is swayed through being fed up with violence linked, whether rightly or wrongly, to these groups.

However, for Rodgers, there is nothing to show that law enforcement programmes provide a sustainable and effective solution for combating violent and illegal behaviour by gang members. He cites as an example the case of the Nicaraguan national police who, in 1997, launched a vast crackdown campaign in one of the neighbourhoods most affected by youth violence in Managua. But although gang activity seemed to decrease at first, this decrease was only temporary. As the cost of these police operations was fairly high they could not be maintained, bearing in mind the economic constraints faced by the police. In addition, gang members (pandilleros) started to organize themselves strategically by developing or strengthening their warning systems, using lookouts and by adapting themselves to the police night raids. This is why, in many respects, neighbourhood violence ultimately worsened following the crackdown. Intrusions by police, more massive and brutal, have resulted in more frequent armed clashes with gangs, which in itself creates a risk of collateral damage.

On another note, the failure of El Salvador is one of the most emblematic strategies based solely on law enfor-

cement and the collective fight against collective violence and gangs[31]. To recap, the history of gangs in El Salvador started during the years 1970-1980 when the civil war forced many families to leave the country and settle in several U.S. cities, including Los Angeles. Many young Salvadoran exiles, challenged by gangs formed by young Mexicans in particular, joined or formed gangs by way of retaliation. In particular they gravitated towards two particularly well-organised gangs in American cities in the 1990s: the M-18, composed mainly of young Mexican-Americans (later the 18th Street gang in Los Angeles) and MS-13, a gang formed by young Salvadorans. In 1996, several new immigration laws facilitated the deportation of foreign offenders including people with the legal status of permanent resident. The implementation of these laws has resulted in the mass deportation of Salvadorans, including thousands of people who were then gang members. Their arrival in El Salvador served as a catalyst for the development of a new culture of street gangs in the country, but with a high level of violence. The response of the Salvadoran government was essentially repressive, with the Mano Dura plan (2003) and "Super Mano Dura" (arrests on the basis of appearance, mass imprisonment, many accounts of police brutality, etc.). Despite this toughening up of policies rarely observed in anti-gang policies, the homicide rate continued to increase in the years following the implementation of these successive laws (2003 = 33.0/100,000; 2004 = 40.9/100,000; 2005 = 55.5/100,000).

In the USA, policing strategies for suppression and neutralisation are based primarily on targeted legal initiatives. Many states attempted to ban participation in street gangs, even if the laws applied varied from state

31- Edraza Fariña L., Miller S., Cavallaro J.-L., 2010, *No Place to Hide: Gang, State, and Clandestine Violence in El Salvador*, Human Rights Program, Harvard Law School

to state. In Georgia, for example, the law prohibits participation in gangs (Ga. Code Ann. § 16-15-4 -1998). Similarly, in Texas a person is committing an offence if he or she tries to establish, maintain or participate in a gang (Tex. Pen. Code Ann. § 71.02 - Vernon 1997). Some states have prohibited recruitment into gangs. In Florida and Kentucky, for example, a person who promotes, solicits or recruits another person intentionally to join a criminal street gang is committing a serious crime (Fla. Stat. Ann. § 874.05-1999) (Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 506140-2000). Other states have chosen to focus on the style of dress of young people. A number of them have allowed schools to establish a "dress code" forbidding students to wear anything that might show signs of affiliation to a particular gang. This is particularly the case in New Jersey, as well as Tennessee (NJ Rev. Stat. § 18A:11-9-1999) and (Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-4215 - 1998).

However, the United States First Amendment often renders unconstitutional any regional attempt to curb gang activity, in the name of freedom of assembly.

In fact, the philosophy of public policy in the U.S., whether we are talking about states or municipalities, tends to modulate schemes according to the age and level of involvement of the youths. Prevention policies seem to be particularly favoured for the very young, as shown in a summary published in 2010 by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, by James C. Howell. For children, intervention programmes and family education; for young adults, measures combining legal pressure and getting youths into employment.[32]

Many programmes have been evaluated in recent decades in the United States. Those that focused on law enforcement and imprisonment, particularly in the 1990s, have been widely criticised and, more surpri-

32- Howell J.-C., 2010, Gang Prevention: an Overview of Research and Programs, OJJDP, https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/231116.pdf

singly, the street workers described in detail in the classic book by Short and Strodtbeck[33] are also deemed irrelevant because they carried a risk of strengthening gang cohesion instead of allowing youths to get out of a gang.[34] The G.R.E.A.T. programme aimed at preventing youth involvement in gangs and crime is also cited as a source of failure. It facilitated training in schools, given by police and was launched in 1991 by the city of Phoenix. It was aimed at young primary school and college students and had a special programme for parents, as well as a summer programme. Although the G.R.E.A.T. programme managed to raise awareness of the consequences of gang involvement and change certain attitudes toward the police, it did not, however, reduce the number of young people involved.[35] This observation brings into perspective the impact that these campaigns on the heart of the phenomenon.

Three other programmes are also cited as positive examples: the "OJJDP" project, the "Boston Gun Project" and "Operation Ceasefire" The "Comprehensive Community-Wide Gang Model" was created by Irving Spergel and his colleagues at the University of Chicago, after they have decided to explore all possibilities and analyse all the U.S. programmes implemented between 1987 and 1991. The exploratory phase was launched in 1992 in Little Village, Chicago. At first the programme was tested out in five areas: Bloomington-Normal, Illinois; Mesa, Arizona; Riverside, California; San Antonio, Texas; and Tucson, Arizona. It was then implanted under the auspices of the OJJDP in 25 urban and rural communities. This programme defined four kinds of action: community mobilisation, training and education for the professional integration of young people, early social intervention with families and sup-

33- Short J. F. and Strodtbeck F. L., 1965, *Group Process and Gang Delinquency*, University of Chicago Press.

34- Klein M. W. 1995. *The American Street Gang*, New York, Oxford University Press.

35- Esbensen F.-A., Osgood D. W., 1997, National Evaluation of G.R.E.A.T., Research in Brief, Washington, DC, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice.

pression through legal action. For Spergel, the programme has been particularly effective in Little Village as it has led to fewer arrests and has severely limited drug-related offences. People aged 19 years and over were the most receptive group. The programme has not necessarily produced the same results anywhere else but Chicago, due to a lesser involvement of the neighbourhood community.[36] This assessment points to the significant need for commitment from local officials and the community.

In another vein, the "Boston Gun Project", developed in the 1990s, aimed at reducing homicides by youth and violent acts involving firearms in Boston. Started in early 1995, this project was implemented under the name of "Operation Ceasefire" in spring 1996. This included two strategic components: a rapid frontal attack against trafficking in firearms and a strategy of deterrence aimed at the leaders of street gangs. Parallel to these deterrence efforts, the city of Boston carried out numerous prevention and intervention projects such as the "Boston Community Centers Streetworkers" and "Youth Services Providers Network." As part of the first project, a coalition of social services in Boston, probation officers and later, churches and other community groups offered gang members voluntary services, support and opportunities.

Another programme developed and implemented partnership strategies between youth aid organisations and municipal agencies dedicated to the prevention of school dropout among adolescents through mentoring, professional training, tutoring and development of "leadership skills". Interventions in the framework of "Operation Ceasefire" are also part of a global strategy to deal with gun violence and gang violence by developing synergies between youth services and those aimed at dealing with violence. Even though it is hard to establish direct accountability, many observers felt

36- Spergel I. A., Grossman S. F, 1997. The Little Village Project: A Community Approach to the Gang Problem.Social Work, 42, 456–70.

that these programmes led to a considerable decline in the number of homicides in the city.[37]

The solutions provided by Canada to gangs and street violence are very similar to those developed by the United States.[38] The Canadian government has been greatly inspired by various American experiences in terms of public policy. In recent years, governments have praised what is called "Multi-Systemic Therapy" (MST) for addressing the problems of gangs and juvenile delinquency. MST is presented as "a model of intensive family- and community-based treatment program that focuses on addressing stakeholders associated with criminal and antisocial behaviour of adolescents and their families. It targets young offenders of both sexes, aged 12 to 17 years, and their families. MST proposes firstly to reduce the problems associated with antisocial behaviour and other clinical problems in adolescents, to decrease the number of children placed in care and strengthen families' resources to handle difficult situations in the future. These objectives are achieved by developing skills for parents and the necessary resources to educate youth and providing young people with the means to deal with problems and challenges at the individual, family, peer, school and neighbourhood level." Approaches combining clinical and social behavioural interventions have taken various forms depending on the region or city in question.

In a more targeted approach, we can also mention the "Wraparound Milwaukee", which is a "system of individualised care in the community for children and youth with serious mental health, emotional and beha-

37- Braga A. A., Kennedy D. M., Piehl A. M., Waring E. J., 2001, Reducing Gun Violence. The Boston Gun Project's Operation Ceasefire, https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/188741.pdf.

38- Lafontaine T., Ferguson M., Wormith J. S., Street Gangs: A Review of the Empirical Literature on Community and Corrections-Based Prevention, Intervention and Suppression Strategies, Report for the Government of Saskatchewan, 2005. http://www.cpsp.gov.sk.ca/gangreportforcpsjune30_05.pdf

vioural problems, as well as their families. The philosophy behind this approach is to carefully identify the services and support needed by families and to provide such services as long as necessary. The wraparound programme has been implemented in different sectors such as children's welfare, education, juvenile justice and mental health. [...] If the "Wraparound Milwaukee" programme considers registration to be justified, youths participate in the programme by court order. The programme includes coordination of care, a child and family team (CFT), a mobile crisis team and a network of service providers." [39]

In Quebec, public intervention aimed at gangs differs significantly. It traditionally includes two components of public policy: law enforcement and prevention. Law enforcement is primarily concerned with "well-established gangs", in other words organised gangs who engage in criminal activities, while preventive interventions are mainly aimed at youths and less structured groups. Also, the Quebec action plan 2011-2014 is based on four approaches: two classic approaches of repression and prevention, and two more innovative approaches through desistance (social rehabilitation), as well as research, analysis, training and communication.

From this brief overview we must keep three basic elements in mind: on the one hand, the distinction between the state and local authorities is difficult to establish as public policy tends to be integrated. Control changes hands, the various institutions appear interdependent, even if local authorities are more involved in preventive and local action and governments generally have control of the major law enforcement measures against gangs (despite the importance of local police). In addition, developing joint action is the rule, mono-strategy the exception. Finally, apart from

39- Centre National de Prévention du Crime, 2007, *A l'épreuve des faits. Les gangs de jeunes*, Sécurité publique Canada.

the programmes presented in this paper, local social intervention remains the main mode of regulating urban unrest. These are trends that we propose to use to confront the main changes in European prevention models and the results of the survey conducted with prevention and safety coordinators in dozens of European cities.

The lower resonance of gangs in Europe has limited the development of targeted programmes dedicated to the phenomenon, although in recent years, the United Kingdom and France have used the law and specific policing schemes. To reveal the main trends in European policies for the prevention of juvenile disorders, we can refer to the English and French "models" and their development.[40] In fact, although they were relatively different in the 1980s, they have tended to become more similar in the following decades, like a continent in which the circulation of practices and their theoretical foundations rapidly increased. During the 1980s, there were two main crime prevention policies that stood out: the French approach of social prevention, [41] which aimed at improving general living conditions and social capital in local authorities exposed to delinquency, and the Anglo-Saxon approach of situational prevention whose purpose was to deter the offender and take action to prevent potential victims from becoming so. Other countries of the European Union tended towards one or the other of these approaches.

The English approach emerged in 1984, and then in 1987 when the conservative government launched the programmes Five Cities, then Safer Cities. These were based on two basic principles: community empower-

40- Robert Ph., Dir., 1991, *Les politiques de prévention de la délinquance à l'aune de la recherche : un bilan international*, Paris, l'Harmattan. Robert Ph., 2002, *L'insécurité en France*, Paris, La Découverte

41- 16 Baillergeau E., 2008, Intervention sociale, prévention et contrôle social. La prévention sociale d'hier à aujourd'hui, *Déviance & Société*, 32, 1, 3-20. Body-Gendrot S., Duprez D., Les politiques de sécurité et de prévention dans les années 1990 en France, in Duprez D., Hebberecht P., Dir., 2001, Les politiques de sécurité et de prévention en Europe, *Déviance & Société*, 25, 4, numéro spécial, 377-402.

ment and reducing opportunities for committing crime through city planning and the use of technology.[42] It is less the potential offender than the potential victim that must be helped, in order to crack down on the conditions for committing crime (anti-intrusion systems, increased surveillance, particularly by residents, etc.). Neighbourhood watch schemes have been the main element of these programmes.

At almost the same time in France, a report on security involving mayors made its mark on prevention strategies. Until then, prevention was a matter for the State and local associations. Pressure by local elected officials played a part in a context of decentralisation and the arrival of the left in power. The aim of the report was to establish a new security policy based on the links, unheard of at that time, between prevention, repression and strong social policy, by targeting a population and their local area in order to improve their lives. It was no longer about targeting specific groups - such as youth gangs in previous decades - but from now on, programmes based on zoning. The strategy was also innovative in terms of control, by placing the mayor at the centre of partnership units, including State services and the voluntary sector. Theoretically it was also about linking these programmes to law enforcement work, which had hardly ever been done up until then, or only on a very small scale.

Over the next decade, these programmes were to be sustained by the Ministry of Urban Affairs and the number of targeted areas - unlike available resources – increased almost constantly. In 2000, 250 city contracts affected about six million people. Whatever the political leanings of the government, social solidarity has never ceased, even if human action gradually

42- Crawford A., 2001, Les politiques de sécurité locale et de prévention de la délinquance en Angleterre et au Pays de Galles : nouvelles stratégies et nouveaux développements, in Duprez D., Hebberecht P., Dir., 2001, Les politiques de sécurité et de prévention en Europe, *Déviance & Société*, 25, 4, numéro spécial, 427-458.

gave way to a massive investment in improving or desegregating constructed areas (rehabilitation, opening up, restructuring, residentialisation, etc.). An investment, that, coupled with more traditional economic development actions or maintaining an institutional presence, undoubtedly limited the detachment of these areas, but did little to improve their lives in any dramatic way. These many variations show how France has never succeeded in producing a stable prevention doctrine that avoids both being too specialised (and running out too fast) or being too diluted in a general approach. And this, despite the existence of many local programmes that are alternative and creative.

The trend since the early 1990s has been to reconcile models and to decrease differences in models. On the British side, the Crime and Disorder Act passed in 1998 placed local authorities at the centre of activities, now acting in cooperation with regional police services[43]. This law was also influenced by Wilson and Kelling's broken windows theory[44] and more generally by a more defensive approach to managing and limiting risks[45]. In France, despite numerous changes in political parties, governments struggled to break the traditional opposition between prevention and repression by bringing together different stakeholders in local bodies dealing with crime. Similarly, attempts at reconciliation between the police and local social communities were initiated without result, due to much internal resistance to the institution[46]. Thus, despite different socio-political dynamics, the reconciliation of

43- Crawford A., 2008, Modèles comparés de prévention de la criminalité et de sa mise en oeuvre : leur genèse, leur influence et leur développement, *Revue de Droit Pénal et de Criminologie*, 11, 1047-1061.

44- Wilson J.Q., Kelling G., 1982, Broken Windows, *The Atlantic Monthly*, 29-37.

45- Garland D., 2001, *The Culture of Control: Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

46- Roché S., 2005, *Police de proximité : nos politiques de sécurité*, Paris, Seuil.

models is remarkable, particularly – and now widespread in Europe – at the local level, through developing and/or facilitating prevention policies, but also by increasing situational prevention strategies (in which law enforcement actions must be included). This is a trend that is linked to the increased power of the private security market. These developments did not specifically concern delinquent groups and gangs, even though the latter have always represented the core target of the police.

Gender issue in the context of street gangs

Marie-Dominique de Suremain
Contribution of Psytel – Partner of the EU Street Violence Project

Introduction

Just over 10 years ago, Efus published a book entitled *Is the gender-differentiated approach relevant to urban security?*[47] as part of the Daphné project "Sécu-cités Femmes" that enabled the implementation of "exploratory approaches to the security of women in the public space" and a reflection on a gendered approach to urban security policies.

One of the key recommendations from the final meeting, to ensure the equal access of women and men to urban security, was the need to first introduce the gender dimension into data collection and processing, "bringing to light what is still secret", particularly gender violence and to show the different relationships of women and men to the city and to security. The report also recommended analyzing these differences as central rather than marginal data, as well as a reflection of the socio-cultural reality that is by definition variable and changeable, rather than as immutable biological data that encloses women in the stereotyped role of passive victims.

The creation of the EU Street Violence database was a good opportunity to implement this concern at each stage: the issue of social relations between men and

47- Available on Efus' website : www.efus.eu

women, in connection with violent youth gangs in the public space, was integrated when defining the variables, the structure of collection tools and the data content to be collected.

This is therefore a presentation of the results of this work which demonstrated undeniable progress: more analyses take into account gender issues in urban security, actions are more diverse and are more widespread general orientation is gradually being implemented.

1 - The gender issue in data collection

>>>>>>>>>>

Taking into account the gender perspective, in other words, donning our "gender goggles" designed to see the phenomena that usually remain hidden, has involved several levels. Research into two types of documents was encouraged: those mainly dealing with this issue, but also those actions or recommendations that take the issue into account among other topics. The results can be measured in two ways: the presence of keywords in titles and summaries, or the use of a "gender" marker in three variables codes in the content of downloaded articles and documents: the type of violence addressed, the type of actors and the type of "vectors" of actions carried out.

The "gender" marker means that gender relations were discussed and not just in terms of violence against women and girls. Analyses or actions may relate to the context of power struggles between men and women, the indirect impact on children of domestic violence between adults, relationships between boys and girls at school or in gangs, but also relationships between men (construction of masculinity, the use of violence to

prove their courage and reinforce their identity) or the relationship between girls, for example in girl gangs.

For some articles, there is a central theme found in the title or summary; for others, there is an explicit consideration of the issues even if it is not the main theme of the article.

Of the 478 files created in total (October 2012), approximately 10% included gender, whether in keywords present in the content[48] or the use of gender markers. It was the marker related to vectors of intervention, in other words the kind of action, which showed up the largest number of files. This result could be seen as limited, or even disappointing. However, the specific collection effort and the quality of the texts collected, for the most part recent, suggests a reflection of progress in the field and an emerging theme that can only grow in the future if the results are fully exploited and the work continues. The countries with the most documents relating to gender are Italy, France and Spain, but all countries have been committed to collecting in-depth reflections and meaningful actions.

48- Gender, women, girls, rape, sexual violence, etc.

Inset: Test of database requests:

word or coded variable	ARAS total	Belgium	France	Italy	Spain	UK	Internat.
FULL TEXT (summary, observations and titles)							
Genre	**3**		3				
Gender	**35**	1	3	2	9	3	
Femmes	**7**		7				
Femme			1				
Women	**8**		2	2		6	
Female	**5**					5	
Sexual	**10**			1		8	1
filles	**7**		7				
girls	**12**		2	1		9	
girl	**1**					1	
viol	**1**		1				
rape	**3**					2	1
Request by type of problem:							
sexual violence[1]	**41**	10	7	17		6	1
Request by target group:							
gender marker	**31**	2	9	14		5	1
Request by intervention vector:							
gender marker	**47**	4	12	15	9	7	

[1]In the absence of the «gender violence» code, the marker «sexual violence» has been used in a broad sense.

2 - Analyses

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2.1 In gangs, boys are in the majority and girls are dominated; few girl gangs

The first question that must be answered relates to the composition of different types of youth gangs. The gang

is a male-dominated world but this world is not strictly for men. Not only are there girls in the gangs, but they also play a particular role, either indirectly or directly.
Boys organise gangs between themselves and reinforce their identity by excluding girls: "The manly world of gangs causes the eviction of girls from it[49]". The socialisation of adolescents (boys) -particularly in underprivileged areas where the family and school have little power to educate, regulate or reward - involves identifying with a group that provides reassurance and makes its own rules; this group is not necessarily of a criminal nature but its cohesion depends on the exclusion of "the other". Girls, primarily, but also gangs from other neighbourhoods, those who listen to a different kind of music or dress differently, or even those who are classed as "different" or "inferior" and therefore not deemed worthy to be in the group. Group cohesion is conventionally constructed by confronting the "other", so by organising confrontations that are also heroically staged, preferably in different public areas: sometimes between villages, as immortalised in the film War of the Buttons, or between cultural or ethnic communities, as glorified by West side story. Today, it is more often in the metro, on the street, or online. Girls are not included in these physical confrontations.
Girls are however "drawn to gangs", in other words through their relationships with boys. They can be used as an excuse for "trouble" between the boys or can sometimes play a mediation role in conflicts. Some become involved in gangs through their brothers or boyfriends, but they are most often relegated to secondary activities: "shoplifting, forging cheques and paperwork, etc. (but) they did not take part in collective fights, muggings, or vehicle theft". [50] Those that are involved in male gangs have therefore broken free of control and family and social expectations that limit

49- French Forum for Urban Security, 2006.
50- *Ibidem*

their incursion into the public space, or their deviant behaviour, and have also deflected, at least in part, exclusion by boys. For this to be lasting, however, they must accept to be manipulated and must accept the law of survival of the fittest. They may also only be allowed in at certain times, particularly after school hours...(but) also later on[51] because it is more difficult for girls than for boys to evade social constraints.

Controlling girls is an issue, not just for the parents, but also for the boys, particularly through the mechanism of "reputation". Although often said to be the cause of confrontations, it would be more accurate to say that their "possession" is a common excuse for fights between boys as a way of reinforcing their prestige or power. Girls can also play an active role in circulating information within a neighbourhood or between neighbourhoods, if they are prepared to be used in that way. However, we will see later on how the most common strategy used by girls to reduce the hold of social control, of their "reputation" or of violence, is often avoidance, circumvention or even invisibility.

There are also some female gangs that have broken stereotypes even further by imitating the behaviours of male gangs: "they hang around in groups in the hallways of buildings to smoke sneaky cigarettes, spitting all around them (...), blocking young girls in the lift, consuming cannabis, shoplifting, extortion accompanied by bullying and harassment." The magnifying effect of the media, with frequent hype surrounding male gangs, seems to be multiplied even more in the case of girl gangs, known as "outlaws", as they seem to have a double shock effect, being delinquents as well as girls. However, these girl gangs seem to be few in number and not very long-lasting.

51- Marwan Mohammed, 2006.

2.2. Delinquency among girls, delinquency among boys, gender issues

Two documents deal with the issue of delinquency, comparing girls and boys[52], i.e. considering girls in their active role and not as victims. In the first case, specialised educators start by putting into perspective both the extent of juvenile delinquency with that of female delinquency. They point out that the first only represents 17% of defendants in 2009, while girls only represent 15% of juvenile offenders, so only 2.8% of the total defendants. The figures have certainly doubled in 10 years, but they started from a very low threshold. Presenting this change as an increase creates a bias and tends to magnify the phenomenon, while in real terms it remains limited.
With regards to the type of delinquency the findings match the previous analysis: female delinquency affects property more than people, and girls are rarely involved in violence. The strategies of girls in disadvantaged areas are very different to those of boys because of the control they are subject to: mobile and invisible in their neighbourhood, they visit other neighbourhoods in small groups, looking for mixed spaces and their movements are primary functional. Boys on the other hand can gather aimlessly for the mere fact of being together; they occupy more space and are looking to be seen and to be feared in order to assert themselves. Girls however, even delinquents, are much less exposed for the reasons mentioned above.

The second document is a study into "self-confessed" juvenile delinquency, carried out in Belgium. It questioned the social mechanisms that lead to different deviant experiences or risk-taking among adolescent boys and girls. Adopting a gender perspective, it rejects the

52- Josette Magne, CNAPE 2010 seminar, "Les filles sont un problème" and Claire Gavray 2009 Juvenile Delinquency and the Gender Issue.

"natural" explanations for the difference between boys and girls and searches for social causes: it links the delinquent acts revealed with forms of socialisation and relationships with authority and school. From a very young age, boys are encouraged more than girls to fight and to compete in order to develop one's identity, while girls are expected to conform more. Thus, 32% of girls compared to 67% of boys agree with the proposition that "violence is part of the game" and 33% of girls compared to 66% of boys think that "using force is important for gaining other people's respect and because a life without violence would be boring".

Less violence and delinquency among girls is not, however, explained by them having higher levels of psychosocial wellbeing. There is "a higher degree of psychosocial discomfort among girls" as well as "a stronger correlation between symptoms of depression, family victimisation and intensity of delinquent behaviour". But it is the social context (particularly school and the family) that channels these personal problems towards different forms of expression. And the issue of boy/girl relationships plays a major role in male violence. It "is related to internalised values and beliefs regarding relationships between the different sexes". Boys seem less likely to be able to escape the influence of the group (and the gender stereotypes that it implies), which negatively affects their academic success and integration. Facing fewer restrictions and constraints, boys are proportionally more likely to feel boredom, frustration and victimisation, the cause of which seems to be external to them. Delinquency of girls seems more related to the limitations of their social role and psychosocial victimisation, while that of boys is more linked to the demands of "masculinity'' that affect them. Paradoxically, girls are generally more engaged in academic terms and have more of a desire to succeed. They have realised that an education will help them to gain access to employment and independence, at a time when school qualifications play a

more minor role as a social elevator for boys. Boys tend to feel disillusioned with regards to their employability prospects. They perceive girls as "illegitimate competitors" and devalue school as incapable of giving them a status. Some go on to construct a "male" identity by alternative means. For example, by persecuting girls or even good students, counterexamples or scapegoats. In "ghetto" classes, the peer group exerts pressure that devalues an interest in education. But for boys in the end, bad results linked to a lack of effort during adolescence does not hold them back from professional and social success in comparison to girls, because they are still at an advantage due to persisting social gender inequalities. Poor school performance more directly increases the degree of delinquency among girls, as it more drastically removes any hope of catching up and their professional aspirations.
These differences are also found in the different uses of public space of boys compared to girls.

2.3 Boys and girls in the public space

There are several documents detailing the mechanisms that male-female or boy-girl relationships in the public space are modelled on, not just from the point of view of the constraints but also strategies used to resist, avoid or escape them.
A research action presented in Evry (France)[53] studies the context of rough neighbourhoods, the indifference of parents towards academic institutions, and highlights the paradoxical demands affecting youths of migrant origin: being required to integrate and constantly being brought back to their origins. Through migration, mothers of young people have lost their bearings, in other words, their traditional roles and their family networks. Faced with multicultural references, given the multiple origins of the people living around them, they can find it hard to deal with

53- Urban policy resource centre, Essonne, Evry, research-action 2004.

and can end up staying sheltered in their own apartments and feeling depressed. Some husbands are opposed to them working or having activities out of the home, which forces them to internalise a feeling of social inferiority, this reinforcing gender inferiority.
Girls want to move away from this model of the mother figure. But they face three types of constraints: social control over relationships and going out (the main constraint), being allocated domestic tasks and social control over the way they dress. If girls hang around with boys, go out and dress in a certain way, then the neighbourhood gives them a bad "reputation", such as an "easy girl", "scum", etc. which exposes them not only to criticism but also to violence. Girls therefore choose to avoid "hanging out" with boys. Migrant families in France can apply stricter educational principles than in their countries of origin with the aim of "protecting" their daughters. Some go as far as forced marriage, intended to prevent their daughter from going down the wrong path, in their eyes: they might suddenly send them to their country of origin, without telling them beforehand. In response, girls develop avoidance strategies (meeting boys in other neighbourhoods) or in rare cases, they break up with them when negotiations have become impossible. They can also opt for invisibility by dressing in a neutral way, even as a boy, so as not to attract attention, erasing their femininity and avoiding criticism and/or attacks.

Another analysis[54] highlights that fact that it is the closed and sheltered character of these rougher neighbourhoods that encourages the surveillance of youngsters and the formation of "reputations". By making the neighbourhood area a sort of extension of the private space, the control of the neighbours and neighbourhood is exacerbated by daily tensions: unemployment, conflicts, degradation, and stigmatisation.

54- Horia Kebabza, doctoral student from Université le Mirail., Toulouse, Revue Hommes et Migrations. France 2004

Purpose-built dormitory towns, characterised by a lack of social diversity and activities, are a kind of sounding board for their inhabitants' frustrations. The demands of manhood are even more paradoxical there, as the central aspects of the traditional masculine identity (work, social prestige, etc.) are inaccessible. Gaining the respect of their peers and existing collectively at the expense of "the other" is therefore central to the strategy of boys. "Male groups have a strategy of making themselves visible and occupying areas of the neighbourhood, a noisy and conspicuous occupation... One of them says: "We are always in a group when we go into town. We're scared of other people, we always have our mates with us and we're scared of the police." Clashes with the police and the possession of girls play a dual role in proving their manhood and in the legitimisation of violence. Those who do not submit to the law of the group risk ridicule, punishment, then exclusion. A girl may not therefore not the "cause" of a brawl between groups, but the pretext, a way of making a statement, of proving the cohesion between the boys and a fight for visibility.

