

The importance of social cohesion for urban crime prevention

Final report & recommendations of
Action 5 – measure the impact of
social cohesion on security in public
places

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2. Introduction: about Action 5

This report summarises the results of Action 5 of the Urban Agenda Partnership Security in Public Spaces. The Action “measure the impact of social cohesion on security in public spaces” aimed to contribute to building a more secure, safe and resilient local community by providing local policy makers and security managers a hands-on method that enables them to measure the impact of local social cohesion actions on urban security and feelings of insecurity within the local community.

In particular, action 5 aimed at:

- Creating a common method for local security managers to measure the impact of existing local social cohesion Actions on (the feelings of) insecurity in order to make visible to local decision makers (council members) what already is “good value for money”
- Providing a new method that local security managers can implement to find new solutions for complex social or insecurity issues on which the existing projects don’t seem to have an impact.

In general European cities are very open to the concept of inclusion, social cohesion and so on. The [Orientation Paper](#) of the partnership on protection of public spaces takes a very clear position on security as well as on safety. In other words, cities need to be safe, protecting, open, attractive, empowering, inclusive and ensuring citizens’ well-being. Urban security policies can perfectly combine all these aspects and at the same time appeal to everyone's sense of citizenship. After all, urban security is a mutual responsibility.

There are a lot of excellent (social) crime prevention and urban security programs that exist in European cities. On the other hand, certain security problems are very persistent and complex. Whatever we do, some problems never seem to be solved. Therefore, policy makers need to constantly broaden their horizon and look for other approaches for those persistent problems. The ‘*Collective Impact Model*’ (CIM) is such a systematic approach to address complex social problems at system-level. It provides a framework for cross-sector collaboration that leads to sustainable social change. Since there is few knowledge and experience in Europe with this model, the action 5 leaders decide to order a report on the application Collective Impact model in European Cities with a special focus on the topic of urban security and social cohesion. In this final document we will not go in further detail about CIM and we refer to the separate report which is free available and can be downloaded on the Futurium website or through this [link](#).

This report contains recommendations for prevention of crime and dangerous polarisation processes at the local level. Both phenomena threaten social cohesion and, conversely, can be alleviated by strengthening it. The systematic analysis and

evaluation of social cohesion indicators can thus make an important contribution to the prevention of security threats.

That is why we start with a short introduction into the theory of polarization, the link with social cohesion and the influence of both on urban security. An insight into these theories and the connections between them is necessary in order to properly frame the further elaboration and conclusions of this action.

Then we'll introduce you further by explaining how we proceeded to develop Action 5. How did it come to being, what is the link to the partnership, what choices were made and why?

The next chapter looks more closely at the implementation of the Action's objectives and its results. We conclude with recommendations, both concrete about the instruments and general about increasing urban security and strengthening social cohesion. The final section summarizes the main conclusions and looks at possible opportunities in the future.

The prevention pyramid and the evaluation tool QUALIPREV seem to be useful instruments for the measurement of prevention activities. Both were applied on a trial basis and as an exercise by the partner cities. We therefore want to thank these cities sincerely for their work. The City of Cologne, City of Leuven, City of Munich and Madrid Police have done a lot of effort which has helped a lot in drawing conclusions about the use of the tools and translate them into recommendations. The guiding questions were: What's useful? What's difficult? What's to be further developed?

This final report, and more specifically the recommendations, is addressed to urban actors responsible for prevention of crime and of pernicious polarisation as well as social cohesion in a narrow and in a larger sense. As the internal structures and their departments are organised differently in each city, it is very broadly addressed to city staff in security departments, youth and social work, diversity and integration departments and others. As a cross-cutting issue, social cohesion is relevant to a wide range of fields of action. Sports, culture and especially education are also included.

3. Thoughts on polarisation, crime and social cohesion

3.1 Polarisation as a threat to social cohesion at local level

Cities and municipalities are facing many new challenges today which threaten their social cohesion and the living together. Conversely, high social cohesion can help keep these threats low. Two of the most important current challenges for cities and municipalities are crime and polarisation. They are not the same and must not be confused. But there are some connections between them. For example, social and political polarisation can contribute to violent radicalisation and extremism. And crime, conversely, can promote feelings of insecurity and thereby foster or push polarisation. Nevertheless, it must be noted: social or political polarisation¹ is permitted in pluralistic democracies and, to a certain extent, necessary. It cannot be fought with security measures or punishments. Crime, on the other hand, is by definition against the law and must be prosecuted. Preventive action can nevertheless be taken against both by strengthening social cohesion.

For a few years now, an increasing polarisation of our societies is evident at all levels and local authorities have to deal with it. It is one of the defining characteristics of the young 21st century (Merkel 2021), although it is nothing new or dangerous per se in pluralistic societies and democracies. The mere fact that opinions differ widely is not yet a reason for concern. Moreover, it shouldn't be forgotten, that in the history of Europe, polarisation has been necessary time and again to enable steps towards democratisation. When marginalised or excluded groups demand their rights, this can contribute to a polarisation, which ultimately has an emancipatory and democratic effect. However, when polarising conflict leads to an end of dialogue and an irreconcilable struggle, it poses a threat. Municipalities are often the places where these conflicts escalate to the point of violence and endanger social cohesion. There they become visible and find a real, physical expression in legal and politically important protests, but also in violent acts. It is therefore crucial for European municipalities to analyse the causes of polarisation and to steer it in a constructive direction.

