

# **Applied Crime Prevention as a Continuous Challenge for State, Municipalities and Citizen's Associations Alike**

## **Reflections on the Case of Germany**

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### **Introduction to the Topic, with Special Reference to Changes in the Treatment and Control of Child and Juvenile Delinquency**

The concrete planning and sustainable realization of crime prevention in Germany has a rather short history of some 30 years by now. If one is looking at the earlier situation after the 1950's one can find that the term "Kriminalprävention" (prevention of crime) for general preventive considerations and the term "Kriminalprophylaxe" (prophylaxis of criminality) for individual preventive efforts had been used in a rather widespread manner for e.g. criminal policy statements in penal law politics, welcome addresses at professional associations' annual conferences or anniversaries, or even in scholarly texts on the issue of crime control. However, there was, especially re-evaluated in the retrospective based on the present 21<sup>st</sup> century situation, an astonishing lack of concrete practice as well as elaborated theory.

In the field of caring for child and juvenile delinquency for example the local and regional authorities had to turn to the "Youth Welfare Law" (Jugendwohlfahrtsgesetz, JWG). It was originally enacted in 1920 with some influence of then modern pedagogic and child development psychology thoughts during the Weimar Republic. Under the National Socialism from 1933 on this act was re-shaped as "Reichs-Jugendwohlfahrtsgesetz" (RJWG) in order to so to speak "get rid" of concepts considered then as intolerable "softening" of state and societal answers to wayward families and their offspring, to otherwise individually endangered or wayward young persons, and in particular dangerous early childhood offenders, not to speak about "Un-German" minorities. After World War II the legislator purged the RJWG from evident Nazi parts and re-named it to JWG. However, its basic structure as a traditional "paternalistic" act of executive-administrative law remained untouched.

After a moderate reform of some details in the early 1960's the federal legislator enacted a fundamental reform in 1990: The JWG was abolished, and a new concept of public administration with prioritization of community-service was launched by enacting the "Kinder- und Jugendhilfegesetz" (KJHG, Law on Support and Counselling of Children and Youth). Therein the leading idea was to strengthen the capacities of parents to create and maintain a good everyday domestic life, to care for and educate properly their children, and in particular to beware them of external and internal dangers for their personality development, physically, psychologically and intellectually. In a short slogan: As much as possible municipal or state acute and if necessary continuous support, as little as possible restrictions or behavioural orders, in particular limits to or full withdrawal of parental authority.

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In addition came a remarkable legalization of diversionary strategies and tactics which had developed in the practice of law enforcement and adjudication of juvenile delinquents (i. e. young persons from 14 years of age on) since the 1970's. Those new ways and means to deal carefully and cautiously with young persons charged with an offence, in particular first offenders, were guided by the basic philosophy of "wait and see". In dealing with rather petty offences or offenders, the Youth Prosecutor was the first to decide whether or not to dismiss the case, be it without any further action or be it with sending the files to the local or regional Youth Authority for consideration and eventual taking measures of help, support or guidance. Alternatively, in particular concerning moderately heavy offences or young offenders, the Youth Prosecutor could ask the Juvenile Judge at the local Youth Court to impose to the young delinquent informal "measures" or "directives", and then, if the Judge did so, postpone the further prosecution for a kind of probationary period, and eventually dismiss the case if the youngster sufficiently obeyed to the rules. If the Youth Prosecutor had decided, on the opposite, to formally charge the young delinquent with the offence, the Juvenile Judge could herself/himself decide to chose an informal procedure, especially when the youngster would have shown meanwhile signs of personal maturing and/or behavioural improvement.

Those practical juvenile justice efforts were considered by the majority of scholars of juvenile penal law doctrine if not as fully justified than at least para-legally useful and basically approvable. So in the event in all, then 11, States of the (Western) Federal Republic of Germany, until the late 1980's the youth prosecutors and judges had extensively turned to informal regulation of juvenile offences instead of formal charges and trials. There was, however, a wide variation in the concrete extent: the percentage of informal procedures and measures ranged from some 40 % in the southern federal states to nearly 90% in the northern federal states.