The stereotyped idea that it is the "vulnerability" of women that makes them feel insecure in the public space can therefore be deconstructed [55]. Women learn throughout their lives about the social order in the public space mainly attributed to men, which tends to mainly affect their private space and sexuality. Remarks, wolf-whistles, staring and touching, being followed, are invisible violent and daily practices that remind women - particularly adolescents - of the threat of sexual violence. They shift the responsibility for what might happen to them on to the victim, thus erasing the responsibility of the perpetrators. The fear or "vulnerability" of women, are therefore the social constructs that limit their freedom of movement, forcing them to take "precautions", avoid going to certain

55- Marylène Lieber: *Gender, Violence and the Public space*, 2008.

places or at certain times, walk or dress a certain way and to internalise the responsibility for attacks.

There is therefore a continuum of sexual violence in the public space and private space, with the extreme being gang rape, called "tournantes" [pass-arounds] in France[56]. Research has shown that these "pass-arounds" do not amount to gang rape exactly, but should be seen as "the commercialisation of a rape". They are based on "a mafia-type criminal organisation that can then lead to prostitution". It can start off with a form of domestic violence, going from a loving relationship that transforms into multiple pairs of partners - rapes usually only occurring with one boy at a time - who "pass-around" girls between them taking turns. These "tournantes" therefore combine a symbolic violent dominance, an organised system as a mode of prostitution (an exchange of "services" between men) and emotional manipulation of the teenage girl, the age of whom mostly ranges between 13 and 15 years. This analysis also underlies the actions designed to combat gang violence in Britain (see the next chapter).

3 - Actions

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By compiling actions related to gender issues from several countries we can see that these issues arise in all areas. However, at the territorial level, only one or two aspects are usually taken into account, and the approach varies in an often ambivalent way between violence experienced or perpetrated by girls or boys. Recognising girls as "victims of violence" may initially help to increase the visibility of gender violence, but

56- Béatrice Sberna, EHESS, research-action commissioned by the Ministry of the Interior and the Collectif 13 des Droits des Femmes, France.

considering them as "vulnerable" by nature masks the responsibility of the perpetrators and prevents us from analysing the mechanisms that produce the violence. This therefore prevents a de-construction of the social demands both from the side of the perpetrators (those that carry out the violence) and of the victims, whose role can be perceived as passive and naturalised or as feeling accountable for the violence.
We will therefore take into account actions in the street, school, family, culture and finally combating the "tournantes" and the risk of prostitution, insofar as it is a coherent set of several of these actions that could change the situation in the long-term.

3.1 Specialised prevention in the street and exploratory approaches

Specialised prevention that was directed at boys exclusively, as they were noisier and more visible, has started to become more interested in girls, particularly because the teams include more women too. Understanding that social maladjustment also affects them but takes other forms, certain places and activities have also begun to be examined. However, noting that it is often more difficult to meet with girls in the public space, work has to be carried out in other locations: at college, in the library, at home. This preliminary work helps "to reach a near parity with boys and to recognise that girls are over represented in the proportion of users experiencing problems".
A real place for girls, women, to gain autonomy, freedom, life choices: educators engaging in actions resulting in the emerging potential of this group of people (ADAPP 13). This particular work raises some questions: does professional feminisation promote work with girls? Can educators sometimes cause non-diversity through the bias of their representations?
The practice of "exploratory approaches to security of women in the public space" enables objective diagnos-

tics to be carried out on aspects of urban planning, management of exclusively male (men or young men) environments or male-only occupation of certain spaces, physical or symbolic occupation (road names, for example) which contribute to excluding women or force them to bypass obstacles and prevent them from moving around freely. Putting these diagnostics into practice enables us not only to make proposals to the authorities but also to increase knowledge and self-confidence, to take ownership of the public space, physically and symbolically, by acting on public policies.

3.2 Prevention in schools

It is in schools that we find more actions aimed specifically at identifying, preventing and reducing sexual violence, sometimes by also linking them with interventions aimed at parents. Several Italian examples have been put forward, particularly in Rome and Naples57. In Rome, as part of the general combating of "all forms of violence", there has been a particular focus on gender violence, physical and moral harassment, violent behaviours, racism and homophobia. Valuing the differences and resources of young people, as well as respect, cooperation, empathy, critical analysis of stereotypes, equality between women and men, have all been promoted through awareness-raising actions. These were developed in stages with the participation of women's organisations and involving the entire school community at a launch seminar. Research-actions were carried out in classes and directed at teachers and parents; psychosocial support was implemented aimed at different actors and put online so that networks of associations and institutions could provide answers and follow-up; then there was a final group evaluation. The strengths of this action were the debate provoked, and the high level of involvement of people. Areas for improvement were suggested by the young people: a different frequency of meetings; more continuity of spea-

57- Projects: "Solidea" in Rome and "Differently the same" in Naples.

kers; reinforced psychological support; less emphasis on the image of boys as perpetrators of violence; improving young people's understanding of the seriousness of violent acts and their implications; dealing with drug and rape issues more; and increasing links with school and the wider community.

In Naples, a programme designed to combat violence towards women focused primarily on 10 high-risk schools (14-17 years) in neighbourhoods characterised by high socio-cultural deficiencies. It was then extended to all willing schools with the aim of helping to diagnose, denounce and combat violence. Particular attention was paid to adolescents of migrant origin, from a multicultural perspective. Young people were invited to discuss boy-girl relationships in pairs, with the support of experts, and to develop key messages aimed at pupils and the outside community, as an exercise to learn about citizenship. A guide has been drawn up based on the experience.

3.3 Prevention in families, linked with domestic violence

In France, similar actions have been undertaken, some of which systematically carry out work in parallel (mirrored work) with adolescents and with their parents, and establish a connection with the prevention of domestic violence.[58] Young people are therefore not only led to challenge the traditional stereotyped masculine and feminine roles, and sexual violence at school, but also to understand how the desire to control women (they way they dress, where they go, how they spend their time, etc.) is not "proof of love" but one of the cornerstones of domestic violence which can often set in at the beginning of a relationship.

These activities can also be found in programmes carried out in Italy for "early warning" of gender-based violence, including experiences in pre-school[59].

58- Family Planning Project, Périgueux, France.

59- ALLIES. Alliance between teachers and parents for the early

3.4 Combating "tournantes" [pass-arounds], or prostitution of girls

Both projects are devoted specifically to combating sexual violence, rape and intimidation, one by promoting the self-expression of friends, mothers and sisters of boys belonging to violent gangs in Britain, the other by intervening with teen perpetrators of sexual abuse in Belgium[60].

The first started off with a research-action, through focus groups and interviews in different cities. It highlighted the impact of violence in women in the entourage of "bad boys", the different kinds of constraints (particularly sexual) or threats weighing on them in order to prevent girls reporting violence or getting out of the gangs. Recommendations were made, including:

- Including gang violence against women and girls as a theme of child protection, which requires dedicated resources and structures.
- Winning the trust of girls, to break their silence.
- Defining three general policies more clearly: one against violence towards women, another aimed at young people and one at child protection.
- A need for clearer guides for the local authorities and bodies, in order to reduce violence.
- Recognising the fact that the violent behaviour of men and boys against women and girls occurs both in and out of gangs.
- Admitting the fact that men and boys are not aware of the consequences of their attitudes and their role in violence against women and girls.
- Involving the department of education of the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Interior and making the link between domestic violence, sexual violence and sexual exploitation. It is particularly important to

prevention of violence in the pre-school environment in Italy.

60- This is my life, Female Voice in Violence, in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham, 2010. And "Teen perpetrators of sexual abuse: sex crime or misdemeanour?" in Belgium.

intervene against adult men who use young boys to exploit young girls.
- The police need to respond with trained personnel who are aware of violence against women and underage girls, particularly those caused by gangs.

One project in Belgium focused on intervention with teenage perpetrators of sexual abuse, generally towards girls younger than themselves. The image of young sex offenders is often that of repeat offenders, or youths that are immature, perverse, dangerous or incurable. The article criticises "coercive programmes that (...) are reminiscent of brainwashing or mental reconditioning" while adolescent "sexual offenders" are a sub-clinical group that are particularly vulnerable, exposed to re-victimisation, drug addiction, prostitution, blackmail, etc., resulting in a more or less severe worsening of their sexual psychopathology (depression, suicide, acting out, etc.) and a risk of strengthening their sexual urges. Against a background of inhibited feelings and urges, the authors highlight the fact that these young people have few social relationships and suffer from emotional loneliness (shyness and introversion). Their level of anxiety is significant and is not always linked to the acts committed. They tend to trivialise or normalise their acts in a defensive way.
These adolescents have been "victimised" more often than the other juvenile offenders and the general population. Adolescents who commit sexual offences have usually been affected by a serious family pathology, often of an incestuous nature. The young offender has often grown up in an environment of violence, marital discord, emotional neglect, family alienation or parents lacking accountability. Evaluation tools should take into consider these specific differences should be managed in specialised centres offering a solid treatment framework and guarantees in terms of social and educational control, in other words where adolescents and therapists respond before a third party (judicial or

administrative) regarding how the guidance is progressing.

4 - Conclusion: specific and general actions

We have mentioned some fifteen specific analyses and actions that have focused on the gender perspective. But it should be noted that other projects (around twenty other experiences) took into account gender issues as one of several elements of prevention or the fight against youth gang violence in the public space. This general introduction to the gender perspective is an important breakthrough, as it represents a particular focus on the situation of girls, as members of gangs or as direct or indirect victims. Other actions are also endeavouring to introduce educational schemes aimed at raising awareness or specifically interviewing boys about their love lives, their emotions, in order to increase their empathy with others and to transform their aggressive model of masculinity: these actions question the stereotype of men as being insensitive to pain (theirs and others), by encouraging them to express their feelings, desires and weaknesses. These aspects of personal or emotional development directed at boys and integrated into cultural and educational actions, are also promising of change, by affecting the sexism which is at the heart of not just gender violence but also of gang violence between boys.

Part 2

Violence committed by youth groups in public spaces in nine European countries

Research and practices on urban violence, youth gangs and street crime in Belgium

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Contribution of the Belgian Forum for Prevention and Urban Security (FBPSU) - Partner of the EU Street Violence Project

In this article, we present an overview of research and practices on urban violence, gangs and street crime committed by young people in Belgium.
In the first part of the article, we examine this issue through the historical angle. In the second part we look at some of the most important incidents that have shaped policy, social prevention and various programmes aimed at curbing street violence committed by young people. It seems that politicians and administrators do not analyse these incidents as part of a global phenomenon but rather react to particular incidents. This creates a confusing landscape and a range of different actions. The classical theory on juvenile delinquent behaviour is losing ground and does not explain juvenile crime nor legitimate the actions undertaken to prevent and fight it. In this paper, we put forth the idea that this is not due to an intrinsic weakness of the theory but to the fact that such theory is based on the existence of an inclusive welfare state that is now changing and eroding. In that context, the relatively old theme of youth gangs is not likely to disappear.

The research and findings on the subject of youth gangs and street violence in Belgium confront us with several difficulties. The first is the territorial concept of Belgium as such. Indeed, the responsibilities and actions concerning security, prevention and crime are scattered between different levels of policy, languages and cultures, and between the local, regional and federal levels of administration. To a certain degree, federal agencies govern at a distance Regions, communities and cities act under the inspiration of their governing political parties and/or coalitions. Criminology, data recollection on crime, youth work and policing are subject to a mix of French, Dutch, Anglo Saxon and to a lesser degree German influences, and one would be hard pressed to describe a typical "Belgian" approach. This is not necessarily negative; it can also be seen as a rich array of actions, analyses, approaches and discussions. In any case, given the two main languages in Belgium are Dutch and French, the mere translation of the concept of "urban gangs" as "bandes urbaines", "groepen" and "bendes" reveals slight differences in the way the very concept of urban gangs is defined. This goes much further than the problem of the Eurogang paradox (Klein, 2001) and it appears clearly in the data collected for this survey. Gangs as such are absent, almost non-existent in the Flemish research and criminological literature. They are more visible in French literature. Nonetheless, the issue appears in police activities and at the prosecution level in Brussels and in both the French and Dutch speaking parts of the police corps of large cities. There are indications of some identified troublesome groups in some neighbourhoods of Brussels. Lastly, the concept of "urban gangs" is used sometimes by the media and also by the prosecution in what appears to be a mix of scientific definition and moral panics.

Another problem concerns the implicit relation between gangs, youth, troublesome groups, and street crime. Street crime and violence are by no means a mo-

nopoly of youth and there is no straight line between troublesome youth and serious crime. Petty crime does not lead directly to gang activities. Recent studies on desistance in youth criminology suggest that the relation between youth, crime and persistent crime is more complex (Nuytiens, 2008). However, actions against street crime and violence tend to focus on young people.

A short history

The history of the concept of youth gangs and street violence shows that the research on gangs in the Belgian context is a recurrent theme. Fyvel (1961) makes the suggestion in his 1961 study that the first urban "gangs" became visible in Belgium around 1960. He addresses this phenomenon through the subcultural theories of the time and formulates the hypothesis of a kind of early rebellion against the welfare state in the post WW2 era. Subcultural icons such as "teddy boys" are mentioned and are almost a tradition in an overview of youth subcultures[1]. It is not that hard to find earlier references to discontent about gangs and young troublesome people, for instance in the early 20th century post-war period and in the rich history of the late 19th century (Deneckere, 2001, Vrients, 2011). More specific to the late 19th century, the moral panic around and effective visibility of young people, the presence of children in the streets in criminogenic situations, and concerns about misbehaviour among young people and children are some of the elements that led to youth protection laws and other protective initiatives in the first decade of the 20th century[2]. (Christiaens, 1999)
The issues of youth gangs and street crime re-emerge

1- For a more detailed study on youth subcultures in Belgium , see J. Landuydt, 'Tegen de keer. Jeugdsubculturen 1945-1985', in: P. Allegaert en L. Vanmarcke ed., *Op lawaai. Jongeren en cultuur* (Leuven 1989) 79. .

2- Youth protection laws in Belgium, 1912 Carton de Wiart.

in the nineties, but now embedded or framed in studies on neighbourhood safety and crime. The 1996 study by Vercaigne and Goris, (Vercaigne, 1996), which covers the research on street gangs, is typical. Again, the authors connect the issue with traditional subcultural criminology, referring to Miller's concept of street gangs, and in a way they confirm the Euro gang paradox. They find no connection with organised crime in the nineties in Belgium. The researchers point at the moral panic dimension, they question the relevance of the approach or framing of the problem and dispute Weitekamp's (2001) thesis. Vercaigne (2001) takes up the question again in 2001 and in her overview concludes that the knowledge on "gangs" is limited. If any analysis is possible, she suggests that youth gangs are to be seen as a particular form of youth group (splinter groups). Up to 2000 there is no systematic information available from police statistics, only intentions to gather more precise information[3]. In the second part of the article, Vercaigne takes up the other lemma of the Eurogang paradox and briefly analyses coverage by the media. Youth gangs and criminal groups are mentioned in newspapers, some at the level of prosecution. Vercaigne's findings and interpretation are in line with the few other publications on this issue of the past ten years.

There seems to be one exception, the case of Brussels where gangs with connections to the former Belgian colony of Congo appear from time to time. They get some media coverage and also seem to have an intensive relation with the local police.Other gang episodes are more incidental[4]. Combined with the efforts of the Eurogang project, the theme now attracts more attention. A more systematic review and data gathering are conducted through an isolated project in Brussels

3- The exact date is not clear. One source mentions police statistics from 1991 onwards, others mention systematic information gathering from 2001 in Brussels by a special task force.

4- A group of young offenders became quite famous as "de Colruyt bende van Zelzate".

(Dauphin, F, & Van Belle), along with some attempts to study the question in other contexts (Vermeulen, 2006) (Brolet, 2007).

These recent findings contrast with the fact that up until 2000, there was almost no research in Belgium. It is only recently that Brussels police and public prosecution undertook targeted observations and actions on street gangs. Criminal statistics from the prosecution level do not allow to register group activities. In the media, things go on as usual: they mention gangs from time to time. Once in a while, we see an anthropology or criminology master thesis and intentions at the doctoral level.

Several observations can be made. First, there is a relatively weak tradition in gang study. Furthermore, there seems to be an opposition or resistance to consider juvenile delinquency as part of the concept of youth gangs. Traditionally, youth crime is
contemplated through a micro sociological or socio-psychological/educational perspective. It is not, however, denied. Indeed, Belgium has a strong tradition in youth criminology. Even today, the societal vulnerability thesis (Walgrave, Vettenburg) is used to explain youth crime and has a strong impact on the interpretation of crime rates, on the social approach adopted to tackle youth crime and on the implementation of social prevention. Whether this accounts for the absence of investigation on an environmental and sociological approach of youth gangs remains a question. Reflexive criminology could question to what degree criminal phenomena are constructed by criminological investigation. Nevertheless, police forces and some local authorities have taken up the issue since the late nineties. Street crime, urban violence and urban gang stories are now in the spotlight and new data gathering and profiling practices are being put in place. But what happened since the 2000-2010?

Gangs and street crime in the new millennium

Even if gangs are mentioned in the media and are a concern for the police, things must be seen in context. In academic literature gangs tend to appear in local contexts and are usually limited to some bigger cities' neighbourhoods. They have common characteristics that transcend local appearances. Incidents within and in between gangs are seldom covered by the national press, and do not get much attention. But there is concern about youth and crime. Indeed, the issue of crime "sells" and one could say it is trendy even though it can cause serious unrest.

A quick look at Belgium's recent history[5] shows that the leading theme of the late nineties was the Dutroux case, which had a decisive impact on the reorganisation of the police and the creation of victim support services, and raised serious concerns about the danger for young people to be victim of sexual abuse. The other dominant issues of that period, which are the rise of the feeling of insecurity and insecurity itself, inspired more securitarian policies (Hebberecht, 2005) that have nothing to do with youth gangs as such but tend to focus on young people in the streets. Indeed, unruly young people and children or groups of children are said to be wandering the streets at night in deprived neighbourhoods of Brussels but no explicit reference is made to youth gangs.

In the 2000-2010 decade, several serious incidents raised alarm among the public.

The stabbing of a young man in Brussels' central train station by two Polish-Gypsy immigrants caused a huge

5- Concerning gangs, it is relevant to mention the Bende van Nijvel, the Bende Haemers and other violent criminal gangs that have appeared in the last 20 years of the century. The very concept of gangs, "bendes", is associated with very tough crime by harsh and professional criminals acting in a very organised and almost terrorist-like manner. The concept of gangs or "bendes" is particularly strong in the Dutch language, which might explain why the media and academic world are hesitant to use the concept of "bende" or "gangs".

emotion and concern about youth crime. Youth gangs were by no means involved, although some right wing politicians mentioned groups of 'predators' wandering around in Brussels willing to kill almost for no reason. There was a shootout in Antwerp by a young white man who shot several people, including a baby and an au pair. A young man attacked a nursery with a knife. There was a stabbing in Ostend following an argument about refusing to give a cigarette.
All these incidents shook the conscience. They raise the question of violence in the streets, of youth, leisure crime and senseless violence. These are anything but group activities. On the contrary, they appear to be late modern individual violent and unreasonable acts. These incidents also raise the question of violence as such and conjure a dual image of youth as both innocent and dangerous. (Museum Guislain, 2011). These issues are responsible for the huge amount of actions and campaigns against violence, based on the somewhat unclear concept of "senseless violence". (Declercq, 2007)

Obviously, some groups do engage in troublesome activities. There have been ethnic riots in Brussels, Antwerp and other Belgian French speaking cities, which attracted media attention. But these incidents were far less serious than recent riots in France and the UK. Again, some of these incidents were connected to the existence of criminal groups, although this has been questioned by academics. The most violent group actions as well as riots and incidents in cities and conflicts between groups and the police are considered as "ethnic conflict" issues, sometimes connected with religious issues. In recent years, there has been an increasing number of gay bashing and sexist incidents in the streets, where groups were involved. These phenomena are considered as "intercultural" or "multicultural" conflicts. They are seldom organised. Rather, they are seen as eruptions of violence. The same goes

for the recurring incidents of slapping and blind beatings on public transport during the weekend.
The trauma about senseless violence and "ethnic", "religious", "racial" and "cultural framings" is the background of debates during the decade 2000-2010. But gangs as such are barely mentioned by the media or in policymaking. The normal youth crime statistics show no significant differences or variations in these years. There is some serious violence and crime connected to youth in the first decade of the 21st century, and a certain number of these incidents had group characteristics. But it is the blind and unpredictable crimes perpetrated by young individuals that provoked great emotion. The problem is rarely, if ever, considered in terms of gangs. Others paradigms or frames seem to work or better explain the problem. And even when a genuine gang is involved, still there are different interpretations and framings along with interpretations by the police, focussing on the precarious social situation and survival strategies of those youngsters. (Robert, M.T.)

Street violence

What do we find if we look deeper into the question on street violence, youth gangs and youth crime? Building up the database for the project (EU Street Violence 2012), we searched on a variety of issues. An Internet sweep on violence, urban violence, street violence and youth in newspapers, blogs and scientific magazines resulted in some recurrent findings. We crossed these findings with sweeps on governmental and non-governmental organisations and went through some levels of policy in the bigger, medium and smaller cities, looking for analyses, recommendations and actions.
Not surprisingly, the lemma youth gangs results in most cases to references to the Eurogang inquiry as such. So we had to broaden the sweep on lemmas such as "violence and street". Furthermore, we examined the security policy of several cities and their actions

against violence. We mentioned above the concept of senseless violence. So we swept that issue as well. We browsed criminological literature and publications on social policy. We analysed the media. This resulted in a huge amount of actions, some recommendations and few analyses.

At first sight, we notice a huge amount of symbolic actions concerning violence towards and by youth. Following the incidents described above, there were and still are actions in the public sphere; symbolical actions on public spaces and cyberspace. Tiles, the renaming of city squares, poster actions, charters by city councils and badges can be seen in city centres. In a way it is hard to identify what or who exactly they are aimed at. Under the umbrella of actions against senseless violence, there seems to be several possible directions and issues. The question of bullying at school gets a lot of attention and is labelled as senseless violence, the same goes for steaming and sexual harassment. Following these initiatives, support to victims was improved. Also, they led right wing parties to call for new initiatives focused on public behaviour in the streets, while left wing parties were left in an uncomfortable position.
Things get mixed up in this senseless violence movement. Streets are unsafe, behaviour in public must be managed, and together with the securitarian policies put in place to tackle the feeling of insecurity among the population, local authorities have launched an increasing number of actions in the public space. The Communal Administrative Sanctions are a good example of such initiatives, although far from being the only one[6]. The communal Administrative sanc-

6- Communal administrative sanctions must be considered in the light of other initiatives concerning behaviour in public spaces such as the increase in the number of CCTV systems installed to monitor public places, Very Irritating Police, zero tolerance policies, making neighbourhoods responsible of safety matters, and the involvement of social services in safety and peaceful coexistence (Geldof, 2008).

tions (GAS, SAC) are an infra legal procedure, wherein people as young as 14 can be fined for a whole range of rather arbitrary indecent behaviour in the streets. The strategy has been spreading throughout Belgium and the description of the infractions is very vague. Sometimes, the mere fact of being in certain places at certain times can be sanctioned. In most communal regulations, sanctionable conducts include verbal aggression, beating, littering, nuisance, but also begging, noise, drinking or eating in public spaces or just being at the wrong place at the wrong time. Up to now, there is no known evaluation of the effects of these sanctions on the public sphere and behaviour, nor on violence in the streets. Furthermore the legality of these sanctions is questioned. (Van Caeyseele, 2010)

Another range of actions that have become widespread throughout Belgium concern initiatives such as non-violent education, non-violent communication, attitude training and training in coping with conflict and violence. Most of these actions are set up by NGOs and are based on a specific approach to some of the main current societal issues. They are adopted and funded by local governments and private charities. They are mostly aimed at children and young students and make use of a range of methods from poster actions, theatre, workshops, actions in television programmes for young people, a.s.o. A lot of these actions reach middle class young people and it remains a question whether these groups or individuals are willing to act violently. The analysis of violence in these actions varies a lot. In so far as the fundamental basis of the action is clearly exposed, it seems that violence is merely a question of wrong attitude and communication and that it can be tackled by individual training.

Another series of actions target youths at risk of dropping out of school. They involve the police and local prevention services and have a more scientific basis.

One of the main successful theories in youth criminology has been the "theory of societal vulnerability" (Walgraeve, 2002). It combines social binding theories with subcultural theories, which allows to understand and analyse the behaviour of young people and to see the connection between crime, persistence and desistance of crime and school career combined with class. This theory has inspired social preventive actions. Street Corner work has used it as one of its fundamental justifications. Recently it has been connected with mediation and restorative justice. (Walgraeve & Vettenburg, 2006).

The same authors work on the interpretation of youth crime rates and have inspired many actors including governmental initiatives targeted at youth crime. The theory could be summarised as follows: the chances of being excluded from the main societal sources vary according to social classes. The multiplication of frictions and injuries in connection with societal institutions can cause criminal behaviour. Criminal behaviour as such is a normal part of growing up, and it tends to disappear in the late teens. This thesis is still prevalent, and it has appeared in recent years combined with evidence based initiatives. However, there might be a problem. Indeed, this theory holds when there is a strong welfare state willing to integrate people, to find a place for them or that needs them. As regards new lower classes and new immigrants, the question remains whether the model of inclusive welfare state still holds and whether modern cultural changes can still justify these inclusive practices. Zero tolerance practices, a more punitive climate, and vigilantism are some indications that this cultural climate is changing. Anglo Saxon and Dutch literature (Garland, 2002., Young, 1999, as well as Boutelier,2008) and practices and analyses from France (Wacquant, 2006) question the possibility of this inclusive hypothesis in the neo liberal or neo conservative climate. And although the societal vulnerability theory might still be holding and

explanatory, the effects or the justification of social preventive actions is receding in our more exclusive societies.
This could mean that the theory and connected practices can still work for traditional target groups -lower middle class native young people- but leave out, have no effect, explanation or alternative for other more excluded groups. The integral approaches cities build up in social preventive actions are intended to close the gap but it seems that in and around excluded groups, completely other dynamics might be at stake. This is the background of the upcoming study of Van Hellemont, who analyses the effects of the eroding welfare state and extremely excluded groups, which might be identified or identify themselves as gangs. (Van Hellemont, to be published).

Hypothesis

This might explain the bifurcation of analyses, policies and actions. We mentioned a lot of actions, which are varied. Many are moral, punitive and situational. On the other hand there is a strong analysis connected to the inclusive welfare state with strategies of individual integration and social binding. Street violence by young people, troublesome youth groups and juvenile delinquency could be explained and handled by the theory and practices inspired by the societal vulnerability theory, combined with restorative justice and mediation practices. There is still a tradition of social prevention and individual correction and support. This accounts for a large part of juvenile crime.

However, it does not account for new forms of urban violence: nuisance, steaming, "gay bashing", "leisure crime", "violence in leisure areas"(Winlow, 2005, Hebberecht, 2008), trouble on public transport. It would require further analysis since these issues are not new but take new forms in new contexts. The diffe-

rence between young people and teenagers is disappearing. Alcohol and drug abuse take new forms and are in a way normalised among the middle class as leisure. There is a significant increase of excessive leisure time expenses. A lot of money is involved in this, and it is a substantial part of local economy. These leisure markets may account for new trends in policing. Zero tolerance policy in certain places, stewarding and private security are aimed not so much at removing this type of behaviour from the public sphere or to bring a solution, but rather at keeping such activities in certain areas. There is not much literature on these strategies but they do inspire new types of actions aimed at street life and violence in a leisure economy.

Nuisance, steaming, violence in public transport, vandalism, and leisure crime are hard to connect to or be framed in traditional subcultural explanations. This has led to an inflation of seldom coordinated actions with a variety of curfews for youngsters, street corner work, very irritating policing techniques, situational crime prevention, CCTVs, community orientated policing, proposals to close night shops, increased drug abuse controls, stewarding, and private policing or security. Violence is an issue and the actions are very situational, based on a weak analysis of the causes of such behaviour and of the conditions of their appearance. These findings are very scattered because policy is influenced by local circumstances and politics. We have to add the privatisation of social and other control in semi public areas where analysis and registration are rare. Private security has an effect by the mere presence of vigilantes in attractive neighbourhoods, shopping malls, commercial leisure areas, closed or gated areas. Consequently, groups are displaced, which means they are even harder to find.

And what about the gangs?

