

An integral methodology
to develop an informative-led and community-oriented policy
to tackle domestic burglary
(A methodology to tackle burglary)
HOME/2012/ISEC/FP/C2

Report Advice Council Domestic Burglary

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European Commission – Directorate-General Home Affairs

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The third advisory council took place on 28 April 2014, from 10h00 until 12h00.

1. Introduction

Leen Cortebeeck presides the meeting. After the welcome speech, there were personnel announcements, followed by the evaluation of the previous report.

Since 10 March 2014, the Directorate Local Integral Security has a new Director. Mr. Pierre Thomas has taken over from Rachid Kerkab, who performed the function ad interim since 5 February 2013.

Febe Liagre has been appointed as the new full-time employee for the ISEC project "Domestic Burglary". Her studies in London and her diploma "Master in International Law" are a good basis for this function.

Patrick Janssens does no longer work on this project.

The report of the previous advice council on 20 February 2014 is approved without comments.

2. Cost-benefit analysis of the current policy on burglaries

As discussed before, the cost-benefit analysis will not be scientific research, but will be explicitly used as a policy analysis instrument.

To keep the Advice Council informed of the situation, the new elements of the cost-benefit analysis are discussed.

- An extra chapter will outline a general overview. Here, it will be tried to discuss the numbers and statistics on domestic burglaries of the last five years.
- The various chapters will be sent to the concerned departments, and feedback will be requested.
- The terrain visits will be integrated in the cost-benefit analysis to maintain consistency.
- Care is taken that the analysis does not become too large, and that the link between both is relevant.

- The focus lies mainly on the departments, on what they do and on how they operate. Less attention is paid to scientific literature.

The Advice Council requests to receive the most recent version. The project group will soon redeliver this document to the Advice Council for further reflection.

3. Focus groups 28 March 2014

One of the deliverables of this European project is the organisation of two focus groups. The participants of these focus groups consist of the European partners as well as of the national experts. Seven member states were represented during the first focus group on Friday 28 March 2014, being Germany, Ireland, Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, Lithuania, and Denmark. There was a mix of Belgian and European experts present, divided between public and private partners, and between preventive and repressive actors.

During the first focus group, the subjects of travelling offender groups and new technologies were discussed.

Jeroen De Stercke presents the conclusions of this first focus group.

With travelling offender groups, two major obstacles surfaced, i.e. a slow legislature and a difficult information exchange.

A national database of who lives where does not exist everywhere. It is not mandatory everywhere to report every move. The installation of such a database does not only depend on the budget, but also on the mentality. In the discussion on new technologies, it was particularly striking that similar technologies are being used everywhere, but the quantities and implementations are different. This is mainly because of different privacy laws.

The report of this first focus group is currently presented to the moderators and the participants. As soon as they validate these reports, they will also be delivered to the Advice Council.

Ivo Schoeters and Dirk Geurts have participated in the previous focus group and provide feedback on it. The focus group was interesting, and it was good to see that not only Western European countries participated. The manner of working with propositions ensures sufficient discussion and information. New technology was an important subject, but the base should not be forgotten! We need to start at the base by sensitizing awareness. Know your street, who lives where?

We should neither forget that not every country has a national register: in Ireland for example, it is not known who lives where.

Then, the ANPR project from Turnhout was discussed. This project focuses on the ANPR cameras, and the so-called blacklist. The special infrared security cameras ensure a general prevention, and the prevention of crimes. The goal is to achieve a more efficient tackling of domestic burglaries with ANPR. The blacklist check is aimed at effectively signalling signalled persons and vehicles, and increasing the directed monitoring on specific offenders. There are two action points in this project. The first is sensitizing, and the second is making sure that the government treats the blacklist with more flexibility. This project will be included in the good practices, and it will be checked if a terrain visit would be possible. In Liège, there are also

many cameras, but these are rather destined for civilian law enforcement. Not all cameras can handle the ANPR system, as it needs infrared. One has to be very careful too as this can be very labour-intensive. Apparently, Turnhout is writing programs for this, such that the analyses go faster. Gradually, in Wallonia there are also more PLPs, because it is realised that social control is important.

The European project stresses prevention, but it is commented if nothing can be enforced, for example, when building new homes or constructing allotments. Can we enforce playing rules? Leen Cortebeek notes that this option is also investigated within the Directorate Local Integral Security. It will soon also be discussed with the concerned regions, as this matter is a regional jurisdiction.

From different sides, it is confirmed that there are problems with property crimes in each police zone. The Netherlands has flexible laws, and that way mayors easily receive information. In Belgium, these laws do not exist. This highlights once more the importance of information exchange. E.g., in Antwerp there was a question to start a project around checking invalidity cards. This was forbidden due to the privacy legislation.