The so-called First Act to Reform the Youth Court Law (YCL) of 1990<sup>2</sup> was carefully prepared by the (youth) penal law and penal procedure section of the Federal Ministry of Justice.<sup>3</sup> It took up, inter alia, the national and international discussion which had developed from the 1970's on with respect to the diversion of child and juvenile offenders from penal procedures and sanctions. The consolidated new version of the whole YCL 1990 reshaped so far fundamentally the already existing sections 45 and 47 along the combined guiding principles of subsidiarity and diversion.<sup>4</sup>

In condensing this re-orientation of juvenile delinquency and crime control policy and practice to the nutshell, one could phrase the core message like this: (1) Make use as long and as far as possible of non-reaction (immediate dismissal) or informal measures (early diversion) instead of formal procedures and penal law; (2) If a recourse to penal law principles seems unavoidable due to case or offender or victim particularities, however, try as long and as much as possible to impose, and if suitable also repeatedly, single or mixed educational measures and directives

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<sup>2</sup> Erstes Gesetz zur Reform des Jugendgerichtsgesetzes, JGG. This JGG, the 3rd after its predecessor laws of 1923 and 1943, had been enacted in the year 1953, and had been from then on incrementally modified by the competent federal legislator, i.e. the federal parliament in Bonn.

<sup>3</sup> The section's federal civil servants acted in close and continuous contact with other institutions and societies, in particular with the very influential „German Association of Youth Courts and Youth Court Aid“ (Deutsche Vereinigung für Jugendgerichte und Jugendgerichtshilfen e.V.; <http://www.dvjj.de/>), which had run its own juvenile justice reform commissions.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Frieder Dünkel: Juvenile Justice in Germany: Between Welfare and Justice. In: Josine Junger-Tas (Ed.), International Handbook of Juvenile Justice, New York: Springer Publishers 2008, Pp. 225-262.

not having the legal quality of a criminal penalty<sup>5</sup>, in order not to hamper the future integration of young people.

To make it more concrete in the perspectives of juvenile criminology and youth delinquency prevention: Along the subsidiary principle in Youth Court Law<sup>6</sup> the Youth Prosecutor has got more than ever before the central role in paving the way of a young defendant either a limine away from any further procedure, or alternatively to a transfer to municipal or eventually state youth authority procedures, or to a so-called simplified hearing before the sitting Juvenile Judge, or eventually to a formal charge ending in a regular Youth Court criminal trial.<sup>7</sup>

- Along paragraph 1 of section 45 YCL the Youth Prosecutor can dismiss the case fully if the offence is to be considered a minor violation of law in terms of little guilt of the young defendant and no public interest in a penal response, as defined in section 153 of the GCPP.
- If the case transcends the quality of paragraph 1, the Youth Prosecutor has to clear up along paragraph 2 of section 45 YCL whether in the aftermath of the offence a sufficient “educational measure” or a combination of measures has already been taken by other authorities. Those authorities are not defined by law. The common opinion of practitioners and legal and criminological scholars alike is, however, that it could be any person or institution entitled legally to educate minors either directly by constitutional principles<sup>8</sup> or by special laws based on those principles.

The range goes, only exemplified here partially, from parents to youth associations’ coaches or school teachers or masters in vocational education, up to municipal youth authority employees and, finally, family court judges. Any measure taken by these and other competent bearers of authority is to be considered legally “sufficient” if the Youth Prosecutor concludes that it has made superfluous a formal criminal charge and even a diversionary implication of the Juvenile Judge (see next dot).

Most important in comparison to adult criminal law and procedure is the substantial rule that prosecutorial power to act in this way is not only applicable in cases of misdemeanours but also in cases where the young defendant has committed a criminal felony. And also very important is that a successful out-of-court reconciliation or restorative-justice procedure (like victim-offender-mediation or family conference or peace making circle) counts as full equivalent of a traditional sufficient reaction.

- If in a case where pre-justice educational measures did not take place or, if existing, were legally not to be considered sufficient, the Youth Prosecutor has, before deciding to enter a formal charge leading to a Youth Court procedure resp. trial, to try as far as possible a so-called “suggestion to action” as to be addressed to the local Juvenile Judge along paragraph 3 of section 45 YCL. The content of such a suggestion has to aim at eventually eliminating

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<sup>5</sup> Those penalties have to be entered into the Federal Central Registry (Bundeszentralregister), and set up a criminal record for the convicted person in the Central Criminal Registry. Educational measures and directives, in the opposite, are separately entered into a Federal Educational Registry (Erziehungsregister) and do formally not counted as a criminal record for the young person. The Educational Registry is regularly not accessible for even public institutions except the Public Prosecutors Offices and the Criminal Courts including Youth Courts.

