

## Analysis of the cost-benefit analysis

One of the methodologies of the European project is the use of a cost-benefit analysis to evaluate the Belgian policy regarding the handling of domestic burglaries. The analysis that follows will begin with a discussion of the methodology. Thereafter, the contents of the cost-benefit analysis will be considered. This will include a summary of the various chapters. The recurrent costs and several recurrent facts will be the focus here. The discussion will then be closed with an analysis of the Belgian policy regarding domestic burglaries.

## The methodology

A cost-benefit analysis is an analysis of the costs to society and benefits to projects and programs. In the cost-benefit analysis, the social value of the effect of a measure is assigned a monetary value. Based on the monetary value, an investigation can be made into which projects and measures are most advantageous. It is also a useful policy instrument to verify whether certain projects are effective and efficient and to identify which projects are preferable.<sup>1</sup>

Cost-benefit analyses are usually performed in advance yet they can also be used for evaluations of policies that have already been adopted.

A cost-benefit analysis consists of 3 steps:

- a) The assessment of the effectiveness of an intervention
- b) The estimation of the costs of the intervention
- c) The determination of the social value of the effects of the intervention

In the first step, information is collected about the coherence between the (policy) objective and the factors which influence that objective. In the second step, an estimate is made of the resources needed for the intervention. However, in practice, the third step, the estimation of the social value of the positive and the negative effects of an intervention, is difficult to determine empirically.<sup>2</sup>

## Problems with the scientific method

First of all, scientists have been performing research for many years now into the costs of crime, and not all of its effects can be directly measured and converted into a monetary value.<sup>3</sup> Costs associated with a measure can be calculated, although identifying the benefits of a measure is a more difficult exercise. This is also true of the domestic burglary phenomenon, in the case of domestic burglaries, the perpetrators force themselves into the private sphere and in doing so, the citizens are affected in their most intimate and private arenas. The thought and the feeling that strangers have been in their homes, have looked through their possessions and have taken their valuables, which sometimes even have emotional value, means that the social cost cannot be expressed in material damages

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<sup>1</sup> EUROPEAN CRIME PREVENTION NETWORK, *Review of Costs and Benefits Analysis in Crime Prevention*, 2004, p. 18

<sup>2</sup> VAN VELTHOVEN, B.C.J., "Kosten-batenanalyse van criminaliteitsbeleid", in: *Tijdschrift voor strafrechtspiegeling* (PROCES), Boom Juridische Uitgevers, Den Haag, nr. 2008/4, jaargang 87, pp.3-5

<sup>3</sup> VAN VELTHOVEN, B.C.J., "Kosten-batenanalyse van criminaliteitsbeleid", in: *Tijdschrift voor strafrechtspiegeling* (PROCES), Boom Juridische Uitgevers, Den Haag, nr. 2008/4, jaargang 87, p. 7

alone.<sup>4</sup> The psychological consequences and the impact on the victim's sense of safety are factors which cannot be ignored. By way of illustration, it is a fact, for example, that 65% of victims still experience the effects of the burglary 4 to 10 weeks after it has occurred. These effects include feelings of uncertainty and discomfort as well as continuing to be mentally occupied with the burglary. Most victims report an increased level of physical stress and sleep disturbances, especially in the first weeks after the event.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, it appears that the measures that have been taken by all stakeholders thus far seldom utilize a baseline measurement and/or a control group. As a result, an impact assessment can only be used to search for a numerical connection between a measure and one or more objectives.

This European project consists of a series of methodological steps for the purpose of arriving at an action plan related to burglary prevention policy. Of course, it is important to know the various actors and actions of this prevention policy, but an intensive cost-benefit analysis is not actually necessary for this. In addition to that, the advisory board has recommended to not undertake a scientific cost-benefit analysis. However, it is important to know 'who's doing what'. Therefore we are limiting ourselves to **mapping out all of the actors involved in the handling of domestic burglaries, the existing policy instruments, the initiatives already taken and the available numerical data.**

#### Advantages of the cost-benefit analysis

The final result is a clear overview of all of the actors involved. This includes a description of their missions and tasks and the manner in which they implement these. This enumeration of all of the factors offers great added value for the various actors. Furthermore, By investigating what the different institutions and partners do regarding domestic burglary, it was possible to evaluate the existing policy.

