



Tübingen 2006: A Very German Conference

By Sara Harrop

It is traditional to get lost at the start of a European Society of Criminology conference. In the past few years participants have struggled with labyrinthine Spanish alleyways, tongue-twisting Finnish street names, the vagaries of Dutch trams, and the distractions of Polish piano accordion players to reach the sanctuary of the registration desk. The entire city of Tübingen, however, seemed a haven of calm after hours in disorderly queues at airport security checks in the wake of the latest terrorist threats. Participants quickly relaxed into Tübingen's chocolate box charms as they strolled past painted pastel buildings, café-lined squares, and the lazily meandering river Neckar in search of Eberhard



Karls University, venue for the Society's sixth annual meeting.

The modern *Kupferbau* (Copper Building) buzzed with multi-lingual greetings as people gathered for the opening ceremony. Silence fell as conference organiser and ESC president Hans-Jürgen Kerner congratulated everyone on having braved the world's airlines and welcomed us all to his city. Richard Blath, counsellor for the German Federal Ministry of Justice; Eberhard Schaich, director of Eberhard Karls University; and Brigitte Russ-Scherer, the mayor of Tübingen, addressed the assembly in excellent English. The many-talented Hans-Jürgen Kerner provided a

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Another Successful ESC Conference

By Hans-Jürgen Kerner

The sixth annual conference of the European Society of Criminology took place from 26th August to 29th August in Tübingen, Germany. It was hosted by the Criminology Division of the Federal Ministry of Justice and the Institute of Criminology, Faculty of Law, Eberhard-Karls-University of Tübingen. The programme committee consisted of Christoph Freudenreich, Hans-Jürgen Kerner, Jörg Kinzig, Kerstin Reich, Elmar G. M. Weitekamp, and Rüdiger Wulf, representing the Institute of Criminology, the Faculty of Law, the Association of Tübingen Criminologists, the regional courts, and the correctional department of the State Ministry of Justice.

The conference organiser was Hans-Jürgen Kerner, professor of criminology, juvenile law, corrections, and penal procedure at the Faculty of Law, and director of the Institute of Criminology, University of Tübingen. He is past-president of the ESC. Elmar G. M. Weitekamp, Professor at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium), co-organised the whole programme and directed a large

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NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR ESC PRESIDENT

Nominations and applications are sought for the ESC presidency. Nominations must be received by May 1, 2007. The president is elected for a three-year term, the first as president-elect beginning at the conclusion of the 2007 annual meeting in Bolgna, the second as president in 2008-09, and the third as past president. Nominations will not be regarded as complete without written agreement or confirmation by the Nominee.

Nominations should be sent to Professor Marcelo Aebi, ESC Executive Secretary (see page 2).

SOLICITATION OF ESC ANNUAL MEETING SITES

The ESC is soliciting applications to host annual meetings from 2009 onwards. Applications should identify the proposed organising committee and leader, describe the physical facilities that will be available (and how many attendees can be accommodated), set out a proposed budget, describe likely local funding sources, and explain why, in light of the recent distribution of annual meeting sites, the site proposed is appropriate.

Applications should be sent to Professor Marcelo Aebi, ESC Executive Secretary (see page 2).

Message from the President

By Kauko Aromaa

More than seven years have passed since planning began at the 1999 American Society of Criminology meeting for the organisation of a European Society of Criminology. The official organising meeting took place in The Hague in the spring of 2000. Josine Junger-Tas agreed to serve as president and Martin Killias agreed to serve as conference organiser for the first annual meeting in Lausanne in 2001. Since then, there have been five meetings in five countries — Toledo (2002), Helsinki (2003), Amsterdam (2004), Krakow (2005), and Tübingen (2006), with Bologna (2007) and Edinburgh (2008) waiting in the wings. The home countries of the presidents — Josine Junger-Tas (The Netherlands), Paul Wiles (UK), Ernesto Savonna (Italy), Hans-Jürgen Kerner (Germany), Kauko Aromaa (Finland), and, next year, Krzysztof Krajewski (Poland) — have been as diverse. Board members have been even more diverse. Pictures of the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 boards can be found on page 7.

Criminology is a hugely diverse field. Many criminologists, in Europe and elsewhere, do not consider themselves criminologists at all. This is due to the wide-ranging nature of the discipline: crime and crime control can be approached from many different perspectives, either one at a time or simultaneously. One of my concerns about "criminology" as it appears from the papers delivered at the ESC's annual conferences is that the discipline's inherent diversity is

represented unevenly. I give one current example.

Eastern European colleagues often find it difficult to identify partners from western European countries to participate in joint research projects. The ESC annual conferences illustrate why this is so. The topics presented by researchers from the different regions are very different. The current eastern focus is

generally on such topics as organized crime, corruption, and trafficking in human beings. The western focus, by and large, is on the crimes of the powerless.