<sup>6</sup> Which is considered as a principle overarching the adult penal procedure principles: a) the basic principle of legality or mandatory prosecution principle along sections 152,160,163 and 1070 of the German Code of Penal Procedure (Strafprozessordnung), and b) the moderating principle of discretion resp. opportunity principle, along section 152 and seq. of the GCPP.

<sup>7</sup> Under certain conditions, which cannot be specified here due to lack of space, the Youth Prosecutor needs the written consent of the Juvenile Judge.

<sup>8</sup> In particular Article 6 of the German Basic Law (Grundgesetz) on the priority of parents or other competent legal guardians, exceptionally municipal or state institutions along the “*parens patriae*” principle.

the public need for either educating or/and correcting the young defendant by sanctions which in the worst case might lead to youth imprisonment in special institutions. Upon suggestion of the Youth Prosecutor the Juvenile Judge can impose, either exclusively or in suitable combinations, a very informal “admonition” or certain reactions as regulated in the YCL.<sup>9</sup> These are on the one hand selected “educational measures”, namely delivering community service tasks, trying to come to terms with the victim via victim-offender-mediation, and participating in a road traffic training course.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand come the following “conditions” as part of broader “correcting measures” aimed at making clear to the young defendant that he/she will have to take responsibility for the injustice done to the victim: a) to apologize explicitly to his/her victim(s) for the offence and its consequences, b) to try to make restitution for the damage caused as fully as possible, c) to engage in direct services for the victim or in useful services for the public good (like repairing damaged or destroyed child playgrounds), and d) spending a certain amount of money for the work of a charitable organization (like victim assistance programs or offender rehabilitation associations).<sup>11</sup>

In consequence of the new legal situation and a growing support for diversion in juvenile justice among practitioners and legal scholars the average diversion rate in Germany is now around 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of all decisions to close a youth court law case either by a Juvenile Prosecutor or a Juvenile Judge after the filing of a prosecutorial motion for a simplified procedure before the single sitting Juvenile Judge or a formal charge for a criminal youth court trial.<sup>12</sup> And also the large range of the diversion rate between the juvenile justice systems of the federal states of the Federal Republic of Germany (16 after the re-unification in the year 1990) has considerably diminished. Fortunately, too, more and more of the many diversionary local programmes run by private community associations or municipal youth divisions have turned to include principles and practices of substantial and sustainable crime prevention in their efforts. The “ground-wave” towards such new crime prevention ideas and programmes shall be dealt with a bit in detail in the following chapters of that article.

## **1. Germany on the Move to Modern Crime Prevention up to the 1980’s**

Some fore-running worthwhile examples for elaborated crime prevention theorizing and scattered practical efforts in that direction in (West-) Germany can retrospectively be found already in the 1980’s. Before that decade, either not much happened or, if it might actually have been happened, not much is publicly remembered or accessible via literature sources. So far it seems structurally interesting to show the results of some recent search-runs in German data bases, using a couple of different crime prevention related terms.

A run in the joint data banks of the library and documentation services of the Bundesverfassungsgericht (Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe) and the Bundesgerichtshof (Federal High Court of Appeal in – inter alia – penal matters, also located in Karlsruhe) unearthed the following results: 280 hits overall, of them 7 for 1980 to 1989, 59 from 1990 to 1999, and 114 from 2000 to early 2014. Another run in the specialized databank KrimDok (literally translated:

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<sup>9</sup> Those reactions could also be imposed by a formal decision after a simplified youth procedure or a youth criminal trial

<sup>10</sup> Details are regulated in section 10 of the YCL.

<sup>11</sup> Details are regulated in sections 13 and 15 YCL.

<sup>12</sup> Details are regulated in section 47 YCL. In any case, the Juvenile Judge needs the consent of the Youth Prosecutor when he/she prefers to choose a diversionary solution instead of following the demand for a formal procedure.

criminological documentation<sup>13</sup>) of the Tuebingen “Special Service Library on Criminology”, funded by the German Research Foundation for the purpose of nationwide collection and loaning of relevant publications, produced the following search results: Less than 10 in each year between 1970 and 1979, usually more than 10 but less than 20 in each year between 1980 and 1989, rising from more than 20 in the early 1990’s up to some 160 at the end of the decade, calming down so to speak after that pike in the 2000’s, varying between 40 and 70 in each and every year.