Writing to the various institutions and partners ensured that they feel involved and valued. Moreover, the involved partners can learn from the working methods of the various actors.

#### Disadvantages of the cost-benefit analysis

Next to the advantages there are also multiple disadvantages. First of all, numerical data was difficult to obtain; on the one hand, because in many cases there were no numbers and, on the other hand, because it often took a long time for the institution concerned to react to the request for numerical data. Furthermore the amount of information related to the various institutions and actors was not proportional and, therefore, it could not be compared.

Also, the collection of all of the information and its analysis requires an enormous time investment. The consequence of this is that the original timing of the project was adjusted and more time was reserved to allow this analysis to be completed successfully.

In addition, the Belgian State has a complex structure with many different levels and a good deal of decentralization. This integral way of working means that almost every level is

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<sup>4</sup> EUROPEAN CRIME PREVENTION NETWORK, *Review of Costs and Benefits Analysis in Crime Prevention*, 2004, p. 22

<sup>5</sup> VANDERSTRAETEN, B., en. co. "Slachtofferschap bij diefstal in woningen" in: CHRISTIAENSEN, S., DORMAELS, A., and VAN DAELE, S., (eds.), *Diefstal in woningen; Bijdragen voor een geïntegreerde beheersing vanuit beleid, praktijk en wetenschap*, Antwerpen: Maklu, 2012, pp. 227-258

involved in domestic burglaries. The result of this is that it is not always easy to track all of the actors and institutions involved.

It was not easy to describe the exact costs and benefits. Often, a description could not be more detailed than 'personnel costs', for example. This issue was present in all services and institutions and therefore recurred quite often.

### **Analysis of the methodology**

Since scientists have been working for years on research into the costs of crime, it was not feasible to do this for domestic burglary in such a short period of time. The greatest difficulty in this is the calculation of the non-material costs. In the case of domestic burglary, this primarily refers to the psychological consequences, something which does not have direct monetary value. As a result of this, the decision was taken to focus on mapping out all of the actors involved in the handling of domestic burglary, the existing policy instruments, the initiatives already taken and the available numerical data.

The most significant added value of this cost-benefit analysis is that it provides a clear overview of all of the actors involved in domestic burglary. The Belgian State has a very complex structure and this means that maintaining this overview is not always a matter of course; this cost-benefit analysis solves this. All of the information available can now be found in one document. This is beneficial for the policy but also for our various partners, who can now more quickly and easily work out who they must contact in connection with certain issues.

The most important stumbling block, after the decision was taken to not make a scientific cost-benefit analysis as such, was finding usable numerical data. Not all of the actors involved, however, have relevant numerical data available; for example, the provinces do not have any specific numbers related to their handling of domestic burglaries. Furthermore, the institutions involved waited a very long time before sending numerical data. Once they did send along this data, its correct analysis and implementation were not always obvious.

Another difficulty was the description of the costs and the benefits. They were not assigned any monetary values, but an attempt was made to report and describe the possible costs and benefits. There were, in fact, several costs that continued to recur, such as personnel costs. Moreover, it must also be noted that the benefits of certain measures often lie at institutions other than the one taking the measures. The Federal Public Service (FPS) Finance<sup>6</sup>, for example, provides a tax exemption for anti-burglary and fire protection when people better secure their homes or apartments. The FPS Finance itself, however, gains little advantage from the lower costs in reaction to the crimes committed. So there is an interaction between the various services which can result in one service profiting more than another. However, reflecting this in the cost-benefit analysis is not that easy to do. It was from this standpoint that the option to add the 'political agenda-setting function' was taken (the benefits therefore do not only accrue to the police/judicial system).

### **The cost-benefit analysis**

After the analysis of the methodology, the contents of the cost-benefit analysis will now be discussed. All institutions and actors will be mentioned in each chapter, and what their tasks are in relation to domestic burglary will be briefly discussed. All of this will be concluded with an analysis of the policy.

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<sup>6</sup> For more information, see cost-benefit analysis p. 54.

## Policing component

The policing component is the aspect with which the citizens presumably have the most contact. When a domestic burglary occurs, they are the ones who are notified first. The proper functioning of the different services is therefore also important. The policing component consists of 3 pillars: the Federal Police, the Local Police and the international framework.