Polarisation refers to a state or process of hardened differences of opinion that are based on perceived or real inequalities. Unequal power relations, structural marginalisation, discrimination or exclusion of certain groups can drive polarisation. The features that characterise polarisation processes (cf. Pausch 2020) are

¹ Social and political polarisation are often used as synonyms, and that's fine if you apply a broad understanding of politics. In a narrower understanding of politics, the difference would be that social polarisation refers more to citizens' opinions and political polarisation more to the political party system.

- a strong discrepancy of opinions,
- group formation,
- purism and
- public struggles.

Opinions are not compatible and configure themselves in an either/or relationship. Group formation means then that the differing opinions are held by two different groups whose members are aware of the discrepancy and feel that they belong to one of the two groups (cf. Iyengar et al. 2019). Especially the political opponents are accused of being reluctant to dialogue. Often groups give themselves a name, or names are attributed to them. Relative positions are not taken into account. A conciliatory position is rejected. Bart Brandsma aptly describes polarisation as a hardening in thinking towards others: Everything boils down to “Us versus Them” (Brandsma 2020). The groups that form the poles in a polarisation process cannot take a middle position because their opinions are too far apart. The others are seen as enemy. The fourth characteristic is that polarisation is played out and visible in public space. This distinguishes it from various forms of crime, but also from the phenomenon of radicalisation, which often happens in the dark. Polarisation needs public expression, public visibility. It can therefore have an important function in political mobilisation and is necessary for democracies to a certain extent – we refer to this as benign polarisation. But it can also develop into a danger to social cohesion if it turns into violence and no longer allows dialogue – we refer to this as pernicious polarisation (McCoy/Somer 2019).

Many municipalities have seen protests against COVID measures in recent months. Some of these protests had potential for violence. In the debate about the pandemic, the criteria of polarisation are fulfilled. While some favour the toughest measures to protect the population and argue for further lockdowns or compulsory vaccination, at the other end of the opinion spectrum some categorically reject all measures, deny the dangerousness of the disease and speak of authoritarian rules. The attribution of the political opponent as authoritarian or irrational, as radical or extremist, as manipulated or stupid are well known. The debate in the social media accelerates these attributions and hardens the situation. For the positions at the margins, deviation is hardly conceivable. The debate is conducted in the political public sphere and political parties speak for one or the other of the groups. The longer the pandemic lasts, the more the debate comes to a head. Protests and actions can at least partially turn into violence. Pre-existing inequalities can have an effect in this context. Dissatisfaction with democracy or experiences of exclusion are a motor for polarisation. So other motives are mixed into the protests against COVID-measures, which have to do with the feeling of exclusion. If the other side reacts with arrogance or further aggravation, social cohesion suffers. This can become a real security problem for communities.

Polarisation is understood by some as a purely group-specific process that could then be solved through coaching or conflict management. However, this is a truncated understanding. Polarisation, both in its causes and in its effects, is to be understood as a social, political process that must also be countered with socio-political responses. For cities this means: Commissioning a conflict manager is good, but not enough. It is about structural processes, the fight against inequality, and for inclusion and social cohesion. Ideological debates and lines of conflict must be analysed and understood. It is clear that not all social inequalities can be solved at the municipal level. Economic processes are globalised today. Political framework conditions are set by nation-state or supranational bodies. Nevertheless, certain dangers can be mitigated at the local level. Strengthening social cohesion, and thus inclusion and local democracy, is an important lever in the fight against dangerous polarisation.

Polarisation can also have an impact on crime. It can drive politically motivated violence, radicalisation to violent extremism and contribute to a feeling of insecurity among citizens. If polarisation is not channelled into a constructive path, it has a negative impact on the social cohesion of a society. Conversely, fragile cohesion promotes polarisation and other security risks.

3.2 Social cohesion analysis

For some time now, the conviction has prevailed that security policy must be seen in a holistic perspective. The safety of our cities depends to a large extent on how safe and comfortable their inhabitants feel, whether they can live in freedom and have a say in important questions. Thus, when we talk about security and safety, we cannot be silent about social cohesion and inclusion. The Urban Agenda highlights this several times. Strong social cohesion is an important aspect in preventing polarisation as well as violence and crime. It is also an important aspect of a good life and means that people live in a trustful surrounding, where mutual understanding and inclusive participation are high, where the social and political structures provide equal opportunities and where people feel safe and secure. This does not mean that there should be no conflicts or differences of opinion. In pluralistic societies, these are immanent components of living together. But it is a question of how they are negotiated. If the conflicts are not resolved through dialogue, aggressive and violent polarisation between different groups can occur, which is detrimental to social cohesion and affects society's sense of security. The risk of other security problems also increases when there are no forums of dialogue and inclusion.