If one studies the early development in a more qualitative manner it comes clear that German police authorities and institutions were among the first to tackle the issue of crime prevention seriously as an important policy tasks, to be developed nationally, regionally and locally as a common task for different authorities, institutions and associations. Particularly the Bundeskriminalamt in Wiesbaden (Federal Criminal Police Authority) was repeatedly active, inter alia with its wide outreaching so-called nationwide “autumn conferences” attracting high level practitioners and criminal policy makers and scholars alike. The first relevant autumn conference was that of 1964 with the main topic of “Preventative Combating of Crime”. A decade later the 1975 autumn conference dealt with the general topic of the relationship between “Police and Prevention”. And at the eve of the 1990’s the general title of the 1988 autumn conference approached closer the core issue: “Crime Control as a Challenge/Task for the Society as a Whole”.

However, it is important to point out explicitly that by order of the German Constitution, regarding the bad experiences with central police forces during Nazi Germany, “policing” was basically considered as a state owned jurisdiction. An officially as such designated “Federal Police” authority/force has been developing only during the restructuring of state-federal competency order after the re-unification in the decades after 1990. So, until then, the state police institutions had a prerogative in concretely planning and implementing relevant programmes. But nothing much systematic developed there. A then for many police and other forces somehow provocative initiative had been started in the 1970’s by another of the public powers, i. e. the judicial one. Hans-Dieter Schwind, university professor of criminology with first-hand knowledge of U.S. crime prevention theories, concepts and initiatives, had become Minister of Justice in the Northern State of Lower Saxony. After realizing the – politely said – unsatisfactory but not singular situation in that State he created, inter alia, in Hannover (the capital city of Lower Saxony), together with the competent police authority, the “Programme Police and Social Work”, where specially trained judicial social workers were deployed to a newly created office at the police headquarters in order to offer first-line personal help and social services to arrested suspects or also to victims of crime turning to the police for assistance. And Professor Schwind installed also, against a lot of open and even more mental reservations among his ministerial staff, a new and for whole Germany first task force for “Planning, Research and the Organization of Social Services of Justice” within his Ministry. Together with others he and members of this task force developed a concise concept of a “Comprehensive Crime Prevention Scheme”, aiming at integrating the tasks of different hitherto separately planning and acting Government Areas of Responsibility.<sup>14</sup> Professor Edwin Kube who was appointed as Director of the Institute of Criminalistics at the BKA, engaged on the federal police side in the 1980’s

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<sup>13</sup> KrimDok contained some 180,000 bibliographic entries in early 2014!

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Hans-Dieter Schwind et al. (Eds.): Präventive Kriminalpolitik. Beiträge zur ressortübergreifenden Kriminalprävention aus Forschung, Praxis und Politik. Heidelberg: Kriminalistik-Verlag 1980; XVIII and 649 Pp.

successfully with the endeavour to take stock of the theoretical ideas and the experiential wisdom of police practice, and eventually published a very influential scholarly text on “Systematic Crime Prevention”.<sup>15</sup>

In the Mid-1980’s the German Federal Government was getting highly concerned about the perceived rise in violent crime all over Germany, in particular youth violence and violence in families and partnerships. The cabinet, being aware of Hans-Dieter Schwind’s activities and stamina, eventually asked him to help to create a “Violence Commission” with the purpose of tacking stock of all policy, legislative, practical and scientific aspects of, and action related knowledge on, dealing efficiently and effectively with public and private violence. The commission was not to be a “National Commission”. The reason for that was, as already mentioned above, that the Federal Government very much strived for including in the commission also representatives from the police and also the judiciary. Since the bulk of constitutional competence here was on the side of the States, trying to get these States into a formal collaboration effort (with divergent governments and party constellations) would have resulted in at least long standing and substantially “thick” political negotiations. So it was decided to have the Violence Commission as a Commission of Federal Government, with political support of federal parliamentary factions. Together with Jürgen Baumann, a then highly renowned and policy oriented penal law professor, Schwind was eventually appointed as Co-Chair of the commission which worked between 1987 and 1990 in an interdisciplinary structure, including practitioners of the police and the judiciary and the social and youth and welfare authorities, policy makers from different federal and state levels, and scholars from universities, including criminologists. The commission’s work as such, and eventually the final 4-volume-report with several additional working papers, had a kind of “inducing impact” in helping to get the discussion, planning and implementing of applied crime prevention in Germany off the ground.<sup>16</sup> However, still the pace of affairs remained rather slow for a couple of further years.

