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Evaluation report on the European Union Crime Prevention Network

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REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

Evaluation report on the European Union Crime Prevention Network

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1. INTRODUCTION

Crime prevention is recognised as an important tool to contribute to citizen's safety and security. The **Lisbon Treaty** mentions crime prevention among the key building blocks to establish and maintain an area of freedom, security and Justice¹. Also the **Stockholm Programme** reiterated the importance of crime prevention : “*The best way to reduce the level of crime*”, it argued, “*is to take effective measures to prevent it from ever occurring, including promoting social inclusion, by using a multidisciplinary approach which also includes taking administrative measures and promoting cooperation between administrative authorities, citizens of the Union that have similar experiences and are affected in similar ways by crime and related insecurity in their everyday lives*”.

While systematic cost-benefit analyses related to crime prevention programmes or studies on the costs of crime² that can be used to develop crime prevention measures are not yet common practice in Europe, studies available in countries that have a longer tradition in this (US, UK, New Zealand and Australia), do indicate that crime prevention "works" and that in any case, the costs of crime (including both material and psychological harm caused to victims) are very often higher than the cost of preventing it. Also specialised UN bodies³ pro-actively promote and support the gradual shift to innovative methods of preventing criminality, rather than punishing it.

The European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN) was set up by the Council Decision 2001/427/JHA, repealed by the **Council Decision 2009/902/JHA**. The main objective of the May 2001 Council Decision establishing EUCPN was to promote crime prevention activities and to provide a means through which valuable good practice in preventing crime could be shared. In 2009 a new Council Decision specified the tasks of the EUCPN as follows :

- Facilitate cooperation, contacts and exchanges of information and experience between actors in the field of crime prevention;
- Collect, assess and communicate evaluated information including good practice on existing crime prevention activities;

¹ Article 2 of the Lisbon Treaty reads as follows : *The Union's aim is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples. The Union shall offer its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontiers, in which the free movement of persons is ensured in conjunction with appropriate measures with respect to external border controls, asylum, immigration and the prevention and combating of crime*. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:306:FULL:EN:PDF>

² Examples include the costs of violence (Corso, Mercy, Simon, Finkelstein & Miller, 2007) or sexual violence (Miller, Taylor & Sheppard, 2007), the cost of alcohol-related crime (Miller, Levy, Cohen & Cox, 2006; Miller, Levy, Spicer & Taylor, 2006), the cost of fear of crime (Dolan & Peasgood, 2007), the cost of crime in specific states (Aos et al., 2001), and the cost of mental health care (Cohen & Miller, 1998).

³ UNITED NATIONS CRIME AND JUSTICE INFORMATION NETWORK, Centre for International Crime Prevention, Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention <http://www.uncjin.org/index.html>

- Organise conferences, in particular an annual Best Practice Conference, and other activities, including the annual European Crime Prevention Award, designed to achieve the objectives of the Network and to share widely the results thereof;
- Provide its expertise to the Council and the Commission as required;
- Report to the Council on its activities each year through the Board and the competent working bodies. The Council shall be invited to endorse the report and forward it to the European Parliament;
- Develop and implement a work programme based on a clearly defined strategy that takes account of identifying and responding to relevant crime threats.

The Council Decision also describes the EUCPN's structure and operating framework. In addition to a **Board** consisting of **National Representatives**, the structure includes an **Executive Committee**, **Contact Points**⁴ and a **Secretariat**. The European Commission is an observer⁵ in the Board and attends the meetings of the Executive Committee. The EUCPN's rules of procedure explain how these different elements should interact with each other and third parties.

The EUCPN's basic goals were reaffirmed in the **Multiannual Strategy** for the EUCPN which was adopted by the Board in December 2010 for the period until the end of 2015. It elaborates on the EUCPN's mission, defining it as being to *'Contribute to the development and the promotion of a multidisciplinary and preventive approach to crime and feelings of insecurity at European level. With this in mind, the Network has as 'a key role to support policymakers and practitioners of European, national and local level'*. The Multiannual Strategy goes on to define the vision, mission, target groups and the strategic goals that the EUCPN should achieve over five-year period. It provides policy orientations with a special focus on four types of activities: (i) to be a point of reference for the EUCPN's target groups; (ii) to disseminate knowledge of crime prevention; (iii) to support crime prevention at national and local levels and (iv) to develop EU policy and strategies with regard to crime prevention.