The eastern focus may be partly because international financial support (for example, from the European Union or the World Bank) favours such topics in eastern European countries and criminologists there are often heavily dependent on such funding. The different focuses also likely reflect a long-standing inertia in western research, however advanced it may appear in its own terms.

ESC conferences are potentially an important forum to promote greater mingling of east and west, north and south. This has not yet happened to a large extent. Most work presented in the conferences continues to be from single authors. Multiple-author contributions typically come from single research agencies rather than being multiple-country accomplishments.

Is the ESC able to promote change in this respect? As financial support often drives priority choices, I am doubtful this will happen as long as

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Kauko Aromaa



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What Goes Up, Comes Down

Explaining Falling Crime Rates
By Jan van Dijk

The International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) is a standardised survey incorporating samples of the general populations of countries. It covers victimisation experiences of crime by households and individuals. The ICVS was initiated to collect data on levels of crime that can be used for comparative purposes. It was carried out in 2005, for the fifth time, in over thirty countries, including eighteen member states of the European Union. The EU component was carried out by Gallup-Europe and co-funded by the Directorate General for Research of the European Community. Delays in data collection in some countries and increasing proportions of mobile-phone-only users in others have weakened standardisation, but additional checks on data have revealed no major distortions. At the Tübingen conference of the ESC, some global results were presented for the EU states.

The key finding of the fifth sweep is that the volume of crime has gone down significantly in almost all Western countries since 2000. The United States seems to have

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National Reconviction Rates

Making International Comparisons
By Bouke Wartna and Laura Nijssen

In the Netherlands work has been done to establish the level of recidivism in the entire population of prosecuted offenders. Interested in the scope of this type of research, the WODC — the research bureau of the Dutch Ministry of Justice — sent out a questionnaire to 41 European countries. It turned out that at least fourteen countries have or soon will have recidivism data on a national scale. Steps were taken to bring those countries together. A research group has been formed that will explore the possibilities of making international comparisons of reconviction rates. The second meeting of this group was held at the ESC annual meeting in Tübingen. This article summarises progress to date.

National Studies on Recidivism

As table 1 shows, fourteen European countries have or recently have had a national study on recidivism. Most countries have standardised data on all offenders, by age, types of crimes committed, and sanctions suffered. In

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European Journal of Criminology News

By Julian Roberts

Ben Goold and I have assumed responsibility for editing the ESC's scholarly journal. Our objective is to maintain the high standard of scholarship established by the previous editor, Professor David Smith. The first issue under the new editorship will contain a clear statement of purpose and describe a number of changes to the editorial structure, but a number of points may be of interest to readers of the current newsletter.

In general our goal is to encourage potential authors to submit articles that have clear cross-jurisdictional significance, or submissions that draw general lessons from research conducted in a single country. We shall actively seek contributors from scholars in member states that have not to this point been the subject of a great deal of research.

These are exciting times both for the Society and the *European Journal of Criminology*. We hope to expand the number of issues published each year from four to five. This will permit us to publish a special "themed" issue every year as well as four regular issues. In light of the volume of submissions received the expansion to five issues is a clear priority.

We welcome formal proposals for such special issues – or informal suggestions for themed issues that the editorial

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New ESC Working Groups

By Stan C. Proband

The ESC board recently approved the creation of two new working groups, the European Developmental and Life-Course working group (EDLC) and the European Homicide working group (EHR). Both are based at the Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement.

The EDLC

Developmental and life course criminology is a new and exciting field that is attracting the attention of researchers around the globe. Criminologists, developmental psychologists, life-course sociologists, and scholars from a wide range of other disciplines are unraveling the ways delinquency and crime evolve within individuals' lives.

Recognising the importance of this growing field, the ESC board has approved the creation of the European Developmental and Life-Course Criminology working group (EDLC). The EDLC aims to promote communication among researchers working on European data, facilitate international collaboration between research groups, and encourage international dissemination of research results (see: <http://www.esc-eurocrim.org/workshops.shtml>).