## **2. The New Wave of Applied Crime Prevention in Germany since the 1990’s**

It was very clear for all policy makers, practitioners and scholars eager to push modern crime prevention thoughts, theories and programmes forward, that it would take probably decades to develop a consented and “workable” formal national plan for crime prevention, and to convince authorities on the federal, state and municipal (at least big city) levels alike to enter into a validly binding agreement of implementation. So far, and at least compared to the “good old times” of the new Governments and political forces in the post-communist centralized State of Hungary, it seemed of no avail to prepare a kind of real “National Strategy on Crime Prevention” like the one Katalin Gönczöl, our dear colleague to be honoured by the manifold contributions to the present *Liber Amicorum*, was institutionally enabled and actually capable to launch, together with allies from different origin and location, in 2003 in her position as the competent leader of the special division within the Hungarian Ministry of the Interior.<sup>17</sup> Instead of such an endeav-

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. Edwin Kube: *Systematische Kriminalprävention – Mit praktischen Hinweisen*. 2. Auflage. Wiesbaden: BKA 1986.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Hans-Dieter Schwind & Jürgen Baumann (Eds.): *Ursachen, Prävention und Kontrolle von Gewalt. Analysen und Vorschläge der Unabhängigen Regierungskommission zur Verhinderung und Bekämpfung von Gewalt*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot 1990. (4 Volumes).

<sup>17</sup> With regard to changes and development of penal policy and community policing in Hungary, she showed to my opinion, already a few years later, some implicit concerns about the stability of the future development. Cf.

our many activists, including myself as the founding and still acting chair of the German Foundation of Crime Prevention and Offender Support” (Deutsche Stiftung für Verbrechensverhütung und Straffälligenhilfe, DVS)<sup>18</sup> developed the vision, and conceived then step by step, under oftentimes varying and difficult and sensitive conditions, an informal road map towards a nationwide movement overarching the established institutional and stakeholder interest positions.

The initial ignition spark so to speak came from Northern Germany. The Hanseatic City of Lübeck (State of Schleswig-Holstein) inaugurated, in the year 1992, the first German “Municipal Crime Prevention Council” for an integrated tackling of eventually all community related deviancy, delinquency, crime, victimization and fear of crime issues. Apart from the formal engagement and substantial commitment of the Lord Mayor of that historic city, a couple of other institutions joined in and sent representatives, like the locally situated Public Prosecutors’ Office at the Regional (Criminal) Court, the Criminal and Juvenile Courts, the City Police office answering to the State Ministry of the Interior, the Social Services Department of the City, the Commerce Chamber, Court Aid and Probation offices, and a couple of charitable associations. The Lübeck activists had close contacts to representatives of the then “Police Advanced Management Academy” at Münster-Hiltrup.<sup>19</sup>

Other cities and towns in the State of Schleswig-Holstein followed the Lübeck example, and also cities and towns in other Northern States.<sup>20</sup> So quasi naturally originated at first an uncertain idea, and then swiftly a firm plan, to create a State-wide platform for common issues of all community crime prevention councils and similar private programs and initiatives, and for accumulating knowledge and service capacities at a central location. In the event the local forces joined in with the Schleswig-Holstein Government to establish a “State Council for Crime Prevention”, attached to the Ministry of Interior Affairs in Kiel, the capital city of Schleswig-Holstein.<sup>21</sup> One of the then leading persons in that State Council was Jörg Ziercke, for many years and still now President of the Bundeskriminalamt in Wiesbaden (BKA), a circumstance which aptly explains – at least in part – why nowadays crime prevention ideas and efforts are continuously esteemed there, including the awarding of relevant financial grants to criminological and other researchers for empirical projects.

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K. Gönczöl: Developing Humane Criminal Justice Systems in Democratic Societies: An Update from Hungary. *Probation Journal* 52 (2), 21005, Pp. 181-186.

<sup>18</sup> Founded in 1993 along the laws of the Federal State of Northrhine-Westfalia, the biggest one in terms of the population number, with some 17 million inhabitants.