An overview of the database gives us the impression that there is scarce hard evidence of the existence of youth gangs, and that theoretical and factual research is merely developing. On the other hand, related issues are framed in conceptual theories. Cities seem to be struggling with themes such as mobbing, harassment, leisure crime, gay bashing, trouble in public transport, sexual harassment and senseless violence. And the typical youth gang is rare or almost non-existent in scientific literature.

There are no specific statistics that would justify alarming statements about the existence of youth gangs. Gangs seem to be small, isolated and tend to remain in specific neighbourhoods. They do not fit in the modern age of globalisation and seem to have a different group dynamics. The mass psychology of the late modern city is different. The issue of youth gangs could be an attempt to frame behaviour in old theories, as it is also a way of building an identity in a situation where all other forms of integration and identity building are out of reach. One could put forward the hypothesis that if youth gangs occur, they mostly are about young people who have no connection with society, no possibility to participate in the consumer culture and economy, and only have ties with their deprived neighbourhood. Such situations are rare in Flanders and only occur in bigger cities with scarcely integrated ethnic minorities.

Things can change. The welfare state had a strong educational system that is breaking down or is in the process of being reorganised. Economical crisis and ontological insecurity occur, and the middle and lower middle classes are losing ground. Insecurity has become a political and electoral issue. The traditional ties to society are eroding; the possibilities for excluded groups to use and invent new ties are uneven. Cities

change, migration patterns change, and economic perspectives are bleak.

According to the neo liberal political credo, the State withdraws and regulation is left in the hands of responsible citizens, communities or local authorities. Private of profit-orientated organisations emerge and move in the market by selling risk management in public transport and in neighbourhoods. Public prevention services have the difficult task of managing panic and are supposed to work on issues that are not covered by the private sector. The same panic can also be useful for some political parties

Discussion

What has happened since Vercaigne and Goris downsized the problem of youth gangs? In a way, not much has happened on the academic level. There is no reason to state that things have changed drastically. The majority of problems can still be tackled in the traditional way: with a mix of individual and social prevention. On the other hand, the combination of neo liberal policy, economic crisis and deeper exclusion might create new territories with different rules and players. Police activities aimed at gangs shed light on the situation of these youngsters. And we see attempts to investigate the issue and discuss new framings of the issue of gangs. On the other hand, street crime and discontent have become a major issue and are probably a bigger threat. The issues of leisure crime, unpredictable blind violence and senseless violence need a better explanation, which must be connected with practices. In a way, it can be argued that senseless violence is a type of violence we do not understand and that the challenge is to make sense of it. It seems that these forms of crime and nuisance are treated with rash actions that have a strong moral and symbolic dimension. The problem is not so much the absence of

frame or explanation, but the connection between these approaches and practices. The strength of the societal vulnerability thesis was to be a combination of theory, empirical findings, explanations on the individual and structural level and strategies. The challenge is to reinvent this. The traditional groups considered in that theory were lower working classes. It should be possible to redo this exercise for the new groups at risk who nowadays find it hard to connect with society. Indeed, it can be argued that since they are maintained in exclusion, they are almost forced to organise themselves.

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Organised youth groups and violence in Spain

Noemí Canelles, Bárbara Scandroglio, Clara Soler and Josep Mª Lahosa
Contribution of the Spanish Forum for Prevention and Urban Security (FEPSU) - Partner of the EU Street Violence Project

Violence carried out by some organised groups of youths in Spanish cities has for a long time been an apparently residual problem, with the exception of the political violence in the Basque country or certain violent factions of sports club supporters. However, since the 2000s, a new phenomenon has emerged in Spain, with which we are poorly equipped to deal, in terms of a lack of knowledge and analysis: "Latino gangs".

In terms of social phenomena, as we actually do believe that we are facing an eminently social phenomenon, nine years are not sufficient to acquire the necessary knowledge to make public policy decisions. However, it is also too long in terms of the risk of social divide and stigmatisation of young people as agents of violence. This is why the Spanish Forum for Urban Security (FEPSU) has taken up the EU Street Violence Project as an opportunity to share and improve knowledge between cities and European organisations, in a multifaceted context which requires intervention on the part of various public, private and academic actors, as well as the definition and design of very complex public policies.

Legal framework

First of all, it must be noted that in Spain, police and judicial actions towards violence by youth groups cannot be separated from the media's coverage and portrayal of the phenomenon (Scandroglio, 2009). In this sense, two periods can be identified regarding treatment of the phenomenon by the penal system: one runs from the emergence of the phenomenon in the media, to the three initial modifications of the Organic Act Regulating the Criminal Liability of Minors (LORRPM), which covers the period from 1994 to 2000; the other runs from the start of the emergence of the phenomenon of "Latino gangs" in 2003, up to today with the fourth modification of said Act (LORRPM).

During the first period, there was no differentiation in the legal treatment of violent youth groups, a conflict which was mainly controlled by the police. There were sporadic attempts to outlaw far-right or extreme groups, which, with one exception, did not result in firm sentences. The first three reforms of the LORRPM toughened up the procedures and measures for violent offences by shifting the focus towards special educational prevention, through general positive prevention, whether punitive or repressive. The legal approach to the phenomenon - which is not to say its definition[7] - became evident from 2004 onwards with "Latino gangs" and in the case of the police, with the creation of specific units to deal with these gangs, both within the National Police Corps and the Guardia Civil. This is when an effort was made to establish the legal foundations and to apply the offence of unlawful association. This translates into a "policing and procedural strategy, developed respectively by the Security Forces and Corps of the State and Prosecutor General, to collect

7- The Report of the State Prosecutor General 2008 (p. 951) gives the description produced by the Madrid Provincial Prosecutor of a specific «Latino gang» and applies it generally to all «Latino gangs».

sufficient evidence not only for criminal acts with a concrete outcome, but also for the crime of unlawful association, to psychologically and legally persuade judges and courts of the existence of this crime and the sentence that follows". (Prosecutor General's report 2007, :713).

This is not a strategy shared by all of the provincial Prosecutor General offices and even want a reconsideration of the effectiveness of charging people with unlawful association as the only criminal justice response. They realise that even if faced with a complex and multidimensional problem, it calls for a unification of the phenomenon, thus compromising the effectiveness of measures or even giving precedence to punishment over prevention, which can in itself lead to the neglect of some of the guiding principles of jurisprudence with regard to minors, such as removing them from the judicial system or an institution, the possibility of minimum intervention and strict observance of procedural safeguards. (Prosecutor General's report 2007). The three latter criticisms can also be applied to all of the LORRPM reforms.

In 2005, the Ministry of the Interior approved the "Police action and coordination plan against organised and violent youth groups" (Instructions 23/2005 and 6/2009) which is to be revised and consolidated next year to explicitly include violent groups "of Latino character". This plan includes the development of a unified inventory of "gangs" which reflects their activities and the estimated number of members; the creation of maps of risk-areas enabling monitoring of the places where they meet and their members are based; administrative monitoring of the situation with the possibility of deportation for rare cases; assistance and information among professionals such as judges and prosecutors. In parallel, the LORRPM was revised for the fourth time in 2006, in order to act as a guide for criminal law regarding violence carried out by violent youth groups: it prevents the decriminalisation of vio-

lent offences, rendering them even more serious, with mandatory prison sentences. In addition, it toughened up measures relating to violent crimes committed by a group or as a member of a group; finally, it made it easier for preventive detention measures to be implemented, particularly in the case of immigrant minors.

Urban violence issues

In Spain today, when we talk about violence committed by groups of youths, we often hear about "Latino gangs"[8]. This is the expression used widely by the media since it began, in mid-2003, to report on a new phenomenon emerging in Madrid and Barcelona and involving young Latin-Americans. These were previously unknown organisations, perceived as very dangerous (violence towards their own members and those of other groups), very organised (pyramidal structure, payment of dues, internal rules) and identified by aesthetic 'markers' (colours, types of clothing, caps, etc.) (Canelles and Feixa 2008).
The murder of a Columbian teenager in Barcelona in October 2003 by a gang of Ñetas, who "mistook" him for a member of the Latin Kings whom the Ñetas wanted to revenge, caused a shock wave and a major reaction on the part of security agencies. The media stereotypes of these agencies have, as a result, affected all young Latinos, who are automatically suspected of belonging to these gangs. But Latinos are a particular community, whose members are usually united by a common situation, with mothers who tend to have emigrated to Spain a few years previously, and who therefore find themselves in a precarious situation in

8- The issue of what to call Latino gangs presents many problems from a theoretical and practical viewpoint. This subject is discussed in one of the interviews conducted specifically for this project, with Lluis Paradell, Police Inspector of the Catalan Mossos d'Esquadra. However, in order not to enter into a theoretical debate, for the purposes of brevity, we have kept the name «gangs». In this regard, see also Brotherton and Barrios (2003).

terms of education and employment (Feixa and Canelles 2006).

The origins and characteristics of "Latino gangs" or *pandillas*, encompass a range of different situations. Some of them, such as the Latin Kings and the Ñetas, are actually organisations created in prisons and poor urban neighbourhoods in the United States, which have been recreated in various countries throughout Central and South America through migration and deportation and which have also been reproduced in the Spanish capitals by youths from these countries (Feixa et al. 2011). Other organisations were not formed by members of foreign origin but were simply groups of adolescents who adopted names and symbols, or recreated them. Although initially the members of these groups were young immigrants, they rapidly incorporated members of other nationalities, including many young Spaniards (Lahosa, 2008). The presence of girls in some of these gangs, with varying degrees of responsibility, should also be noted.

The most well-known organisations are the Latin Kings and the Ñetas, although the media often mention other groups such as the Mara Salvatrucha, the M18 or the Black Panthers. From 2005 and 2006 onwards, the Latin Kings and the Ñetas, closely linked to young Ecuadorians, have lost their influence to new groups mainly linked to the Dominican population: Dominicans don't play, Trinitarios, Forty two, etc. At the same time, internal divisions have casued different branches of the same organisation to coexist, which is part of the normal dynamics of these gangs. Currently, these organisations have a certain influence in Barcelona and Madrid, where they are part of a more complex and fluid network of more stable gangs, other splinter groups and new, more minor groups. There may be small groups in the other major Spanish cities, but the phenomenon is definitely not as major, even in terms of their political interest. Although some governments have made an effort to detect the existence

and degree of implementation of these gangs, it seems that this issue is not on the political agenda of municipalities. This is either because a group has not been detected, because it is not considered to be dangerous but rather as a form of socialisation that includes elements of identity, or because of denial, which also occurs frequently, especially due to the social alarm caused by this phenomenon.

Historical overview

In Spain, urban violence linked to groups of youths emerged as a phenomenon in the 60s and 70s with the rapid growth of industrialised cities, linked to the rural exodus, which also led to an increase in the youth population. The first economic crisis and the difficulty of finding a job or training led many young people to come together in the new neighbourhoods that were being built. This is when we started to talk of "gangs", particularly influenced by the media and the police.
At the time, these groups did not have an aesthetic component or a criminal objective, although the link with specific territories and defending them has resulted in clashes with other groups and other crimes. The group dynamic offered cohesion and security in an environment of great social and political change (Feixa and Porzio, 2004)[9]. From the 80s onwards, with the already consolidated urban populations and the spread of secondary education, other youth phenomena related to drug-use emerged and had aspects in common with similar phenomena in other European countries. These were youth sub-cultures, which, in Spain were called "urban tribes", such as punks, mods, skinheads, rockers, etc. It was during this time that elements of style linked to aesthetics, music and entertainment appeared. Although certain aspects of each subculture bind it to a specific social class, this was not an

9- See also the interview with Jaume Funes carried out in the context of the study.

exclusive phenomenon but instead, was widespread among the urban working classes (Feixa and Porzio, 2004). In this case, even though the territorial aspect of the previous decades no longer exists, there are a few occasional clashes linked to the reassertion of differences between groups (Scandroglio, 2009). These conflicts tend to occur between groups that are more closely linked to far-right ideologies and fascism, which are sometimes themselves associated with certain groups of football fans. From the mid-90s onwards, these kinds of groups of youths tended to decline. From the 2000s, with new waves of immigration came a new phenomenon: the "pandillas" or "Latino gangs", mentioned above. From 2000-2010, "tribes" played a minor role in urban violence. They have not completely disappeared but academics and policy-makers are more particularly concerned with "Latino gangs".

Responses

The EU Street Violence Project has proved to be a useful tool for detecting the appropriate response to the phenomenon of youth groups and urban violence. It is a very specific subject, which has required a thorough and exhaustive search for relevant experiences. Moreover, as it deals with a politically sensitive subject, we are faced with a certain lack of transparency on the part of certain government bodies. There are also cases where those responsible for the experiences and programmes developed have chosen not to publicly present them as part of this study, due to the political repercussions it could have. This context must therefore be taken into account. The first phase of the research process was to define the research subject, that is to say, the phenomenon of urban violence generated by youth groups. We also eliminated all the experiences that were not directly linked to the subject, such as youth violence in general or non-specific pre-

vention programmes, by systematically researching actions directed towards groups. In line with the rest of the partner projects, we also limited the period of time analyzed to the last decade, so we have not included any work prior to 2001.

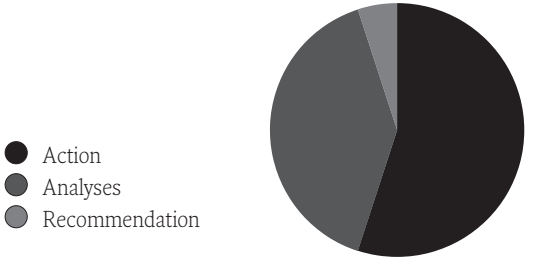
The next step was the field work, including setting up an online questionnaire to collect information experiences in the field[10]. This work has enabled us to complete the 50 Actions / Recommendations / Analysis (ARA) included in the database after the research. We also included four interviews with people who are key sources of information on the subject. These interviews were carried out specifically for this project. All of the ARAs were analysed with the help of a database, created specifically for the purposes of this article[11].

Of the 50 ARAs, 28 relate to actions, 3 are recommendations and the other 19 are analyses, including four interviews[12]. The result is very practical, as shown in the following graph:

10- During the first phase, we contacted key informants from the Spanish Forum for Prevention and Urban Security in autonomous communities, asking them to identify experiences and studies carried out in their regions. These were usually organisations linked to security. We simultaneously initiated contacts with networks of researchers from the team itself, as well as an internet search based on the concepts of the subject definition. We then conducted an on line survey of all member regions of the FEPSU (150 in total) with a minimum of 30,000 inhabitants; we got very few responses. After a systematic search of the Social Services and Youth services of all autonomous communities, we completed research with key informants in each service and with major NGOs in their regions. Finally, we carried out the on line questionnaire with experiences detected by the aforementioned means. The questionnaire was therefore sent out after checking the existence of a study or action. When dealing with studies or published works, the information was filled in the by the FEPSU research team based on published data.

11- The analysis is not intended to infer results beyond the experiences detected, but it can highlight the most significant features of the ARAs collected for descriptive purposes.

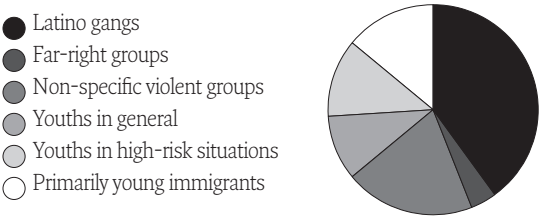
12- Although there is sometimes a very fine line between action and recommendation, or between analysis and recommendation, we have chosen to use the term 'recommendations' when we quite explicitly give practical guidelines related to the topic.



Irrelevant of the kind of experience, the central themes and objectives of the actions or studies are all indicative of the current concerns academics, politicians and society with relation to violence caused by groups of youths, or even their fears or moral concerns. Just as looking at the history of occurrences of urban violence committed by groups of youths shows us how actors and contexts have changed over the last few decades, focusing this study on the years 2000-2010 reveals the pre-eminence of "Latino gangs". ARA analysis shows that these gangs are the subject of study or the target group of a good majority of research or actions. The number of experiences based on young immigrants, even if they are not part of a specific group, is striking.

With regard to analyses, by the ARA relating to "Latino gangs", we can firstly define a category consisting of prospective studies designed to identify the existence of such groups in a given area and to identify their characteristics. These studies sometimes include a more or less in-depth description of the reality experienced by young immigrants as a whole, but identifying "gangs" is more or less an explicit objective. To cite a few examples: the study commissioned by the Defender of the People (Spanish State Ombudsman) of the Navarre region, the study by the Adcara Foundation in Aragon, that of Arceo Social Services in Guada-

lajara, the study carried out in Barcelona by the crime prevention services in conjunction with the consortium of the Consorcio de Infància i Món Urbà [Institute of Childhood and the Urban World] and the study carried out by Rosa Aparicio of the Comillas Pontifical University of Madrid, at the request of the Directorate General of Immigration.



Aim of the study/intervention

The next step is an in-depth analysis of these organisations, their impact on the stigmatisation of the immigrant community in general, or the theoretical aspects underpinning the classification of "gangs" as opposed to other concepts such as "street organisations" (Barrios et al., 2003). Work along these lines includes the case study on the Latin Kings and the Queens of Catalonia carried out by Romani and co., a participatory action research carried out with the Latin Kings of Madrid by Scandroglio and López, or even Kazyrytski's doctoral thesis. The first two, along with the work done by Grup Hebe and Giliberti, are examples of ethnographies conducted with young people themselves, although it is more common to come across studies based on secondary sources.

The research works analysed are generally accompanied by recommendations for actions linked to "Latino gangs"; in fact, of all the actions carried out, they are

the most numerous. This group therefore also includes actions carried out in Barcelona on organisations that chose in 2005 to undertake a process of rapprochement with the Catalan institutions, with the support of city council prevention services (Serveis de Prevenció del Ajuntament). This consisted of a series of training and support actions, such as assistance offered by the Human Rights Institute of Catalonia to form an association, or even monitoring and workshops carried out by Fedelatina. What is different about these actions is that in general they do not aim to suppress the groups, but to increase the accountability of their members through a process of training and support based on establishing relationships of trust. Still in Catalonia, police work developed by the New Groups of Organised and Violent Youths unit of the Mossos d'Esquadra (Catalonian police) also took the innovative step in the last several years of combining analysis and knowledge with more traditional police intervention.

All this is a work approach that combines interconnected actions and studies, united by the common aim of encouraging the formation of associations, as opposed to the type of action promoted by the region of Madrid towards these youth groups. In this autonomous community, the Prosecutor General of Madrid places significant emphasis on unlawful association, which makes it more difficult to work with organisations such as these. This is reflected, in addition to the participatory action study mentioned above, by the analysis of actions by the State Prosecutor General carried out specifically for this study. On the other hand, it is not easy to find examples of work directly dealing with the "gang" situation; it is more often work linked to young people at risk or specifically, young immigrants.

Despite the apparent opposition Madrid and Barcelona's very different work approaches, Luca Queirolo

Palmas - in one of the interviews carried out by the EU Street Violence project - offers a more nuanced visions of the two models, which draws attention to the contradictions between discussing them, and actually putting them into practice.

Furthermore, it is important to note the weight that these two territories, Barcelona and Madrid, hold in the overall experiences gathered. Despite the effort made to identify experiences in other autonomous communities, it is clear that it is in Barcelona and Madrid that most of the academic activity and actions are concentrated, particularly because of the size of the urban population and their tradition of working with groups of young people[13].

If we exclude "Latino gangs," from the experiences collected, it is hard to find another target group as specific as this one. Another target group that has traditionally played an important role on the stage of urban violence is constituted by racist and far-right movements, but regarding the period analyzed (2000-2010) there are very few interventions and studies on that subject. We can, however, cite the experience of the municipality of Sabadell with the Commission on Cohabitation and the study team from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid headed by Fernández Villanueva.

It is, however, easier to find general studies on group violence which include different types of groups. Here, we should mention the studies carried out by the team of Martín López and Martínez García, from the Autonomous University of Madrid, conducted with youths belonging to various violent groups, in which they analyze the psycho-social factors that may cause violent group behaviour. We can also include the analysis by

13- An example of the way in which each context affects the purpose of the study is that of Euskadi, which has a fairly large urban population, but also a situation of political conflict which means that the topic of juvenile violence there has totally different connotations.

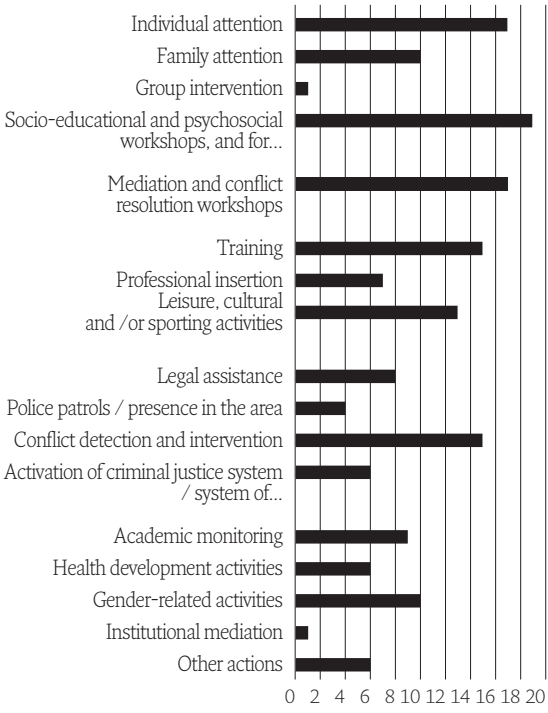
Maqueda Abreu who, from a criminological perspective, places group violence in a social context with regard to the most vulnerable groups.

In general, the ARAs which we have referred to up until now are based on a secondary or tertiary level of prevention, or a combination of the two. However, while considering the group dimension of violence, there are several experiences of action where the level of prevention is a combination of primary and secondary, and in which the target populations are youths at risk, either immigrants or not, or even adolescents in general. This consists of work carried out with youths in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, which combine street work with individual monitoring as part of training, employability or leisure processes. The experiences gathered are, in particular, based on working with natural groups of young people, conflict prevention and involving the beneficiaries themselves in designing actions.

You can find examples of this type of activity in the actions of tertiary sector entities such as Suyae, Semilla, Opción 3 or the Adsis Foundation and in municipalities such as Lleida, Sant Adrià de Besòs or Mollet del Vallès. While in the case of violent groups, we come across both studies and actions, in this group of experiences that is more preventive in nature, we find actions. In fact, we have not found any studies of this type on social exclusion factors and their relationship to group violence.
We have identified other examples of actions aimed at young people in general, but focused on specific conflicts in mediation programmes such as those of the Eduard Fontserè Institute or the GREC which both advocate the introduction of mediation tools into secondary education. Even in most of the actions that are not specifically related to mediation, this forms part of the planned intervention measures. The importance of

mediation also appears in the objectives of the interventions of all action ARAs, as shown in the table, as well as in the objectives of improving coexistence and development of cognitive, emotional and social skills.

It is interesting to note some methodological aspects of the actions. Firstly, in each project, actions are generally focused on training, socio-educational, psychosocial and health workshops, and conflict resolution and mediation. See the table:



The theoretical and methodological models underpinning interventions are very diverse, from the cognitive / behavioural model to the systemic model of critical criminology, through to art as part of the socio-educational process and critical criminology. However, there are some common elements in the experiences analyzed. Firstly, we should mention the community work and networking in the areas referred to, and the development of participatory methodologies that seek to involve young people in all the processes. We also note the importance of preventive measures in a large part of the projects, which aim not only to react to conflicts but also introduce elements of protection in the process of individual and group work.

The gender perspective is present in half of the actions, with specific content related to gender inequality or prevention of male violence, or even with measures to ensure the participation of women in the actions. In some cases, we work on gender aspects with groups of girls without including boys. These methodological aspects mean that the overall outcomes are generally positive. In addition to the more immediate outcomes related to each specific action, such as social skills, training and the creation of spaces for dialogue, in most cases there is a reduction in the levels of violence and improved coexistence. These results are obtained with some agreed success factors: political and institutional support and networking with various community partners are considered essential for achieving the objectives. We should also highlight everything relating to the process of reconciliation with young people: street presence, the support perspective, establishing relationships of trust or a participatory approach.

The main difficulties - which are part of the success factors mentioned previously - are a lack of political and institutional support, which also translates into a lack of financing and resources, thus adversely affecting the continuity of actions. The current economic environment, marked by high unemployment and reduced welfare support, is also clearly a serious problem for the most vulnerable people. We cannot conclude this analysis of the results without mentioning a deficiency shared by most of the experiences: the lack of evaluation of processes. Two experiences were assessed at least six months after the implementation of actions (a period that is used to evaluate the medium-term results) and only five have completed an external assessment, while it is rather more common to conduct internal evaluations.

Another problematic aspect is funding, since all partners offer very little information about this. We cannot

fully evaluate actions without taking into account this information. Through the process of researching experiences, we saw for ourselves the importance of financing such actions, as several programmes were discontinued through a lack of resources and a certain number of proposed projects were never implemented.

Finally, we should mention the recommendations of the ARA, which are consistent with the factors of success and failure we have just discussed. They can be summarised in two words: knowledge and participation. Knowledge in the sense of creating a database relating to youth and violence to deconstruct dominant stereotypes and increase the skills of the relevant partners. Participation in a double sense: that of the various social, educational, police and institutional partners of one community, and the urgently required participation of young people, their groups and organisations in any measure that is designed to deal with their conflicts.

Examples of actions

Young "Latinos" in Barcelona. Public space and urban culture

"Young Latinos in Barcelona. Public space and urban culture" is the result of a survey promoted and financed by the prevention services of the municipality of Barcelona [Serveis Prevenció de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona] through the consortium of the Institute of Childhood and the Urban World [Consorcio de Infancia i Món Urba, CIIMU] from 2004 to 2005. Its objective was to gain in-depth knowledge of the reality of young Latinos in the city and to study the emerging phenomenon of "Latino gangs" at a time when the only available sources of information were the police and the media, and there was a distinct lack of information on the characteristics and extent of the organisations, and on ways in which to address the problem.

The methodology adopted involved working with a large team of researchers of various disciplines. As well as the initial objectives of identifying the characteristics of the young Latin-American community and to tackle the phenomenon of "gangs", we also added a second objective, which was to conduct a series of monographs on different subjects: music, public space, night geographies, school, gender, etc. Information was obtained through in-depth interviews of young people and the adults in their lives, discussion groups, secondary sources (demographic studies to measure the Latino population, press articles) and ethnographic observations.

The results of this study were published in a book that portrays a little-known, criminalised community that has developed its own identity, drawn from its society of origin and the host society. The book also discusses the social construction of "Latino gangs", especially the media portrayal, and that of various social and educational partners. Beyond the report itself, this study offered initial contact with the Latin Kings and Ñetas, which continued to prove useful in subsequent studies, particularly in the creation of associations and various cultural projects. The seminar at which this study was presented, also entitled "Young Latinos in Barcelona/Public Space and Urban Culture", was significant because of the debates that took place, but also due to the participation of members of youth organisations. Another important element was the Barcelona Declaration on the political approach to adopt towards these situations (see ARA on this subject).

Support and legal assistance in forming associations of Latino youths

This is an action undertaken by the Catalan Institute of Human Rights (Institut Català pels Drets Humans), an association dedicated to raising awareness of Human Rights and providing assistance and training in this

field. Between 2006 and 2007, at the request of the Prevention Services of the municipality of Barcelona (Serveis Prevenció of the Ajuntament de Barcelona) and in collaboration with the Catalan Ombudsman for the defence of the rights of children and adolescents, we carried out a process of assistance to members of the Latin Kings & Queens and the Ñetas of Barcelona which resulted in the formation of these two gangs into cultural associations. It was the leaders of these two groups themselves who expressed a desire to create associations and the project was consistent with the theoretical approach and conclusions of the study previously carried out (see above). Thus, a series of meetings and exchanges with these two groups took place, at the end of which the status of the associations was drawn up and they were registered.

This initiative has had several outcomes. Firstly, the newly created associations have contacted various youth organisations. The Latin Kings & Queens have also become members of Fedelatina (Federation of Latin American Entities in Catalonia), just like any other association, and have implemented various initiatives. Another immediate effect was the reduction of conflicts between the Latin Kings & Queens and Ñetas, who furthermore have even launched joint cultural initiatives. In the medium term, we have noticed that internal divisions have appeared within each group, between those who support this approach, and those who prefer to develop their groups without this help, "on the street", in a more "classic" way.

INSOVI project (Socio-educational intervention for youths and prevention of violence)

This is a project by the Suyae Association that has been implemented in several districts of Madrid since 2010, with public funding from the Community of Madrid and private funding. The socio-educational intervention is aimed at teenagers and young people at risk of

social exclusion. We work with them individually and in groups, always with a view to prevention and promotion. The project targets are pre-teens, teens and young people in various situations, some of whom belong to violent groups in their local area and are sometimes undergoing legal action. The objective of the project is to reduce risk factors by acting on the situations of exclusion, conflict and social problems and promoting protective factors and the potential of the young person and their family, by strengthening strategies and skills required to meet the challenges, as well as increasing aid and personal and social support.