All ESC members involved in longitudinal research are invited to join the EDLC. The first meeting will be held

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EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF CRIMINOLOGY

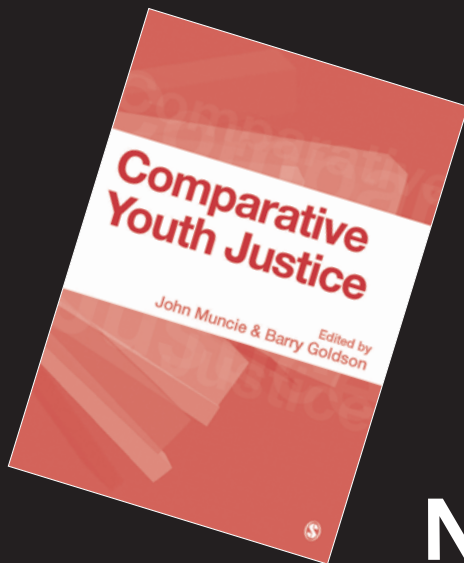
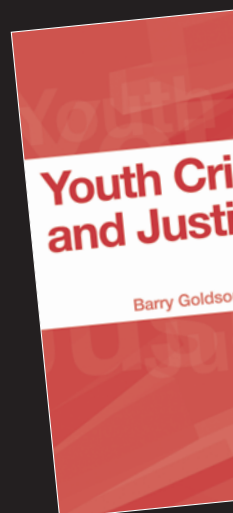
Conference 2006 • Tübingen, August 26 - 29



EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF CRIMINOLOGY

Conference 2006 • Tübingen, August 26 - 29





SAGE Publications

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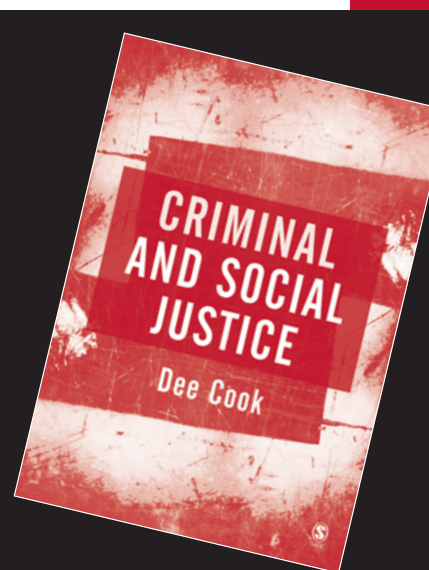
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Message from the President *Continued from page 2*

the society is unable to provide such support. We can offer a forum, but we have not found a way to influence the research profile.

A scholarly or scientific society should indeed be like that. Its members should take advantage of the opportunities offered. If board members and conference organizers attempted to foster an agenda of paradigm change and preferred topics they would, at least implicitly, exclude the interests of many ESC members. That would be unacceptable.

But to remain a mere reflection of the status quo is not fully satisfactory either. What should be done is to apply the working group approach to this issue. At present, several working groups exist under the auspices of the ESC. A basic constraint is that they are totally dependent upon the active input of individual members, as the ESC is unable to provide financial support to the groups. Thus, it also lacks the capacity to help get new groups launched.

ESC Board 2005-2006



L-R: Michael Tonry, Uberto Gatti, Krzysztof Krajewski, Kauko Aromaa, Hans-Jürgen Kerner, Sonja Snacken, Marcelo Aebi, Gorazd Mesko

Another of my concerns is about political power. The marginalization of criminological research in relation to political power is disquieting. Many

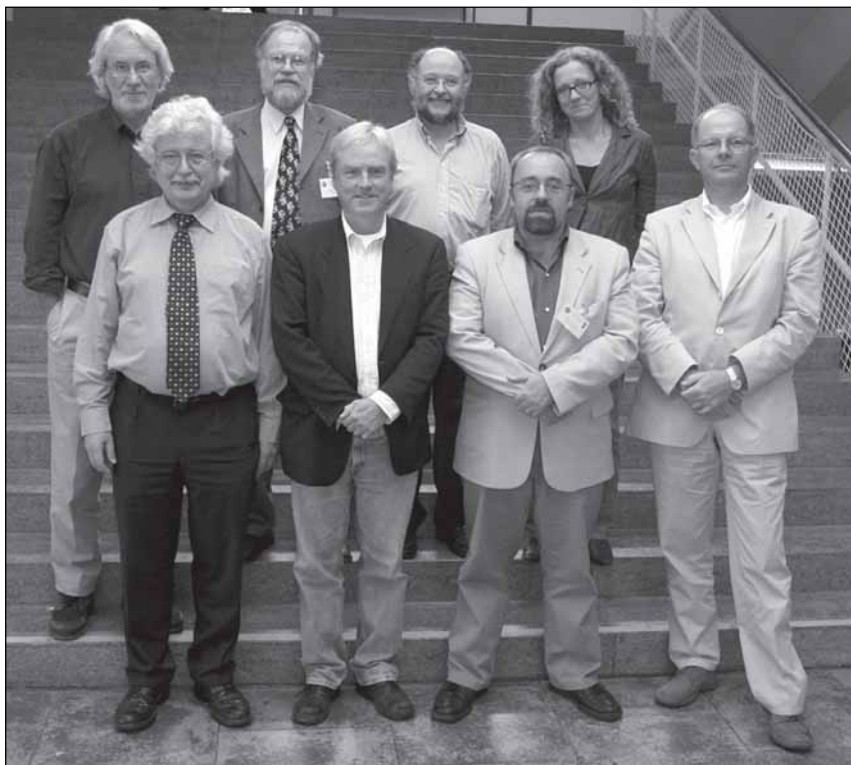
governments are investing more in investigative and repressive action related to crime phantoms, the influence of criminology in relation to ordinary everyday crime is weakening, and political interest in classical crime control dilemmas is diminishing.