Inequality is the most important problem for social cohesion and democracy. It causes a loss of confidence and trust in institutions. It is therefore quite clear that it is precisely at the local level that the factors for cohesion, democracy and dialogue must be strengthened, while the risk factors of division must be kept as low as possible and even reduced. In an inclusive community with high social

cohesion, residents feel safe to voice their opinions. They are not afraid to speak out publicly, even if their opinion is not mainstream. At the same time, they respect the opinions of others and are committed to ensuring that everyone has an equal say. Exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination as well as social inequality should be kept low. In a community with large discrepancies, marginalised groups and little dialogue, criticism and discontent must be expected to arise. These expressions show that inequalities prevail and must therefore be taken very seriously. They must not be immediately branded as dangerous developments and fought against, but should be transformed into constructive dialogue.

Although there have been many publications on social cohesion since the 1990s by UNESCO, the OECD, the Council of Europe and other institutions, and it has been recognised as an important goal, for a long time there was no concrete definition with indicators (Jenson 2010). That has changed in the meantime. Today, social cohesion is largely understood as social inclusion, for which there are a number of factors listed in the [OECD Better Life Index](#) (OECD 2011) and other measurement tools. Demographic aspects are included here as well as socio-economic ones. Trust in institutions is examined as well as political participation. Housing and social infrastructure play an important role, as do educational and security issues.

The prevention pyramid, which is presented in more detail below, is based on a similar understanding and considers crime prevention as something that has to do with social cohesion. This also makes it an interesting instrument in the analysis and prevention of dangerous polarisation processes.

3.3 General remarks on evaluation and prevention

Evaluating (crime) prevention measures isn't easy. As the objective is that certain (criminal) events or phenomena like polarising processes do not occur at all, it is difficult to make measurements, since an event that has not occurred cannot be proven. This problem is well known as prevention paradox from other prevention areas, such as health care or the prevention of terrorism. If a measure for safety, security or inclusion has been implemented and there is still a high crime rate or strong polarisation, we cannot automatically conclude that the measure has failed. Moreover, certain discernible effects often only appear in the long term and can be influenced by many different intervening variables. Furthermore, local decisions are influenced by national laws and larger social developments such as unemployment, economic growth and political issues, so it is not easy to evaluate the exact impact of the measure. Out of these reasons, results must be treated and communicated in a very careful way to the different groups, be it concrete target groups, organizers/implementers, project partners, political actors, other stakeholders or the wider public.

A scientifically sound and systematic evaluation must be based on indicators that are relevant to the project objectives. It checks reality against plans and helps to draw conclusions about the success and the lessons learned. The improvement of the prevention measures in the future or their applicability for future contexts is the key objective of any evaluation process. For a systematic evaluation, the linkage back to a theory is important. Without prior assumptions about interrelationships and directions of impact, it is not possible to evaluate whether a project is being implemented in a concise manner. Equally, however, these basic theoretical assumptions must be open to evaluation results that challenge them or falsify certain basic assumptions.

4. Contribution of Action 5 to security in public spaces

4.1 About the Urban Agenda Partnership Security in Public Spaces

Ensuring the security of public spaces and improving the feeling of security for citizens is a priority for all local and regional players, regardless of their size. The Partnership brings together capital cities, large and small cities but also regions and ministries. The Partnership delivered a concrete Action Plan that was endorsed by the European Commission, the Member States, the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions and other relevant stakeholders.

The aim of this Action Plan is to propose Actions that are useful to local and regional authorities, realistic, in line with the challenges of our time, easily understandable by citizens and bringing real European added value.

Three concrete priorities have been defined in the Orientation stage and guided the spirit of the Action Plan:

1. Urban planning and design 'to create safer cities';
2. Technology for smart, sustainable and safe cities;
3. Managing security and sharing public spaces in urban and peri-urban areas.

The three abovementioned priority areas have been the foundation upon which the work of the Partnership has been built. It The Partnership has selected the Actions presented in the table below as a contribution to the three objectives of better knowledge, regulation and funding.

Action	Objective	(Co) leaders	Participating Partners	
1	Developing a Framework for a Self-Assessment tool dedicated to Urban Authorities	Better knowledge	Helsinki	Madrid, Unione della Romagna Faentina (URF)
2	Recommendations on EU security strategy, multi-level, participatory and	Better funding and better regulation	Nice, Efus,	URF

	innovative governance and funding			
3	Evaluate the application of AI inclusive technologies	Better regulation	Nice	Madrid, Lille, Riga
4	Develop a capacity building training scheme about integrated sustainable urban security	Better knowledge	Regione Toscana, URF	Efus, Mechelen
5	Measure the impact of social cohesion and inclusion on security in public spaces of urban and peri-urban areas	Better knowledge	Mechelen	URF, Efus, Regione Toscana, Madrid
6	Develop guidance for architectural spatial design and planning (security by design)	Better regulation	Brussels,	Croatia, Mechelen, Helsinki, Madrid

For more information on the Partnership and more details about the other actions, we refer to the [Final Action Plan of the Urban Agenda Partnership Security in Public Spaces](#).