With regard to domestic burglary, the Federal Police has three core tasks: to enlarge the pool of information related to itinerant groups of perpetrators, to provide specialized support to the Local Police and to guarantee supra-local assignments. The most important service at the central level is the DJB (The Directorate of crime against goods)<sup>7</sup>. They are responsible for increasing the expertise related to itinerant groups of perpetrators. They do this by means of analyses and by coordinating and supporting projects. The '*organized robbery and ART*' service is responsible for monitoring the phenomenon of burglary in homes and other buildings. At the level of the district, there are three important institutions. The Federal Judicial Police (FGP) performs criminal investigations and search inquiries. In addition to that, the FGP also offers judicial expertise and specialized resources to the Local Police, in particular. Each district also has a District Information Crossroads (DIC) where administrative and judicial information originating from the Local and the Federal Police is processed and analyzed. The DIC stimulates the exchange of information and has a signaling function. Finally, there are also the DirCos (Director-Coordimators) and the coordination and the support services. Among other things, they are responsible for the daily management of the victims' assistance capacity. They have a coordinating and a supporting function with regard to lines of reasoning and working methods which involve all partners in the safety chain, such as the Full Integrated Police Actions (FIPA), for example.

The Local Police guarantee the "basic policing"<sup>8</sup>. In concrete terms, that means that each zone must perform at least six basic tasks: district operations, reception, intervention, police victim support, local search efforts and the maintenance of the public order. In Belgium there are 195 police zones. A police zone consists of one or more municipalities. With regard to domestic burglary, the police zones have three core tasks: investigation, victim support and prevention. It is often the intervention teams from the Local Police who are the first to arrive at the scene when a domestic burglary is reported. They also lead the local search efforts and the local investigation. In addition to this, the police are also the first contact for the victims. The police agents receive them and give them the contact details for victims' assistance services. Many police zones also have a functioning re-contacting project to be able to better guide the victims. Finally, the Local Police also work on prevention. The most visible action in this arena is the appointment of domestic burglary prevention consultant. They visit the citizens and provide advice about how to better secure their homes. Here, the starting point is organizational measures, before calling on mechanical and electronic measures.<sup>9</sup> What is remarkable here is the important preventive function of the Local Police with regard to the exchange of information. An important aspect of this is a well-detailed registration of

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<sup>7</sup> DGJ/DJB (Directie van de bestrijding van de criminaliteit tegen goederen– La direction de la lutte contre la criminalité contre les biens)

<sup>8</sup> 7 december 1998, Wet tot organisatie van een geïntegreerde politiedienst, gestructureerd op 2 niveaus. BS 5 januari 1999, 132

<sup>9</sup> KERKAB, R., and DEROOVER, M., "Naburig herhaald slachtofferschap bij woninginbraken" in: CHRISTIAENSEN, S., DORMAELS, A., and VAN DAELE, S., (eds.), *Diefstal in woningen; Bijdragen voor een geïntegreerde beheersing vanuit beleid, praktijk en wetenschap*, Antwerpen: Maklu, 2012, p. 52

the information into the National General Database [Algemene nationale gegevensbank] (ANG). Furthermore, the district agents are also important partners when it comes to the tracking of suspicious actions, places of residence and the handling or storing of stolen goods.

Due to globalization, the international pillar is becoming more and more important. The Schengen Agreement within the EU made it necessary to establish international crime-fighting institutions. Of these, Interpol is the largest; it has 190 member-countries. Its primary responsibility is to facilitate the exchange of information between the police services of the member-countries. It is for this purpose that Interpol developed the I-24/7, a world-wide police communications system. Moreover, Interpol also works to maintain and improve operational databases and data files for the police. Finally, they provide operational support 24 hours a day and 7 days a week to the police and law enforcement services. The European counterpart of Interpol is Europol. This agency has approximately the same responsibilities but then primarily within the borders of the EU. Neither institution has executive authority within the member-countries. Europol has also opened an EMPACT project related to itinerant groups of perpetrators. Belgium is leading these efforts. And, finally, there is Cepol. The mission of the European Police Academy is to create educational programs and training opportunities for the high-level police functionaries from the police services in Europe. The focus of all of these programs is on cross-border crime. The activities target the facilitation of the exchange of knowledge and best practices.