The actions undertaken include educational workshops and training, street work, gender-related activities, sports and leisure activities, detecting and responding to conflict, and academic support. The main outcomes have been less conflicts and young people acquiring new skills. The success factors include, in particular, the combination of individual and family follow-up, and the importance of community work and networking with other partners. Of the methodological elements, we should mention the work done with natural groups using participatory and "empowerment" techniques (taking control, accountability).

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Youth gangs in France: from research to action

Michel Marcus and Maye Seck
Contribution of the French Forum for Urban Security (FFSU) - expert for the EU Street Violence Project

For the past two years, the French Forum for Urban Security (FFSU) has taken part in the EU Street Violence project, financed by the European Commission. The project aims to create a database bringing together all of the analyses, recommendations and actions (ARAs) regarding street gang violence in Europe.
It represents a great opportunity for the French forum to reaffirm the positions of the French cities, to promote their practices on this issue and to update the guidance publication on Les phénomènes de bandes en France [Gangs in France], published in 2005. However, it was not an easy task for several reasons, relating both to the project content and methodology.

Regarding the content

The notion of street gang violence has sparked a large number of structural investigations by project partners that have enabled a better organisation of the database content. What are the essential actions, analyses and recommendations that are going to be included?

a. First investigation: youth gangs, groups of youths, gangs: what do we mean?
Each country uses different terms for these pheno-

mena and the way we understand these terms can also differ. What do we mean when we talk about the notion of gangs?
After numerous discussions, the project partners, with the help of project experts, agreed that the notion of a gang is as follows:
- a group of young people (more than 3 people)
- characterised by deviant behaviour even if violence is not the primary objective for forming the gang.

This is the most widely accepted definition and has been agreed on by all project partners. This is, however, a conservative definition, because there are other major characteristics that define gangs. The fear and distrust that these groups arouse in people form part of these characteristics. The International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC) therefore[14] defines a gang as "a distinct group, involved in a significant number of delinquent incidents that produce consistent negative responses from the community".
Others define gangs through their relationship to territory. "Territory is the unifying factor of a gang's identity."[15] Some researchers even consider the territory to be the "default identity" of gangs (L. Mucchielli). This territory, however, can vary in size: it might be limited to a neighbourhood, a square, a building lobby, a stairwell, etc.

b. Second investigation: gangs and violence?
Violence, even if it is not the essence of the gang, is one of its preferred modes of expression. Indeed, gangs differ from groups of youths through deviant behaviour and differ from organised gangs since these are trained to carry out criminal activity for profit. As project expert Marwan Mohammed states, "crime is not the gang's aim, this is not why it exists, but it what will

14- Comparative report on the types of intervention used for youth at risk of joining a street gang – practices from Belgium, Canada and France, ICPC, 2011.
15- *Les phénomènes de bandes en France*, FFSU, 2005

distinguish it from other forms of groups of the same age. I set the deviant, delinquent element, which for me is the world of gangs, against other elements which are prescriptive"[16]. These prescriptive elements represent the other sociability factors within groups of youths such as religion, sport, activism, art, etc.

This distinction however, as coherent as it may be, cannot resist the force of the collective imagination that suggests that any group of youths is a "gang" and therefore engages in delinquent activities. The media have contributed significantly to this symbolic construction, as Marwan Mohammed also says: "The gang and topics associated with it have, for decades, been symbolically effective and echo a social imagination which sees them as a feudal resistance to the pacification of manners, as an incarnation of the most socially dangerous."[17] However, gangs by their very definition are a minority in terms of number compared to other forms of youth groups (whether religious, militant or otherwise).

However, the phenomenon of gangs it is difficult to quantify, despite numerous statements by the Ministry of the Interior on the matter. Statistics show 222 gangs in 2009, 408 in 2011 and 313 in 2012. The number of members is difficult to quantify. Moreover, the lack of familiarity with census methodologies from one year to another means that these figures should be handled with caution.

Regarding the method

Like any database, the EU Street Violence is not exhaustive and is intended to be improved. This is also

16- Marwan Mohammed, op. cit in *Les phénomènes de bandes en France*, FFSU, p49 2005
17- Marwan Mohammed, «L'épouvantail politique des bandes de jeunes», in www.laurent-mucchielli.org, February 2012

due to the methodology of the project. Part of the data it contains is derived from research conducted by the French Forum for Urban Security and its member cities. However, it must be updated continuously. This is one of the challenges of its creation.

The data listed in the database are derived largely from research and policies implemented by cities. A small proportion of them relate to police intervention strategies in the fight against violence committed by gangs.

The database was constructed to make access to information easier. The ARA files should enable the main points of the action or analysis to be identified. They must also allow the reader to quickly find more information if they want.

The French context

The issue of gangs in France is subject to a lot of fantasies linked to a particular context. This particularism occurs on two levels:
- The impression that gangs are a new phenomenon
Gangs in France are not a modern phenomenon. To understand it, we must delve into history and look at works by Ludivine Bantigny (2007)[18] Laurent Mucchielli (2002) in particular.[19] Even before the First World War, works already evoked the fear of gangs of youth from the working classes, nicknamed the "Apaches". Laurent Mucchielli explains: "They were said to be very violent, thieves, but also rapists and murderers. They would otherwise be affiliated with territories, taking the names of the street or place. In short, these would have been savages; the term

18- Ludivine Bantigny, «De l'usage du blouson noir. Intervention médiatique et utilisation politique du phénomène», *Les bandes de jeunes. Des «blousons noirs» à nos jours*, Paris, Ed. La découverte, 2011.
19- Laurent Mucchielli, «Apaches, blousons noirs, sauvageons et autres racailles», in Claris, *Le Bulletin* No 3, November 2002.

"Apaches" would have suited them very well. The First World War brought a lull in this phenomenon, a lull which continued during the periods of growth that followed. It was not until the end of the Second World War that these "youth gangs" were heard of again. In the 1960s, the "blousons noirs" [greasers] appeared, gangs of violent youths that also made the headlines, which were talking about gangs of more than a hundred members, highly violent and unpredictable.
So we can see that gangs are not a new phenomenon but that their modes of expression do differ from one era to another. However, certain typical traits have stood the test of time: deviant behaviour, the cult of solidarity, youths suffering total disruption in school, family and social lives.
- Increasingly violent gangs, made up of increasingly younger members, school dropouts, in complicated family situations and with increasingly unpredictable modes of action.
The relationship between gangs and violence has also stood the test of time. The research carried out by Laurent Mucchielli on the history of gangs in France sheds some light on this aspect. At the time of the "greasers", clashes between gangs, robbery, rape and acts of vandalism on buildings and institutional structures were already being denounced. However, gangs did not use drugs. Today, youth gangs are feared for the same reasons, but a major difference is that in modern gangs, the trafficking and use of drugs are very common, as well as acquisitive crime and antisocial behaviour.

The other element that has always been true of gangs is undoubtedly the cult of solidarity that connects the gang members. In order to understand this, we must refer to the "package" idea developed by Marwan Mohammed. Gangs offer a sort of "all-inclusive package" which addresses the many shortcomings suffered by many young members: "They meet many social needs such as consumption, recognition, construction of

identity or management of certain social and political conflicts". (M. Mohammed).

The contribution of gangs is therefore more symbolic than financial because they enable young people who often have troubled academic and family backgrounds to redefine a new social balance. Indeed, researchers agree on the significance of the school and family as major risk factors if they do not correctly fulfil their educational and supervisory roles. This is supported by the fact that the prevention actions found in the database are mainly based on the school or on families.

Legal framework

Gangs in France fuel the media and are often at the heart of political discussions on insecurity. Firstly, the French Penal Code includes several provisions to punish acts of violence committed in groups/gangs. Therefore:

- **Art. 121-7 of the Penal Code.** "The accomplice to a felony or a misdemeanour is the person who knowingly, by aiding and abetting, facilitates its preparation or commission. Any person who, by means of a gift, promise, threat, order, or an abuse of authority or powers, provokes the commission of an offence or gives instructions to commit it, is also an accomplice."
- **Art. 132-71 of the Penal Code.** "An organised gang within the meaning of the law is any group formed or association established with a view to the preparation of one or more criminal offences, preparation marked by one or more material actions."
- **Art. 450-1 of the Penal Code.** " A criminal association consists of any group formed or any conspiracy established with a view to the preparation, marked by one or more material actions, of one or more felonies, or of one or more misdemeanours punished by at least five years' imprisonment. Where the offences contemplated are felonies or misdemeanours pu-

nished by ten years' imprisonment, the participation in a criminal association is punished by ten years' imprisonment and a fine of €150,000. Where the offences contemplated are misdemeanours punished by at least five years' imprisonment, the participation in a criminal association is punished by five years' imprisonment and a fine of €75,000."

Beyond these provisions, the fights against the phenomenon of gangs in France reached its climax with the promulgation of the Law of 12 March 2010 "reinforcing the fight against group violence and the protection of people charged with a public service mission". This law created the offence of belonging to a violent gang. From then on, participating in a gang, even temporarily, with the intention of committing purposeful violence against persons or damage to property became punishable by one year's imprisonment and a fine of €15,000 (Ministry of the Interior, 2010). Aggravating circumstances are also defined as follows:
a) Violence committed by persons purposefully concealing their faces;
b) Attacks on persons committed "because of their job". This applies in particular to teachers.
c) Theft and extortion committed in or near schools.
d) Intrusion into a school (one year's imprisonment and a fine of €7,500) and bringing weapons into such an institution (5 years' imprisonment and a fine of €75,000);
The effects of this legal arsenal in the fight against gangs have not been properly evaluated. But we do know that it has helped to prevent these phenomena or reduced their acuteness.

Teaching the database on gangs and urban violence

In the French part of the database, 109 ARAs are listed as follows: 36 Recommendations, 40 Analyses and 33 Actions.

Half of the 36 recommendations relate to educational prevention, in particular measures for preventing school dropout. They are considered essential for preventing school dropout and the risk of young people joining gangs.
The second main focus relates to specialised prevention, parenting support and social mediation. Therefore, seven recommendations are based better adapting social work to deal with the issue of gangs. The rest of the recommendations suggest working on the image of gangs in France, including in the media, on the institutional approach of gangs and methods for getting out of gangs. It is interesting to note that only eight of these recommendations come from cities (including seven from the French Forum for Urban Security). The rest come from state structures such as the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Crime Prevention, specialised prevention associations (CNLAPS or even ADDAP 13) and from the research world.

The 40 analyses reflect the work of researchers and give a voice to local elected officials on the local perception of gangs. This therefore helps to promote the local approach to the phenomenon of gangs. Analyses relate to gang formation, their relation to violence, their mode of expression, the position of girls in gangs, interpersonal relationships within the gang, the relationship between the gang and the neighbourhood residents, the difference between gangs and organised gangs, and organised crime. These analyses aim at a better understanding of gangs and how they work. They need to be real tools for aiding decisions and action.

The 33 "Actions"[20] entries, are the most relatively underrepresented part of the database. Eleven relate to the

20- A majority of the actions recorded in the database come from actions carried out by the French Forum for Urban Security within the framework of the four editions of the French Crime Prevention Prize.

field of education and ten are social mediation or peer actions. The rest of the actions relate to measures of parental responsibility, or prevention through sport or art.

A study of the French part of the database raises two major issues:

What are the outcomes of the territory perspective?

The territory perspective is a constant presence when talking about gangs. The identity of gangs is so closely linked to territory that to combat them, territories have been actually been treate d as walled-off areas. Thus, during a training session at the French Forum relating to safety considerations in project planning and construction, the participants all mentioned removing public benches. In fact, to avoid gangs gathering, cities have constructed public spaces of flux rather than spaces for meeting and cohabitation. Public space has been affected by this fear of gangs, which exacerbates social divisions even further, as illustrated by the major photography exhibition La rue est à tous [the street is for everyone][21]. This fear inspires urban planning that is designed to combat gangs, with the effect of changing the appearance of towns or cities as a way of deterring sociability. But paradoxically, this change may just push some young people into seeking social membership to join a gang.

Are gangs a research topic that is impervious to action?

The project is about street gang violence. A look at the database reveals that the concept of "street violence" loses out to an in-depth examination of "gangs": their formation, their modes of expression (including violence) and the prevention policies implemented.
While the analysis and research listed in the database

21- http://www.larueestatous.com/expomouv.html

are conducted on gangs, the actions implemented in the sense of policy interventions or strategies, on the other hand, seem to ignore the "gang" in favour of the individual pathways of its members. In action, the gang only has meaning through the individuals it is made up of. Are gangs impervious to action?

This probably explains why, for the cities examined, the actions carried out are mainly on crime prevention and not aimed at gangs. Very few actions listed in the database are flagged up as "youth gangs".

How, then, can a genuine strategy for combating gangs be created?

Our relationship with crime is very contradictory, he says. It ranges from rejection to understanding, even support. This variation depends on the position we occupy in society: there are grey areas, when you consider the behaviours adopted in relation to tax, roads, transport, trade, compared to those for finance, or corruption. Our perception of crime is not quite the same if we are at the top of the social ladder. This fairly commonplace finding is too often forgotten when we talk about working-class neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods are often the symbol of "popular crime". "Popular" in the sense that this crime is in part supported by the people. Silence and a lack of testimony from the people involved are not only due to fear of reprisals, but are also caused by complex forms of solidarity that range from extended family or neighbourhood networks to "black market" networks that are strongly reinforced by the economic crisis. Poverty can create forms of survival that oppose the law. Our vision of the phenomenon of delinquency is far too blinkered.

Brandishing only the argument of the law does not help to rally the people in a crusade against gangs and dealers, above all when the message is one of all-out

war. Civil society cannot declare war on itself.
Groups harbouring criminal activities do have the same story of the Mafia or of British gangs, who both share durable structures, a passing down of culture and economic organisation. The Mafia has its own history, a religious culture, a geographically and culturally closed society, and a specific family dynamic.

The fluid nature of the groups we are concerned with denotes a lack of history, of passing down, of status quo. American crime history teaches us that maybe, if we are not careful, we are in a phase of conquest, a form of savage capitalism where capital accumulation does not help individuals to reach a sufficient level to give them access to institutionalisation and referral towards other criminal activities that are more lucrative and international.

That is why we use the notion of a "group" in the sense of a gathering of people passing through. This intergenerational movement (of 12 to 25 years) does not have crime as its main goal: it must be analyzed as more or less perennial gatherings that may contain criminal activities. This should prevent us from having a vision of these groups as having one sole purpose, which would lead to us mistakenly pin everything on a criminal strategy, while these groups also combine the socialisation processes of a number of young people. Using a single criminal strategy leads to increased dependency within the group, not to mention creating solidarity through repression.

The main objective is to break the ties of solidarity between the people and the youth involved in delinquent activities. This is achieved in various ways, according to the degree of engagement of the person with a life of crime.

Actions will try to increase barriers to group activity, to reduce the gang's influence on young people, to limit its occupation of public spaces. But in parallel we should also set a target to strengthen the resilience of the community, to make use its rejection capabilities. This strategy is based on the assumption that the neighbourhood has not started to side with the gang and does not condone it activities because the benefits of the environment, neighbourhood and community outweigh the disadvantages or due to high-level intimidation.

To imagine that the criminal justice solution is the only one suitable for the current situation is a mistake. Criminal strategy must be part of a more comprehensive strategy that also includes a civil, social and spatial strategy.

Social strategy will play on the elements of an individual's involvement in various aspects of society: economic and professional affiliation, social and family aid.

Civil strategy will deal with an individual's connections with their family, friends and neighbours.

Spatial strategy tackles the quality of public space by using ways of influencing the environment and the use of space.

Criminal strategy aims to play more of a role in strengthening and supporting the actions involved within the framework of the other two strategies.

The actions within the strategy are undertaken in a two-pronged approach of 'infiltration' and 'drying out'. Breaking down the 'dam' that gangs represent to adults and the action of institutions involves using a method of infiltration that enables the dam to collapse. Nearby, the sources that enable the group to benefit

from complicity and tolerance should be dried up (regardless of the nature of origin of these sources).

Social strategy
Through identification of an individual's social ties across all social and cultural systems or those that they wish to belong to, action will consist of playing on these or offering the individual objectives to help dissuade them from hanging out with the group and participating in its activities. This action can also take on binding aspects, in the form of exchanges; it can also be as a form of pressure on the person. This set of actions can also be applicable to the very close entourage that may influence the individual in question.

Civil strategy
Actions will be directed at individuals with the aim of strengthening the capacity of civil society to deal with aggression, to enter into dialogue with group members, showing the social responsibility of the person. These actions will apply both to people in contact with the group, or those people whose citizen intervention could be useful to achieving the objective. Women play a significant role in this kind of action; due to their activism as mothers or girlfriends, and due to their image of respect and promotion of respect for human beings. Women in gangs, close to the gangs or distanced from them, are essential in intervention. The neighbourhood and its inhabitants should be seen as active participants, particularly by acting on the periphery gang members, the gang's support network. Assurance must be given to those who are closely monitoring the gang issue, whether in groups or individually. A climate of dialogue needs to be established within the community. This must be perceived both for small groups in a stairwell to neighbourhood-scale groups. Direct or indirect victims must be monitored in particular.

Spatial strategy
Layout, planning and monitoring are taken into account to break the framework of the drugs market. Street furniture, lighting, surveillance cameras, the implementation of "disturbance" techniques are just a few of the tools that can be used. The use of events, celebrations, not to mention police checks not made directly on the market but around it should all be included in this action relating to the space occupied by the group.

Criminal strategy
The reconciliation of "police" and "justice" documents is essential for a good understanding of individuals and for defining the nature of actions that may have an impact. But this understanding should not lead us to give priority to criminal proceedings, except in cases of flagrante delicto or certain seriousness. We should avoid uniting the gang around a "repressive saga", in which those who go to prison are normal examples of gang life. By reversing the legal adage, civil proceedings should come before criminal proceedings. In the vast range of legal texts, there are also a certain number of criminal statutes that can be used to reinforce strategies, including contravention methods.
The strategies are not exclusive or chronological; they are simultaneous and coordinated. Those responsible for them use the actions listed in each of the categories according to the changing circumstances and bearing in mind that each strategy not only affects the gang and the space but other people as well. On the scale of urban territory, such strategies should ideally be implemented for several groups.

The implementation of the strategy requires thorough knowledge of the group and its peers, obtained through data collection from various sources and the establishment of a set of monitoring tools and evaluation indica-

tors. It involves setting up two circles of actors: the first is bound by the shared secrecy of the operation; the second is committed to the more general objectives relating to the implementation of the strategy.

This strategy involves relationships of trust between actors, the unfailing support of municipal authorities and the government, and regular evaluation for measuring the results achieved. It is essential that the action is long-lasting. Demobilisation through discouragement and weariness are the major threats to its duration. The evaluation must enable us to measure results and make the action visible to each other, particularly to the public.

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Problematic youth groups in Italy

Stefania Crocitti, Livia Fay Lucianetti, Gian Guido Nobili and Fiamma Terenghi
Contribution of the Emilia-Romagna Region – Partner of the EU Street Violence Project

Until[22] recently, youth has not been interpreted as a problematic category in the Italian public and political debate nor has young people's behaviour been associated to danger, risk or violence. Compared to other countries (especially Northern European countries) the discourse on young people is embedded in a culture of tolerance, protection and de-responsibilisation, which influences both the criminal justice system and welfare policies.

The first campaign that considered young people's behaviour as particularly dangerous (both for themselves and other people) was launched during the Nineties around the issues of violence in sports and hooliganism.
Further steps in this slow change in the understanding of young people are: the emergence of bullying as a

22- The evidence base of this paper comprises the A.R.A.s and in depth interviews with: a State Police officer in Naples; the representative of an NGO in Naples; the Guarantor for childhood and adolescence of the Lazio Region; the manager of a youth centre of Sassari; the head of office of the social services of Taranto; the manager of a youth centre of Bari; a researcher of the University of Genoa; the manager of the Youth policies division of the Province of Trento; the Police Commissioner and the Head of the flying squad of the State Police based in Piacenza; a Local Police Inspector of the Municipality of Bologna; two street workers of the Municipality of Bologna; two Social Services officers of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia.

new framework for interpreting juvenile aggressiveness and violent behaviour; the recent focus on the second generation of immigrants, and above all on the emergence of Latin American gangs in some cities of Northern Italy. These last phenomena in particular have led to associate youth and danger, contrarily to the previous protective attitude towards young people, and have generated a new tendency towards the criminalisation of young people's behaviour [23].

Few research contributions in Italy have investigated the existence of troublesome youths or gangs acting in public spaces. The objective of these studies was to understand the social and cultural characteristics, internal dynamics and meaning of violent behaviour. Following the huge mass coverage of a series of violent incidents involving young people in various Italian cities, some universities and local authorities started to develop specific studies and prevention programmes. In particular, Genoa and Milan put in place interesting experiences, while the Emilia-Romagna Region was the first to identify as such the phenomenon. Afterwards, an experience was developed in the city of Pescara (Abruzzo) where an innovative project, co-financed by the European Commission, was launched with the explicit aim of preventing street violence by young people. We may also recall that an investigation on the topic started in 2011 in the Trentino Region.

This state of the art reflects the present conditions within Italian urban contexts, in particular regarding the existence of gangs. The formation of these youth groups is related to specific factors that have only surfaced in recent years in the country. This also explains why, prior to that, research and prevention projects

23- This tendency is also reflected by the increasing severity of penal laws towards young people (Nobili and Selmini, 2008). An example is provided by the increasingly difficult access to the alternatives to imprisonment for young offenders.

were focused mainly on juvenile aggressive (e.g. bullying) or deviant behaviours and on risky behaviours.

The emergence of "youth gangs" and "baby gangs" in the public debate is also a consequence of immigration. These groups are mainly formed by newcomers, in particular Latin Americans - and generate feelings of insecurity and alarm among residents of various cities. In particular, the phenomenon concerns groups of adolescents acting aggressively against peers in front of schools as well as in city parks and streets (e.g. fights, assaults) or committing petty crimes in public spaces.

Legal framework

In Italy, street gangs have not been a relevant political nor social concern (Nobili and Selmini, 2008). Gangs or antisocial/violent youth groups are not a specific crime typology in the Italian penal law.
Although the term "gang" was and is used to describe the phenomenon of co-offending minors (Blaya and Gatti, 2010), a ministerial report stressed that Italian groups of young offenders have different characteristics than the Anglo-Saxon model of baby gangs (Dipartimento Giustizia Minorile, 2001).

The legal relevance of youth "groups" can however be found from a double standpoint in a) penal law and b) administrative rules.

a) Juvenile delinquency is mainly a group behaviour: "According to official statistics (1999), out of 100 minors reported to the judicial authorities, 67% committed crimes with other persons, usually minors. The percentage is higher for property crime (theft, robbery, etc.)." (Blaya and Gatti, 2010). According to the article 416 of the Italian penal code, co-offending minors shall be punished if they constitute or take part in a "delinquent association", which is defined as an orga-

nisation of three or more people who gather with the purpose of committing a crime. The sanction for the mere fact of participating in such an association is one to five years in prison, and 3-7 years for people who form a delinquent organisation.
In Italy, the term "gang" traditionally refers to criminal organisations (such as the Mafia). Groups composed mainly of adults who gather to commit crimes are considered gangs (Blaya and Gatti, 2010; Crocitti and Barbieri, 2012). However, the involvement of youngsters in organised crime and the possible exploitation of minors in Mafia crimes were underlined by those interviewed, especially in the southern Regions. We may also recall the article 416 bis of the penal code that provides a heavier punishment (from 3 to 6 years of prison) for those involved in "Mafia associations".
Another offence concerning violence in public spaces is the so called "street fight". If somebody is injured or dies in a street fight, article 588 of the Italian penal code inflicts a sentence of three months to five years of imprisonment, for all those taking part in the fight.

b) Municipal Governments and Regions, even though they do not have authority or competence in penal law, are continuously confronted with situations of street crimes and urban decay, to which they responde by preventive measures that are an alternative to the traditional lines of action of institutions. Local administrators have enacted administrative measures to prevent and/or sanction antisocial behaviour by youngsters in public spaces - e.g. vandalism, overbearing acts and alcohol consumption. In 2008, a specific law (L. 125) concerning "urban security" gave Mayors the power to give an administrative sanction (i.e. a fine) for such misbehaviours.
In many Italian cities, administrative ordinances have been enacted in order to prevent physical and social urban decay by establishing rules of conduct in public spaces. Ordinances regulating opening hours of leisure

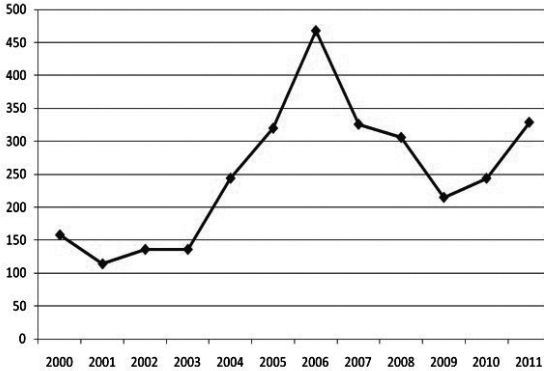
time places and people's behaviour in public areas (e.g. squares, gardens, etc.) were frequently aimed at governing and sanctioning especially youth groups whose misconduct represented a threat to urban security (ANCI, 2012). In so doing, local authorities also intended to reaffirm legitimacy and control on public areas thus depriving youth groups and gangs of their territory, i.e. streets and urban places.

Issues of street violence

The presence of youngsters committing criminal and anti-social behaviour in small groups is registered in several cities of the country. The most frequent crimes committed by deviant youngsters are against property. What emerges is, throughout the various territories, an increasing tendency by some young people to steal in shops and mega-stores or to steal from other people (often other young people) in order to acquire brand name items, mobile phones, etc. What is commonly acknowledged is that these young offenders do not necessarily come from deprived families/social backgrounds, but also from middle and sometimes even upper-classes.

What is often pointed out by those interviewed is that frequently young people are not aware that they are committing illegal acts (for example when damaging public infrastructures), showing a sort of ingenuity. At the same time, some stakeholders emphasise an increasing use of violence along with a growing "culture of aggressiveness" - generally expressed by individuals who come from more difficult family background. More generally, the main problem associated with young people throughout the territories investigated is bullying. Tackling bullying is in fact a key objective of a significant number of projects developed locally by NGOs, schools and local authorities.

Often, juvenile bullying in and out of school (surrounding places, streets, parks) has been the focus of public concern and of local authorities interventions. Youths acting aggressively (verbally or physically) towards peers are one of the main problems targeted by these interventions. These deviant and violent behaviours have been increasingly labelled as acts of bullying, thus leading to an underestimation of their penal aspects. The absence of the family, the exposure to television and videogames that offer violent models and the dominance of the macho culture are considered factors that generate these forms of violence.
Similarly, youths hanging out in public parks, streets and squares or near pubs have increasingly become a matter of public concern due to antisocial and violent



Source: *La Repubblica* (largest circulation in Italy)

Fig. 1 Number of articles published in *La Repubblica* in which the term «baby gang» is used (yearly figures, 2000-2011)

behaviour (i.e. vandalism, alcohol and drug abuse, loitering, illegal occupation of housing estates, fights and crimes committed against peers or adults, as well as against private and public facilities). These acts are committed by both deprived and marginalised youths and by "normal" youths who may become antisocial and violent, especially as a consequence of a lack of positive values and valid adult reference models. Furthermore, immigration flows towards many cities spur increasing social and cultural conflicts in public spaces.

As mentioned previously, the problem of street groups acting violently in public spaces has emerged in recent years and has been studied in northern Italian cities such as Genoa, Milan, and Piacenza. In particular in Milan and Genoa, the academic and public attention is focused on the existence of street organisations or groups of Latin American youths. Specific projects have been implemented jointly by youth workers and researchers with the aim of fostering social inclusion and preventing violence.

Developments over time and space

In general, the problem of gangs in Italy is evidenced only in a very limited number of cities of the North, despite the increasing number of reports by the local and national press of episodes of youth deviance and/or anti-social behaviour as being committed by "baby-gangs" (revealing an improper use of the term) (see fig. n.1). Nevertheless, it is necessary to consider that the phenomena and problems associated to street and youth violence, as well as the ways in which they are framed and addressed by local stakeholders, are subject to territorial differences that reflect the North-South divide.

Northern Italy

In the North of Italy, the local mass media have in large part contributed to the social construction of the problem of street organizations (in Genoa) and of street groups (in Milan) in terms of deviant and violent youths acting in public spaces.