Although action 5 has its own very specific objectives, the links with other actions are unmistakable and could be further developed in the future. This final report likes to trigger new opportunities for collaboration to explore new projects combining outputs from the different actions. Therefore it's strongly recommended to go through the output of all 6 actions, to get inspired by them and create new project designs to be tested in practice.

4.2 Objectives of Action 5

There is a broader support within the Partnership for the idea that social cohesion measures should be part of an integrated urban security policy. Aspects of inclusion, social capital, social mobility, citizen participation, empowerment, etc. can help to create safer environments or as safe perceived environments.

The challenge is to provide local policy makers and security managers with a method that enables them to build secure, safe and resilient local communities. In such communities, objective threats are under control, people feel comfortable in the public domain and trust the government. They rely on and relate to their fellow citizens and the community as a whole.

What does it mean for policy makers and local security managers? How can they create more social cohesion and how can they, by doing so, have an impact on urban security? There is no common framework to translate those vague concepts into concrete local security policies. By consequence, the results and the social impact of social cohesion initiatives and inclusion efforts or non-problem-oriented approaches are extremely difficult to show.

In order to provide local policy makers and security managers with a method that enables them to build secure, safe and resilient local communities there are 2 major Actions with several sub-Actions that were developed:

1. Create a common method for local security managers to measure the impact of existing local social cohesion Actions on (the feelings of) insecurity in order to make visible to local decision makers (council members) what already is “good value for money”;
2. Provide a new method that local security managers can implement to find new solutions for complex social or insecurity issues on which the existing projects don’t seem to have an impact.

4.3 Working method

The focus of the first sub-Action is on (the feelings of) insecurity in order to make visible to local decision makers (council members) what already is “good value for money”. “The difference between safety and security lies in the nature of the threat: safety refers to the condition of being protected from accidental harm (e.g. earthquake, pandemic) whereas security refers to the condition of being protected from harm caused by intentional human action or behaviour (e.g. criminality, terrorism).” (Urban Agenda 2020, 3). It can be added that safety is also influenced by aspects like social and health policy, the stability of democracy, housing, income, etc. and especially by polarisation processes - thus in a general sense by social cohesion/inclusion². That is why it is so important to make visible what is already in place, what is missing and whether the existing policy is in balance. The prevention pyramid seemed to be the perfect instrument to answer these questions. A manual was written, and tested in Mechelen, after which 4 other cities did the same exercise. Each city gave feedback on the manual and the prevention pyramid. This feedback has been incorporated into the conclusions and recommendations.

² There are a number of instruments to measure social cohesion, quality of life and quality of democracy, but less at the local level than at the national level (OECD Better Life Index, Democracy Barometer).

After this mapping exercise, the next logical step was to evaluate these measures. Are measures or projects effective? Do they work and why? What parameters indicate whether a measure is promising? After a search of existing instruments, we chose the Qualiprev as tool to use here. This tool does not directly answer the question whether a measure works or not, but allows the policy maker to reflect on its elaboration and evaluation, to assess whether the measure is promising or not. This seemed to be of a greater value than 'just' an evaluation. To test/use this tool, we went about the same way as the prevention pyramid. Mechelen, as lead partner in Action 5, made the first exercise as an example, with tips and tricks for the other cities that then in turn also filled out this tool for one particular measure. Again, we counted on feedback from the cities involved to draw informed conclusions and write practical recommendations.

For the second sub-Action we chose to take a closer look at the Collective Impact model. [A separate report](#) explores the possibilities of this methodology for EU cities as a means to find new solutions for complex social issues for which existing policy measures have shortcomings. It also brings together qualitative resources on Collective Impact Model and contains an Executive Summary on Collective Impact Model. Finally, an analysis makes it possible to see whether and how the model can be deployed in the European context and what preconditions must necessarily be met.

There are a lot of tools that can help local authorities assess their prevention policy, or develop the right measures for a specific problem. There are probably even more tools and advice on how to evaluate these measures, so many, in fact, that it is difficult to see the wood for the trees. It is not the intention here to proclaim the truth concerning the best instrument, although we hope our work will help local authorities.

5. Output Action 5

5.1 Prevention Pyramid

1. About

The prevention pyramid is a scientific instrument, developed by Johan Deklerck (Declerck 2016), for an integral and positive prevention, which aims to avoid a one-sided approach of insecurity. The main idea is to integrate crime-related social problem dimensions into prevention policy. The pyramid is a reference framework for developing prevention policies and practices aiming at a combination of general and specific measures within an integrated approach. The pyramid can in this way help to frame the (often negatively perceived) topic of security as a positive achievement, because the focus is on high social cohesion. The pyramid focuses on strengthening the positive (social cohesion) instead of diminishing the negative (ic crime).

A distinction is made between problem-oriented levels (levels 3 and 4), well-being oriented levels (levels 1 and 2) and a general level (level 0) of society in its different dimensions. The levels 1 to 4 are considered as action levels, while level 0 cannot be directly influenced.