Government-driven crime prevention programmes participate in the competition with similar consequences. Nonetheless, accepting the desirability of knowledge-based criminal justice policy, criminology and decision-making should work more closely together.

Wealthy nations should be able to keep up the good old traditions while investing heavily in emerging concerns. Poorer countries have difficulty doing so. Their criminologists may wind up neglecting the most burning problems of old-fashioned repressive criminal justice policy with regard to the everyday crimes that fill the prisons because more financial support is available for work on fashionable topics.

As the ESC is primarily a forum comprised of its members, not a research centre or a partner in research, we are unlikely to solve these issues, but we should not lose sight of them. ■

ESC Board 2006-2007



*Back row (L-R): Michael Tonry, Kauko Aromaa, Mike Levi, Catrien Bijleveld
Front row: Hans-Jürgen Kerner, Julian Roberts, Marcelo Aebi, Krzysztof Krajewski*

Another Successful ESC Conference *Continued from page 1*

group of volunteer helpers. The organisational issues were handled by a conference secretariat and the institute secretariat.

For the entire preparatory period and during the conference the clerical work was carefully and very efficiently headed by Ms Maria Pessiu, who was joined later by Ms Ursula Haug-Lénert and Ms Monika Lieb. Two others deserve special mention: Ms Jasmin Löffler for her assistance with pre-filtering submitted abstracts, communicating with participants, arranging hundreds of papers into meaningful panels, round-tables, and workshops, and assisting the ESC-Executive Secretary Marcelo Aebi during the conference; and Ms Katharina Stelzel for her assistance with double-checking participants' names, addresses, and other coordinates, creating lists, and proof-reading brochures and numerous documents. Finally, many members and collaborators of the Institute of Criminology and many volunteers, mostly students of law, psychology, social work, pedagogy, and sociology of the University of Tübingen, efficiently helped with preparations immediately preceding the conference, arrangements throughout (in particular the registration desk), and clear-up work afterwards. Logistics such as hotel reservations, professional excursions, and the social programme were dealt with by the conference secretariat, the Association of German, Swiss, and Austrian Criminologists (NKG), the Association of Tübingen Criminologists (WVTK), the Tübingen Tourist Office, and two professional catering firms, Hotel Krone Catering and Rosenau Catering.

All conference events took place in Tübingen University buildings at the edge of the town centre. The Copper Building was the central location for the opening and closing ceremonies, plenary meetings, book exhibits, workshops, round-table sessions, the poster session, the ice-cream, wine and cheese social and, not least, the many informal gatherings during breaks and at other times. The bulk of

Who Came to Tübingen

Germany	82
United Kingdom	74
United States	33
Belgium	31
Netherlands	27
Canada	22
Sweden	21
Italy	20
Spain	17
Switzerland	17
Austria	14
Finland	13
Czech Republic	11
France	11
Israel	11
Poland	11
Slovenia	11
Greece	10
Taiwan	10
Denmark	7
Hungary	6
Australia	5
Japan	5
Norway	5
Ireland	4
Estonia	4
Iran	4
Iceland	3
Lithuania	3
Russia	3
Malta	2
Georgia	2
Romania	2
Turkey	2
Ukraine	2
Armenia	1
Bosnia & Hezegovina	1
India	1
Korea	1
Latvia	1
Pakistan	1
Portugal	1
Serbia	1
South Africa	1

the panels took place in the New Aula, the Theologicum, and other buildings near the Copper Building.

Tübingen attracted some 514 registered participants, a similar number to Krakow. Together with official guests, local collaborators, and volunteers, the conference attracted

about 550 people. As the table shows, they represented 44 different countries. Germany was the most represented country (more than 80 participants). This was followed by the United Kingdom (more than 70 participants), the United States and Belgium (more than 30 participants), and the Netherlands (27 participants). Represented with 20 or more participants were Sweden, Canada, and Italy. More than 10 participants each came from Spain, France, Switzerland, Austria, Finland, Israel, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Taiwan. Up to 10 participants came from Australia, Denmark, Russia, Greece, and Hungary. Up to 5 participants came from Ireland, Japan, Norway, Estonia, Lithuania, Iran, Malta, Iceland, Georgia, Romania, Turkey, Ukraine, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, India, Korea, Latvia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Serbia, and South Africa.