The EUCPN target groups are identified as being: (i) Practitioners and policymakers at local level; (ii) practitioners and policymakers at national level; and (iii) relevant EU and international agencies, organisations, working groups, etc. Annual work programmes then set out more specific priorities.

The EUCPN currently benefits from financial support from the ISEC Programme⁶ through a grant worth 845.000€ covering the period mid 2011 – mid 2014.

According to article 9 of the 2009 Council decision, the Commission shall present by 30 November 2012 an evaluation report to the Council on the activities of the Network with a special focus on the efficiency of the work of the Network and its Secretariat, taking due account of the interaction between the Network and other relevant stakeholders.

⁴ According to article 6 of the Council Decision, Contact points shall support national representatives in exchanging national crime prevention information and expertise within the Network.

⁵ There are currently 5 observers representing Croatia, EU agencies (Europol, EMCDDA) and the European Commission and Council Secretariat. Observers may participate in the business of the EUCPN Board but do not have a vote.

⁶ Financial support programme of the European Commission for the Prevention of and Fight against Crime. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/security-and-safeguarding-liberties/prevention-of-and-fight-against-crime/index_en.htm

In the Stockholm Programme, the European Council invited the Commission to submit a proposal to setting up an '**Observatory for the Prevention of Crime**' (OPC), *"the tasks of which will be to collect, analyse and disseminate knowledge on crime, including organised crime (including statistics) and crime prevention, to support and promote Member States and EU institutions when they take preventive measures and to exchange best practice. The OPC should build on the work carried out within the framework of the European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN) and the evaluation of it. It should include or replace the EUCPN, with a secretariat located within an existing EU agency and functioning as a separate unit.* The Stockholm Programme stipulated that a proposal should be submitted by 2013 at the latest.

This document therefore evaluates the work of the EUCPN over the past two and a half years and provides recommendations as regards the future, including considering the feasibility of establishing a Crime Prevention Observatory.

2. EXTERNAL EVALUATION

In order to inform the further development of the EUCPN, an independent, external evaluation of the EUCPN was undertaken in the first months of 2012⁷. The external evaluation addressed several aspects of the EUCPN, including its performance over the past two and a half years, its organisation and governance and finally it provided for a number of development options.

Overall, the external evaluation concluded that the EUCPN is functioning relatively well and has made good progress in relation to the objectives set out in the 2009 Council Decision and the 2010-2015 Multiannual Strategy. Following the adoption of the 2009 Council Decision and follow-up activities, the EUCPN has a much more clearly defined strategy and target groups. It has been strengthened and professionalized, particularly following the establishment of the new Secretariat which has provided much needed support for the Network's activities.

Compared to the situation when the last evaluation was conducted⁸, many shortcomings have been addressed, the EUCPN's activities are more targeted and the quality and quantity of outputs have been improved. For example: since 2012, the EUCPN Secretariat is producing "**Thematic Papers**". The first paper on 'Sport, science and art in the prevention of crime among children and youth' was based on the work completed by the former Presidency trio.. In June 2012 the EUCPN Secretariat has published the first 6-monthly "**European Crime Prevention Monitor**" which presents information on crime situations and crime trends based on statistics, surveys and reports from different sources. The aim of these reports is to provide a quick and substantial, but selected overview of the situation and trends on crime and crime prevention . Target groups are local, national and European practitioners and policy makers.