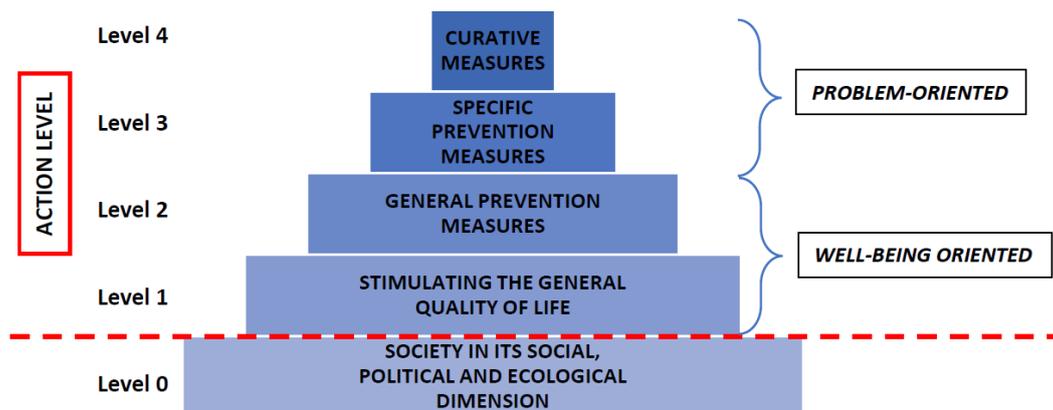


Figure 1: Prevention Pyramid Johan Deklerck

The pyramid shape refers to building an integrated security policy. A good prevention policy starts with a good quality of life, while the higher levels only come into action when the underlying fail. The ultimate goal, general quality of life, lies in level 1. An integral approach means that several or all levels can take action, always looking to strengthen the pyramid downwards.

The basis (level 1 & 2) of an effective and stable security policy is a general quality of life enhancing policy, these measures are well-being oriented. The top (level 3 & 4) are problem-oriented and shouldn't dominate the substructure. A too one-sided problem-oriented prevention approach (security, problem approach, mitigation of risks...) is counterproductive and will increase fear and feelings of

insecurity. In other words, acceptance and effectiveness of tougher security and control measures depend on the strength of a local community. Moreover, specific prevention practices are considered as part of improving the quality of life. Or to put it the other way round: prevention policies and practices should not disrupt or deteriorate this quality of life. With a good prevention policy, all levels are represented in the measures.

In this action we made a manual to use this instrument as a tool to make an inventory: all actions, initiatives or other measures in a prevention policy should be given a place in this pyramid. This provides a clear overview of what is already happening within a city, and offers local policymakers the opportunity to frame their own prevention model and to situate it within the broader social context. In this way, attention and work points are exposed, which makes it possible to work on a more integrated security policy.

The manual contains a comprehensive theoretical explanation of the prevention pyramid. Each level is explained using concrete examples. In addition, the manual contains a detailed exercise from Mechelen. The manual was subsequently tested by 4 other cities. All input and feedback was collected and processed in this report.

2. Benefits and strengths

The prevention pyramid is a tool to look at prevention in all its aspects. If filled in properly and extensively, it gives a complete overview of what has already been done and where it needs to be stepped up. If possible, the results has to be really visualized in the different levels, to see a pyramid shape is reached. The result is a good starting point for internal discussion to see whether there are enough measures at each level and whether they reinforce or contradict each other.

The manual made in this action is comprehensive, with detailed instructions, and thus very useful. The worked out example of Mechelen makes it easy to understand the pyramid and how to complete.

3. Challenges and questions

The prevention pyramid as a tool in itself is not easy. It takes time to understand. A manual and/or a worked out example is necessary. And even then it is not always clear in which level a measure belongs. Some measures also belong in more than one level, depending on how it is meant or what effect is reached. Even more, some measures have contradictory effects. They can have a positive effect in level 3 (perpetrators are deterred by CCTV), but a negative effect in level 1 (a lot of camera's can give people the feeling it must be an unsafe area). It is therefore that it takes time and people to complete the pyramid. The discussion with colleagues or other policymakers about the (impact of) measures

and where to place them in the pyramid is essential to get the desired result that gives a correct picture of the situation of measures.

At this moment the pyramid is meant to be filled in according to the number of measures in each level. Effects are partially taken into account, as in on which level it has the most impact. But there are a lot of other factors that could (and should?) be taken into account. Some measures for example cost a lot of money and seem to have little effect, others are quite cheap with great effect. Some measures require the commitment of many people, others do not. It could be interesting to not look at the number of measures, but at the cost or the need of personnel per measure. Does the city commit more staff to level 4 measures, or does the majority of staffing focuses on other levels? The same can be examined for the financial cost, or other factors/indicators. This can give another result, and maybe an even better result, depending on where the policy maker prioritizes.

Another issue is the fact that a prevention policy of e.g. the city is part of a larger picture. If a city makes this exercise to see whether or not its policy is in balance, it can only focus on its own measures/projects, and the direct impact of them. The result could be that there are no measures on level 4, because the city has no authority in this domain, only the higher government has. Or, the effect of a measure is enhanced or even reduced by a measure of another government or organisation. The pyramid does not take into account where the city can actually intervene, and what is the influence of other actors on the actions of the city. And the other way around: can the city in one way or another have an influence on other political levels, by agenda setting or lobbying? This is not taken into account in the pyramid, let alone visualised, although it can have an enormous impact on the security and social cohesion in a city, and therefore does belong in the pyramid in some way.