<sup>19</sup> Polizei-Führungsakademie, a tertiary professional qualification institution for experienced police officers, predestined for leading positions in their State of origin in case of successful termination of the Academy programme. The PFA was a common undertaking of the collective the Ministries of Interior of all Federal States, with kind of special relations to the Federal Government, represented by the Federal Minister of Interior Affairs in Bonn. A couple of years ago the PFA was re-organized and transformed into the „German High School for the Police“ (literally translated from „Deutsche Hochschule der Polizei“), which is to serve all State and Federal police forces as the central common tertiary education/professional qualification institution with basically the character of a University of Applied Sciences. The curriculum includes issues of prevention theory, policy and applied crime prevention.

<sup>20</sup> One of the most active and widely recognized councils has been the one of the City of Oldenburg, State of Lower Saxony, established in 1995 as a public law foundation. Beginning with 1999, this foundation established an Institute for Crime Prevention and Security Management as “working platform” with a multi-faceted agenda.

<sup>21</sup> „Landesrat für Kriminalitätsverhütung“ Schleswig-Holstein. In German constitutional and public law tradition the Federal States carry the name „Land“ or, in the plural, „Länder“, often also called „Bundesländer“.

In the year 1997 the so-called permanent Conference of the State Ministries and Senatorial Departments, and of the Federal Ministry, of the Interior confirmed the re-launch of the former traditional police crime prevention campaign concept. Based on years of planning and careful steps of institutional implementation in the police authorities and forces, the new factually nation-wide institutionalization carried the name “Programm Polizeiliche Kriminalprävention der Länder und des Bundes” (ProPK), the best translated as “Joint State and Federal Programme for Crime Prevention”. This programme is being financed by contributions from the Ministerial budgets, it runs a central headquarters and administrative and operational office in Stuttgart, attached to the State of Baden-Württemberg Office of Criminal Police.<sup>22</sup>

Also in the same year 1997 the Federal Ministry for Family, Woman, Seniors and Youth (BMFSFJ) provided considerable financial resources to the German Youth Institute (Deutsches Jugendinstitut, DJI) located in Munich, the capital city of the State of Bavaria, in order to enable this Institute to establish a special “Working Unit for Child and Youth Crime Prevention” with a social science resp. public welfare or health perspective.

In the year 1999 “the Federal Ministry for Traffic, Building/Construction and Town Development”<sup>23</sup> launched a nation-wide incentive programme for preventive enhancement of town and city structures and public spheres under the title “Social Towns and Cities”.<sup>24</sup>

In the year 2001 the German Federal Government and the German States inaugurated the civil law foundation “German Forum for Crime Prevention” (DFK)<sup>25</sup> as a nation-wide body for crime prevention in Germany by promoting the various approaches to reduce crime and criminality. Meanwhile several other institutions or bodies joined in, so the Association of German Towns and Cities, the German Association of Municipalities, and more than 20 private institutions, companies and (mostly) charitable associations. The DFK defines its central tasks as a) networking and co-operation, b) bundling, c) management and transfer of knowledge, and d) public relations.

In the same year 2001, Germany joined an initiative of the European Council for Justice and Interior for launching a European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN) with headquarters at the EU in Brussels. This Network consists of a nominated National Representative from each EU Member State, a Substitute Representative, and other crime prevention experts including practitioners and academics.

### **3.) The Promising Development of a Comprehensive Nation-Wide Conference-Series in Germany: “Deutscher Präventionstag” resp. “German Congress on Crime Prevention**

The above named Lübeck City Council for Crime Prevention was eager already shortly after its inauguration (in 1992) to create a regional and, in the longer run, also national network, including additionally institutions and initiatives and private associations as located and active in the border regions of neighbouring EU-member states. The Council activists contacted many bodies and persons, and within just three years of networking and co-ordinated planning and preparation the joint forces were successful in running, in September 2005, the factual First German

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. its main topical website of “Kriminalpolizeiliche Beratung under: <http://www.polizei-beratung.de/>

<sup>23</sup> Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Stadtentwicklung, recently re-organized and renamed as Federal Ministry for Traffic and Digital Infrastructure (Ministerium für Verkehr und Digitale Infrastruktur, BMVDI).

<sup>24</sup> „Programm Soziale Stadt“, extended since 2012/3 under the new title, which is more community and neighbourhood oriented as „Programm Soziale Stadt – Investitionen im Quartier“ („Programme Social Towns and Cities – Investing in Blocks resp. Neighbourhoods“).