Around 63 percent came from Western Europe, around 15 percent from Central and Eastern Europe, around 12 percent from North America, around 8 percent from the Middle and Far East, around 2 percent from Australia and New Zealand, and less than 1 percent from Africa.

The conference's theme was *Understanding Crime: Structural and Developmental Dimensions, and their Implications for Policy*. The opening ceremony and reception on Saturday evening were attended by most participants. Representatives of the Federal Ministry of Justice (Berlin), the State Ministry of Justice (Stuttgart), the City, and the University of Tübingen gave welcome addresses. From Sunday morning to Monday afternoon, central fields of the main theme were dealt with in four well-attended plenary meetings.

The first plenary was devoted to *Longitudinal Studies on Criminality and Crime*. Presenters were Klaus Boers (University of Münster, Germany) and Ineke Haen Marshall (Northeastern University, USA). The topic of the second plenary meeting was *Public Opinion and Crime Control through Policing and Law*

Enforcement. Presenters were Jan J. M. van Dijk (University of Tilburg, the Netherlands) and Gorazd Meško (University of Maribor, Slovenia). The third plenary was on *Crime Control through Prosecution, Adjudication, and Sentencing*.

Speakers were Jörg-Martin Jehle (University of Göttingen, Germany) and Tapio Lappi-Seppälä (National Research Institute of Legal Policy, Helsinki, Finland). The fourth plenary was devoted to the topic of *Crime Control through Deprivation of Liberty and Treatment of Offenders*. Speakers were Alison Liebling (University of Cambridge, United Kingdom) and Santiago Redondo Illescas (University of Barcelona, Spain).

Otherwise the conference programme consisted of 125 panel sessions, round tables, and special meetings, dealing with a broad spectrum of other criminological concerns. Some 35 of them were pre-arranged, i.e. panel sessions with a

specific subject proposed by a single scholar or by a group of scholars, with presenters and presentations proposed in advance. The others were thematic sessions put together by the co-organisers and their aides. A poster session attracted 30 exhibitors.



Hans-Jürgen Kerner with some of his team

Apart from the lively, crowded welcome reception, hosted by the Institute of Criminology and the Federal Ministry of Justice, with support by the Association of Tübingen Criminologists (wine), the social programme included two other large events: an ice-cream, wine, and

cheese social, supported by the American Society of Criminology (ice-cream) and the Association of German, Austrian and Swiss Criminologists (wine); a gala-dinner in the historic Monastery of Bebenhausen near Tübingen, with a hunting horn band

and a special performance by the “Japanese Drummers” of Munich. Professional excursions were available to the museum of prison history in Ludwigsburg, a forensic clinic in Zwiefalten, and a criminal court in Tübingen. The most prominent sight-seeing venue was Castle Hohenzollern near Hechingen, where the last German emperors’ family

originated.

The Tübingen conference attracted and hosted more pre-conference events (on Friday and Saturday) and post-conference events (on Tuesday) than previous ESC conferences, altogether thirteen. This interesting development is worth supporting if not actively promoting by the ESC board and future conference organisers. It provides opportunities for committees and groups to tackle their special subjects and issues in a relaxed atmosphere without strong time boundaries, and to join in the main conference. The subjects dealt with in Tübingen were, apart from formal committee or board meetings: the last wave of the international self-reported delinquency study (ISRD), the ISRD studies in so-called Daphne-Countries, the European Postgraduate Researchers’ group, the increasing importance of public prosecution services within criminal justice systems, the recent developments with the European Sourcebook on Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics, and recent development of the EUROGANG network. ■



A quartet of ESC presidents

Tübingen: A Very German Conference *Continued from page 1*

simultaneous translation service for Ulrich Futter, acting director of the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Justice.

Work and Play

Many people have commented on the seriousness of purpose of the ESC annual conferences. Typically, when panels are in session, corridors and coffee rooms are deserted. (The plenary sessions in Tübingen were so popular that Hans-Jürgen needed to find a larger room at the last minute.) Working groups take advantage of having their members together in one place by holding post-session meetings. Snippets of conversations about prisons, gangs, desistance, and recidivism can be overheard in the host town's bars and restaurants. To prevent participants taking themselves far too seriously, a successful conference should also offer ample opportunity for networking – catching up with far flung colleagues and making unexpected new contacts.