In the last fifteen years, Milan and in particular Genoa have become the capitals of Latin immigration (especially from Ecuador). In the first phase (second half of the 90s) the phenomenon mainly regarded women, who generally worked irregularly as caregivers for Italian families. With a second immigration flow characterised by family reunions, the composition and size of the Ecuadorian immigrant population radically changed, which generated different social perceptions and representations. Latin youths (i.e. hermanitos) belonging to street organisations (i.e. Latin Kings or Ñetas) arrived in Italy during 2000-2003 the period as a result of a vast emigration flow from Latin America. In this sense, the phenomenon of street organisations in Milan and Genoa is linked to migration processes, although their members were not necessarily engaged in similar experiences in their native country (Queirolo Palmas, 2006). These immigration flows - mainly due to family reunion - and the marginal conditions in which migrant youths live are among the main factors contributing to the formation of street groups and to the rise in membership. In particular, a great number of young Latin Americans arrived in Italy through the process of family reunion, after having spent their childhoold and adolescence in their native country. Their custody is frequently granted to relatives, usually the grandparents. Once they are in Italy, these angry and disoriented youths are confronted with difficult living conditions (lack of money, small and overcrowded apartments, etc.). They also feel alienated both at school and in the job market. Similarly to their parents,

their working perspectives appear to be limited to unprotected and under qualified jobs.

Various factors influence groups' affiliation: 1. groups offer the opportunity to belong to a community belonging where youngsters can experiment affective relationships, support and solidarity; 2. groups offer the opportunity to escape from life strains and anonymity, while sharing practices that question the discriminatory situation; 3. joining a group gives the opportunity to avoid family control and to experience freedom, power and the risks associated to the group's actions.

Violent behaviour usually represent a way to defend the respect of the group and/or of the individual member. Furthermore, the use of violence is linked to specific cultural variables that define masculine identity, according to which males have to demonstrate they are brave and physically strong. Violent episodes that took place in Genoa and Milan and that led to subsequent charges of criminal association, robberies and assaults determined the construction of a misleading image of these groups by the mass media. Violence did not prove to be linked to criminal activity or to activities aiming at controlling the territory. On the contrary, in most cases violent acts (such as fights) were not planned and often originated in fortuitous events (a conflict over a girl, a bad look, a previous enmity).
In recent years, the situation of street organisations has not changed substantially. As a researcher from the University of Genoa explains:

The characteristics and types of youth street organisations existing in the city today are similar to the ones previously assessed. Violence is still characterised by the absence of criminal intent, and although illegal acts are committed, they are perpetrated to regulate conflicts among street groups or concern single individuals. For example, there has been a total of three ho-

micides since 2006. The only two differences I have spotted concern on the one hand, the appearance on the street scene of a new group, already involved in illicit drug selling, who chose a name coming from the gangsta world just because it is cool. On the other, the increase of heroin consumption within street organisations. We have not investigated the cause of this new phenomenon, we just know that it is not linked to the country of origin (Ecuador) but rather, that it is influenced by environmental variables.

Without denying the gravity of events in which the gangs were involved (i.e. violent fights, aggressions, thefts) these groups did not express an economically oriented criminal intent nor the intention of controlling the territory. Instead, the use of violence has a high symbolic value. The analysis of street violence is useful to trace the boundaries among groups and is characterised as follows: 1. conflicts occur among peers who belong to the same age range and share a similar subculture; 2. conflicts occur in specific places, such as clubs and in the subway Violent acts represent a way of expressing group affiliation and also contribute to the definition of a group's internal hierarchy and leadership.

The phenomenon of youth aggregations similar to American and European gangs is also growing in the Emilia-Romagna region. While youth gangs are present in some major cities (e.g. Latin King New York, Latin King Chicago and Ñetas in the city of Piacenza; Bolognina Warriors, Pilastrini in the city of Bologna),other forms of youth aggregations seem to be more informal gatherings (Crocitti and Barbieri, 2012). As interviewees have pointed out, the latter are usually not structured, they lack a clear definition of roles and common objectives, and are not oriented towards deviant and violent behaviour. In particular, informal groups spontaneously gather in public spaces due to

temporary situations, without planning any actions, imitating the symbols and dress style of gangs (i.e. copycat groups). The members are aged 12 to 25 and are mainly males, although female membership is also acknowledged (and may even occupy a hidden leading role). Stakeholders interviewed also notice these groups have an increasing number of younger members. In general, nationality is not a discriminatory variable for groups' growth. Street associations are both composed of Italians and immigrant juveniles. Indeed, the mixed composition mainly depends on the lower socio-economic conditions.
In the regional territory of Emilia-Romagna, youth groups are street-oriented, meaning that socialisation processes occur in public spaces (e.g. streets, parks etc.). Rather than the use of violence, the means used to construct the youths' collective identity in public spaces are symbols and dress styles. Urban spaces where youths live and hang out are the privileged "platforms" for the construction of an identity that is significant and relevant to the individuals.

Central and Southern Italy

People interviewed as part of the EU Street Violence project agree that gangs are not an issue in central and southern Italian regions.
Our research shows that the problem of violence in public space is evidenced in a very limited number of cases and that specific references to the issue of street violence are even more rare. There is however the exception of the Abruzzo Region, where an EU Commission funded project (the Y.U.S. project)[24] has the explicit aim of reducing street violence. What emerges from interviews is that local councils' staff and social workers do not witness the existence of structured groups systematically committed to specific types of activities. These results are in line with those of a re-

24- see the related A.R.A.

search conducted by the Dipartimento Giustizia Minorile (Department of Juvenile Justice) in 2001, which demonstrates that the situation in the last ten years does not appear to have undergone major changes[25].
In southern cities where the presence of criminal organisations is more rooted, such as Naples and Bari, actors do not witness a direct association between youth violence and criminal organisations. This is clearly expressed by the representative of an NGO operating in the Campania region:
"Generally, violent youngsters start by getting together, without being part of criminal organisations. They mostly commit damages, forms of extreme vandalism ... the phenomenon of violence is not related to entry in a criminal organisation. It is possible that someone is noticed and initiated, but not necessarily ... Group violence is crushed by criminal organisations. [...] We have never witnessed episodes of group violence. Individual initiatives are seldom undertaken. In practice, violence is mediated by the Camorra".

Similarly, a police officer of the Police headquarters in Naples mentioned the fact that the lack of gangs and other forms of organised groups of young people is probably linked to the presence of criminal organisations – confirming again the results of other research projects and in particular that by the Dipartimento di Giustizia Minorile above mentioned. In addition, in Naples and in other areas, young females are increasingly committing acts with a certain degree of violence. The project manager of an NGO operating in Campania pointed out that girls with specific indivi-

25- The aim of the research, conducted in collaboration with the Sapienza University of Rome, was to investigate the phenomenon of minors deviant groups in Italy. Interviewees were asked an explicit question on the existence of baby gangs (in the sense of structured organisations with specific delinquent objectives). It is interesting to note that almost no social services officer identified any. While some highlighted the emergence of some basic elements that characterise youth gangs, others stated that this phenomenon does not apply to the Italian context.

dual characteristics (i.e. being obese) and family problems are more likely to join young deviant males.
In the south of Italy, problems arising from young people's behaviour are recurrently associated with a socially and economically deprived environment. The focus of interventions is generally on the causes of youth deprivation and deviance rather than on their effects. Coherently with these ways of framing the "youth problem", most of the actions observed have a preventive and educative intent.
In bigger cities in particular, the neighbourhood factor is often highlighted as important in influencing young people's behaviour and life style. It is the case of the area called "Isola" in Taranto, of the "Zen" neighbourhood in Palermo, of "Scampia" in Naples and of the "San Paolo" and "Enziteto" areas in Bari, and of "Tor Bella Monaca" and other suburban areas in Rome.
The effects of the economic crisis were pointed out in particular in southern Italian cities. Social services officers in Puglia stress the link between the crisis, increasing unemployment and crime figures (in particular burglaries and thefts from vehicles), committed both by adults and young people. The issue of immigration is also mentioned when referring to these phenomena. In Rome, the Guarantor for Childhood and Adolescence of the Lazio Region highlights the problem of unaccompanied foreign minors.

Responses

The main actors implementing projects and services targeting youth violence and deviance are municipalities. The research results show that these projects are managed mainly by Social Services departments rather than by Urban Security or Youth Policies departments. Many services and projects are supported by the central government and were launched through Law 285/1997, aimed at preventing youth deviance. In other cases they are funded by Regions or foundations.

Frequently, projects are managed by partnerships that bring together various services of local authorities (i.e. social and educational services, the municipal police) and third sector agencies, schools, trade or employers boards, national police forces, territorial judicial officers, parishes, and the community.

The review of ARAs and interviews shows that the preventive is prevalent in policies and interventions targeting troublesome youth at the local level. This is perhaps related to Italy's culture, which is characterised by a tolerant and permissive attitude towards young people, and which also affects the juvenile justice system (Nelken D., 2006). The interventions observed targeted in most cases youth in general and youth at risk (often, youngsters residing in specific areas). The most frequent actions implemented are primary and secondary prevention initiatives. Apart from young people, actions frequently target professionals (in particular school staff, with the intent of providing them with new tools and methodologies) and families (with the aim of supporting them in the education of their children).
One of the main types of activities carried out with the specific goal of preventing youth violence and deviant behaviour at street level is that of educativa di strada. It mainly consists in educational, counselling and community activities and is carried out by street workers who get in contact with young people directly on the street.

Youth centres represent another important point of reference especially in deprived territories. In some cases they are directly supervised by local council social workers, in others they are run by NGOs or religious foundations. Sometimes young people are directly involved in the management of the centre. Youth centres generally offer free time and leisure activities (i.e. theatre and music worshops) and are meant as a place for socialisation and recreation. The most innovative centres

entail the participation of different actors and offer a wider range of activities, based on an integration approach. In such cases, additional social and educational services are provided, such as school support, training activities and counselling.

Another category of projects implemented at local level are those delivered in schools. Their aim is to prevent bullying and antisocial and violent behaviour committed against peers and in some cases even against teachers (e.g. vandalism, verbal offences, physical aggressions). Numerous actions aim at preventing school dropout. Moreover, special attention is dedicated to gender violence, featuring various types of initiatives at both school and community level. Other primary prevention interventions aim at promoting civic attitudes, community engagement, active citizenship, and in some cases at reducing the distance between juveniles and institutional bodies and representatives. In this sense, social educators and/or local police officers give students courses on topics such as urban safety, alcohol and drug consumption, bullying, sex crimes and fraud. Specific courses regarding education about law and legality are frequently part of wider educational initiatives and/or of empowerment actions that are often organised in schools or in youth centres. In some cases they are part of programmes targeting specific communities (in particular those living in extremely disadvantaged areas of southern cities) and complement other activities aimed supporting families and their children (i.e. psychological support, school dropout prevention, training courses etc.).

Interventions aimed at training and promoting employability are implemented especially in economically deprived areas. These initiatives generally imply the provision of grants or other forms of economic support in order to help individuals enter the labour market (for example by engaging in apprenticeship schemes).

Work counselling for young people is sometimes provided in youth centres, in schools or through desk services. Some projects also include work counselling and training for parents living in difficult economic conditions.

In the specific cases of the Latin gangs in Milan and Genoa, the interventions follow the experience conducted in Barcelona in Spain (see the report of the Spanish Forum for Urban Safety). These interventions are based on the assumption that under specific conditions, street gangs members are able to "activate" and to develop the capacity for voice and action. Such process entails three main steps: 1. building trust between researchers and some members of the youth gangs (i.e. Latin Kings and Ñetas); 2. the suspension of hostilities between rival gangs; 3. public recognition of these groups and increased visibility of some of their representatives.

Examples of actions

A. Latin Kings and Ñetas: the experience of Genoa with youth gangs

In 2004, a research group of the University of Genoa started to investigate the phenomenon of Latin American youth gangs with the aims of studying the complex social conditions of these youths and of deconstructing the criminal image that the mass media presented of them.

This research project on street organisations included two main steps: 1) Action-research (researchers are able to do field work and conduct a series of interviews with members of street organisations); 2) Participative action-research (involvement of leaders in the research project, interviews and ethnographic study with Latin American members and Italian tutors).

In June, 2006, Latin Kings and Ñetas were invited to talk to the public at the convention on 'Youths, migrants and Latinos. Beyond the gangs, for a process of

recognition and non-violence'. They announced their intention to quit violence and begin a peace process that would be supported by the Assessorship for Culture of the Municipality of Genoa (Cannarella et. al., 2007: 4). Consequently, the two main street organisations contacted each other and began to manage together the Zapata Social Centre. The centre is a meeting point for gang members, academics, militants of the centre, social educators of the institutional Centre of Services for Minors and Families. It is also attended by some officials of the Municipality of Genoa. It has become a prime vehicle for implementing projects and initiatives targeted at second generation immigrants.
The emergence of "official" Latin American street organisations in Genoa produced positive effects both for young people and for the wider local community, which can be summarised as follows (Cannarella et. al., 2007):

- decrease in inter- and intra- group violence,
- application of mediation methods to manage conflicts between groups,
- identification of legitimate Latin American leaders guiding the process of pacification,
- increased interactions between street groups and associations and institutions,
- legitimisation of codes and symbols,
- better knowledge and awareness of the characteristics of street groups among social and institutional agents and representatives,
- decreasing public alarm,
- a less criminal image of street organisations and Latin Americans in the media,
- participation of street organizations' members in social projects aimed at increasing educational, professional and cultural opportunities.

B. The "Pugni in tasca" project by the Municipality of Nuoro

In its first stage, the project launched by the Municipa-

lity of Nuoro (Sardinia) was called "Cuzones Vivos"26. The project was developed around the needs of young people aged between 14 and 20. The focus was on cultural and socialisation aspects as well as on deviance, deprivation and malaise among young people. The team in charge of the implementation was composed of social street workers and volunteers. Volunteers played a key role in contacting peer groups. At the beginning, the intervention consisted in mapping areas at risk, observing the presence of groups, and establishing a first contact with young people. After being contacted by street workers, young people were encouraged to participate in various activities such as acting, planning, etc., which helped them to think and make plans about their future. Street workers had all a profile which guaranteed they could intervene without prejudice, so as to favour closer relations between young people and institutions.

In particular, street workers did a lot of direct observation. Another important line of work was job counselling, which was carried out by other public agencies together with enterprises. Counselling on penal/legal matters was also offered. Cultural and social events and activities (i.e. concerts, theatre etc.) were organised in one suburban area considered at risk. Primary and secondary prevention was carried out in some schools through the following activities: movies, reading, theatre, seminars and various forms of interaction and confrontation with young people.

The methodology used in street work aimed at promoting participation and socialisation and at establishing relationships based on respect and reciprocal understanding. Getting in contact with informal groups was particularly important. These groups represent a reference point for teenagers in their own development. The relationship with a group of peers offers a "space" for confrontation that is not ruled by adults. The as-

26- See: www.comune.nuoro.it/PugniInTasca

sumption is that understanding the internal dynamics of the group of peers may help identify those factors that lead to marginalisation and deviance. Street workers intended to become a reference point for the young people that "consume" the street. In this way, the street worker can help individuals select the specific services they need. The objective was to establish a continuous communication with the young people, both in terms of education and socio-political participation, taking into account the overall context and territory.

C. The "Spazio Raga" project by the Municipality of Reggio nell'Emilia

The "Spazio Raga"project promoted by the Municipality of Reggio Emilia is an example of social and community prevention programme, which relies strongly on conflict mediation, and which was implemented in a multi-ethnic neighbourhood (named "Turri-Paradisi"). First, social educators analysed the signs of juvenile discomfort (e.g. lack of strong educational models, school dropout) and territorial characteristics. They assessed specific interventions (targeting the expectations and motivations of young people) such as school support, photography, theatre and musical courses, and manual work activities.

Spazio Raga is a youth club for adolescents who live in the area of Reggio Emilia East, started in December 2005. Today, about 40 young people (30% of the whole youth population living in the area) regularly attend the centre. They are aged from 13 to 18, and are originated from various countries: Albania, China, Egypt, Ghana, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and Ukraine.

The project was focused on helping young people develop their personal skills (by helping them with their homework, the use of free time, sports activities, creative labs) and their relationships within the group. It also implemented small "active citizenship" programmes.

Another target of Spazio Raga is to create a strong connection between the families and all the socio-educational projects in the area in order to promote trust, social cohesion and positive neighbourhood, with the support of cultural and linguistic mediators.
According to stakeholders interviewed, the success of this initiative depends mainly on the following elements: 1. the capacity to address the needs of young people to build an individual and collective identity and to gain self-confidence; 2. school support; 3. having a place where youngsters can experiment constructive reciprocal relationships and positive interactions with adults.

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UK youth street violence – an overview

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Contribution of the National Community Safety Network (NCSN) – Partner of the EU Street Violence Project

The EU street violence project database contains over one hundred examples of Actions, Recommendations and Analysis (ARAs) drawn from the UK. In this summary we will outline some of these: significant research; approaches considered as best practice or promising; the most interesting. Before we do, however, we need to look at the context in which these have been developed – what we know about violent gangs or groups of young people, what the statistics show the problem is, and the changing landscape of community safety.

The issue of youth street violence

The spectrum that contains groups of young people, public space and violence is broad and complex, but for our purposes here can be broken down into three essential groupings, each of which attracts its own approach from the authorities.

The first are groups of young people who assemble in neighbourhoods, parks or town centres. They are most likely not engaged in any sort of criminal behaviour, but it is indicative, perhaps, of the way youngsters are regarded in the UK that in categorising anti-social behaviour "young people hanging around" not "young

people hanging around causing problems" is one such subset. At the other extreme, however, these groups do engage in criminal/anti-social behaviour, and whilst violence will be rare it may be threatened or be a potential risk (and, as with the second grouping below, when this is the case alcohol usually plays a significant role). Approaches to address these issues are an important part of anti-social behaviour strategies.

The second grouping is largely confined to town centres and social or leisure events, and concerns violence in which alcohol is a, if not the, key factor. Approaches to address these behaviours are part of alcohol reduction and night-time economy management, as well as anti-social behaviour, strategies.

The third grouping - that of gangs or troublesome youth groups where violence is a feature - is the most extreme, and it is one which will not be an issue for most community safety partnerships. However, for some that cover deprived inner-city neighbourhoods, this will be a significant concern.

Whether a group of young people committing violence is defined as a gang or a troublesome youth group is a moot point, partly because definitions are not used consistently within the UK or its constituent parts, and partly because they are not recorded in official statistics. This means that the scale and nature of the problem can never be fully understood, except at a local level.

The Home Office now uses the 2009 Dying to Belong definition of a gang as:

A relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who:
1) see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group;

2) engage in criminal activity and violence;
3) lay claim over territory (this is not necessary geographical territory but can include an illegal economy territory);
4) have some form of identifying structural feature; and
5) are in conflict with other, similar gangs.

Not, then, quite the Eurogang definition, and not one that is necessarily used by local partnerships: "definitions are still varied nationally" [Alaesha Cox, Youth Gangs in the UK: Myth or Reality?, 2011]. This means that when we talk of "gangs", we are not necessarily talking about exactly the same phenomenon in different areas.

Nevertheless, let us consider some statistics. Cox points out youth gang populations identified through different means: 72 in the UK (1998); 169 in London (2006); involving 3-7% of the youth population (2008). From 2008 to 2011 the Metropolitan Police Service recorded over 60 harmful gangs that were involved either as suspects or victims of crime in London, West Midlands police documented 42 urban street gangs across their force area involving more than 400 individuals and Nottinghamshire police reported they had 15 gangs involving up to 400 individuals [HM Government, Ending Gang and Youth Violence, 2011]. In 2008 Glasgow's Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) identified the existence of around 55 known and established street gangs across the east end of the city with around 600-700 members [Violence Reduction Unit, The Violence Must Stop: Glasgow's Community Initiative To Reduce Violence – Second Year Report, 2011].

This does not mean that gang populations are increasing or that violence arising from this is getting worse. Gang- or group-occasioned violence - is not re-

corded as such, but we do know that violent crime is falling across the UK.

In England and Wales, homicide, which includes murder, manslaughter and infanticide, fell to 550 in 2011-12, the lowest level since 1983. The annual reduction of 14% reflects a sustained fall since the peak at 1,047 offences in 2002-03. The falling homicide rate in England and Wales is also reflected by the reductions in gun, knife and general violent crime. Violent crime fell by 7%, from 822,000 offences to 763,000 offences. There were 30,999 offences involving a knife or sharp instrument in 2011-12, a fall of 5%, and firearms offences fell by 16% to 5,911. Such figures –as with all crime data - have to be taken with a note of caution as to their reliability (the separate Crime Survey of England and Wales showed crime levels unchanged from the previous year, and much of the fall in violent crime has been attributed to decreases in recorded rates of domestic violence – domestic violence accounts for almost one-fifth of violent crime) [Office for National Statistics, 2012].

In Scotland, violent crime reduced by 17% in 2011-12, to a 30 year low. Unlike its southern counterpart, crime survey results were equally improved – the 2010-11 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey showed a 30% fall in violent crime between 2008-09 and 2010-11 (but indicated that the proportion of violent crime reported to the police rose). The number of offensive weapon crimes recorded by the police decreased by 10% to 5,631, the lowest level since 1994. Scottish police forces recorded 643 offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been involved in 2010-11, a decrease of 24% from the number recorded in 2009-10 (843). This was the lowest reported total for 32 years. There were 97 homicide victims recorded by the police in Scotland in 2010-11, an 18% increase from 82 in 2009-10, but still the third lowest in the

last 10 years and 16% lower than at the start of that period [Scottish Government, 2012].

In Northern Ireland, violence against the person with injury rose by 2.3% in 2011-12, but that was still 14.1% lower than the 2006-07 peak. The number of murders recorded was at its lowest level (since comparable data sets were used from 1998-99) in 2011-12, with 16 recorded. There was a slight increase in the percentage of violent offences in which knives were used, as against small decreases in England and Wales and a larger decrease in the use of offensive weapons in Scotland [Police Service of Northern Ireland, 2012].

Whilst these figures do not have a direct correlation with street violence by young people, they are at least an indication that youth gang-related violence is not the epidemic some press coverage would have us believe. But let us not underestimate the significance, or the impact, of gang-related violence:

Almost 50% of shootings and 22% of serious violence in London is thought to be committed by known gang members. Gangs create a culture of violence and criminality which can stretch beyond the gang itself." [HM Government, Ending Gang and Youth Violence, 2011]

The same report points to the links between street gangs and serious criminality:

The supply of weapons, for example, is overwhelmingly dominated by organised criminality. Drugs supply, as Professor John Pitts points out in his study of street gangs in Waltham Forest, is a business, requiring a large workforce and supply chain. For the gang members, the financial rewards of involvement in this supply chain can be significant.
The issue of press coverage of crime, and its influence

on the public's understanding and fears regarding youth street violence, is worth touching on here. What people see, hear and read about crime in the media does not constitute an accurate picture: "45% of all crimes reported in the papers in the UK involve sex or violence, compared with only 3% of actual reported crime, reinforcing the view that there is a tendency for crime reporting to focus on the sensational." [Home Office, Communicating for Confidence: Insight and Research, 2009] There has also been a tendency in some quarters to demonise young people (as we shall see, this has been addressed by some Actions). As a result gang violence, and more particularly knife crime involving young people, has become a serious public concern across the country. But whilst in some inner-city areas that is a genuine worry for people resident in those neighbourhoods, most people are not themselves touched by this. Alcohol-related violence, which can be seen on the streets of many places on an evening, and anti-social behaviour by young people in general, also witnessed by many of the general public, are also highlighted by the media and have become genuine and widespread public concerns.

Addressing youth street violence – the context of community safety in the UK

As may be evinced by the previous section, whilst the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a unitary state, it consists of four distinct countries - England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland - the latter three of which have devolved administrations. With different political, judicial and administrative arrangements, the approaches to community safety and the structures that are used to address crime also differ from country to country. Whilst the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which established community safety as a statutory responsibility for key agencies such as local authorities and the police, shaped approaches in

England and Wales, elsewhere parallel structures emerged. (It should be noted here that there are differences between England and Wales, as devolution in the latter has put pressure on community safety and anti-social behaviour strategies to "place a premium on the social inclusion of young people". [Adam Edwards and Gordon Hughes, Reluctant Fabians? Anti-social behaviour and community safety work in Wales, in Peter Squires ed ASBO Nation, 2008])

The focus here will be on England and Wales, for it is here that the political change in the UK government (from Labour to the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition in 2010) has had the greatest impact on community safety and hence on approaches to youth street violence. With the change in government has come a change in emphasis. From the centralised approach of the previous administration, with local partnerships held accountable for performance in part through a regional government structure responsible for delivery of policy at that level, we have moved to one where local partnerships are freer to approach issues important to their area in the way they think best, and will be held accountable locally through their results. (There had been moves towards this by the previous government, with the creation of one single national target for the police – to improve public confidence by addressing the crime and disorder issues that matter locally; the same government also renamed the local partnerships, from Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to Community Safety Partnerships). The relaxing of bureaucratic reporting arrangements may have been welcomed, but this has also been accompanied by large cuts in public sector funding, with fewer resources at the disposal of stretched local agencies. A further complication is the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners, directly elected officials who took over the responsibilities of police authorities as well as holding much of the funding that previously was given to

community safety partnerships by central government. With the first elections for the commissioners held in late 2012, it is too early to gauge the effect they will have on local community safety activity, but it may be substantial.

The changes outlined above – most particularly the expenditure cuts – have had a discernible impact on the UK Actions, Recommendations and Analysis contained in the EU Street Violence Project database. Much of the activity carried out under the Tackling Knives and Serious Youth Violence Programme, the Tackling Gangs Action Programme and the Tackling Violent Crime Programme, which instigated, measured and encouraged new practice to address these issues, has been scaled down or ceased altogether. A good example of this is what appeared to be promising good practice in one city with its development of a gangs policy and partnership. Not only has that work ceased, but continuing gang-related work has become fragmented as the community safety partnership itself was subsumed into the wider strategic partnership. In other areas, work may be continuing but on a smaller scale, whilst experienced, key individuals have retired or moved on from organisations and not been replaced.

A series of extraordinary events did, however, put the issue of youth street violence firmly back on the government's policy agenda. The riots of August 2010, which started in London and spread to a number of other urban centres in England, led to a cross-government report, new programmes of work to address the issue (including the Troubled Families initiative, targeted at the country's 120.000 most dysfunctional families) and (as tends to happen following such events) the identification of funding to take this activity forward.

The UK examples of Actions, Recommendations and Analysis

There are over 100 UK entries on the EU Street Violence database. (We have submitted an international one too, the World Health Organisation's Violence Prevention Evidence Base and Resources, hosted by the Centre for Public Health at Liverpool John Moores University, which fulfils a similar function to the Efus database but across a broader topic area.) Over half of the entries are Actions (legislation; enforcement; education, prevention or diversion), the rest split roughly evenly between Recommendations (strategy, policy or guidance) and Analysis (research).

Some of the entries contain interviews with people involved in particular ARAs: Professor Mark Bellis (Violence Prevention Evidence Base and Resources); Detective Chief Superintendent John Carnochan (Community Initiative to Reduce Violence); Deborah Erwin (Away from Violence); Carlene Firmin (This is It. This is My Life...); Professor Gordon Hughes (Status Dogs, Young People and Criminalisation: Towards a Preventative Strategy); Inspector Mark Lawes (CitySafe Havens); Marion Meakin (Spotlight); Andy Pownall (Tactical Options for Dealing with Alcohol-Related Violence). Each interview sheds further light on both the relevant ARA and the issue of youth street violence in general.

When selecting an ARA for inclusion several factors were considered. Did the ARA appear to be good or promising practice? Had it been evaluated? Was it important research? Was it something that would be of interest and value to others, even if it was work in progress, or uncompleted, or had poor or uncertain results? We tried wherever possible to find ARAs which would give us more than a database text entry, where the reader could access documentation - such as re-

ports or evaluations, or the research paper under consideration, for example – and could follow a link to a website and contact the people involved in the ARA itself. Unfortunately, however, we have to acknowledge that there are some entries where it was not possible to identify any extra information source.

We did manage to achieve our goal of including examples from every country in the UK, both in the ARA entries and in the interviews, though most of the ARAs emanate from England.