Furthermore, new initiatives such as the setting up of a **stakeholder database**, the dissemination of a **redesigned newsletter**, the **world cafés** during Board meetings and the launch of a **stakeholder feedback survey** have all contributed to better cooperation, contacts, exchanges of information and experience between actors in the field of crime prevention (for

⁷ This evaluation was undertaken by the Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services (CSES). The study is available on the website of DG HOME : http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/organized-crime-and-human-trafficking/crime-prevention/index_en.htm

⁸ Evaluation of EUCPN conducted in 2008 – 2009 by CSES [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/organized-crime-and-human-trafficking/crime-prevention/docs/evaluation_of_eucpn_final_report_\(cses_11_03_09\).pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/organized-crime-and-human-trafficking/crime-prevention/docs/evaluation_of_eucpn_final_report_(cses_11_03_09).pdf)

example, Bulgaria's recently adopted national crime prevention strategy relied heavily on EUCPN information). EUCPN Board meetings have increasingly dealt with points of substance as opposed to procedural issues. A greater number of Member States now takes part in the **ECPA (European Crime Prevention Award) contest**.

Other substantive activities include a total of **18 research projects** which since 2009 received support under the EUCPN work programmes. These projects dealt with preventing domestic violence, restorative justice, developing estimates of the economic cost of crime, developing administrative measures to combat organized crime, reducing recidivism among youth, neighborhood mediation, the promotion of social inclusion, developing good practices of Community Conflict Management etc. The results of all projects can be consulted on the EUCPN website. A substantial number of **systematic reviews** were produced in 2008 on various initiatives and activities to prevent criminal activities. However, since then no systematic reviews were published until May 2012 when the Danish Crime Prevention Network published a systematic review on the EUCPN website on the effectiveness of mentoring and leisure-time activities for youth at risk.

The EUCPN website – despite its technical limitations – now has a more developed **searchable online database** of good practices and up to date **information on crime prevention strategies and measures**.

However, the external evaluation also identified **a number of weaknesses** : (1) the evaluation could not find evidence that EUCPN activities are always linked to the crime prevention priorities facing the EU and Member States; (2) the quality of the EUCPN outputs is generally good and these products are useful but there is scope to tailor them even more to target groups; (3) EUCPN is in general less successful in reaching target groups at local level, than at national or EU level (although the two above mentioned products - the thematic papers and the European Crime Prevention Monitor - are specifically destined to practitioners at national and local level); (4) a substantial amount of crime prevention projects supported by the ISEC programme are implemented without associating or even informing EUCPN; (5) there is a considerable difference in effectiveness of the rotating presidencies capacity to provide leadership to EUCPN; (6) the intention to put key documents in different EU languages on the website to attract a wider readership and provide supporting documentation to stakeholders particularly at local level was not fulfilled; (7) many of the contact points do not appear to provide any added value to the functioning and visibility of the EUCPN and in a variety of member states there are no contact points; (8) the activities of the EUCPN are supported by relatively modest funding and its activities and outputs are proportionate to the financial inputs; (9) more needs to be done to raise the EUCPN profile.

3. THE ROLE OF THE EUCPN

Over much of the past decade, the EUCPN's development has taken place in the absence of a strong EU legislative framework. The EU had limited competence⁹ in crime prevention and to the extent that it had powers, these were mainly in the field of organised crime. With the

⁹ Article 2 of the of the Treaty on European Union and of the Treaty establishing the European Community reads as follows : "To maintain and develop the Union as an area of freedom, security and justice, in which the free movement of persons is assured in conjunction with appropriate measures with respect to external border controls, asylum, immigration and the **prevention** and combating of crime". Article 29, second subpara refers to "... **preventing** and combating crime, organised or otherwise, in particular terrorism, trafficking in persons and offences against children, illicit drug trafficking and illicit arms trafficking, corruption and fraud..." <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/ce321/ce32120061229en00010331.pdf>

changes made by the Lisbon Treaty to the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) the EU received a stronger role in crime prevention.

Reflecting this, Article 84 of the Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) states that the European Parliament and the Council, acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, ‘*may establish measures to promote and support the action of Member States in the field of crime prevention, excluding any harmonisation of the laws and regulations of the Member States*’.