4. Recommendations

- Include the feeling of self-efficacy of citizens, dialogue and participation in the general aims and objectives

In a society with a high level of social cohesion, people feel self-efficient, i.e. they have the impression that they are in control of their lives and have a say in social issues. Often, concepts of social cohesion emphasise consensus, agreement, commonality. This is undoubtedly important, but it should not be overlooked that social cohesion should also be about the realisation opportunities of the individual. Everyone should have the opportunity to be effective in society and to have a say. This also includes the possibility to disagree and deviate from the

mainstream. The possibility to be different without being afraid should therefore be considered as a goal of social cohesion. Consequently, it is about dialogue between different positions and about equal participation.

- Actors analysis

An actor analysis should be included to have a complete overview of the prevention (social cohesion) policies and the possibilities to strengthen these. Also for the evaluation of projects, the method of policy field and actors' analysis is a useful tool. Policy analysis divides political action by governments into different phases in terms of process and usually presents them in a circular form (as a cycle). The most common is a division into six phases:

- 1) problem formulation
- 2) agenda setting
- 3) policy formulation / decision making
- 4) implementation
- 5) evaluation
- 6) termination and re-start of policy cycle.

Within the framework of an evaluation of crime prevention, these steps can be analysed at least in part. Above all, the analysis of different actors and their potential impact is revealing. An extension of the tools presented could succeed at various points by incorporating actor and policy field analysis.

A closer look at the different actors and stakeholders in a project on the local level allows for a differentiated picture that reveals possible obstacles and opportunities and improves awareness of the own possibilities for intervention. While some have agenda-setting, decision-making or veto-power, others can only partially intervene. At the other end of the spectrum are those who are affected by the decisions but cannot participate in them. Categorisations within the framework of stakeholder analyses are thus possible both on a scale of influence and affectedness and on a scale of interests (cf. Hein et al. 2006, 209 f.). David Easton and others have developed illustrative models of the relationships of different actors in systems-analytical approaches (Easton, 1957). An important subdivision is made here into inputs, i.e. demands on a political system, and outputs, i.e. the results of a political system.

Form of power/competence	Level of competence	Influence of local level
Agenda-setting: Which actor defines the problem?	On which level is the agenda-setting power?	Direct or indirect?



Which actor can bring the problem into the policy cycle? Which interests do the agenda-setter have?	National, supra-national, regional, local?	Can actors from the local level set the agenda and define the problems?
Decision-making: Which actor has the last word? Which has the formal decision-making competence/power? Which actor has the informal power?	On which level is the decision-making power? National, supra-national, regional, local?	Can a decision be taken or be influenced by the local level? In which way (lobbying, public pressure, other?)
Veto-power: Which actor can veto a project? Which actor can informally prevent a project?	Can a veto be used by different levels? Are decision-making and veto-power on the same level?	Can the local level veto a project? In which way can the local level interpret decisions from other levels so that they better fit to the local interests?
Resources: Where do the resources come from (staff, budget)? Which actor can fund projects?	On which levels can projects be funded? Which private or public funding is possible?	How can resources be organised at the local level?

To have a complete picture we recommend to combine the prevention pyramid exercise with this analysis.

5.2 QUALIPREV

1. About

The second tool is the Qualiprev (EUCPN 2016). This tool is meant to evaluate the quality of crime prevention projects quickly and easily, based on the presence of

key criteria. It is aimed at evaluators wanting to evaluate (the potential of) their own projects or external evaluators wanting to select promising practices.

The tool analyses the quality of crime prevention projects on the basis of key criteria. It consists of two steps. The first step is the scoring of the evaluation quality of a project along 5 dimensions: problem statement and theoretical background, evaluability assessment, process evaluation, outcome evaluation and dissemination/publication of results. The second step is an effectiveness assessment that allows for the identification of good practices.

2. Benefits and strengths

The Qualiprev is a very useful and hands on tool in the field of safety prevention, which is easily accessible and applicable. It is particularly valuable for assessing and optimising project planning, implementation and evaluation. By doing the Qualiprev exercise, gaps or blind spots in a project are made visible. It is a very good tool to check if your measure/project is put together well. It is also an exercise that can (and should) be done at any moment: at the start of a project, as a preparation and checklist to not forget anything; in the middle of the project, to check whether it is going in the right direction and adjust if necessary; and at the end, to really assess the project and think about durability and dissemination. So, it is rather the application process as such that forces one to deal with the measure, its goals and its impact. Justifying and evaluating one's own approach in writing often leads to new insights and to rethinking processes.

The result of the Qualiprev is also very valuable for future projects because it makes directly visible where there might be room for improvement. The result shows which steps in a project the organisation is good at, and where it can still learn, in more areas than just evaluation. This is very useful information for future projects, where these lessons learned can be taken into account from the beginning.

The Qualiprev is really focused on prevention measures. Specific indicators and mechanisms are provided as a basis to evaluate. If used for several projects or actions, they can be compared.