Let's pick out some of the more interesting, distinctive or important of the UK ARAs. A good starting point is one of the Recommendations, a good practice guide which itself contained almost half of the UK entries. The Tackling Knives and Serious Youth Violence Programme (TKAP) Good Practice 2010-11 essentially summarises the best examples of practice developed through TKAP, a state-led and –funded programme to reduce serious youth violence. At the start of TKAP in 2008 there was limited knowledge and few tactical options of what worked in tackling serious youth violence in the UK. At the conclusion of the third phase of TKAP in March 2011 this position had altered. The three phases of TKAP helped to build a knowledge base of the type of interventions that work in reaching vulnerable young people (13-24 year olds) to prevent violence and to start to change attitudes and behaviours. The ability of the programme to share what works and lessons learned across all those participating was one of its strengths. The document compiles examples and case studies from across the participating areas. Its coverage includes: alcohol and the night-time economy; education, prevention, diversion; enforcement; gangs; and knife crime prevention. Whilst presented as a compendium of good practice, in truth it covers a spectrum, from evaluated approaches through to initiatives that look promising and thence

to ones whose results were unknown or projects that petered out. There is, however, sufficient information for the reader to make a judgement as to intrinsic value, and the best entries present honest assessments of barriers and problems. The greatest value of the document is that it brings these practices together in a consistent and easily digestible format.

A number of Actions contained within the guide are worthy of further attention. Whilst the TKAP programme was limited to those areas of England and Wales where serious youth violence was deemed to be a significant problem, schemes such as Street Pastors, Taxi Marshals and Safer Glasses are all now embedded within the response to alcohol-fuelled problems in many towns and cities across the UK. Another response that is spreading, and has been highlighted by the government as an important scheme, is the City-Safe Havens. The havens are modelled on an initiative in Lewisham, established as one reaction to the death of Jimmy Mizen, a boy who was chased and stabbed to death in a shop. They provide safe places for people to seek sanctuary as well as reassurance that, should sanctuary be needed, a Safe Haven is never far away. Apart from the value of having a safe haven, establishing such a scheme has benefits in bringing different sectors of the community together for a common purpose.

Young people, according to Chief Inspector Mark Lawes, who instigated the scheme in Liverpool, were very much "at the centre" of the CitySafe Havens [Efus interview, August 2012]. Other such inclusive approaches, which attempt to counter the negative ways in which young people are often portrayed by the press or regarded by the public, are the 99% Campaign in London and the Goodies in Hoodies scheme. The latter was set up by a 16 year old girl – Maisey Andrews – who wanted to prove that not all young people wearing hoo-

dies are stereotypically 'bad'. She also wanted to create the opportunity for volunteers to develop skills, confidence and hands on experience. Pleasingly, this example of an intergenerational project in action won Ms Andrews recognition and the scheme has spread to other areas. (When asked in his Efus interview in July 2112 as to which approaches are successful in tackling youth street violence, Cardiff-based Professor Gordon Hughes said, "Youth inclusive approaches and intergenerational work are both really important.")

Some of the other Actions that involve the 'third sector' and are highlighted in the TKAP guide involve educational approaches, including theatre in education (often used across the UK when tackling issues such as bullying). Examples in the database include Pact, Terriers and It's Not OK!, all of which have been evaluated. The youth-work based Away from Violence in Northern Ireland is not in the TKAP guide, but it is particularly interesting. It addresses the issue of how a culture of sectarian violence is normalized and accepted by young people and applies Public Achievement's Civic Youth Work model to support young people to explore the nature of violence and how it affects them and their communities. Public Achievement's Deborah Erwin believes the key factor in the project's impact was through involving young people. "Most of the time they are never asked their opinion on local problems, let alone invited to be part of the solution. Give them the opportunity not only to have their say, but to do something about it." [Efus interview, August 2012].

There are a number of educative and preventive approaches in the database, some principally aimed at giving information, such as the British Transport Police TKAP Team & Eurostar - Anti-Knife Campaign, the Fearless website or the Drop the Knives films from Tameside, others being more actively engaging, some-

times involving several agencies in their design and/or delivery. Examples of the latter approach include Doncaster's Hub Violent Crime Engagement Day, Birmingham's Crime Factor and My Life, My Choice, Durham's Be Safe, the nationwide Prison! Me! No Way!, Northumbria's Spoiled for Choice and Lambeth's Growing Against Gangs and Violence.

Most Actions showcased in the database, though, stem from the statutory sector. Many of these deploy legislation developed to counter anti-social behaviour and violence, chiefly from young people and often involving alcohol. Such legislative tools include Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, Dispersal of Groups, Drinking Banning Orders, Designated Public Places Orders, Violent Offender Orders and Injunctions to Prevent Gang-Related Violence (the latter being used to restrict the movement of people accused of gang membership). The use of such tools in England and Wales has varied, as has their effectiveness (hence the review of anti-social behaviour tools and powers that the new government conducted). The phrase that appears in the title of the research document The Use and Impact of Dispersal Orders: Sticking Plasters and Wake-Up Calls has a general applicability here: as Adam Crawford and Stuart Lister write, such tools "constitute a 'sticking plaster' that provides a degree of immediate and localised respite but invariably fails to address the wider causes of the identified problems." It is true to say, however, that inter-agency offender management processes have been sharpened in recent years. Spotlight in Greater Manchester was specifically developed to deal with potential serious youth violence offenders and is now recognised good practice.

We talked earlier about alcohol-fuelled violence being a major issue, and have mentioned some of the initiatives that now form a key part of many partnerships' strategies to address violence in the night-time economy.

Andy Pownall, former fieldworker with the Home Office's TKAP programme, considers alcohol to be the major factor in youth street violence but also believes that there is now an understanding of the approaches necessary to address problems in the night-time economy [Efus interview, April 2012]. Pownall co-authored one of the Recommendations in the database, Tactical Options for Dealing with Alcohol-Related Violence, a guide for practitioners that was structured in the form of the different stages of a 'night out', with approaches for each stage. (Other related Home Office guides are The Practical Guide for Preventing and Dealing with Alcohol Related Problems: What You Need to Know and A Practitioners' Guide for Dealing with Problem Licensed Providers, whilst a local partnership produced Reducing Alcohol Related Violent Crime and Disorder Codes of Practice, which detailed the contribution of the partner agencies). These all require co-ordinated, multi-agency activity, and examples of specific operations are in the database – Operation Portcullis, Operation Sherry, the Management of Large-Scale Pub Crawls, Triage in the Night-Time Economy, Partnership Working in the Night-time Economy, Reducing Crime & Disorder in the Night Time Economy. But one cannot help but feel that, no matter how well inter-agency co-operative endeavours are dealing with the problem of alcohol-fuelled issues, it is yet again little more than sticking plasters set against seemingly intractable causes – a pervading culture of binge drinking amongst many young people (consider how long it took to make drink-driving largely – but not by any stretch fully – unacceptable to the general public), and a licensing system in which local voices speaking on behalf of health, community safety and the broader community are secondary to those of the alcohol industry (a similar situation prevails as regards gambling and betting shops).

The issue of violence emanating from gangs or troublesome youth groups, especially where knife violence is a

feature, is an issue that has a high profile for central policy makers across the UK. Analysis of such issues is well-represented in the database. The gangs/weapons/young people interface is examined in reports from Scotland such as Gang Membership and Knife Carrying: Findings from the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime and Troublesome Youth Groups, Gangs and Knife Carrying in Scotland, Tackling Knife Crime Together - A Review of Local Anti-Knife Crime Projects (in England and Wales) and, more generally, Young People, Knives and Guns: A comprehensive review, analysis and critique of gun and knife crime strategies.

As young men are mainly, if not exclusively, the perpetrators of youth-related gang violence, the focus of strategies is often on them. Carlene Firmin's This is It. This is My Life… attempts to redress the balance, looking at the effects of such violence on girls and women (effects often hidden from agencies) and proposing measures to address these through gender-proofing gang strategies. But though Firmin's research revealed for the first time the nature and scope of violence, including sexual violence, experienced by girls and women involved with gang members, her concern is that this is often not being acted upon:

"We need people locally to be identifying young men involved in gangs and mapping their relationships with other young men, girls and women to understand who is at risk and what the nature of that risk could be… We now know what the impact of youth violence is, what we need to do now is ensure we identify these girls and women and have support in place for them." [Efus interview, August 2012]

Dangerous dogs, whether or not linked to youth violence, are a public concern in the UK; Status Dogs, Young People and Criminalisation: Towards a Preventative Strategy is the first major report to shed light on this.

Mention has already been made of the influential 2009 report Dying to Belong, which sought to identify the key trends, drivers and common characteristics of gangs in Britain, and the government's gang strategy, Ending Gang and Youth Violence: Cross-Government Report. The latter proposed five areas of focus:

1) preventing young people becoming involved in serious violence in the first place, with a new emphasis on early intervention and prevention;
2) providing pathways out of violence and the gang culture for young people wanting to make a break with the past;
3) punishment and enforcement to suppress the violence of those refusing to exit violent lifestyles;
4) partnership working to join up the way local areas respond to gang and other youth violence;
5) support from the government to local areas to tackle their gang or youth violence problem.

Partnerships in the UK now routinely deploy problem-solving approaches (such as the Victim Offender Location and the SARA - Scan, Analyse, Respond, Assess - models) to identify, target and address the local crime and disorder issues, including violent crime. Tackling gang violence demands not only rigorous and continuing analysis but also dedicated resources and partners committed to the strategic approach outlined above. A number of local gang initiatives are contained in the database; we shall highlight two in particular that follow this template. The Community Initiative to Reduce Violence was started in the east end of Glasgow by the Scottish Government's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU). It is a focused deterrence strategy that aims to reduce gang violence (not break up the gangs) and was modelled on best practice in the US. Co-director of the VRU, Detective Chief Superintendent John Carnochan, commented that, "The risks in what we do are small. We build on evidence-based

approaches." [Efus interview, August 2012] Following intelligence gathering, gang members are approached by CIRV street workers with the offer to help find an alternative to a violent gang lifestyle. They are invited to voluntarily attend a self-referral session and then attend a carefully scripted meeting with police officers, A&E consultants, members of the community, victims and youth workers. They will be asked if they want to pursue a different lifestyle and, if so, to sign up to the scheme. Once they have signed up their needs are assessed and they are put on relevant programmes which may include job training, education, employment, anger management, etc. CIRV is about influencing behavioural change over a course of time. Any signed up members that commit violence are dismissed from the programme, although second chances can be given. 400 gang members actively engaged with CIRV in first two years, with an average 46% reduction in violent offending and a 34% reduction in all other types of crimes and offences. Carnochan says, "Gang fighting in the east end of Glasgow is now the exception rather than the norm." [Efus interview, August 2012] The CIRV programme was extended into other areas of the city and is now being built into Glasgow's community safety plan.

Launched in 2011, Enough is Enough is a gang prevention programme in the London borough of Waltham Forest. As with the CIRV, it was based on sound principles – in this case, commissioned research by Professor John Pitts (Reluctant Gangsters), with the strategy drawn from Dying to Belong. Enough Is Enough seeks to help those who are deeply entrenched in gang culture: those who are most at risk of joining gangs and those who are affected by their family members' destructive choices. Uniquely, the programme works with the whole family and attempts to address the many different factors that can draw people towards a life of crime. The programme has four themes

– a family partnership approach, enforcement, neighbourhood working and early years intervention. First results are encouraging: ten months after the launch of Enough is Enough, there had been a marked decline in crime levels in Waltham Forest. Serious youth violence declined by almost a quarter, gun crime had fallen by over 30% and knife crime and personal robberies had also decreased.

John Carnochan has stated that he believes that jobs and employment are crucial to the long-term success of leading a gang member from violence [Efus interview, August 2012] and a focus on training and employment is a feature of other entries in the database, such as In-2 Work (Lambeth) and Project Daedalus (London). A very different type of training – this time for professionals across the children's workforce in Wolverhampton - is the theme of Workforce Training, aimed at enhancing their understanding of gang issues affecting young people.

A final word or two on gangs. The report Dying to Belong talks about the "clear correlation between level of deprivation and gang prevalence". After the Riots, the final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel on the August 2011 riots in England, tells us that "70 per cent of suspected rioters live in the 30 per cent most deprived areas." The risk factors for young people who become involved in gangs include: early childhood neglect and abuse; violence, mental health and drug or alcohol addiction in the family; school exclusion and early conduct disorders; early and repeat offending; early involvement with peers in local gangs.

None of this will surprise. But it does point to the massive challenge facing national governments and local agencies. Effectively tackling deprivation has never been easy – with an increasing gap between rich and poor, a recession and decreasing public expendi-

ture, it will only become harder. If a dangerous drinking culture sustains alcohol-fuelled youth street violence, then increasing levels of deprivation will ensure that gang violence, as well as the likelihood of further riots, will not be eradicated from Britain's urban areas in the foreseeable future.

Conclusion

The number, variety and (in many cases) the quality of the UK submissions to the EU Street Violence database suggest that there is a great deal of positive activity going on to address the issue in hand. The research that has been conducted, and the strategies which such analysis has helped form, also indicates that there is now a good understanding of what community safety partnerships need to do to challenge and reduce serious youth violence.

However, it is also true to say that we do not know how well, or how effectively, this learning and practice is applied at local level, at least in England and Wales. Aside from those areas that receive central funding, there is no central monitoring or reporting system in place that gathers such information. So, whilst we can be confident in asserting that in the UK good practice, based on sound analysis, to tackle street youth violence is certainly present, we do not know how consistently it is applied across the country.

A look at the situation of street violence in German cities

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A review of recent findings on European gangs and research about the actual situation of street gangs, gang-like youth groups, and youth groups reveal some interesting developments: first, it is now undeniable that there are street gangs or gang-like youth groups in European cities. These are, according to Klein (1995), mainly specialty gangs and to a greater extent compressed gangs, rather than traditional American gangs. These street gangs have to be differentiated from motorcycle gangs, prison gangs, hooligans, right-wing groups and neonazi gangs. Second, most Europeans seem to acknowledge the existence of youth groups, but do not consider them as street gangs. It appears to us that this is merely a matter of definition and that it should not draw atten-tion away from the fact that we have indeed street gangs in Europe.
Street gangs in German cities are mainly formed by groups of young immigrants. Once in Germany, these youngsters have had to assume responsibilities and educational tasks that their parents and families were for various reasons unable to provide any longer. In addition, some European countries have reduced public spending and programmes aimed at these young people, in particular language training programmes, which are crucial. This is one of the main reasons that lead and even force youngsters to form and join gangs. As society shifts towards a "winner-loser culture"

(James 1995), young people find it increasingly hard to to get a good education or a job. They are often excluded from full time, career oriented work. Young immigrants in particular are the biggest losers since they are usually the least integrated and often live in poor, neglected neighborhoods that can serve as a breeding ground for street gangs.
The increase in crimes and in particular violent crimes committed by groups indicate that there is a growing street gang problem in Germany. German newspapers from small and big cities now regularly publish reports on gangs and criminal behaviour by gang-like groups, which do not surprise anyone anymore.

By reviewing the gang situation in Europe we can rely on the history and background of the Euro-gang research programme, which was according to Esbensen and Maxson (2012,2 – 6) founded and developed originally in Leuven, Belgium, and later the same year in San Diego (United States). The first official Eurogang meeting took place in 1998 in Schmitten, Germany. Subsequent meetings took place in Oslo, Leuven, Egmond aan Zee, Straubing, Copenhagen and Stockholm, among other cities. Participants in the Eurogang group came to realise they needed a solid definition of what constitutes a street gang, which would reflect the various views expressed in the group. This tremendous task group was led by Malcolm Klein and after some years of discussion and deliberations, the Eurogang group agreed on the following definition: *"A youth gang or troublesome youth group is a durable, street-oriented youth group whose involvement in illegal activity is part of their group identity."*

An analysis of the situation in Europe by means of an evaluation of the publications of the Eurogang research group leads to the conclusion that indeed, gangs exist in Europe. Furthermore, it seems that Eu-

ropean countries do everything they can to create more gangs and to develop a serious gang problem, which could eventually be as bad as the American gang situation even though this may seem unimaginable in Europe. The fact is that most European cities have descriptions of street gangs, in spite of the overall denial, which have some common features. These are:

- gangs exist in deprived communities;
- most gang members belong to a racial, national or ethnic minority or come from immigration;
- gangs are predominantly male;
- gang members are almost always alienated and marginalised youths who are excluded from society and whose opportunities are blocked;
- gang members are usually young: typically, they are teenagers or young adults;
- gang members are involved in a broad range of criminal activities and delinquent or criminal behaviour;
- gangs are stable over time and can exist for long periods of time.

Assuming that there is indeed a rise in violent behaviour, it is worth analysing the social factors that might provide some explanation or interpretation of such trends. The available literature suggests that three general dimensions should be addressed: (a) the degree to which violence in developed countries is collective, in¬cluding the development of forms of youth gang violence; (b) the emergent social class structure which entraps some young people in economic deprivation and aban¬donment; and, (c) ways of interpreting the overwhelmingly masculine character of youth violence (despite a recent increase in female violence).

It would appear that Europe is now moving into a new phase in the way social life is organised for young people, especially those prone to engage in criminal activity, including collective forms of crime. It is also

clear that violence can be a central feature of these emergent groups. Weitekamp (1999) reports that within ethnic groups such as Aussiedler, tentative evidence suggests exceptional levels of violence and that violence is a central component of self-identity.

From a biographical perspective, one of the characteristics of youth is the need to belong to peer groups. These groups or cliques take over socialisation functions, provide orientation and stabilise behaviour during the juvenile transition period.
However, young people are not the only ones who form cliques. On the societal level there are processes that are not only beneficial for the attachment of juveniles to peer groups but also tend to promote the formation of delinquent, violent or drug consuming gangs featuring deviant attitudes towards normative actions as part of their group identity.
Research shows that the rise of immigration since the early 90s with associated processes of social exclusion and discrimination as well as growing poverty among children and juveniles in Germany have contributed to this trend (Förtig 2002). With regard to social and material concerns both factors contribute to experiences of deprivation and marginalisation of juveniles. In their peer groups young people look for ways to overcome their social, cultural and economical circumstances and – as Trasher pointed out – "try to handle the vital struggle for existence on the streets." (Trasher 1927).
Finally, due to the increasing individualisation of society, commonly shared social orientations on how to build a reputation, acquire money and enjoy happiness tend to disappear. If juveniles do not manage to distinguish accepted norms and values by socially recognised means, then deviant behavior may be an alternative. Wilhelm Heitmeyer's desintegration-theorem illustrates in detail these processes within right wing youth gangs in Germany (Heitmeyer 1995).

Right wing groups

A specifically German issue, are right wing gangs or extremist youth groups (Kersten 2007). Al-though these groups do not fall within the scope of the EU Street Violence project we have included them in this review because countless recent research reports have shown that German youths identify in varying degrees with extremism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism. According to Kersten (2007), it is necessary to differentiate between attitudes, organisations, and displays of extremist behaviour in order to better understand this phenomenon. It is important to take into account who takes part in what activities and when. Because of Germany's particular sensitivity about its history and because of the German guilt factor, the provocative potential of any racist and anti-Semitic symbolism is extremely high and very attractive for rebellious youths and subcultures and therefore often used by skinheads. Xenophobia and hate crimes on the other hand depend often on situational factors. Furthermore, Weitekamp and Kerner (1996) concluded that after Germany's reunification, there was a similar rise in right wing violence by youth groups in the old and new federal States. The reality in Germany is that the majority of these perpetrators do not belong to military-like right wing organisations but rather are driven by a right wing ideology. They take part in the right wing movement to express their frustration about the political and social situation in Germany.

In his evaluation of juvenile crime and violence in 10 European countries, Pfeiffer (1998) concluded that we have experienced since the mid 80s a substantial increase in youth violence throughout Europe. According to him, the main cause is the shift of European countries toward a "winner-loser culture" in which many disadvantaged youths appear to be the losers. Pfeiffer is basing his argument on the findings of

James (1995) who argues :

"It is abundantly clear from many studies [...] that inequality in incomes combined with false promises of equality of opportunity, American-style of welfare support for the disadvantaged and poor job-quality are major causes of violence in develo¬ping and developed nations alike. From 1979 onwards in Britain, all three of these patterns were adopted as a deliberate government policy; the gap between rich and poor increased to pre-war levels, the amount and kind of state support for the disadvantaged was reduced dramatically; the quality of jobs available to young men decreased after union power to guarantee minimum wages and conditions of work was removed. These changes coincided with an unprecedented increase in violence against the persons since 1987.» (James, 1995, 74).

Polk and Weitekamp (1999) talk about the abandonment of youth. They point out that historically virtually all generations, whether from lower, middle of upper classes, have been able to look forward to a process of moving from childhood through schooling into adulthood with some combination of work and family roles. Such prospects are not relevant anymore and the problem of abandonment is greater for those young people who leave school early and enter the labour force with little to offer in the way of qualifications, skills or experience. In his study on the new urban poor, Wilson (1996) talks about a process in which work has disappeared for this group of people. The lack of full-time jobs leads to undesired consequences such as: lack of money, delay in becoming independent from parents and in being able to have sexual relationships, marry and start a family. These individuals become stuck in a social and economic no man's land where the central feature of existence is that the normal supports for their identity as a man or a woman are not available. Polk and Weitekamp (1999) call this a «developmental trap» that forces young people to engage in complicated and innovative ways to struggle

with their central identities as males or females. This development trap is even worse for members of minority groups by race, nationality or ethnicity. Dubet and Lapeyronnie (1994) investigated the "winner-loser" hypothesis in France and found that a significant shift has occurred in social problems, including crime trends. They concluded that the social exclusion of marginal groups had become the key problem of the 1990s. Furthermore, they consider that criminal acts by marginalised youngsters are an expression of their helplessness and inability to live a normal life and gain access to society.

This is where we can see the clear connection with violence and gangs. The situation of abandoned youngsters is such that issues of status and manhood are problematic and cry for a solution. The lack of traditional pathways to define "who am I as a man" is, according to Polk and Weitekamp (1999), particularly striking when compared to the status of those who are part of a gang or aspire to create one. The gang can change the rules of the game and enable a loser to become a winner.

Many signs indicate that European countries are on their way to create more "winner-loser" cultures, which could fuel the formation of gangs and compell some youngsters to resort to violence as a way to assert their masculinity. Pfeiffer's (1998) research clearly indicates that Europe is experiencing a substantial increase in violence. In addition, a study conducted by Dünkel and Skepenat (1998) in the State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern showed the increase in violent crimes was mainly caused by groups. There is but one step from group offending or offending within a group to the formation of gangs, especially if processes of youth abandonment are not countered by any meaningful social policy and the opening of legitimate pathways to allow young people to participate in society.

Aussiedler gangs and groups with migration background

This dangerous situation can be illustrated with the example of German Aussiedler (ethnic German migrants from Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union returning to Germany), a phenomenon that started around the mid 1990s. We are convinced that any European country has similar problem groups, even though Aussiedler have some peculiarities. One of them is that they were given automatically a German passport and are considered Germans. According to Reich et. al. (1999), around two million emigrated from the former Soviet Union to Germany since 1988, with a peak of some 400,000 arrivals in 1990. Germany financed substantial aid packages to integrate Aussidler into German society. Until 1993, they received among other the so-called integration aid, which is a kind of unemployment benefit given for a duration of 312 days, as well as free German language courses during 12 months. However, new laws in 1993 drastically reduced the amount of aid for the Aussiedler. Now, integration aid is only paid for 156 days and the duration of language courses has been halved to six months. The so-called guarantee fund which amounted in 1991 to 450 million German marks was reduced by 65 per cent at 180 million marks per year.

These cuts hurt young people the most, since the aid package provided education, job training and social integration support programmes. In addition, recently immigrated Aussiedler had to live in so-called “temporary special housing arrangements”. While they are in theory supposed to leave these special housing units yery quickly, in reality they stay quite long. For example, in Tübingen the average stay is two years, according to Stoll (1999). Living conditions in these units are hard because of overcrowding and lack of comfort and privacy. These "housing arrangements"

are similar to ghettos, and sometimes have several hundred tenants. Due to lack of space, young people hang out in the hallways or outside of the buildings.
The situation of young Aussiedler is particularly difficult. In Russia, they were considered a mi-nority group because of their German descent and were labelled as German facists. In Germany, they are again considered a minority and are labelled Russians, even though they have a German passport. In addition, they have often language problems and struggle at school. The academic and professional training they received in Russia is worthless in Germany, which leaves them marginalised. It is not surprising that they form and join gangs in order to find a place where they belong and can identify with. Hanging out in groups was already very much part of their culture in the former Soviet Union, since it was often too dangerous there to go and hang out alone. In Germany, they perceive the German culture and environment as too dangerous, which is another factor that drives them to to hang out together and form gangs. Stoll (1999) reports on the existence of gangs, which can be considered neotraditional, in the "temporary special housing units" of Tuebingen. Youngsters usually hang out in the street right in front of the housing unit. They have a strong hierarchical order based on age and experience in the country of the "enemy". These housing units are often the only place where Aussiedler can make friends, in particular in rural areas. When families move away, youngsters and young adults member of these gangs often come back and are admired by the newly arrived or those who still live there, because of the status symbols they display. These can be cars, clothes, and other items indicative of their newlyfound "wealth". Older gang members recruit recently immigrated young people and use them for all kinds of illegal activities. Indeed, according to juvenile correctional facilities records, a disproportionately high number of young Aussiedler are incarcerated.

There is a very strong group cohesiveness in "Russian gangs", which is due in part to the fact that they were already treated as outsiders in their country of origin. There, they considered the State as an enemy and regulated conflicts among themselves. In addition, young Aussiedler have very machista culture and attitudes which consider a high degree of violence as normal (Reich et.al. 1999).

The situation of Aussiedler clearly shows that in Germany, we are on our way to create a serious and long lasting street gang problem. We assume that similar developments can be found throughout Europe for different groups of immigrants, since all European countries have a serious minority problem with similar characteristics: poor housing arrangements, elevated high school dropout rates due in part to language problems, poor education, unskilled low paid jobs, social exclusion and marginalisation, and the quest for an identity. In a way, German Aussiedler are privileged compared to other minority groups since the State provides them with integration support schemes that are not available for other groups of immigrants. This means that if even this group forms gangs to cope with the circumstances of their new home country, other less "advantaged" immigrants are even more likely to form and/or participate in gangs.

To a certain extent, there has always been youth groups who enter in conflict with mainstream society (see for example the "Habstarke" phenomenon in the 1950s). These groups mirror the composition of the least privileged categories of German society, which is where immigrants very often find themselves upon arrival. Poor living conditions and social status can explain the emergence of "ethnic gangs" in large cities since the 1980s . The Turkish Power Boys (TPB Bornheim) in Frankfurt mentioned by Tertilt (2001) are an example. They are character-ised by brutality and

street crimes. Their Turkish origin (their "turkishness") is an important part of their group cohesion. Tertilt sees their use of violence as an attempt to free themselves from the low self-esteem that has been forced upon them by German society. Generally, gangs in Germany – as shown in the comparative study between Bremen and Denver by Huzinga and Schumann (2001) – seem to be low on territoriality, hierarchical leadership and stability over time. We agree with Bremen and Denver that Germany does not have a gang problem serious enough to cause fear among the public. However, one can observe a trend in some German cities whereby clans of immigrants «occupy» a city or part of it and cause major problems including the formation of gangs, gang violence and other forms of crime. In a context of prolonged economic crisis in Europe and increasing inequality and poverty in Germany[1], there is little probability that this situation will improve.

What is done to deal with troublesome youth groups?

As we can conclude from different studies and our own survey (Specht 1999), underprivileged youths are more likely to join delinquent youth groups for several reasons. These youngsters combine several risk factors that compel them to look to acquire a feeling of belonging and recognition outside their family. Their living conditions also lead them to join peer groups at an earlier age than other juveniles. They feel compelled to maintain a sense of self-worth and self-esteem through delinquent acts. Other needs and values, in particular in the case of males, are power, strength and respect which they seem to achieve through violent acts.

These insights show how the problem of troublesome youth groups is generally addressed, and also that

there is plenty of room for preventive action. Indeed, as the German jurist and criminologist Franz von Liszt (1851-1919) said, "The best criminal policy is a good social policy."

In Germany, the phenomenon of troublesome youth groups is generally dealt with as part of the regular crime prevention and enforcement measures undertaken by the police and local authorities. In many German towns and cities, the police, local authorities, the justice system and a large array of NGOs work together at the local level in a more or less formalised way. As can also be seen in the EU Street Violence database, there are programmes and projects against youth violence and bullying, youth criminality and reoffending, substance abuse, individual treatment offers, etc. However, only a few projects deal directly with gang issues. One can assume that many local authorities do not (yet) consider it necessary. And they rightly consider that existing prevention tools and structures are a good basis to build on.
In the database, there are examples that deal with the issue of problematic youth groups from different angles. For example the NGO “Gangway”, which does street work in Berlin. Work-ing with different teams and through various projects, Gangway offers support to youths (and adults) with a view to empowering them so they get back on track. In addition to classic social street work, it offers training and qualifications. Another example is the "The Hoodboyz - not with us!!!" project conducted in Stuttgart. It is geared towards young people who are either gang members or supporters who glorify violence. The “Streetlife” project in Wolfsburg me-diates in conflicts between youth groups and adults on the use of public spaces. "Go Willi" is a multi-agency approach to prevent street violence in Göttingen.