The various pillars of the police institutions show us, in particular, how the perpetrators are investigated and apprehended. Prevention is considered extremely important and one of the recurring cornerstones of this is the exchange of information. The police work extremely hard on this aspect of prevention. The next section will discuss which agencies try the perpetrators.

### **Judicial component**

The role of justice and the public prosecutor's office mainly reveals itself in the 'tertiary prevention'. In itself, the prevention of burglaries has little impact on the fight against the phenomenon, if one does not also invest in the other links of the security chain, i.e. detection, proceedings, determination of the sentence and execution of the sentence. In this respect, priority will be given to burglary cases, to a quicker and more efficient execution of the sentences and to the reintegration in society to prevent recidivism. The judicial component of domestic burglaries is made up of 4 cornerstones: local public prosecutor's offices, federal prosecutor's office, the Criminal Policy Department and the international component.

Today, the judicial landscape is being thoroughly reformed. An increase in scale has been carried out and, as a consequence, 12 court districts and 187 judicial cantons have been created. The public prosecutor's office is in charge of following up and dealing with criminal and civil cases. In the interest of society, they make sure that the criminal procedure is carried out normally and settled, not only as for the criminal investigation but also concerning the substantive handling of the case. In court, the magistrates of the public prosecutor's office claim the application of the criminal law and see to it that the necessary measures are taken with a view to an appropriate enforcement of the sentences pronounced.

The federal prosecutor's office is also an office whose competence extends to the Belgian territory as a whole. It was created in order to more efficiently take action against legal offences which go beyond the competence of local offices, such as itinerant criminal groups. An important advantage of the federal prosecutor's office is the international aspect. The

federal prosecutor's office has relationships and exchanges information with similar foreign services. This is especially important as regards handling stolen goods among itinerant criminal groups.

The Criminal Policy Department is the policy supporting and coordinating service of the Minister of Justice. It aims at developing a better, more coherent and efficient criminal policy by implementing a scientifically based policy cycle throughout the criminal chain as a whole. The CDP thus seeks to develop a global security policy, whose mainstay is an integrated criminal policy.

Finally, Eurojust is responsible for the judicial component at the international level. Eurojust stimulates and improves the coordination and cooperation of investigation and legal action between the competent authorities of the Member States. To that end, it aims at facilitating the international legal assistance as well as the execution of requests for extradition. Eurojust supports in all possible ways the competent authorities of the Member States in order to make investigation and legal action more efficient in dealing with cross-border crime.

The different cornerstones of the criminal part show what is done to effectively punish offenders and prevent them from perpetrating more often. In this regard, one cannot lose track of the international component since cross-border crime is committed more and more frequently. Once again, information exchange proves to be a recurrent aspect.

### **Administrative component**

The services and institutions that outline the policy fall under the administrative component. In order to implement an effective prevention policy, there must be services which organize this and which do the work of having the cooperation between all of the links in the chain run smoothly. The administrative component consists of 4 pillars: the Federal, the supra-local, the local and the international levels.

All Federal Public Services (FPS) can be found in the federal component. The most important of these is the FPS Home Affairs. Burglary prevention and the securing of homes are handled within the Directorate-General for Safety and Prevention. This directorate focuses in concrete terms on the elaboration, monitoring and evaluation of measures targeting the protection of persons and goods against crime, social nuisance, fire and intoxication and on encouraging the citizen to take preventive measures. The strengthening of the collaboration is pushed to the top of the priority list; in light of this they organize, for example, the States General Domestic Burglary. Here, a systematic exchange of information is also high on the burglary prevention agenda. In order to make this information as high-quality as possible, the Directorate stimulates the expertise of its stakeholders. In addition, they aim to work as evidence-based as possible and therefore outsource investigations to Belgian and/or foreign educational institutions. Besides this, there are also the FPS Economy and the FPS Finance, both of which are important within the prevention policy. FPS Economy controls the goods and services market for the purpose of tracking and preventing the handling and storage of stolen goods. FPS Finance is responsible for granting tax exemptions for the integration of security measures into buildings. This is meant to stimulate the citizens to increase the security of their homes.