Overall, it can be said that the EU dimension of crime prevention has been strengthened in many ways in recent years, including through a number of initiatives being taken to assist Member States in their efforts to combat criminal activities¹⁰. With the increasingly cross-border nature of crime, and the blurring¹¹ of the distinction between organised and so-called ‘volume’ crime, having an effective EU framework in place is a necessity for crime prevention efforts at all levels to have a greater chance of success.

Although crime rates in Europe have decreased for many years¹², there are signs in some EU Member States¹³ of this trend having now been reversed, perhaps reflecting the effects of the economic recession¹⁴. Moreover, security concerns among EU Citizens remain important¹⁵. Consequently, crime prevention - and collaboration at EU level to promote it - remains a priority for the EUCPN’s key stakeholders and EU citizens generally¹⁶. The rationale for further developing the EUCPN therefore remains valid.

¹⁰ Dedicated crime prevention provisions have been inserted in Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims (art 18) as well as in Directive 2011/93/EU on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography (art 23). The EU Strategy towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings (2012 – 2016) – COM(2012)286final - has the prevention of trafficking in human beings as one of its key priorities (priority B).

¹¹ Crimes committed by mobile “itinerant” criminal groups are a good example of this blurring between organised and volume crime. These crimes include: shoplifting, metal theft, cargo theft, house burglaries and pickpocketing.

¹² In most EU countries, crime levels have been decreasing consistently over the period since around 2002-03 although the tendency was upwards in some Member States (Denmark, Finland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Romania and Sweden). The countries where the decrease in total crime has been most noticeable were Cyprus, Greece, Malta, Poland and the UK. Even recent figures indicate for the UK (crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales) a further drop of 4.2% between the years ending March 2011 and March 2012. Total numbers of crimes recorded for nine of the ten main categories of offence fell compared to the previous year, with criminal damage showing a fall of almost 10% (source : UK Police force tables). But underlying these general tendencies there are considerable differences in the development of specific types of crime. Since 2006 – 2007 the police recorded more crimes in a number of Member States, particularly, for domestic burglary and drug trafficking. On the other hand the type of recorded crime which showed the most substantial decrease was theft of motor vehicles, followed by violent crime and robbery. (Source : EUROSTAT - Statistics in Focus crime and criminal justice) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-12-006/EN/KS-SF-12-006-EN.PDF

¹³ See media reports on Greece (<http://www.balkananalysis.com/greece/2011/05/15/organized-crime-in-greece-statistics-trends-and-police-countermeasures-in-2011-2/>).

¹⁴ See also OCTA (2011) p6 : "The recent global economic crisis and the connected financial restraints have made communities more tolerant to illicit commodities, especially counterfeit goods".

¹⁵ Nine out of ten Europeans consider organised crime as an important threat to EU security, see EUROBAROMETER 371 of 2011 on p 28.

¹⁶ According the survey of key stakeholders undertaken for this evaluation, almost two-thirds (65.2%) of the respondents indicated that collaboration at the EU level between Member States to promote crime prevention is either ‘very’ or ‘quite’ important. This confirms the findings of a Special Eurobarometer 380 ‘Awareness of Home Affairs’ report, June 2012, pages 51-60, which stated that nine in ten Europeans (91%) agreed that the EU institutions and individual Member State governments should work more closely together to fight terrorism and crime.

4. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUCPN

The following section provides recommendations for addressing the weaknesses identified during the external evaluation. Two of them seem to stand out : first, the need to address the visibility of EUCPN¹⁷ and - linked to that - the need to better align EUCPN activities to agreed priorities at EU level, including through creating synergies with other initiatives and bodies. This would contribute to a better focus and to building up know-how in specific crime areas, allowing more added value in the interaction with both the local and EU level and thus also addressing the issue of lack of visibility.

4.1. What are the main changes required of the EUCPN ?

Firstly, a number of measures could be taken to increase the EUCPN's *performance, impact and added value*.