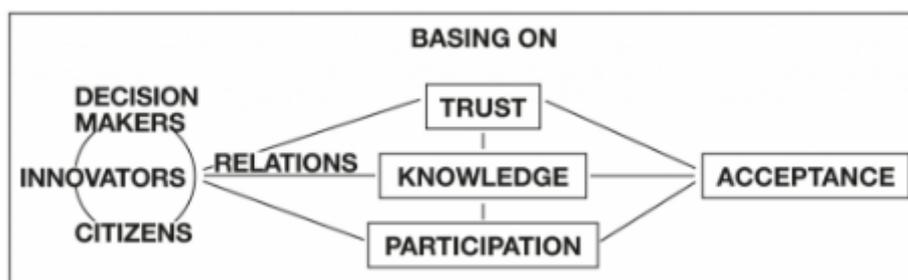
3. Challenges and questions

Filling in the Qualiprev and its results provides information about the design and evaluation of a project. However, it is largely about the way of evaluating, not the outcome of that evaluation. The points are given for whether or not a particular step is carried out in the evaluation, such as involving stakeholders. Whether that step was carried out well, is not really looked at. So e.g. whether sufficient stakeholders were involved, and whether they had a say and at what

times, is not assessed. The same goes for a number of questions in the outcome evaluation. It is asked how many indicators were discussed, but it is not examined whether these were the right indicators and whether the result was positive or not. The last two questions do deal with this partly. They ask about the effectiveness of the project in terms of process and outcome. However, the answer is free to choose, without any explanation being asked. For this reason, the "bare" result of the Qualiprev does not seem to be very useful, either to the project manager or to policy makers or other interested parties.

A few questions in the Qualiprev seem to be of little relevance for the assessment of a project or actions. E.g. the availability of an English report does not really influence the effectiveness of a project for the purpose for which it was developed, but it does influence the Qualiprev-score. This score is therefore only valuable for external assessors, who want to know whether a project is easily replicable, which is not the main focus of the (local) policy maker or project manager.

Other things to consider seem to be missing. Communication for example is crucial in all kinds of projects and implementation. Not only internal, between the different actors (project management, policy makers, organizers, social workers, police...), but also external (citizens, target groups, other government organisations). In the evaluability assessment it could be useful to have a question on this. Is communication seen as a key factor and in what manner has it been conducted? This is once more important because measures must be accepted in order for an effect to be achieved.



In this chart, reference is made to the relationship between three groups: decision makers, experts/innovators and citizens. The relationship between these three groups of actors is central when it comes to social innovations that affect a broad society. Thus, the acceptance of preventive measures against crime or polarisation can be based on trust in the elites. Innovations can then be accepted relatively unquestioningly. However, since there has been a decline in trust in politics in recent years, it cannot be assumed that this form of acceptance will bear. Knowledge in a complex world can also only rarely be assumed as a basis for the

acceptance of innovations or political measures. This leads to the fact that, at least as a supplement to the first two forms of acceptance, participation in projects, measures, decisions is becoming increasingly important. Especially in a sensitive area such as security policy and prevention, it is therefore advisable to involve the population in as many decisions as possible. Social cohesion is inconceivable without the participation of citizens.

4. Recommendations

As said, the Qualiprev is meant as a tool to evaluate the quality of crime prevention projects, and evaluation is mostly at the end of a project. Although, in our opinion, it does not seem an evaluation tool, but more a project / evaluation planning tool, a tool that should be used already at the beginning of a project. Then it can unfold its full effect and help to correct processes that are going in the wrong direction. It is mentioned in the research report that it can equally be used as an advisory tool or standard to improve the evaluation process, though we think this is the main result the tool reaches. We would therefore recommend it to adjust and make into a manual for project and evaluation planning.

Because of the fact that the questions in the Qualiprev are only to be answered with yes/no, we recommend to give an explanation for each answer. In this way it is clear for everyone (colleagues, policy makers, citizens, other interested parties...) why that answer was chosen. In this way the result of the exercise is more than just a score, but a real reflection on the course of the project and its evaluation. Only in this way can you learn something from it.

In order to find out the answer to each question, you must have all the required information. That's why it is necessary to document everything in a project, right from the brainstorming phase, and that a clear leader must be appointed from the start, who is responsible for documenting the project, so this information can later be used for e.g. an evaluation. The manual and the research report should be used here, to be sure to understand the questions properly and answer them correctly. We therefore recommend to first read everything carefully and collect the information needed to answer the question, before actually filling in the Qualiprev. This can be done by this person in charge, but even better would be for everyone involved in the project (steering group, stakeholders...) to complete it together.

6. General summary

As cities become more and more diverse, learning to deal with polarisation is, as argued in chapter 3, one of the key challenges for local communities. To be clear, polarisation is necessary and wanted when it leads to more and better inclusive democracies. Toxic polarisation or hate speech, on the other hand, crosses the boundaries of decency and hides hatred behind the right to free speech. This disruptive form of polarisation dehumanizes 'the other' and paves the way towards justification for violence against 'the other'. Social cohesion is key to keep the dialogue going between groups and overcoming differences in opinions. Civilisation is respecting each other, each other's rights and guaranteeing every one's safety.