The Copper Building was particularly conducive to meeting and mingling. The opening formalities over with, participants got down to the serious business of searching out old friends and the nearest source of alcohol. In the spacious lobby, groups formed, expanded, dissolved, and reformed as introductions were made and old friends located. Lubricated by plentiful supplies of excellent Württemberg wine, conversation flowed.

Making it Work

Anyone who has organised a major conference knows how much work is needed to create an easy-going yet productive atmosphere. Forward planning and attention to detail are vital. Hans-Jürgen and his team were happy to benefit from the hindsight of Krzysztof Krajewski and colleagues who hosted last year's meeting in Krakow.

'The greatest task,' says Hans-Jürgen, 'is organising the abstracts we receive into panel sessions. Elmar Weitkamp and I arranged the panel

programme. We decided to adapt the procedure used in Krakow. We tried to read all abstracts immediately upon receipt and contact their authors the same day to accept or reject their offerings.'

Hans-Jürgen and Elmar were fortunate to secure the help of Jasmin Löffler, a former graduate student of Eberhard Karls and now a part-time lawyer. Fortunately, Jasmin's legal duties left her time to wade through hundreds of abstracts, following Hans-Jürgen's carefully prescribed criteria. Her keen eye and scientific mind proved invaluable when acting as 'first filter.'

Once the abstracts were accepted, came the Herculean task of sorting them into appropriate panels, each session comprising four or five related papers. As usual with the ESC, a proportion of panels come pre-arranged. This pre-arranged model works like a dream. The constituent papers complement each other and a chair is appointed by the panel arrangers, leaving no juggling act for the overworked conference organiser. The remaining abstracts (the larger proportion of those submitted) need to be carefully categorised and lined up with sibling papers on similar topics. A couple of waifs and strays are inevitable but Hans-Jürgen is proud to boast that 95 percent of the papers in Tübingen's open panel sessions fit together like apple strudel and cream.

Conference secretary Maria Pessiu handled all the practical arrangements and designed the programme cover and contents layout. Hans-Jürgen's regular secretary, Ursula Haug-Lénert, found herself working almost full-time on ESC issues in the weeks leading up to the event. No ESC meeting would run smoothly without the good will of local volunteer helpers. Elmar Weitkamp took responsibility for a team of around 50 volunteers who helped with everything from handing out registration packs to directing people to the right lecture rooms.

Inevitably, the odd hitch occurred. Five minutes before the first plenary the lecture room's electronics decided

not to work. The lights fizzled and went out and when Hans-Jürgen plugged in the data projector, it exploded with an apologetic pop. Disaster was averted thanks to the calm practicality of the Copper Building's young janitor, Christine Paal.

'Without her I would have been totally lost,' admits Hans-Jürgen. 'She's dependable, technically sophisticated, and seems able to fix anything. She can work beamers, projectors, and sound systems, locate replacement laptops, and rewire frazzled nerves!'

Problems are always caused when presenters fail to show up, leaving gaping holes in carefully designed panel sessions. Several people underestimated the length of time needed to obtain a German visa, and one participant changed the title or the timing of her presentation twelve times before finally phoning to say she was stuck in Helsinki with no connecting flight to Stuttgart.

Making it Special

Plenty of materials on German crime prevention were on display



Enjoying Correctional Wine

throughout, illustrating how advanced Germany is in this respect. What a shame so many of us lack the linguistic abilities to appreciate this fully! English language materials sold like hot-cakes from the conference 'gift shop'. Hans-Jürgen and

colleagues were keen to ensure that their ESC meeting would be memorable for being uniquely German and more precisely that it should showcase their local Swabian culture. Nowhere was this more evident than at the gala dinner at Bebenhausen monastery. A fanfare of hunting horns announced the onset of a serious eating and drinking session.

What an opportunity to show off Tübingen's famed hunting horn band! The Bebenhausen monastery is one of their favourite venues, particularly when the university hosts events there. The band counts several professors amongst its brass-blowing members.

Platters of rich Swabian dishes were enough to challenge the hungriest guest after a hard day pondering the latest theories on effective interventions. While not exactly Swabian, Japanese drums provided a memorable diversion

drummed down relentlessly, forcing the event inside rather than out in the monastery's lovely courtyard! On a happier note, wine and beer were as copious as rainwater.

Wine featured in generous quantities at another popular event. The American Society of Criminology traditionally organises an 'ice-cream social' at every ESC

gathering. In Tübingen, however, the Association of German, Swiss, and Austrian Criminologists had the bright idea of supporting local industry by securing several barrels worth of wine,



Monastic Meal

museum at Ludwigsburg Castle, home to the last guillotine to be used in Germany; to a forensic psychiatric clinic housed within a baroque monastery; and, most popular of all, to Tübingen's district court to gain a brief insight into German criminal court proceedings.