- (1) The EUCPN should more systematically **align its priorities to agreed EU priorities**, including those defined in the Internal Security Strategy, the EU Policy Cycle and other security related initiatives endorsed by EU Member States (for example, there are obvious links between the EUCPN and the informal network of contact points on the administrative approach¹⁸ to prevent and fight organised crime¹⁹ that could usefully be further explored).
- (2) Linked to the above, the EUCPN should strengthen its role in making **inputs to EU and Member State policymaking** in the crime prevention field. At the moment, the inputs of the EUCPN at the EU level remain modest.
- (3) A more strategic approach to determining EUCPN activities and strengthening its role in providing inputs to policymaking at the EU and Member State level, should be supported by the development in the longer-term of an **observatory-type monitoring function**²⁰. Establishing a better knowledge base on crime prevention at EU level should primarily be done by using available data (e.g. from EUROPOL and EUROSTAT) while avoiding any overlap with existing initiatives.

¹⁷ The overall low response rate to the survey as well as the high degree of “don’t know” are only two examples of the fact that EUCPN and its activities are still not widely known.

¹⁸ The so-called 'Administrative approach' to combat organised crime can best be described as a combination of tools at administrative level to prevent organised crime from infiltrating the public sector, the economy or key parts of the public administration. Council Conclusions on the fight against crimes committed by mobile (itinerant) criminal groups were adopted in November 2010 and contained provisions for the establishment of an informal network of contact points on the administrative approach. http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/118169.pdf The network was established in 2011 but has no secretarial support.

¹⁹ The EUCPN Council Decision (art 2.2) allows EUCPN to look into “*all measures that are intended to reduce or otherwise contribute to reducing crime and citizens feeling of insecurity...*”. Equally, the multi-annual strategy of EUCPN states that EUCPN should contribute “*to the promotion of a multi-disciplinary and preventive approach to crime*”. For reasons of efficiency and sustainability, there should be greater synergies between the EUCPN and the network, possibly also from an organisational point of view.

²⁰ This could include building up a better understanding of trends at the EU level and across Member States with regard to crime, establishing an overview of Member States’ crime prevention institutional set ups, strategies and policies (some of this information is already available) and to the extent that it can be assessed, an assessment of what impact crime prevention measures have on different types of criminal activity.

- (4) To support such monitoring activities, the EUCPN should continue its **collaboration²¹ with Eurostat and others** to introduce better statistical information at EU level but also to avoid any overlap with on-going or planned activities.
- (5) The EUCPN should further **develop its outputs** to increase the capacity to respond to key stakeholder needs, subject to the necessary resources being available. The EUCPN's Secretariat has an important role to play in this respect. Likewise, Member States should be encouraged to contribute more actively to the work of EUCPN (e.g. by feeding it more regularly with data or signalling best practices), herewith ensuring better quality outputs.
- (6) A key EUCPN priority should be to produce **good practice material for crime prevention practitioners at a regional and local level**, including in a demand-driven manner. The EUCPN's capacity to do so depends on intensifying EU-level networking involving practitioners and being able to convert the results of this and other activities (e.g. ECPA) into useful material.
- (7) During the period under review, the EUCPN has developed **closer relationships with a number of other entities**. Priority in this respect should be given to EUROSTAT, CEPOL (because of the possibility of strengthening the EUCPN's capacity to reach practitioners at the local level), and EUROPOL (because of EUROPOL's role in helping to identify future challenges and priorities in fighting organized crime).
- (8) The content, design and user-friendliness of **the EUCPN website** should be improved, preferably through the establishment of a new website as the current one seem to have reached its limits as regards the technical possibilities to further adapt it to users' needs.