This perspective leads to the idea that the prevention of toxic or dangerous polarisation by improving social inclusion of (especially) vulnerable groups (core meaning of social cohesion), is the basis of urban security. In chapter 4 we introduce the prevention pyramid where the broadest base consists of measures to improve social inclusion. All other measures, general prevention, specific prevention and reactive/repressive actions are built upon this fundament. This perspective claims that the broader the base, the more effective harsher security measures will be. Focusing only on security and control without giving people a voice in the creation of rules, without informing citizens about their rights, without paying attention to specific needs of minorities does not feel like a free, sustainable and safe society. If 'the other' is constantly perceived as a threat or a risk, people will feel constantly insecure and 'the other' will constantly be insecure about their living conditions or the protection of their (human) rights. On the contrary, if everyone has access to good living conditions, if everyone's voices are heard and needs are taken into account, then there is also greater support for regulation, control and enforcement of rules. It's the reciprocity that's crucial: citizenship for protection and vice versa.

But, how to translate these perspectives into a concrete policy program and how to show the impact of that holistic social cohesion based approach on urban security?

What we are particularly interested in in Action 5 is the question whether hands-on tools exist that can effectively meet the needs of local "security managers". Local decision makers want to know what works in creating safer cities. Local administrators need to prepare dossiers in order to make the best possible decisions. The central question is how social cohesion measures relate to security measures and especially how can this relation be made visible? Moreover, the instruments to do so need to be hands-on, concrete, ready to use and user-friendly. Only one way to find out: we did the test in 5 partner cities and collected

feedback from the field during 3 online meetings on 2 particular tools: the prevention pyramid and QUALIPREV.³

This final report has provided a comprehensive and documented overview of both instruments which, at least that is the general conclusion, do what they are supposed to do. The prevention pyramid can be used to map the existing urban security policy as it is in a certain place at a certain time and can detect possible 'gaps' (such as specific type of measures that are lacking). Moreover, it is an interesting exercise to initiate the local dialogue between various policy sectors and partner organisations on the integral safety policy. The prevention pyramid allows to formulate an holistic advice to the local administration on additional measures to be taken. Mapping allows detection of measures in which additional investments can be made, where there is potential overlap, and how additional investments can be linked to initiatives already developed. The prevention pyramid can offer a starting point for interaction and discussion at local level concerning the integrated approach towards urban security. And thus, bridge gaps between organisations because everyone's contribution becomes visible.

The added value provided by Action 5 of the Urban Agenda is a handbook on how to use the prevention pyramid. This [manual](#) is available together with concrete examples from other cities on the Futurium website.

In addition to mapping the various existing measures and their interrelationships, the effectiveness of the measures needs to be assessed separately. In other words, do the measures achieve their goal and –more economically seen- is public money for urban security well spent? The QUALIPREV is an extremely interesting, ready-to-use instrument for evaluating crime prevention. The QUALIPREV, although little known to practitioners, is a practice-oriented instrument developed and (scientifically) tested by the EUCPN. As a general conclusion, this instrument shows that good policy evaluation starts from the beginning, even before the implementation of concrete actions on the ground. This is often an eye-opener for those who use QUALIPREV for the first time. But it is definitely recommended to start using it, and possibly this tool can stimulate a larger culture for policy evaluation.

The Prevention Pyramid and the QUALIPREV have proved to be useful and useful tools to demonstrate and manage the impact of social cohesion on urban safety. But what the field tests have taught us in combination with an academic review of

³ Thanks to the wide network of cities that the EFUS represents, the partners of Action 5 were able to call on the voluntary cooperation of five local authorities: Mechelen, Madrid, Cologne, Munich and Leuven. This was a very valuable contribution, as the value of the outputs of Action 5 could immediately be tested in practice. The results were reassuring, in the sense that the tools do what they are supposed to do, but somewhat surprising, because there are still important areas for improvement. Thus, this feedback also immediately provides new food for thought and it could yield interesting innovative experiments towards the future.

the work that has been done, is that pieces are still lacking in the integrated prevention strategy such as integrating an actor analysis. There is much scope for deepening existing instruments, developing ideas further and setting up more in-depth projects combining the outputs of different actions of the Action Plan.

One of the most important recommendations from Action 5 are the call for action to other local and regional authorities to link up and develop new prevention projects to act upon a growing concern around polarization and the need for socially inclusive projects that go hand in hand with local security policies. It's not social cohesion or urban security: it's both and they can be combined in one holistic, effective approach.

The aspect of polarising cleavages, for instance, could be introduced into the prevention pyramid on the lower level. Social inequalities, which can be seen as drivers of polarisation and as a threat to social cohesion, can be highlighted and addressed. Awareness raising is one of the first crucial necessities in the prevention of a dangerous polarisation.

Moreover, the other actions in the Action Plan of the Urban Agenda on the Protection of Public Places have produced very interesting and mutually reinforcing outputs. Therefore, it would be great to get creative and design a new project in which the final results of action 1 to action 6 are combined in new urban safety projects throughout several European municipalities.

Let's get started...

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