<sup>25</sup> Stiftung Deutsches Forum für Kriminalprävention: <http://www.kriminalpraevention.de>

Congress on Crime Prevention in Lübeck.<sup>26</sup> A rather small number of people participated (186 delegates and some other persons in service functions). The main co-organizer was the German Foundation for Crime Prevention and Offender Support (DVS). The width of extension already in the beginning of the endeavours comes clear when one looks at the names of the institutional partners: The State of Schleswig-Holstein Council for Crime Prevention, the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation, the Further Education Department of the German Association for Social Work, Penal Law and Criminal Policy (DBH), the German Section of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, and the European Commission.

The German Congress on Crime Prevention has meanwhile been developing as “the” annual national convention for the field of crime prevention. The aim of this now well established institution is to present and strengthen crime prevention within a broad societal framework. Thus it contributes to crime reduction as well as reducing both the fear of crime, and the number of victims of crime.<sup>27</sup> The main objectives of the Congress are:

- Presenting and exchanging current and basic questions of crime prevention and its effectiveness.
- Bringing together partners within the field of crime prevention.
- Functioning as a forum for the practice of crime prevention and for fostering the exchange of expertise. Helping to get into contact at the international level and to exchange information.
- Discussing implementation strategies.
- Developing and disseminating recommendations for practice, politics, administration and research in the field of crime prevention.

Beginning with the 7<sup>th</sup> German Congress on Crime Prevention, which took place in the year 2007 at Wiesbaden, the organizers introduced within the conference frame an “Annual International Forum” in order to specifically address an international audience. Experts from all areas of crime prevention are being invited to share and discuss with English speaking colleagues (also from Germany) their ideas, goals, outcomes, projects and speeches, and to experience the German modality and means of crime prevention.<sup>28</sup>

Regarding the target groups, the German Congress on Crime Prevention as well as the Annual International Forum are geared to people from over the world (German and non-German speaking) working in all areas of crime prevention, in particular – alphabetically listed – administration, churches, health system, judiciary, local authorities, media, organizations and associations, police, politics, prevention committees, projects, schools, science, and youth welfare.

The GCOCP acts on behalf of the German Foundation for Crime Prevention and Offender Support. Its bodies and especially its management are continuously collaborating with so-called

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<sup>26</sup> For more details see the vivid opening speech by the conference chairperson, Prosecutor Dagmar Pohl-Laukamp, published in a slightly revised version in the volume „Entwicklung der Kriminalprävention in Deutschland. Allgemeine Trends und bereichsspezifische Perspektiven, zugleich Dokumentation des 3. Deutschen Präventionstages“, edited by Hans-Jürgen Kerner, Jörg-Martin Jehle und Erich Marks, Mönchengladbach: Forum Verlag Godesberg 1998. The official title as „Deutscher Präventionstag“ (German Congress on Crime Prevention) was formally established a bit later on, binding from 1997 on, with the 3rd. Congress in Bonn.

<sup>27</sup> This text and the next lines follow the GCOCP self-description as to be found at the English language website under: <http://www.gcocp.org/nano.cms/Objectives>

<sup>28</sup> For details of the up to now last publication, referring to the AIF of the 17th GCOCP in 2012 at Munich, see the Volume „International Perspectives of Crime Prevention 5“, edited by Marc Coester and Erich Marks, Mönchengladbach: Forum Verlag Godesberg 2013. The electronic version of the programmes of the 1st to 7th AIC can be downloaded from the GCOCP-Website. Direct hyperlink to the 7th event: <http://www.gcocp.org/nano.cms/18-gcocp/Page/3>

“Congress Partners“. These are on the national level the “Permanent National Partners”.<sup>29</sup> They have direct influence on planning and especially programme decisions concerning conference general theme and sub-topics, papers and presenters, organizers of thematic and free workshops, theatre performances, thematic film events, and sometimes also special children or youth universities. They also co-determine which applicant institution or association will be provided with a place in the exhibition (“market of possibilities” in the field of crime prevention), opened for the general public of the event city on the last congress day.

“Permanent International Partners” are the “European Forum for Urban Security (EFUS)”<sup>30</sup>, the “International Centre for Crime Prevention (ICCP)”<sup>31</sup>, the “World Health Organization (WHO)”<sup>32</sup>, the “UN-Habitat for a Better Urban Future”<sup>33</sup>, and the “Korean Institute of Criminology (KIC)”<sup>34</sup>.