I recall how last year Hans-Jürgen expressed some concern that participants might find Tübingen small and provincial after the bright lights of Krakow. However, the ESC's smallest host city yet proved a real star. It is a huge advantage to be able to go everywhere on foot and it seemed one had only to step into a restaurant or wander past one of the scenic street cafés to be greeted by cries of, 'Hello. How good to see you! Won't you join us?'

Memories of beer gardens on the banks of the Neckar, vast plates of food served in cellar restaurants, and punts laden with party-goers should linger in our memories for just as long as our newly acquired knowledge of female delinquency or police procedures in Bosnia. ■



Claudia Fried and Bruce Weber on the Drums

between the main course and dessert.

The 'Japanese Magic Drummers' actually hail from exotic Munich but specialise in 'drums of the world' and have studied indigenous music and its traditions round the world and have given concerts in Senegal, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Cuba, and the United States.

What a pity that the rain also

from the winery of the Heilbronn Correctional Institution! It's great fun to watch prominent academics trying to shake hands while balancing a glass of finest *Heilbronn weiss* and a mountain of raspberry ripple.

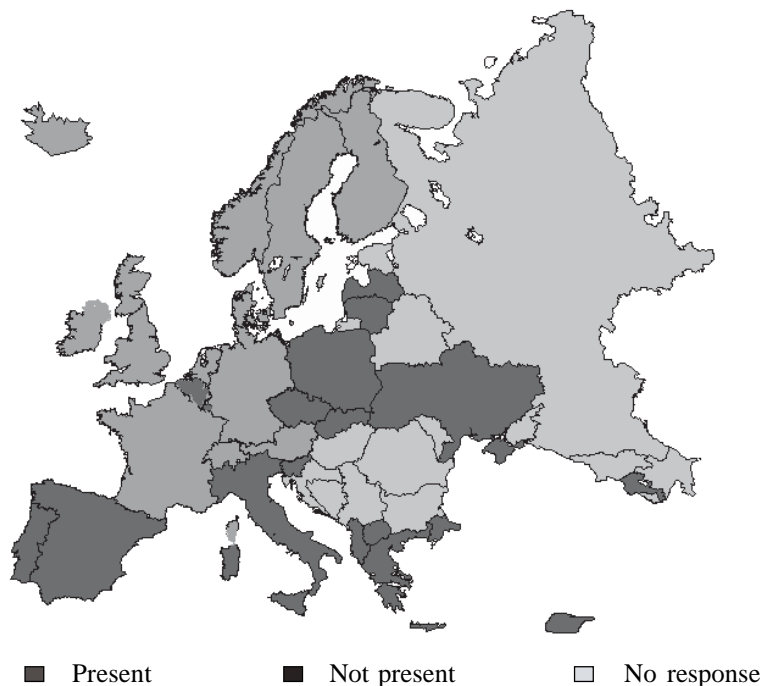
Excursions were offered to Hohentübingen and Hohenzollern castles and, for the truly dedicated, trips were available to the corrections

* * * * *

Sara Harrop is assistant editor of Criminology in Europe.

National Reconviction Rates *Continued from page 3*

Figure 1
European Countries with and without National Recidivism Studies



France and Finland though, national figures are restricted to the population of prisoners.

Some countries monitor recidivism rates over time. In the United Kingdom, the Nordic countries, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, measurements are held annually, or can be. In Germany, there are plans to measure recidivism on a yearly basis. One-off measurements have been carried out in Austria. In France and Ireland, it is not clear yet whether the research will be repeated.

Each country handles crime in its own way, so there are bound to be cross-national differences in how central concepts are defined. Eleven of fourteen countries use records on court appearances to establish recidivism rates. In these countries the operative word for recidivism is 'reconviction'. Germany and the Netherlands include cases decided by prosecutors' offices, but both countries use the term 'reconviction' to delineate the events concerned. Norway, Finland, and Ireland are the exceptions. Norway uses police data on charged crimes and Finland and Ireland limit the definition of recidivism to events of 'reincarceration'. In Norway and Finland, there are plans to use other types of data as well.

In presenting their figures, most countries use a standard period of observation. In the UK for instance, most research uses the reconviction rate two years after imposition of the sanction or release from custody. Other countries, including France, Germany, and Austria, use longer observation periods. Of course, as a consequence, their reconviction rates are higher.