Jeroen De Stercke clarifies what is the function of the focus groups. Through these focus groups, further obstacles can be identified, and concrete proposals can be made regarding future policy. The goal is to collect national as well as European reflections. Our service will also learn from this.

4. Focus groups 21 May 2014

Ailien Stove discusses the next focus group, planned for Wednesday 21 May 2014. This one will follow the same outline as the previous one.

These focus groups focus on the following two themes:

- A visible and tangible policy around domestic burglaries – Moderator: Prof. Dr. Em. Paul Ponsaers (University of Ghent)
- A burglary happens. The victim is left behind. – Moderator: Prof. Dr. Els Enhus (Free University of Brussels)

Ivo Schoeters mentions the problem that in most countries, facts on burglaries and robberies are only brought in front of a court from a certain number of proven facts. E.g., out of 500 committed offences, 50 have been proven, so these 50 will be brought to court. The victims of the other 450 committed offences do not even know whether the offenders have been caught. This shows once again that each committed offence should be put in a database as accurately and as quickly as possible. Then the information will be available to any involved person.

Leen Cortebeek mentions the topic of the BINs (neighbourhood information networks). The question rises if the BINs are indeed responsible for the reduction in the number of domestic burglaries. How can this be measured? How can we be sure that it does not just concern a 'move' of domestic burglaries?

Guido Bennaerts notes attention should not only be paid to the place of residence, but also to the working place. The police decides which information they pass; passing on soft information is important. Another important point with the BINs is that citizens have to be willing to call, and there is a need for more awareness here. There is a mobile app for the

smartphone where the government can put information. Child Focus is also involved in this. This does not violate privacy legislation because the user decides which information he or she wishes to receive. This is the Yazuka app. Unfortunately, this only works on 3G, which still excludes lots of users.

Guido Bennaerts presents a nice example of preventive action. In Antwerp, some prevention consultants will cooperate in the lab. By working on the crime scene, this will benefit prevention. This way, the prevention consultants are involved at several levels of the investigation; they will gain more insight into the operation mode of burglars, and will be able to come up with better prevention strategies.

5. Terrain visits

Ailien Stove discusses the terrain visits that are planned during this project, with the objective to collect about thirty best practices regarding domestic burglary prevention. This is part of the deliverables. Some conclusions came already forth from the terrain visits that were done. The visits as well as the reports of the projects 'Wij-kk-ijken' and 'Villa Daily' were already concluded. The projects 'S-DNA' and 'Demo space prevention services' were visited, and the reports are being drafted.

There are many more projects on the agenda, not only preventive ones, but judicial projects as well, such as 'Artemis'.

We are also still looking for two French-speaking projects. The Turnhout project will also be added to the list.

The list with good practices and the corresponding reports will be distributed.

6. World Café

Another activity that is organised within the context of this European project is a World Café. Febe Liagre proposed this to the Advice Council.

The World Café will consist of some 100 participants (terrain people), who will discuss premises and open questions on domestic burglary and prevention. The premises will be formulated in a provocative way to stimulate the discussion. The participants will be subdivided into smaller groups of about seven persons. In order to facilitate the discussions, it is chosen to foresee separate Dutch-speaking and French-speaking tables.

The goal of the World Café is to collect as many opinions as possible on the various premises, in order to make policy proposals from there.

Violet Baert will present the invitation for participants in a meeting on 13 May with all DPAs. Some propositions for premises: Is there support for the installation of protection against burglary in new homes? As well when this would cost money? The insurance companies should definitely have their say. We need to raise awareness with citizens to register.

The Advice Council provides some tips to make this World Café a success. There needs to be a good time manager. Care needs to be taken that the World Café would not become too busy. Another option would be to ask questions instead of formulating premises.

7. Conclusion

The sensitization of the population is still the most important aspect of domestic burglary prevention. Raising awareness of the problem and the solutions with the citizens would be a big step forward.

The obstacle of information exchange at local, regional, national, and European level is big. There are big differences between the European countries, and this makes it difficult to do prevention. However, also within Belgium there is still a lot of work to fine-tune the exchange of information.

8. Various – Agreements

The next Advice Council will take place on **30 June 2014, from 10h00 to 12h00**.

Dates for the following Advice Councils:

- Thursday 28 August.2014, 10h00-12h00
Location: FOD IBZ (Ministry of Internal Affairs), 76 Avenue Waterloo, 1000 Brussels (Waterloo room)

We wish to thank you for the cooperation and for your input.



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