The provinces, the regional governments and the Union of Cities and Municipalities belong to the supra-local level. In the provinces, the Governor is responsible for maintaining the public order and for the coordination of safety in the province. The Governor's most important task is

the stimulation and improvement of the cooperation between the various actors for the purpose of achieving an expansion of the scale of the prevention. Adequate exchange of information is also extremely important here; on the one hand in order to ensure that provincial partners are aware of the problems related to domestic burglaries and on the other hand to make and keep citizens watchful by means of communication campaigns. The regional governments are also responsible for the dissemination of information and for the stimulation of these collaborations. On top of this, they are also in charge of city planning and housing departments. These services must also adequately inform the citizens about living safely. In addition to all of this, efforts to improve security are also made together with the Union for Social Housing. Finally, the Union of Cities and Municipalities safeguards the interests of the cities and municipalities. The goal of the organization is to provide information regarding the police and the security services to the different municipalities and police zones.

The local administrative level is the level that stands closest to the citizens themselves. The most important players here are the cities and municipalities. In addition, there are also the Domestic Burglary Prevention Consultants and the Neighbourhood watches which are active at the local level. The mayor is the administrative head of the local police and is therefore responsible for the safety of the citizens. Whether or not active efforts are made in the area of safety prevention depends strongly on the mayor. As a matter of fact, he or she has a leadership role in projects and in motivating the administration. At the local level, the mayor is the link between the municipally integrated safety policy and the zonal policing policy. In addition, the mayor is responsible for the internal communication. Finally, cities can also decide independently whether they provide a burglary prevention premium for their citizens who integrate technical preventive measures for the prevention of domestic burglary into their homes. Domestic burglary Prevention Consultants are responsible for the dissemination of knowledge about these technical preventive measures. The neighbourhood watches mentioned above are a concrete aspect of the cooperation between the citizen and the police within a specific neighbourhood. Central to this is the exchange of information.

The European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN) is responsible for the administrative component at the international level. The EUCPN is an informal network for the promotion of the crime prevention in the EU member states. The network is a primary source of development of crime prevention and good practices within the EU. The EUCPN is responsible for the dissemination of high-quality knowledge related to crime prevention. They also support crime prevention activities at the national and local levels. Here, too, the exchange of information between the members is at the core.

The administrative component consists of various levels which all have the goal of creating an effective and integrated prevention policy related to domestic burglary. Almost all of the services and institutions stimulate the cooperation between the actors and make serious efforts in the area of the exchange of information.

### **Private partners**

All of the services and institutions mentioned above can ultimately be traced back to the government. However, an effective and integrated safety policy also needs private partners to be successful. In this chapter, the four most important private partners are discussed: the insurance sector, the architects, the academic world and, of course, the citizens themselves, because they also have an important task in the prevention of domestic burglary.

First of all, there are the insurance companies. They are involved in almost all burglaries, since they guarantee the compensation for the losses incurred. A good prevention policy is

therefore also beneficial to the insurance companies. They can help to implement this by also informing their customers of the government's prevention tips. An important aside here is that a theft insurance policy is a separate insurance policy. In other words, this policy is only a limited part of the comprehensive insurance portfolio (= fire insurance). Relatively few citizens however purchase this extra insurance.

In addition, burglary prevention measures that are built into a house are decisive in increasing security and in reducing the chance of becoming a victim. It is easier to build these measures into a new construction than it is to have to add them later. Therefore, architects also have an important task in this matter. They are able to make the public aware right from the start. However, they are currently still too often designing from an aesthetic, functional and structural point of view. They can also play a major role in the design of new or in the improvement of existing sites within the "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design" principle (CPTED), whereby crime and a lack of security can be approached via environmental measures.

The aforementioned partners play an especially decisive role in the further dissemination of the prevention message. The academic world, on the other hand, is important in the research, development and evaluation of this prevention message. The academic world is responsible for stimulating and delivering the research that supports the policy. The fact is a thorough burglary prevention policy needs to be up-to-date, varied and based on relevant knowledge. It is in the interest of the policy to evaluate practices and to only allow those practices and projects which have passed a scientific test of their effectiveness. Furthermore, the academic world is also an important partner in the dissemination of information by means of publications and the organization of conferences.

The citizen usually underestimates their role in the domestic burglary prevention policies. However, prevention is of no use whatsoever if the citizens themselves do not apply the simplest of tips. So, the citizens must be made responsible, and this is most successful when they feel involved. In this respect, the establishment of a Neighbourhood watch is a very interesting initiative. In particular, it ensures that the citizens are more watchful and that there is better communication with the police. This results in the more rapid reporting of suspicious activities. A more accessible relationship between citizens and the police is often decisive for good prevention. The Domestic Burglary Prevention Consultants are also very important in this, because they often first focus on the encouragement of organizational changes before the citizen must make financial efforts.