At each and every Congress the Programm Committee and the Management invite event-related partners at local, regional and State levels.<sup>35</sup>

## Conclusion

Each concept of a nation-wide crime prevention structure with a central focus on Community Crime Prevention needs steady commitment among and between the mostly varied institutional and individual partners. On the local level, we are used in Germany to the following idiomatic expression: “crime prevention is Lord Mayors’ responsibility!” This slogan does not mean that a city or also town mayor can be expected to engage in crime prevention efforts on a so-to-speak everyday job workload. What it means instead is: If in a municipality the highest representative demonstrates repeatedly to her/his town administration collaborators, and to the city population, and in particular to the local media people, that she/he is truly convinced of the importance of a systematically planned, well structured, and integration orientated community crime prevention, than a programme has a real chance to a) get off the ground, b) to develop towards a stable undertaking instead of remaining – as often to be realized – a short term enthusiasm with all signs of a “straw-fire”. Even better if the Mayor creates, as it is by now the case in many bigger German towns and cities, a how small ever but permanent special office directly answering to the Mayor’s head office. In addition she/he should personally engage in showing up at local events like crime prevention days or anniversaries of member organizations, associations and even grass-root movements.

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<sup>29</sup> These are “DBH - Educational Services” (<http://www.dbh-online.de/unterseiten/fachverband/bildungswerk.php>), the “German Forum for Crime Prevention (DFK)” (<http://www.kriminalpraevention.de/english.html>), the “Police Crime Prevention Programme at State and National Level (ProPK)” (<http://www.polizei-beratung.de/ueber-uns.html>) and the “White Ring” as the by far largest private organisation of victim support and policy in Germany (<https://www.weisser-ring.de/internet/>) with some 65, 000 members, and regional offices in each and every federal State.

<sup>30</sup> Located in Paris: <http://efus.eu/en/>

<sup>31</sup> Located in Montréal: <http://www.crime-prevention-intl.org/>

<sup>32</sup> Geneva Division of Violence and Injury Prevention: [http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/en/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/en/)

<sup>33</sup> With headquarters in Nairobi: <http://www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=9>

<sup>34</sup> Located in Seoul: <http://www.kic.re.kr/english/main.asp>

<sup>35</sup> And also always urgently needed sponsors. The width of such an effort, and its concrete „fruit“, can be exemplary seen at the special website of the next and 19th GCOCP, which is being scheduled for April 2014 in the City of Karlsruhe, State of Baden-Württemberg: <http://www.praeventionstag.de/nano.cms/19-dpt-partner>

Permanent networking will help to create a firm feeling of transparency, acceptance and integration among the local partners and otherwise implicated collaborators. This may happen via (electronic) information sharing, repeated meetings during the course of a year, openly discussing the inevitable frustrating experiences “at the front” with clients, bystanders, inhabitants particularly at neighbourhoods, and, not to forget, base level representatives /agents of public authorities getting involved in a conflict or quarrels about a complex social problem. Partners and collaborators in addition, here and there, may suffer from communicative mishaps or may feel hurt by others’ disgruntled mood, events that are inevitable along our common “human condition”; if not handled by a sensitive open talk they may lead to an inner retreat and eventually the cancelling of all activities in the programme. For those and similar issues also the course of crime prevention development in Germany provides ample “true real-life stories”!

All in all: In Germany we still do not have an official “National Strategy on Crime Prevention”, but a vivid and multi-faceted scene of actors at and across local, regional, State and Federal levels, meeting and networking – inter alia – at the occasion of each and every annual German Congress on Crime Prevention. In Hungary Katalin Gönczöl and collaborators were lucky in elaborating and launching such a National Strategy. But it seems, considered from outside, and talking to conference participants like those at the last European Society of Criminology 2013 annual conference in Budapest, and reading relevant publications,<sup>36</sup> as if the political structures and policy changes and alterations in the “general mood” of the public may more and more hamper concrete nation-wide crime prevention programmes and further development. I cross my fingers for a possible turn towards a brighter future. I am doing this as a deeply committed friend of Hungarian criminology and criminologists, and especially as a close foreign collaborator for decades in a couple of events with Katalin Gönczöl and her colleagues.

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. Klára Kerecsi: ‘Grandpa’s Fashion in the New Year’- Innovative Theoretical Thoughts vs. Simplistic Crime Prevention Practices in Hungary. In: P. Hebberecht & E. Baillergau (Eds.): Social Crime Prevention in Late Modern Europe: A Comparative Perspective. Brussels: Academic & Scientific Publishers 2012, Pp. 181-209