Approaches based on restorative justice also seem promising. They are for example success-fully used by the community organisation "Roca" in Boston (United States) to deal with gangs and related crimes in some neighbourhoods. An important part of their work consists in using "Peace Circles" as a strategy to build positive links between marginalised youths and families in inner cities, and to overcome conflicts (Boyes-Watson 2008). This holistic approach takes into account the environment of the youngsters, their family and the community in order to tackle underlying problems. Restorative Justice Conferences have already been tested in the Stuttgart pilot project "Wiedergutmachungskonferenzen", although not in the specific context of group violence. Furthermore, there are plans in Berlin Neukölln to use an approach similar as the one adopted by Roca in Boston.

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Youth groups and street gangs in the Netherlands

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Youth groups have been present in the Netherlands in various forms for the last three decades, and some could be considered gangs. Some have received a lot of media attention. For example, groups of Moroccan boys that have emerged in the mid-eighties are known to cause a lot of nuisance and to easily enter into conflict with inhabitants of their neighbourhood (Van Gemert 1998b; De Jong 2007). In the early nineties, urban minority youths, mostly from Surinamese or Antillean descent, started to imitate American West Coast street gangs and call themselves Crips and Bloods (Van Gemert 1998a, 2001; Van Stapele 2003). From the mid-nineties, groups of native Dutch youths with sympathies towards the extreme right (formerly called 'Lonsdale groups' after a popular fashion brand) received some attention and some of them have been mentioned in relation to anti-migrant crimes such as mosque arson (Homan 2000; Van Donselaar 2005; Van Donselaar & Rodrigues 2004, 2006). Apart from these three very visible, but quite different, examples, there are many other groups of young people who spend a lot of time in public places and who are more or less involved in criminal behaviour or nuisance. They are often less distinctive and remain under the

radar of the media, but they also represent an important part of the gangs and youth groups in the Netherlands.

In recent years, youth groups involved in nuisance and crime have become a priority for the Dutch police and government. In May 2011, the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice launched the 'Delinquent Youth Groups Action Programme'. This programme has two objectives. First, within two years measures will be taken to tackle all 89 criminal youth groups that were identified in November 2010 (cf. Ferwerda & Van Ham 2011). Second, the approach to tackle troublesome and nuisance groups will be intensified (EUCPN 2012: 34-37). This contribution presents an overview of the evolution of youth groups and street gangs in the Netherlands in the last three decades. The focus will be on those groups that are covered by the consensus definition of the Eurogang Research Programme, a network of researchers on gangs from various European countries and the United States (see e.g. Klein et al., 2001; Decker & Weerman, 2005; Van Gemert et al., 2008; Weerman et al., 2009; Esbensen & Maxson, 2012). This consensus definition describes a street gang as: "any durable, street-oriented youth group whose involvement in illegal activity is part of its group identity".

The description does not add up to a monolithiv picture: there are many faces and facets to the street gang problem in the Netherlands. Also, different research approaches and perspectives focus on various aspects and features of these groups. We will start by presenting a general overview of three decades of Dutch research on gangs and youth groups. Next, we will draw a picture of the volume and characteristics of the street gang phenomenon in the Netherlands. In the final paragraph we will comment on Dutch policies on street gangs and youth groups.

Three decades of research on youth groups and gangs

An important part of the research on youth groups in the Netherlands is linked to immigration, ethnicity, socio-economic factors and neighborhood disorganisation, factors that have been identified as important in the formation and proliferation of gangs in pioneering American gang studies conducted in the 20th century (Thrasher 1927; Whyte 1943; Cohen 1955; Cloward & Ohlin 1960). These theoretical themes are still relevant in the Dutch context in which street gangs emerge. Furthermore, research on gangs in the Netherlands is linked to events and developments that took place in the whole of Europe. The hip hop and gangsta rap youth culture played an important role in spreading American West Coast gang stereotypes in European countries. There have been riots in the French banlieues (suburbs) in which gangs were involved, and more recently in London. In Scandinavia and Eastern Europe, we have seen the emergence of extremist white power groups.

Early ethnographic studies on youth groups in the Netherlands appeared in the 1980s. The first studies focus on street groups of ethnic minority youths. In this period, there was an important inflow of young Surinamese immigrants, who arrived in the Netherlands after the independence of the former colony in 1975. Drug addiction, especially to heroin, became a new and serious problem that affected the lives of many young immigrants (Buiks 1983; Van Gelder and Sijtsma 1988a; Sansone 1992). In the inner city neighbourhoods of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, black Surinamese youngsters introduced the South American streetcorner life, which created a niche for drug dealing.

In the period that followed, Moroccan youths became a second important immigrant group to be studied in relation to street groups and gangs (Van Gelder and Si-

jtsma 1988b; Kaufman and Verbraeck 1985; Werdmölder 1986, 1990). Their migration history goes back to the active recruitment of "guest workers" by Dutch companies in earlier decades. In particular, Moroccan boys of the second generation, sons of these guest workers, spent a lot of time on the streets and got involved in crime and nuisance. At the end of the eighties, the first reports on Moroccan street gangs in Amsterdam were published (Loef 1988; Werdmölder 1990). In 1998, an ethnographic study of Moroccan youth in Rotterdam was published (Van Gemert 1998b), followed in 2007 by an ethnographic study of Moroccan street youths and their street codes conducted in Amsterdam (De Jong, 2007).

In the nineties, another ethnic group, the Antillean youths, got the attention of ethnographic researchers in surveys that also included information about troublesome youth groups (Van Hulst & Bos 1993; De Jong, Steijlen & Masson 1997; Van San 1998). At the same time, youth groups in Dutch large cities, especially in The Hague, began to copy American West Coast gangs such as the Crips and Bloods. Black Surinamese and Antillean youth in particular were attracted to these groups, influenced by the international hip hop culture, which has many African-American role models. This phenomenon is described in several studies. One study used archival documentation to describe three criminal Crips gangs and their characteristics (Van Gemert 1998a), and an ethnographic study on Antillean youth also focused on several groups of Crips and Bloods (De Jong et al. 1997). A later book (and movie) by a journalist documented more in detail the rise of the Crips groups in The Hague (Van Stapele, 2003; see also Roks & Staring 2008).

In the mid-nineties, the police of The Hague region began to show particular interest in youth groups. For several years, they produced annual inventories of these groups, established thanks to a survey of policemen on the beat. These studies distinguish groups

that are only troublesome, those that cause nuisance, and criminal ones (Van Oosterwijk 1995). This categorisation was later used in Dutch research and policy. A small number of groups was labelled 'jeugdbende', the Dutch equivalent of street gang, and according to researchers from the police, these can be found in all three categories of youth groups (Ibid. 1995:44). Over the years however, the definition of 'jeugdbende' used by the Hague police changed gradually (Gruter et al. 1996:7; Gruter 1997:20; Van Solm and Rotteveel 2000:2). At first, shared identity and criminal activities were key elements, and a link to immigration was implicit. Later, the focus was on levels of organisation and offending.

At the end of the 20th century, the Dutch Ministry of Justice ordered a study to develop an instrument for inventorizing youth groups nationwide. This instrument, called the 'Shortlist', is to some extent a newer version of the one used earlier by the police in The Hague (Beke et al. 2000). It is a survey among policemen who regularly work in a neighborhood, which is comparable to the Eurogang Expert Survey, an instrument which was developed independently (see Weerman et al., 2009). Nowadays, the Shortlist is used by police forces nationwide and the distinction between troublesome, nuisance and criminal groups is applied throughout the Netherlands

In the first decade of the 21st century, a number of studies inspired by the Eurogang Research Programme were published. This network of researchers developed a consensus definition of street gangs, and produced four volumes of research findings and several standardised research instruments, in particular an ethnography guideline, an expert survey questionnaire, and a youth survey questionnaire (see Weerman et al., 2009; see also www.umsl.edu/ccj/eurogang/euroganghome.html).

The Eurogang ethnography guidelines were applied in a study in Amsterdam-West (Van Gemert & Fleisher

2002, 2005), which used observations, archival material, open interviews and informal conversations to analyse a group of Moroccan boys (about 25 core members) that often hung out in a specific square. The group had regular conflicts with shopkeepers and local inhabitants, and members were involved in offences ranging from petty crime to serious offences. Interestingly, the group was loosely organised and structured, but at the same time exerted an important influence on the lives and behaviour of its members.

The Eurogang Expert Survey was used to study the prevalence of street gangs in the city of Amsterdam (Van Gemert 2005). More than 100 policemen on the beat were interviewed or returned a questionnaire. The method is comparable to that of the Shortlist although the questionnaire uses a relatively objective method to categorise street groups and gangs. The study provided figures about the numbers of youth groups and street gangs in the city and their geographical distribution, as well as information on how these groups and gangs are formed.

The Eurogang Youth Survey was used in a study among more than 1,500 secondary school students in the province of South-Holland, including the city of The Hague (Weerman, 2005; Weerman, 2012). This study provided information about the proportion of lower educated boys and girls who were members of youth groups or street gangs, as well as about several basic characteristics (composition, organisational features, use of names, group members' involvement in delinquency), and risk factors for gang membership among these youths.

A few core questions from the Eurogang Youth Survey were also included in the questionnaire of International Self Report Delinquency study (ISRD), also conducted in the Netherlands (Junger-Tas et al., 2011; Gatti & Haymoz, 2011). This study gave information on the prevalence of street gangs in the Netherlands in comparison to other countries (see below).

Prevalence of Dutch youth groups and street gangs

In the eighties and nineties there have been a number of isolated studies on youth groups and street gangs in the Netherlands. Some included local inventories, but none led to estimations of the importance of the phenomenon at a national level. This changed after the introduction of the Shortlist developed at the request of the Ministry of Justice. This instrument was increasingly used by police forces all over the country, and nowadays it is even compulsory. The data gathered by separate police forces can easily be combined to present national statistics on youth groups, but initially this was never done. A few years ago, journalists saw in this information an opportunity to present an initial summation of these police figures. These estimations were probably incomplete, but more importantly the terminology used differed from the official language. The very neutral term 'youth groups' was replaced by 'jeugdbende' (street gang), which gave way to screaming headlines about the presence of "almost 1800 'jeugdbendes' in the Netherlands". According to these press reports, the country was suddenly facing a major street gang problem.

In contrast to what these reports may suggest, the question whether a category of youth groups can be called 'street gangs' has been much debated in the Netherlands. In general, policy makers were very hesitant to use the word 'gang' (or the Dutch equivalent 'jeugdbende'), because of its association with 'the American situation'. Though this policy may have prevented unnecessary moral panics, it obviously has a boomerang effect when a misinterpretation of the wording leads to alarming numbers (Van Gemert 2012). The terminology of the Shortlist is also cautious but it does make use of the words 'jeugdbende' and 'straatbende'. However, these words are restricted to so-called 'plus variants' of respectively nuisance and

criminal groups (Beke et al. 2000:132-3; Ferwerda & Kloosterman 2004:15). 'Jeugdbende' is defined as "a criminal youth group that does not operate in public, but goes underground and starts to belong to organised crime" (Beke et.al. 2000:133). As a result, there is little formal mention of youth gangs, because the word is linked to very serious groups that are only seldom found.

After the media made use of (and distorted) police figures, it was decided that national statistics would be provided each year by the authorities themselves. Starting with data from 2009, a study is published each year and summarises the findings obtained with the Shortlist in all the regions of the Netherlands (Ferwerda & Van Ham, 2010; 2011; 2012). This study records all troublesome, nuisance and criminal youth groups in the Dutch police regions, and again distinguishes between street and youth gangs. In the years covered by these studies, the total number of troublesome youth groups reported by police officers varied from (1379 to) 1760 to 1527 to 1165. 'Jeugdbendes' are also included, but only 10, 6 and 5 were reported in these consecutive years.

Youth groups	2008*	2009**	2010***	2011****
Troublesome	1192	1341	1154	878
Nuisance	117	327	284	222
Criminal	70	92	89	65
Total	1379	1760	1527	1165
'jeugdbende'	unknown	10	6	5

*(http://www.rtl.nl/(/actueel/rtlnieuws/binnenland/)/components/actueel/rtlnieuws/2010/01_januari/06/verrijkingsonderdelen/jeugdbendes_cijfers.xml)
** (Ferwerda & Van Ham 2010)
*** (Ferwerda & Van Ham 2011)
****(Ferwerda & Van Ham 2012)

Table 1. Youth group categories in the Netherlands from Shortlist 2008 - 2011

These results suggest that the number of youth groups has been decreasing in the last couple of years. Policy makers may interpret this as an indication that increased efforts to tackle these groups are successful. However, these data should be carefully weighed. The Shortlist instrument is a relatively subjective method, which relies on the cooperation and judgment of police officers on the beat. It is possible that police officers working on the ground experience 'research fatigue' due to repeated requests to participate in the Shortlist. Furthermore, their perception of the seriousness of these groups and their and characteristics may vary over time and depending on the region where they operate (Harland, 2011). The 'plus variants' of 'jeugdbende' and 'straatbende' in particular depend on local perceptions and policies. In this regard, it is significant that according to the Shortlist, none of these two categories were reported in the major Dutch cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague, while in another city, Utrecht, three were reported in 2009, and none in the following years (Ferwerda & Van Ham 2010, 2011, 2012).

It is difficult to compare the findings from the Shortlist with data from other European countries or with the results of the annual US gang surveys. As mentioned, the Shortlist uses a very broad definition of youth groups, but a narrow one of 'jeugdbende', the Dutch equivalent of street gang. More useful for a comparative purpose is the Eurogang expert survey conducted in the city of Amsterdam (Van Gemert, 2005). This study reported 39 street gangs, as per the Eurogang definition, in seven police districts of Amsterdam. Unfortunately, this study could not gather information on all the neighbourhoods of Amsterdam, which implies that the estimate is conservative. Because the use of the Eurogang expert survey has not been widespread yet in other countries, it is also impossible to compare the findings for Amsterdam with other places.

Another source on the prevalence of troublesome youth groups are Dutch surveys that included ques-

tions from the Eurogang Youth Survey instrument. Among a group of lower educated secondary school students, it appeared that about 6% were member of a street gang according to the Eurogang definition (Weerman, 2005). Interestingly, membership was not restricted to boys, although they were relatively more often involved in street gangs than girls (8% among the boys, 4% among the girls, see Weerman, 2012). These figures are not very different form those reported in other studies that have used the Eurogang Youth Survey (see Decker & Weerman, 2005; Van Gemert et al., 2008; Esbensen & Maxson, 2011), or in surveys about street gangs in the United States (see Esbensen & Weerman, 2005).

More comparative information was obtained by the ISRD study conducted in 30 countries that included the core questions about gang membership. In a representative sample of youths in two Dutch cities, 3.3% of respondents indicated they were involved in a street gang as per the Eurogang definition and saw themselves as members of a youth gang (Gatti et al., 2011). This figure is comparable to the other samples in the international study, somewhat below the international average of 4.4%. According to the Eurogang definition exclusively, 11.8 % of the Dutch sample belonged to a street gang (Maxson & Haymoz, 2011; personal information). These figures are similar to those from other countries involved in the study, which show that the Netherlands is on par with other countries with regard to self reported gang membership. This is illustrated in table 2, which summarises the findings regarding gang membership for a selection of countries that participated in the ISRD.

	Member of gang according to Eurogang definition	Eurogang and also self defining as gang member
The Netherlands	11.8 %	3.3 %
Belgium	9.7 %	6.4 %
Germany	12.1 %	5.3 %
Denmark	10.5 %	3.1 %
France	12.4 %	8.9 %
Spain	6.5 %	2.4 %
Hungary	9.9 %	6.5 %
Poland	16.3 %	3.3 %
U.S.A.	17.9%	3.1 %

Source: Gatti et al., 2011; Maxson & Haymoz, 2012; personal information from Haymoz (2011)

Table 2: Prevalence of self reported gang membership according to the International Self Report Delinquency study (ISRD) in a selected number of countries

Characteristics of Dutch troublesome youth groups and street gangs

With regard to the nature of Dutch street gangs and youth groups, different sources are available: a large number of Shortlist surveys, the Eurogang expert and Youth surveys, and various qualitative accounts and ethnographies. Interestingly, these sources offer quite similar findings about key features of Dutch youth groups and street gangs. We address three of them: structural and organisational characteristics; territoriality and the relation to the neighbourhood; and involvement in criminal behaviour.

It appears that Dutch troublesome youth groups and street gangs are small to medium in size. Most have between 10-30 members (see e.g. Beke et al., 2000; Weerman & Esbensen, 2005; Van Gemert, 2005; Fe-

rwerda & Van Ham, 2011). Large gangs, comparable to traditional American gangs or some Russian and British urban gangs, are rare. Most gangs do not seem to be exclusive when it comes to race or ethnicity. Many groups are mixed or allow members from other ethnic background than the majority.

Considering organisational characteristics, it is safe to say that most youth groups and street gangs in the Netherlands have no strict organisation. According to the expert surveys conducted among police officers, the majority of troublesome youth groups appear to be loosely organised and non hierarchical (Beke et al., 2000; Ferwerda & Van Ham, 2011). This picture was confirmed by the Eurogang expert survey conducted in Amsterdam, which found no formal leadership or initiation rites, although some group members could take leading roles in certain situations (Van Gemert, 2005). Qualitative accounts of gangs and troublesome youth groups in the Netherlands present a similar picture of a loosely organised, non hierarchical group structure. In the Netherlands, most gang members appear to dislike formal rules and hierarchy, and members often say they would not accept somebody claiming to be a leader (see e.g. Van Gemert 1998b; De Jong, 2007). Furthermore, quantitative data from the Eurogang Youth Survey lead to the conclusion that Dutch youth groups are much less organised and structured than their American counterparts (Esbensen & Weerman, 2005). A minority of Dutch gang youths indicated that their gang had features like leadership, gang rules, and symbols, while such characteristics were reported by a majority of American gang youths. These differences are further specified by the findings in table 3.

	Netherlands	United States
Regular meeting times	37%	58%
Rules within the group	38%	75%
Have to do something special to join / initiation rites	21%	80%
Established leaders	29%	76%
Colours / symbols	24%	92%
Subgroups / age groups	44%	38%

Source: Gatti et al., 2011; Maxson & Haymoz, 2012; personal information from Haymoz (2011)

Table 3: Characteristics of troublesome youth group and gangs reported by Dutch and American youths

Another striking characteristic of many Dutch gangs and youth groups is that they do not use a name of their own and do not have symbols such as specific clothing or colours. This is not only reported in the quantitative study among school youth, but also in qualitative accounts of a more serious street gang in Amsterdam (Van Gemert & Fleisher, 2005). However, groups that do adopt a name or a specific style are often inspired by American gang culture, in particular American movies and gangsta rap. Among Dutch school youths, gang names often include a reference to gang or criminality and violence (Weerman, 2005). From the nineties until today, some street gangs, especially in The Hague and Amsterdam, named themselves after the famous L.A. Crips and Bloods (see e.g. Van Gemert, 1998a; Van Stapele, 2003; Roks & Staring 2008). More recently, the name MS13 has appeared, probably inspired by popular documentaries. However, the use of this name does not indicate the presence of gangs as dangerous and violent gangs as the infamous Mara Salvatrucha 13. Some of the groups that carry the name have certainly been involved in serious offending (like robbery), but most

seem to be less or even not delinquent at all in nature. Some gang names have become brands that can be used to create an identity to impress others (Van Gemert, 2008).

While many gangs in other countries, in particular the United States, are territorial in nature, most Dutch gangs and troublesome youth groups are not. That does not mean that these groups do not have places where they regularly meet, hang out, and consider 'their own'. However, they do not defend these places from other groups, and fights with rival gangs over 'turf' are very rare. In the Netherlands there are no accounts of gangs defending turf to warrant a market for street sale of drugs. Activities of troublesome groups are not necessarily confined to their own neighborhood. Sometimes they go out and cause trouble in other places, in particular the city centre (see e.g. Beke et al., 2000; Van Gemert & Fleisher, 2005).

Extremist white power groups are seldom found in large Dutch cities and most seem to emerge in surrounding small cities. There is no immigrant population in these localities (Van Donselaar & Rodrigues 2006), but young people who consider them "the ennemy" may have experiences from visits elsewhere, related to school or leisure. These groups are rarely involved in fights with opposing groups. On a few occasions members of these groups have set fire to mosques or Islamic schools (Van Gemert & Stuifbergen 2008).

Moroccan youth groups are particularly prone to conflicts with inhabitants of the neighborhoods where they hang out. They cause nuisance and trouble, and clash with citizens and shopkeepers, often out of boredom. Sometimes, conflicts lead to prolonged bullying, and local authorities respond by enforcing strict measures. On other occasions, small incidents in neighbourhoods are connected to "bigger" stories and stigmatised groups are blamed over and again. In the city of Gouda, a bus driver was harassed and even though the incident did not take place in the neighbou-

rhood of Goverwelle, where many Moroccans live, the bus company refused to make stops there. Within days, the incident made the headlines of several national newspapers, and populist politician Geert Wilders suggested in Parliament that the Dutch military should return from Afghanistan and be sent to Goverwelle to restore order.

With regard to their involvement in illegal behaviour and crime, it is obvious that street gangs are responsible for a disproportionately large share of crime and nuisance committed by young people. The available qualitative accounts show that members of certain groups can become involved in serious forms of crime and that sometimes this involvement escalates in lethal incidents, as became clear in recent years when a number of killings took place among youth gangs in Amsterdam-Southeast. The last victim, known as 'Sin Quin', was killed in August 2012 and said to be a member of the Crips.
Expert surveys give a varied picture of the degree of involvement in delinquency of troublesome youth groups in the Netherlands: the distinction of the Shortlist between three categories (troublesome, nuisance and criminal) is partly based on the seriousness of crime involvement. The most serious category (criminal youth groups) are involved in serious forms of offending and sometimes in profitable drug crimes (Beke et al., 2000). The Dutch youth surveys also show that Dutch members of street gangs are disproportionately involved in criminal activity. In general, youngsters involved in these groups offend about three to four times more often than non-gang youths (Esbensen & Weerman, 2005; Gatti et al., 2011). This is even more blatant for some types of crime, such as robberies, that are committed ten times more by gang members than by other youths (Klein et al., 2006). It is also interesting to note that while Dutch groups differ from their American counterparts in terms of organisation, their level of de-

linquency appears to be very similar (Esbensen & Weerman, 2005).

The Dutch gang policy: a variety of projects

Nuisance from youth groups has become a major cause of the feeling of insecurity among the population in the Netherlands. According to a number of surveys, a growing number of citizens consider that youth groups hanging out in the streets or in shopping malls are a major source of disorder and create a feeling of insecurity (Hoenson 2000; SAMS 2004). People have even repeatedly mentioned cinemas and swimming pools as places where they feel distress because of the presence of youth groups.

Over the years, various projects have emerged to tackle youth groups problems. Some have been evaluated, or are based on evidence-based projects in other countries (e.g. Van Gemert & Wiersma 2000), but most have been introduced based on experience or own intitiative, and sometimes seemingly without much reflection beforehand. There are currently at least 73 distinct projects used in local policies of which 49 are specifically aimed at tackling youth groups. And this is in a country that is quite small. These projects are all presented on a website sponsored by the Ministry of Justice (http://www.wegwijzerjeugdenveiligheid.nl).

Using various criteria one can distinguish (1) between the kind of youth group a project targets: troublesome, nuisance, or criminal; and/or (2) between targets on the individual, the group, and/or the place where they operate; and/or (3) between means that are used: sport, work, parents, neighbourhood, and/or role models; and/or (4) between prevention and repression. The police is a partner in a number of these projects, whereas in others they are not involved beyond the task of identifying the group.

The projects published on the website (thus not taking into account many more local projects and approaches

that have not been registered) are characterised by a great variety in approaches, sophistication and available evidence of effectiveness. Several projects are aimed at organising activities such as sports for youths who are in troublesome groups, sometimes together with neighbours. Some projects aim to involve neighbours or family members in tackling nuisance caused by youth groups, or to gather group members and neighbours to improve mutual communication. Some projects give information and training to group members in order to increase prosocial behaviour. Several projects try to organise outreaching methods to gain the trust of and give support to group members who are difficult to reach. Several projects are aimed at individual group members and offer them help or treatment. Other projects are aimed at parents and families of youth group members. Finally, several projects adopt a more integrative approach and try to organise collaboration among local institutions to combine repressive and preventive measures. Evaluation of these projects is often unavailable, but some of the projects are based on theoretical considerations. A small minority builds on evidence-based interventions from other countries.

Three large cities in the Netherlands, Amsterdam, The Hague, and Utrecht, are known for having developed over the years their own approach of youth groups. In Amsterdam, part of the approach consists in establishing a list of the 600 most active juvenile delinquents and in giving them full attention by following their tracks and contacting their parents. In Utrecht, an integrative approach is adopted in collaboration with Justice and youth care. A distinguishing feature of this approach is that it tries to disentangle the group dynamics of youth groups by singling out negative instigators, joiners, and members with a positive behaviour who can become role models. The Hague also chose an integrative approach with a distinctive feature that consists in including the context and background

of the problems caused by the group. Group members' situation at home is investigated and intervention is based on a mix of repressive and preventive measures.
Because of the nationwide application of the Shortlist, one is tempted to say there is a 'Dutch model' of policing and tackling youth groups and street gangs. Indeed, the fact that the Dutch government gives advice and support to local authorities (municipalities) tends to reinforce such a nationwide model. In 2010, a brochure was published containing advice to local authorities on how to tackle troublesome youth groups (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijkrelaties, 2010). The publication explains the Shortlist method and presents a seven step plan as a guideline for local authorities to tackle troublesome youth groups. The first step is 'prioritising and setting an agenda' by using the Shortlist and targeting the most problematic groups. The second step is to establish a 'consultative body' of institutions involved in youth groups (e.g., the municipality, the police, youth workers). The third step is problem analysis and 'unity in understanding' the targeted youth groups. The fourth step is to formulate a multidimensional approach, which can include measures aimed at the group, the location and the individuals from the group. The fifth step is to execute the plan, the sixth to evaluate the approach, and the seventh to communicate about everything with prudence. These general recommendations seem to be appreciated by local authorities. However, they are not evaluated by scientific research.
Recently, the Dutch Ministry of Justice initiated an 'action programme' to tackle the 89 most criminal youth groups in the Netherlands. The strong language used in this programme is striking: offending behaviour of youths at risk should be robustly dealt with. In practice, the new policy comes with a special task force at the Ministry of Justice, support for local governments, and more intense efforts to coordinate response to criminal youth groups in various places. No new inter-

ventions are implemented, but more information is provided about existing programmes and 'best practices' in the field. In general, the approach is formulated very vaguely, with a combination of repressive and intervention measures, and without clear criteria as to when to use what. Currently, this action programme is being investigated to see which measures are taken in practice to tackle criminal youth groups.

In summary, it appears that the Netherlands is a special case compared to other countries, because it uses throughout the country instruments such as the Shortlist, which generates data on youth groups and street gangs on a national level. Even though serious remarks can be made about this instrument (see above), there is probably no other country in Europe that can provide such nationwide data. The data from this inventory can be used to meet local ends and to prioritise youth groups for intervention. In practice, there is a great variety of intervention projects. In general, if a group is criminally active, the approach is relatively more repressive and the police and Justice come into play, focused on a judicial approach of some individuals within the groups. If the problem is less serious, preventive measures are more suitable, and they are usually carried out under the supervision of the municipality.

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Violent groups and gangs in Portugal - conclusions from the EU Street Violence seminar in Portugal

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This article follows a seminar held by the European Forum on Urban Safety (Efus) in Lisbon (Portugal) in October 2012. The seminar was run as part of the Efus project EU Street Violence and was entitled "Portuguese and European experiences with street violence". The article will look at some examples of group crime in Portugal, putting the phenomenon in context by looking at criminality in Portugal in general and urban violence in other southern European countries, namely Italy and Spain.

Violent criminality in Portugal

Violent criminality is defined in the Portuguese penal code encompassing a number of different offences in criminology. Included in this terminology are offences ranging from homicide to rioting or carjacking. However, this type of crime does not account for the majority of crimes in Portugal, most of them being crimes against property. The last 10 years have seen an increase in all types of crime by 12%, with a slight dip in the past four years. Data from 2011 show that over half of all crimes (55%)

committed are crimes against property. The seven types of crime with most occurrences account for 50% of occurrences.
Unsurprisingly, the major urban centres account for the majority of crimes. The Lisbon and Porto districts, home to the two biggest cities, account for the largest number of crimes. The two axes of Lisbon-Setubal and Porto-Braga account for a large majority of all crimes committed in 2011.
In general, where violence is used, physical force is the most common weapon. This can be explained by the cost factor, and because it means offenders do not have to carry potentially illegal items on them. This same reason explains the widespread use of other unclassified items used as weapons. Although still small, the number of occurrences involving firearms has risen, and is a cause for concern amongst the Portuguese police forces. Unfortunately, demographic data available in Portugal are not very helpful, as all offenders over the age of 24 are grouped together.