The first three private partners are primarily responsible for the dissemination of information: on the one hand to the citizens and on the other hand to the policy. The citizens, of course, are also important partners because their actions have a great deal of influence on their possible future victimization. Making citizens responsible is therefore very important. Without their willingness to change their habits and/or home, it remains difficult to implement effective prevention policy.

### **Analysis of the policy**

In the chapters above, all of the relevant institutions and actors related to the prevention of domestic burglaries were discussed. What now follows is an analysis of the total policy, with regard to the aforementioned actors and on the basis of several strategic objectives.

In October 2013 the FPS IBZ (Home Affairs), the General Service for Safety and Prevention, organized the 1<sup>st</sup> States General related to Domestic Burglary<sup>10</sup>. The objective was to combine the forces of the various regional and national (and international) authorized partners as well as those of the private sector. This European project is one of the action points that was formulated following this States General related to Domestic Theft. Within this organization, a vision text was drafted in which the most important strategic objectives were also brought to the fore:

1. Continued efforts in the area of strengthening collaborations are needed; all partners must proceed to the expansion of their foundations. In fact, collaboration is crucial for the gathering of knowledge and expertise. It is in this manner that the various target groups can be reached and that one common basis of support can be created.
2. Striving for innovation in education and communication and thereby coming to a targeted and neighbourhood-oriented approach. Additional efforts must be made to reach disadvantaged groups. This can take shape by providing communication that is adapted for outreach purposes.
3. The follow-up and support of technical solutions and evolutions. The existing techno-preventive measures in homes must continue to be improved. Efforts towards this goal can be made by the development of building standards which are either imposed as regulations or are promoted directly to the stakeholders.
4. The fostering of the implementation of environmental measures. During the renovation of public spaces, the aspects which have a direct impact on safety and the perception of safety, such as lighting and landscaping, must be taken into even greater account.
5. Working in an evidence-based manner. A targeted policy requires both an adequate representation of the problem and an impact measurement. On the basis of existing international and national studies, the existing know-how related to efficient and effective measures regarding the handling of domestic burglaries must be bundled, and all involved partners must be informed to the greatest extent possible.

In the previous chapters, the stimulation of the collaboration emerged strongly in the administrative component. The collaboration of the various services and institutions is essential for arriving at an effective and integrated prevention policy. The collaboration with the private sector also occurs more and more frequently. The exchange of information appears to be one of the most important aspects within these collaborations. The exchange of information is important in all of the components but it is somewhat more so in the policing component. The exchange of information about itinerant perpetrator groups is essential for controlling this phenomenon. Therefore databases at the national and international levels are also extremely important within this component. Within Belgium, a great deal is still being done to stimulate the maintenance of these databases. The different consultation forums also ensure that the exchange of information is not obstructed by professional thresholds. The administration and the partners are working hard to strengthen the cooperation.

In addition, there must be clear communication to the citizens so that they have a better understanding of the domestic burglary phenomenon. The local communication is performed primarily by the mayors and, to a lesser extent, by the Governor of the Province. However, national prevention campaigns are also created. These originate from the Directorate-General for Safety and Prevention. The targeted and neighbourhood-oriented approach is especially important for Domestic Burglary Prevention Consultants and for the functioning of the Neighbourhood watches. Domestic Burglary Prevention Consultants are still

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<sup>10</sup> GENERAL SERVICE FOR SAFETY AND PREVENTION, knowledge database, <https://www.besafe.be/kennisdatabank/staten-generaal-diefstal-woningen>, 2014

not well-known enough and certain groups, such as renters, the elderly and others, are under-represented. It is important to also reach these groups so that they are better able to protect themselves against theft. The police zones and cities can stimulate this by setting up targeted projects and campaigns<sup>11</sup>. There are already many initiatives fostering clear communication to the citizen, but there is room for improvement.