Secondly, while the changes introduced by the 2009 Council Decision have strengthened the EUCPN organisation and governance, further improvements could be introduced through a number of measures:

- (1) There remains a considerable difference in the **effectiveness and capacity of the rotating EUCPN Presidencies** to provide leadership to the EUCPN. While it remains important mainly for reasons of creating "ownership" among EU Member States, to have rotating presidencies, Member States should commit to allocating sufficient resources to the EUCPN Presidency. The Secretariat should be closely involved in providing support to plan and implement priorities.
- (2) The **role of National Representatives (EUCPN Board members)**, especially in relation to promoting the EUCPN in their countries, should also be defined in more detail. National Representatives of Member States that joined the EU in the past decade are still on a steep learning curve as regards the integration of crime prevention in their overall security policy. The EUCPN is for them first and foremost a useful source of information and inspiration. Most other Member States have a longstanding experience in crime prevention and some of them actively share it. Nevertheless, the success of the EUCPN critically depends on the active contribution

²¹ The EUCPN and EUROSTAT participate both in the expert group assisting the Commission with the implementation of the Crime Statistics Action Plan 2011- 2015 COM(2011) 713 final.

of all National Representatives to the activities of the network, during and beyond EUCPN Board meetings.

- (3) The role of the EUCPN Board **observers** should be clarified in terms of (a) who should enjoy this status and (b) their attendance to board meeting should define whether or not to continue to grant this status.
- (4) As there has been little evidence of their added value in promoting the EUCPN and its activities, the role of the EUCPN's **Contact Points** should be reviewed²² and at least better defined, for example by ensuring that all Member States appoint Contact Points who subsequently should turn into an active network of crime prevention practitioners, closely associated to the work of the EUCPN. Alternatively, the concept of EUCPN contact points could be abandoned all together and replaced by e.g. networks of academics that on a case by case basis could provide scientific inputs to the activities of EUCPN.
- (5) Overall, the research confirms that the EUCPN **Secretariat** is performing well in supporting the Network, despite its limited capacity (3 full time staff). In fact, the establishment of the Secretariat is probably the most important structural change that has contributed to improving the performance of the Network overall. A stronger secretariat would be an important asset to further develop the EUCPN.

4.2. EUCPN versus a "Crime Prevention Observatory" as stipulated by the Stockholm Programme

While there is no clear-cut definition of an EU level "observatory", it is generally accepted that the common key tasks and activities of European observatories (or organisations with observatory features) are at least the following:

1. **Gathering, monitoring, analysing, interpreting and disseminating data** on a regular basis to all parties concerned regarding a specific policy area in the different countries in order to provide the EU and its countries with an overall view of the situation, measures or activities designed in their respective spheres of responsibility;
2. Identifying **emerging trends and best practices** across the Member States often based on a **common set of key indicators** allowing to some extent the comparison between the different Member States;
3. Producing a set of **technical papers, reports, studies and other outputs** specifically designed to disseminate the information to the target groups such as decision-makers, academic communities, practitioners and the general public;
4. Promoting **networking and exchange between stakeholders** through setting up working groups, forums, and/or meetings.

The EUCPN has currently only embryonic features of an 'observatory'.

In addition to the specific conclusions and recommendations set out above, various more general options regarding the EUCPN's development have been examined in the external

²² See footnote 4 for their role according to the Council Decision

evaluation. These included keeping the status quo, enhancing the EUCPN, establishing a European Crime Prevention Observatory, and disbanding the EUCPN.

Option 1: Status quo

Keeping the situation as it is would mean that the EUCPN could probably continue to function in a quite satisfactory manner. However, it would also mean that the identified shortcomings would not be addressed and the added value of the EUCPN would not be fully exploited in a way that it can fully meet the expectations underlying the 2009 Decision. This could lead to key stakeholders losing interest in the Network, which risks to ultimately lead to option 4 : disbanding the EUCPN. For these and the other reasons mentioned under option 4, Option1 is not recommended.

Option 2: EUCPN +

In order to consolidate progress made so far and to allow further incremental development in line with the recommendations listed under section IV.1, the capacity of the EUCPN would be strengthened to address key stakeholder priorities through a strengthened Secretariat and a range of measures that will increase the Network's visibility. These improvements would be possible to achieve by doubling its currently very modest resources, which would still represent a relatively small budget compared to similar networks. Additional costs might include (i) enlargement of the Secretariat (estimated €180.000 for 2 extra staff x 2 years = €360.000), (ii) website development and maintenance (= €150.000 for a 2 year period), and (iii) enhanced role/networking of Contact Points or alternatively establishing networks of academics (e.g. 2 meetings per year x 2 = €100.000). The total costs for the EUCPN would be approximately €600.000 per year, or €1,2M for two years, to be compared with the current level of funding (approx. €300.000²³ per year).