A significant factor is the drop in the number of crimes committed by three or more suspects, which in some cases can be seen as gangs. The last available figures show a 32% drop for 2012 in relation to the previous year. Unfortunately, data from the Public Security Police (Polícia de Segurança Pública, PSP) do not show if the 2011 data are for the same period as that of 2012 (January to September).

Very often public discourse in Portugal would have it that gangs and the gang culture do not exist in Portugal. According to the former Director General for Social Re-integration, the proximity between problematic neighbourhoods means potential gang members end up in a number of criminal groups and not in a single gang. It would seem that the geographic element, so present in gang culture, is not a factor in Portugal. Unfortunately, throughout Europe the gang phenomenon

is very often linked with migration, which doesn't seem to occur in Portugal either. The Spanish case is an example of this.

The Spanish case as an example

Gangs in Spain first appeared in the 60s and 70s when cities grew due to the rural exodus, with many migrants ending up in newly formed neighbourhoods. In those neighbourhoods there were often no services (recreation, etc.) or public spaces for youths. The groups they formed were called gangs, but most were not crime oriented apart from the occasional fight with other neighbourhoods. There appeared to be little room for such organisations in the face of the autocratic police state run by Franco. Any sort of civic organisation, criminal or not, which was not sanctioned by the State had a hard time surviving.

In the 80s they seemed to have disappeared, perhaps because of legal issues. In the 90s, subcultures arrived: punks, hippies, etc. Group violence was linked to right wing and fascist groups. Sometimes this got mixed up with football and hooliganism, which is often a breeding ground for xenophobic sentiment. During this period, gang violence seems hard to define, and indeed there seems to be little academic research on the subject.

In 2000 the phenomenon of the "Latin Gangs" emerged. It started with migrants from South America who settled in Spain and built similar groups as they had in their country of origin. Spain knew about these gangs mainly from the media. The image was of hierarchical, very dangerous groups, which very often was not the case of the groups formed in Spain. However, neither the media nor public institutions and indeed public discourse were ready for the phenomenon. As a result, the vast majority of Latin American teenagers were associated with gang membership.

The gang phenomenon is not seen as a major threat in

Spain. In fact, only 5% of their activity is criminal, and many simply function as cultural or recreational associations. A number of them, thanks to a proactive approach by authorities in some Spanish regions, are even recognised as such legally. The "Latin" term is also often not applicable, as people from 40 different nationalities are part of these gangs.

The Italian case

The Italian case bears a lot of similarity to the Spanish case. Gang violence is not a serious problem or a major concern for the authorities. However, it is still an issue due to the rise in certain trends of violence such as bullying and a growing culture of violence.
The appearance of gangs is similar to the Spanish case, starting in the 1970's with the rural exodus into the suburbs of the main cities like Rome and Milan. In the 80s-90s the main problem was hooliganism and right-wing violence.
Currently, most criminal activity in which youth groups are involved is against property. The consumer society has its influence on the phenomenon, with an increase in thefts of brand items and electronics in shops or from other youths.
The Latin Gangs also have a presence in Italy, mainly in the major northern cities of Milan and Genoa. The north, being more industrialised, urban and with a larger influx of immigrants, is more prone to seeing this phenomenon arise. There is a large territorial discrepancy from the south of the country, where organised crime is rife (Mafia, Camorra) and stifles any sort of violent gang activity. Once again, the term Latin Gang is very loose, and the members of these gangs come from a variety of backgrounds, including autochthonous Italians.

Group violence in Portugal

Portuguese culture and society is in many ways similar to Spain and Italy's. It is a mainly Catholic society, with a relatively strong sense of cohesion built around family institutions. As an advantage in terms of cohesion, Portugal has few discrepancies in its autochtonous population, with few regional differences and no regional languages of any significant expression. The migratory patterns are similar to Spain's, although on a reduced scale, and with its own historical specificity: Initial waves of migrants came from Africa, where Portugal's last colonies were, and not from South America (Brazil's independence dates from 1822, whereas Portugal's African colonies gained their independence in the 1970's).
The insignificance of gang culture in the general criminal scenario is another similarity. As previously mentioned, the general line is that gang culture does not exist in Portugal. And yet, the media often mentions gangs in headline news.

Until the end of October 2012, the Criminal Investigation Police (Polícia Judiciária) had dismantled eight "ATM Gangs". These gangs operated mainly in the Lisbon-Setubal area (44%), although there is evidence of similar operations all over the country. They blew up ATM machines using liquid gas bottles to then steal the cash inside. The first such gang appeared in March 2011. Until now 173 hits have been registered, with a total of €1.6M in damages. Although the first gang was made up mainly of Romanian citizens, little mention is made of this, and all gangs are grouped together as the ATM gangs.

This ATM gang was preceded by another that used different tactics. In the 90s, they would kidnap mainly women, and then force them to give up their ATM card and pin code so that the gang could withdraw cash. A

notorious case involved a 25-year old woman disappeared mysteriously in 1992. Over two years later a number of people were arrested in connection with the ATM crimes, and only then was sufficient evidence found to link the murder to this group.

Another "gang", based in the Algarve, Portugal's southernmost region, cloned credit cards and used them to withdraw large sums of cash. To do this, they set up a complicated fraud scheme involving establishing company, buying data from overseas firms, etc. In a short time, they managed to steal upward of half a million Euros. Besides this, they also sold rental cars in Spain using fake documents.
Once again, the media refers to the nationality of some of the gang members, who in this case were British. When they were arrested, no weapons of any sort were apprehended, and the group was not known to be involved in any violent activity. This case bears little resemblance to what would traditionally be considered as a gang.

The "Alfama Group", a local gang in one of Lisbon's traditional neighbourhoods, fits the gang moniker far better. During the European Forum for Urban Security's (Efus) recent seminar in Lisbon, a case study on this group was presented.
Its members are all between 17 and 24 years of age, and the ringleaders are known to practice Jiu Jitsu, a Brazilian martial art. They were involved in a number of thefts using assault, threats and kidnapping. Their victims were mainly residents, tourists and shop-owners in the neighbourhood. They would also frequently extort "protection money" from business owners in the neighbourhood. The gang had two leaders with concentric rings of "operatives", the smaller ring being those closest to the leaders and most involved in the gangs operations. Those on the outer circles were only sporadically involved in the gang's activities.

The PSP investigated the gang in an ongoing operation for four months, culminating in March 2012. The operation ended with 19 suspects for a total of 62 crimes.
Another case study presented during the seminar was that of the "night-life gang". In the mid 1990's, the use of professional bouncers in bars and nightclubs became widespread in Lisbon. Subsequently, some of them organised themselves into groups or gangs. The first criminal investigation into this phenomenon ran from 2006 to 2008. The investigation revealed a highly organised group led by a former police operative, who had taken the inspiration for his hierarchical organisation from the security forces themselves. The investigation started with the occurrence of severe damage in a night club. The gang itself had over 20 members, with 14 of them identified as the nucleus.
The group's crimes included illegal security services, controlling prostitution and drug trafficking in the bars and clubs they worked in, extortion from club owners and prostitutes, and assault to and extortion from customers.

From the examples mentioned above, we seem to have a concept of gangs mainly related to economic interests: ATM machines, nightlife establishments, credit card fraud, extortion etc. Violence appears to be a means to an end, and not an end in itself.

According to Carlos Resende da Silva, head of the PSP's Criminal Investigation Division, the main concerns for security forces when it comes to gang violence are the rising use of firearms; the perception of gangsters as role models for youths; conflicts / rivalries between neighborhoods; violence linked to the security of nightlife establishments.

The literature available on gangs in Portugal seems to follow the broadly accepted line that gang violence is not an issue in the country. As such, the amount of li-

terature available is very limited. On the other hand, the media are relatively quick to use the word, applying it to all sort of criminal activity, as long as it is perpetrated by more than two people. As Luis Fernandes, Director of the Department of Police Information at the PSP mentioned, there is a problem with the concepts of both "gangs" and "violence", as neither are consensual on a European or even a national level. If this is not consensual at a scientific level, it will be all the more difficult for more uninformed members of society like the public or generalist media to know how to use these terms.

However, not everyone shares this opinion. José Manuel Anes, head of the Observatory for Security, Organised Crime and Terrorism (OSCOT), stated that Portugal now had more gangs, that they were increasingly violent and were using methods comparable to those of the Chinese and Italian mafias. The statement was made in the context of a wave of violent robberies in the Algarve at the end of 2011, which were suspected to have been committed by a group of Eastern Europeans.

The link between migration and gang violence in public opinion seems to be far less present in Portugal than in the neighbouring countries mentioned, Italy and Spain. The exception to this concerns Eastern European citizens. A number of highly organised and trained groups have been observed operating in Portugal. They appear to have clear objectives and operate in a very efficient manner. They rob jewelers, luxury homes and other targets that guarantee a maximum return.

There are numerous reports of such gangs, with one of them supposedly having up to one hundred members robbing jewelers all over the country. There are also reports of training camps for such activities in Por-

tugal. However, extreme care must be taken when reporting on these groups: They are often made of professional criminals who operate or have operated in a number of countries in the EU and are wanted by Europol and/or Interpol. This phenomenon cannot be linked to immigration from eastern European countries, which is accepted to have begun as a phenomenon in the second half of the 1990's.

Portugal does have its own equivalent to the Latin Gangs seen in Spain and Italy, usually seen to stem from social exclusion felt by the immigrants of the rural exodus and second generation migrants. In the early 2000's, a lot of attention was given to these gangs, with the focus placed on those who came from migrant backgrounds. The difference in relation to Italy and Spain was that these were not South Americans but descendants of migrants from Portugal's former African colonies. Their behaviour seems to follow a similar pattern to the Latin Gangs. A significant amount of work has been done both by the authorities and civil society to provide alternative pathways for the youths that take part in them.

Responses and conclusions

B their own admission, the main role of security forces is to enforceme the law and repress crime. Their mission is less focused on prevention. However, the Portuguese police forces, both the GNR and the PSP, have a number of programmes that focus on prevention. They act mainly with youth and inhabitants of poorer neighbourhoods, countering the threats of an increased use of violent theft, the idolisation of gangsters and the use of force in rivalries between neighbourhoods and ethnic groups.

The police in school programmes is an example of this. By maintaining a presence in schools and running a

number of preventive schemes with youths, the police try to diffuse the attractiveness of crime as an option. As previously mentioned, idolisation of gang members is a threat.
Proximity policing, by maintaining a presence in difficult neighbourhoods, tries to build a relationship with those members of society who are more vulnerable, such as youths. In this way, the police can also try to dissuade these individuals from choosing crime as a way of life, and intervene more rapidly when this happens.

Dr. Carlos Poiares, expert in criminal psychology and social exclusion, argues that prevention should be focused on two important pillars: Education (together with culture) and citizenship.
Youths must have all the necessary conditions for a proper education, which includes learning, character-building and civility. School must be seen as something positive for youths and their families, which is not always the case. There should be interdependence between school, families and the community, with the latter investing in the former as a place where a number of functions are fulfilled. The result should be the education of citizens, as opposed to simply men and women. All people should be considered citizens, with all the rights and obligations that go with the notion. The balance between these two is what makes complete citizens. This balance should be taught to children from a young age, by the triad of family, school and the community.

Although prevention schemes with youths are a valid and necessary policy option, the real problem with so-called "gangs" is elsewhere, as these are professional criminals. In Portugal, a lot of disinformation exists, mainly due to the widespread use of the term "gang" in the media and the lack of consensus on how it should be used to begin with. However, authorities seem to be

dealing with the problem on both fronts. The current economic situation in Portugal may have pushed people to commit more crimes however the examples mentioned here are of motivated professional criminals, and cannot simply be explained by the economic downturn.

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An outlook on street violence in Scandinavian countries

Sebastian Sperber
Contribution of the European Forum for Urban Security

Scandinavian countries have a lot in common. They are among the richest in the world and are (still) characterised by what Esping-Andersen[27] called the social democratic welfare State, which aims at providing social security for every citizen at all stages of life.
In terms of crime rates, they can be considered relatively peaceful, even though it is very difficult to compare crime rates between countries. For example homicide rates in Denmark, Norway and Sweden are at around 1 per 100,000 inhabitants, and the 2006 figures of respectively 0,6 and 0,7 place Norway and Denmark amongst the lowest in Europe[28]. Furthermore, with an average of less than 80 prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants in 2009, the Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden have the lowest prison population in Europe and probably in the world (EU average 129, USA 784). Finland, Denmark and Sweden have also the lowest numbers of police officers with respectively 156, 197 and 207 police officers per 100,000 inhabitants[29]. In addition, Nordic countries are said to be the happiest on earth. According to the first «World Happiness Report", commis-

27- Esping-Andersen (1990)
28- European Sourecbook 2010
29- Eurostat (2012)

sionned by the United Nations and published in 2012, the three happiest countries in the world are indeed Denmark, Norway and Finland.
So how do we fit in this picture newspaper articles such as "Sweden Grapples with Rise of Biker Gangs"[30], or "Biker Gangs out of Control in Denmark"[31], and "Danish Gang War Spills Over Into Malmö"[32]? How are such performing welfare states dealing with issues of street violence and problematic youth groups?

In this short article, we intend to complement the overview on eight European countries presented in this publication with an outlook on Scandinavia, a European region that was not represented in the EU Street Violence consortium. We have not been able to draw on intensive research, as undertaken by the project partners, nor on the knowledge of the experts who contributed guest articles to this volume. This article is based on the available information brought together for the EU Street Violence database, and on insights gained while exchanging with Scandinavian members of the Union of Baltic Cities' local safety commission (Karlstad, Nacka, Helsinki), the Norwegian National Crime Prevention Council (KRÅD), the Swedish NGO Fryshuset, and the Swedish MP Anton Abele. Our aim here is to provide an outlook on street violence and problematic youth groups in Scandinavia. In the first part of this exposé, we will describe the problem in these countries and its characteristics, and in the second, we will discuss ways to address it.

30- New York Times, 9 July 2007: http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/09/world/europe/09iht-gangs.4.6571147.html?_r=0
31- Euronews 22 October 2010: http://www.euronews.com/2009/10/22/biker-gangs-out-of-control-in-denmark/
32- The Local, 3 March 2009: http://www.thelocal.se/17958/20090303/#.UTCjzaITEsc

Problematic youth groups, motorcycle gangs and organised crime

In Scandinavia, there has been considerable debate amongst researchers, professionals working with delinquent youths and the police over the issue of whether gangs exist at all.[33-34] When talking with local authorities and other practitioners in the field of prevention one does not get the impression that it is a burning issue in these countries. Of course, there is talk about "street gangs" in the media when incidents occur, but not as a major issue that preoccupies Nordic societies. The problems mentioned in the EU Street Violence survey are vandalism and incivilities, petty crime and violence in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, social housing estates, recreational facilities and schools, which occur occasionally. Youth gangs or troublesome youth groups on the other hand do not seem very widespread[35]. This does not mean however that there are no problems of "street violence". A famous case for instance is that of Anton Abele, who became an award-winning activist against violence at the age of 15 after his friend Riccardo Campogiani was beaten to death at a party in the centre of Stockholm. But overall, it seems that stakeholders in Scandinavia rightly refrain from moral panic because they are well aware that the general situation is good, as described above.

At the same time, it was indeed a "gang war" that spread all over Scandinavia in the 1990s and obtained worldwide attention. "The Great Nordic Biker War" opposed the motorcycle gangs "Hells Angels" and "Bandidos" and other subgroups. Both were described as coherent and sophisticated gangs with serious cri-

33- Carlsson and Decker 2005: 260
34- Some, as Sarnecki in Sweden, chose to speak of «criminal networks», in order to prevent labelling effects (see e.g. Sarnecki and Peterson 2001), while in Denmark, the expression "wild youth" was coined (see for example Carlsson and Decker 2005: 270)
35- Carlsson and Decker 2005: 279

minals armed with firearms, explosives and anti-tank weapons. At least 11 homicides, 74 attempted homicides and 96 wounded are directly attributed to this conflict by police services.[36] These violent groups control important parts of the drug market as well as the red-light districts; they are involved in extortion, stolen goods handling, and gun trafficking, which explains this "gang war". In 2009, active gang members were estimated at 4,000 for Sweden alone[37]. For years, biker gangs have been a widespread phenomenon in Nordic countries and they are central to the gang issue in Scandinavia.[38] It shows how "street violence" can take various forms and be associated with different realities in different countries and parts of Europe.

Efforts being led in Scandinavia to deal with gangs are therefore concentrated on organised crime, a phenomenon that the EU Street Violence project chose to exclude from its scope. The groups involved are not youth groups. They are organisations with strict hierarchies and structures that serve criminal activities. While they consider themselves as "outlaws", as illustrated by their "1% lifestyle", they do not openly declare themselves to be criminals. However, they have an official store front, their club house and their chapters, and even spokespersons[39].

While gang issues in Scandinavia are primarily associated with organised crime, in particular motorcycle gangs, this is not the whole story. As in other European countries, there is a longer history to the issue of "gangs" and a greater variety of "problematic youth groups" than may appear at first sight.

36- Pedersen and Lindstad 2012: 241
37- Leinfeldt and Rostami 2012: 81
38- Rønn and Jensen 2012: 300
39- Truc 2010; this also enabled a dialogue with these groups, which is part of many police strategies (see for example Vrist Rønn and Snedevig Jensen (2012) 277ff.

In the late 1950s, when there were "Zoot-suiter and "Boppers" in the U.S., "Teddy Boys" in England, "Blousons noirs" in France, "Vitelloni" in Italy, and "Halbstarke" in Germany[40], the Skinnknutte appeared in Scandinavia. In Denmark they were referred to as "Green Jacket". The first gang structures in Norway appeared in Oslo in the 1960s and were called the "Blackie" gang and the "Frogner" gang. They were boys from urban lower classes who had joined neighbourhood-based groups.[41] They did not commit crime, but protested against a homogeneous society through their clothing style and aggressive behaviour.[42]

According to Peterson and Linstad[43], in Denmark in the 1970s, loosely organised groups of teenagers who used to disturb public order and to fight rivals unarmed turned into serious criminals. They became involved in violent crime, drug dealing and racketeering. Peterson and Linstad argue that under the influence of the American bikers culture, these Danish "rebels" became outlaw motorcycle gangs. The "Union" Biker Club was accepted in 1980 as the first Danish Chapter of the Hells Angels.

In the 1980s, the first criminal gang structure appeared in Oslo. The "Tveita" gang, named after a neighbourhood of Oslo, started its criminal career with small, burglaries in shopping centres, They «specialised» later in "hit and run" operations against exclusive shops. In the same period, the first minority gangs appeared. Groups of immigrants boys who supported each other against bullying and violence from other groups transformed into immigrant gangs. They were homogenous, multiethnic street gangs that created a singular criminal subculture, which reflects the culture and ethnicity of the diaspora(s).[44] Some of these street

40- Karen Hennigan and Marioja Spanovic (2012).
41- Petersen and Lindstad 2012: 240
42- Jensen and Stubberud 2012: 273
43- Petersen and Lindstad 2012: 241
44- Lien 2001: 167, see also Lien 2008 and Björk 2008

gangs, such as the Pakistani A- and B-Gangs, developed their criminal activities and became leading players in the Oslo underworld. At that time, and in the 1990s, motorcycle clubs were already involved in crime and well-known international groups such as the Bandidos and Hells Angels established themselves in Norway.

They were already present in Denmark and spread to Sweden at that period (1990s), where they rapidly increased their activities and formed chapters throughout the country. This is when when criminal networks started to become a significant problem in Sweden.

By the mid/end 1990s, motorcycle gangs were the key groups in Scandinavian countries. There were fierce battles among them, up to the 1997 «peace agreement», which included a territorial division to avoid further conflict.

With the turn of the millennium there was a shift away from the established outlaw motorcycle gangs and criminal networks towards different kinds of street gang such as the Black Cobra, which openly promoted crime. The gang was established in Denmark, and later spread to Sweden and Norway. According to some analysts, the fact that authorities deployed massive efforts to fight biker groups allowed other groups to take over their markets and territories[45]. According to Rostami and Leinfeld, these new "street gangs" try to imitate the organisational structure and codes of the Hells Angels and Bandidos, but actually depend very much on strong individual leadership. They have more in common with the loosely organised American street gang than any other types of criminal groups or networks in Sweden[46]. The latest gang conflicts started in the late 2000s in Denmark and involve biker gangs and their support groups on the one hand, and several independent street-oriented gangs mostly with an im-

45- Rønn and Jensen 2012: 301

46- Rostami and Leinfelt 2012: 255

migration background on the other.
This simplified overview would not be complete without mentioning racist, white supremacist, neo-Nazi groups.[47] These groups, which could be considered a priori as political, are actually similar to street oriented "gangs" created in response to the emergence of ethnic gangs. It seems that motorcycle gangs also position themselves along these lines. In their conflict with other criminal groups, especially when their members are of foreign origin, they present themselves as defenders of Nordic culture and values when recruiting young people[48].

By zooming in on the Scandinavian situation, we see there are various problematic groups as well as troublesome, urban youth groups, mainly in large cities. While taking a closer look should not lead to seeing problems as bigger than they actually are, one can see that "street violence" is of certain relevance also for Scandinavian countries. Carlsson and Decker for example point out that a large share of youth violence takes place in a group or collective context. They conclude that there are reasons for concern: "Some types of youth violence are rather new and frightening, others are old but have increased in number, still other have not increased but the threshold for worrying and concern has decreased."[49]

It seems nevertheless that much of the "criminal gangs" mentioned here can be counted as forms of organised crime rather than youth groups causing trouble. This leads to question the relation between problematic youth groups and organised crime – an issue of interest beyond Scandinavia.
The example of Nordic countries seems to imply that the there are connections both ways. As seen above,

47- Carlsson and Decker 2005: 272, 280
48- See for example Truc 2010
49- Carlsson and Decker 2005: 263

some of the relatively informal gangs have turned into structured criminal organisations. At the same time,

motorcycle gangs in particular very much rely on support groups and foot soldiers to do much of the dirty work. A good example is the AK81 gang in Denmark. Their «mission» is implied by their name: AK stands for "Altid Klar" (always ready), and 8 and 1 for the letters H and A, as in Hells Angels[50]. While groups of youths in search of identity and recognition among peer groups are quite different from structures established for criminal activities, support groups such as AK81 seem to be an important link. For many of the would-be members of motorcycle gangs (the "hangarounds") belonging[51] seems to be at least as important as the promise of future material gains. On the other hand, street gangs that function as support groups benefit from the reputation and protection of the motorcycle gangs. While these links between "troublesome youth groups" and structures of organised crime and between small criminality and mafia-like groups are not self-evident or automatic, they can also be observed in other countries.[52]

Prevention and intervention in Nordic countries

What is being done to deal with these problems of street violence? Given the characteristics of Nordic welfare States, is there a specific Scandinavian way of dealing with issues of problematic youth groups?

"The wealth of the Scandinavian State, their large public sector and the great freedom of local municipalities to find their own solutions to problems have re-

50- See Pedersen and Lindstad 2012: 24 or Vrist Rønn and Snedevig Jensen 2012: 301

51- In contrast to other criminal organisations, belonging to a motorcycle gang can be publicly shown and is therefore even more important when considering social status.

52- See for example Mohammed 2005: 282ff.

sulted in a very rich diet in the field of crime prevention," explain Carlsson and Decker. They argue that these countries pursue fairly similar policies against crime, which would be characterised as "soft" in the United States, with for example a widespread reluctance to put youngsters under 18 in prison.[53] At the centre of the Scandinavian arsenal of prevention tools are the existing and established public institutions such as schools, the child-care system, social services, youth clubs, sport facilities and, more traditionally, the police. They explain that many of these measures are part of the traditional welfare state response, which made "special programmes" such as those implemented in the U.S. unnecessary.

The Scandinavian welfare is strongly rooted at the local level, to the point that some speak of the "welfare municipality"[54]. This approach recognises the importance of municipalities in responding to emerging social problems, and the fact that indeed they provide solutions. Scandinavian municipalities have considerably developed their capacity to prevent and intervene on youth problems over the last two to three decades. Local community interventions also represent the primary mode of intervention with respect to problematic youth groups.

Having adopted a more market-oriented approach in recent years, while increasing local autonomy, these countries have supplemented their response strategies with a number of specific problem solving measures and programmes, many of which are also used in gang intervention.[55]

How does this work concretely? As an example, the Norwegian town of Drammen, with just under 60,000 inhabitants, has more than forty distinct services or intervention measures connected to prevention. Many

53- Carlsson and Decker 2005: 261
54- Carlsson and Decker 2005: 261
55- Carlsson and Decker 2005: 280

of them are provided by the municipality, others by the county or NGOs. What is important to point out is that most of these actions are not aimed at preventing gangs or even crime in general. However, these services that aim at preventing social marginalisation, social problems linked to poverty, and to a certain degree youth delinquency and violence are also central to prevent problems with youth groups[56].

Special programmes are used to complement this, when it appears necessary to intervene on a specific problem. Governments[57] and police forces in Scandinavia are mobilised on the issue, major cities have special units working on gangs and organised crime[58], in close cooperation with municipalities. In a nutshell, the Scandinavian intervention mix builds on suppression and enhanced social control as well as on social intervention and opportunity measures. Some examples of this approach are the nighttime civilian security patrols (the «Night Owls» in Sweden), joint stakeholder interventions with individuals at risk and their parents (the «worrying conversations» in Norway), forms of restorative justice (youth contracts in Denmark), multi-systemic therapy offers or projects to provide exit opportunities (Exit groups in Norway and Sweden, in particular those adapted to criminal gangs as in the "Passus" project of Fryhuset). Some researchers also recommend taking into account cultural specificities when dealing with groups with a migration background.[59]

The Stockholm Gang Intervention Programme (SGIP)

56- Carlsson and Decker 2005: 264f.
57- See for example the Danish ministerial Commission examining strategies on juvenile crime, which stresses the problem of the recruitment of juveniles into gangs involved in organised crime (Pedersen and Lindstad 2012: 239)
58- See Leinfelt and Rostami 2012, Pedersen and Lindstad 2012, Vrist Rønn and Snedevig Jensen 2012
59- See e.g. Lien 2008

is an example[60] of a holistic (enforcement) programme. "Historically, the police have primarily focused on hard components (suppression) in their work with gangs.

We believe that a successful programme incorporates both soft (prevention) and hard components," explain Rostami and Leinfelt[61]. "We need to recognise that the police are only one piece of the puzzle. Gangs are not simply a police matter, they are a societal matter. If we do not address the underlying causes that lead young people to join gangs we will not succeed. Only by way of preventive measures can we limit the pool of gang eligible youths." The SGIP has therefore developed an operation model for a holistic gang prevention programme called PANTHER, which stands for "Preventive Analysis about Network Target for a Holistic Enforcement Response". Its aim is to integrate police suppression and enforcement methods with the various social science intervention concepts into a fully operational model. For that purpose it builds on collaboration with other authorities. In order to make the work against gangs more evidence-based and coherent with best practices, it begins by scanning the situation, before mapping and analysing the structures, and developing operational measures. A core component are community-based intervention teams, which gather various social service agencies from the local municipality, the local educational board, the cultural and recreational management, the local police borough and representatives of the justice system. These teams develop individualised plans to tackle the different groups and to offer group members exit plans. The SGIP therefore stands for an inclusive and integrated gang-intervention programme.

60- See e.g. Vrist Rønn and Snedevig Jensen (2012) and Jensen and Stubberud (2012) for programmes in Denmark and Norway
61- Rostami and Leinfelt 2012: 262+263

While it would be difficult to speak of "a Scandinavian approach", given the freedom local authorities have in elaborating their own local safety strategy, these elements on prevention and intervention in Nordic countries indicate they have a specific way of dealing with street violence and problematic youth groups.

All in all, the information collected as part of the EU Street Violence project shows that Scandinavian countries have some issues with troublesome youth groups as well as problems with organised crime that takes the form of criminal gangs or outlaw motorcycle gangs. The identified prevention and response strategies are very much in line with the thematic recommendations of the European Forum for Urban Security's Aubervilliers and Saint-Denis Manifesto. These countries build on the performance of their welfare States, which includes schemes that can be used to prevent the specific issue of troublesome youth groups. But they also use bespoke programmes to intervene in specific situations. The holistic Nordic approach is deeply rooted at the local level and builds on the contribution of all stakeholders.

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