At the European level, non-obligatory guidelines for techno-preventive measures have already been formulated. However, Belgium has not yet elected to make these guidelines mandatory<sup>12</sup>. Within Belgium, the regional governments are the ones responsible for this. During the States General mentioned above, a vision text was drafted on this subject.<sup>13</sup> Mentioned in this text is a mandatory Burglary Prevention Council whereby the owners are still free to decide whether or not they apply the guidelines provided. However, this measure has not yet been implemented. The General Service for Safety and Prevention has already been in contact with the regional governments, but no concrete steps have yet been taken.

"Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design" (CPTED) is a principle in which crime and a lack of security can be handled via environmentally oriented measures. In Belgium, however, this principle is still not applied frequently enough. Since the regional governments are responsible for housing and city planning, they are the most important partners in this. Contacts were already made but, here too, there was no concrete outcome. The collaboration with architects is also important here. There is still a great deal of room for the expansion of this principle. When it comes to the development of new residential districts, in particular, this can be very important.

The policy must be grounded on evidence; therefore the evidence-based approach is important. Evidence-based means that the know-how related to the handling of domestic burglary must be expanded. Within the General Service for Safety and Prevention, a great deal of effort is being made to improve their expertise. As a part of this, they are also working together with the academic world in order to stimulate the research efforts related to domestic burglaries. In addition to that, the Federal Police is carefully studying the phenomenon of the itinerant perpetrator groups in order to arrive at an improved approach to them. Here too, it often comes down to the exchange of information, which is required to obtain a more complete representation of the phenomenon. The Federal Police make great efforts in this area via the District Information Crossroads. These efforts show that a great deal is already being done to work in an evidence-based manner.

What is notable about the policy is that very few impact evaluations are performed. The partners, both individually and in collaboration with one another, initiate a great deal, but it is not clear what the effect of this is. Undertaking more evaluations would be appropriate for the purpose of knowing what the efforts made by the administration and by the partners produce. The lack of these impact evaluations is a fundamental reason why a scientific cost-benefit analysis is so difficult to make. It is often clear which costs are involved in a project, but without an evaluation, it is extremely difficult to list the benefits of such a project. Working in an evidence-based manner would also go more smoothly if there were more evaluations at hand.

When reviewing the goals from 2013, several good themes did emerge. Serious efforts were made in the collaborations, the exchange of information and the communication with the partners and the citizens. These are all very important parts of an efficient prevention policy.

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<sup>11</sup> During the terrain visits, several of these campaigns were addressed.

<sup>12</sup> The Netherlands has already decided to start the Safe Living (Veilig Wonen) quality mark. This is required for a minimum of techno-preventive measures.

<sup>13</sup> See Cost-benefit Analysis, p. 61

The impetus for the continued elaboration of techno-preventive and environmentally oriented measures has already been provided, but this elaboration must be explored in greater depth. In addition, all of the prior projects and collaborations must be evaluated. Only then can an effective analysis of the policy be made.

## Conclusion

The formulation of a cost-benefit analysis is a big job. Since it is extraordinarily difficult to determine the exact price of certain costs and benefits,<sup>14</sup> a decision was made against preparing a purely scientific cost-benefit analysis. Instead, the focus was on mapping out all of the actors who are involved in the handling of domestic burglary, the existing policy instruments, the initiatives already taken and the available numerical data. Here, too, several difficulties, such as the non-availability or the late availability of numerical data, were encountered. On the other hand, the current cost-benefit analysis provides a clear overview of all of the stakeholders. The question 'who's doing what' now has a structured answer.

The cost-benefit analysis was divided into four large components: the police component, the judicial component, the administrative component and the private partners' component. Within the police component, both the Federal and the Local Police were covered in detail, and the international dimension was not forgotten either. The judicial component also consists of local and federal services and of an international institution. The layered structure of the Belgian State also emerges in the administrative component. First, the Federal Public Services were highlighted followed by the regional governments and then finally the local governments. There is also an international service present in this component. Finally, the private partners were subdivided into four groups: the insurance companies, the architects, the academic world and the citizens. These categories were chosen in order to provide as structured a representation as possible of the prevention policy related to domestic burglary.

The most important aspects of the policy are collaboration and the exchange of information; the national and international databases are extremely important parts of this. It is through these that we intend to obtain integral and integrated safety provision. In addition, great efforts are made in the area of communication to the partners. Finally, the techno-preventive and environmentally oriented measures must continue to be refined and promoted.

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<sup>14</sup> For example, psychological problems resulting from a burglary or the emotional value of a lost heirloom...