Option 3: European Crime Prevention Observatory

Establishing a full-fledged observatory would enhance the EUCPN's ability to monitor and analyse crime prevention trends. However, while this type of data is relevant to key stakeholders at the national level, the regional level and local level were above all interested in learning from good practices and the other types of outputs currently produced by the EUCPN. Assessing the added value of an Observatory has also to take into account the costs it would imply, which will be substantially higher than in option 2. Starting from the estimated costs for option 2 (€1,2M) the additional funding required might include (i) an additional 2 secretariat staff to help coordinate observatory data collection and analysis (€180.000 x 2 years = 360.000€) and (ii) grants to Contact Points to collect data (average €25.000 per year, per Member State x 2 years = €1,4M). The total costs would be around €3M for a period of two years. The risks are also higher because of a combination of relatively high costs and a shift of focus which is not necessarily equally beneficial to all stakeholders.

Option 4: Disbanding the EUCPN

There is very little support for disbanding the EUCPN. The EUCPN is widely seen as producing more and more benefits for Member States, especially since the adoption of the 2009 Council Decision. Disbanding it would reduce the capacity of the EU and Member States to promote crime prevention and make it more difficult to engage Member States and other key stakeholders in helping to prepare and implement innovative and smart ways to

²³ The Action Grant of €845.000 covering a three years period, requires 5 % co-financing by EU Member States.

prevent crime in a complementary way to classical law enforcement actions. Member States whose crime prevention policies are still at an early stage would lose out most of it. Given that the rationale for collaboration at EU level on crime prevention remains strong, this course of action would not be relevant to key stakeholder needs. Moreover, given the relatively low cost of operating the EUCPN, the savings would be modest

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The EUCPN has proven itself to be an increasingly useful instrument to support policymakers at EU and national levels and also with a considerable potential to create added value at local level. Building on its improving track record, the Commission is confident that the EUCPN will continue to adapt to meet new challenges.

For the reasons set out in section 4.2, as well as the positive developments in the past two years (subject to taking into account the recommendations in section 4.1.), the Commission considers that **establishing a Crime Prevention Observatory**, based on or in addition to the EUCPN, for the time being, **does neither correspond to a pressing need, nor is it politically or financially desirable in the short term.**

Enhancing the EUCPN ("EUCPN +"), notably by a better resourced Secretariat, is therefore the preferred option as it would allow the EUCPN to concentrate on consolidating progress made so far and on further improving its functioning along the recommendations made in section IV and in the external evaluation. A particular effort is required to increase the visibility of its activities and communicate them pro-actively to its stakeholders. The EUCPN has embryonic features of an "observatory" and could overtime evolve towards reinforcing these features. Preliminary work has already started in this respect under the current grant agreement financed through ISEC.

The costs of an incremental development of the EUCPN are estimated at approximately €1,2M for a two years period, starting when the current Action Grant expires (mid 2014). Member States may decide to finance EUCPN themselves, or alternatively, decide to apply for co-funding under the ISEC Financial Programme (through an Action Grant).

Independently of any possible future application for financial support through the ISEC programme, the future development of the EUCPN should be matched with a stronger commitment of all EU Member States to actively support the work of the EUCPN.

The Commission considers that a working group of the EUCPN Board Members supported by the Secretariat should be established to consider and address the recommendations made in this report under section IV and in the external evaluation.

The Commission recommends that the work of the EUCPN over the next three years (2013-2015) is evaluated again in 2016. At that time, the usefulness of establishing a Crime Prevention Observatory could be reconsidered. The Commission looks forward to debating the development of the EUCPN further on the basis of this report, notably with the other EU institutions and the Member States.