Most countries take account of type of offence and type of sanction in calculating the reconviction rates. The sanctions most frequently mentioned are an unconditional prison term, a community service order, a training order, a probation order, and a fine. Demographic variables often used to disaggregate data are sex, age, nationality or country of birth, and previous criminal record. In Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and Iceland recidivism data can routinely be linked to other data sources containing social-demographic information (work status, education, income, and so on). In other countries, researchers foresee technical, judicial,

and political problems when databases of different origins are merged. In England and Wales, an integrated system is being developed containing information on criminogenic needs. In the Netherlands, data linkage is at an experimental stage.

and political problems when databases of different origins are merged. In England and Wales, an integrated system is being developed containing information on criminogenic needs. In the Netherlands, data linkage is at an experimental stage.

Making International Comparisons

While a growing number of countries use a standardised methodology to produce national statistics on recidivism, the next obvious thing to do is to make international comparisons and find out what sanctions yield the lowest reconviction rates worldwide. Of course, if one is seriously considering such an undertaking, one should realise that the problem of noncomparability of the recidivism figures may well be solved at a national level, but continue to be a hindrance internationally.

Table 2 presents the reconviction rates of prisoners released in several European countries and the USA. In each country recidivism is defined as 'having a new conviction', so there is no prima facie problem of incomparability. Still, one has to wonder if the term 'reconviction' means the same in the UK and the USA as in the Netherlands or France. Besides, there are technical questions. What data sources do researchers in different countries use? What cases and kinds of offences are left out? For each country the answers to these questions define the universe of possible events of recidivism. It is unlikely that these universes are identical.

Another problem is the definition of the offender group. Can a prisoner in the Netherlands be compared to a prisoner in Scotland? Table 2 shows there are slight differences in age ranges of the prisoners from the six countries. Knowing age is a strong predictor of recidivism, these differences must have affected the reconviction rates. Furthermore, if a country is more restrictive in the imposition of an unsuspended prison sentence, only high-risk offenders will be sent to prison and it would be natural for this country to have higher reconviction rates.

Table 1
Some Examples of National Studies on Recidivism

<u>Country</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Offender Group</u>
Austria	Pilgram (1994)	Adults and juveniles sentenced in 1993
Denmark	Prison & Probation Department (2001)	Persons released from prison or with a suspended sentence in 1996-1999
England & Wales	Spicer & Glicksman (2004)	Adults convicted or released from prison in 2001
	Home Office (2005)	Juveniles (10-17) convicted or discharged from custody in 2003
Finland	Hypen (2004)	Offenders with an unconditional prison sentence and released in 1993-2001
France	Kensey & Tournier (2005)	Prisoners released from May 1996 - April 1997
Germany	Jehle, Heinz, & Sutterer (2003)	Persons sentenced or released from prison in 1994
Iceland	Baumer et al (2002)	All persons released from prison from Jan 1994 - Nov 1998
N. Ireland	McMullen & Rudy (2001)	Adults with a non-custodial disposal or released from custody in 2001
	Decodts (2001)	Juveniles (10-16) with a non-custodial disposal or released from custody in 2001
Norway	Statistics Norway (2006)	Persons charged in 1996
Scotland	Scottish Executive (2005)	Adults discharged from custody or given non-custodial sentences in 1999
Sweden	National Council (2004)	All persons found guilty of criminal offences in 1999
Switzerland	Storz (1997)	Adults convicted in 1986-1994
The Netherlands	Wartna, Tollenaar, & Blom (2005)	Adults and juveniles (12-18) sanctioned in 1997

Considering the 'detention rate', i.e. the number of prisoners per 100,000 of the national population, the United States is far less selective in sending people to prison than is Europe. Maybe this is why reconviction rates for the USA are lower than for the UK and for Holland. It does not explain the outcome for Switzerland, France, Northern Ireland, and Iceland, though. For these countries, notably, the imprisonment rates are low, and the reconviction rates are also low. Interestingly, Baumer et al. (2002) concluded earlier that recidivism rates in Iceland are 'not appreciably lower than those observed in other nations'.

Considering the figures presented here, we think they are.

Progress Made so Far

Table 2 is merely an appetiser. It raises more questions than it answers. A prison term is far from being a homogenous sanction. There are many differences in the way these sentences are executed, both within and across countries and the same goes, of course, for any other sanction. So, before rushing to conclusions on data such as in table 2, one should stop and think about the pitfalls. The European Research group on National Reconviction rates

(ERNR) is doing just that. This group had its second meeting in Tübingen and is now spelling out the conditions under which cross-national comparisons can be made. When this work has been done, the ERNR aims to publish annotated tables like table 1, perhaps in a next version of the European Sourcebook.

Making international comparisons of reconviction rates is a difficult and somewhat hazardous enterprise. To do a proper job, one should consider cultural differences that affect the penal systems of the countries involved, check the nature and

Continued on next page

National Reconviction Rates *Continued from previous page*

Table 2
Reconviction Rates of Prisoners in Six European Countries and in the USA

Percentage of prisoners reconvicted at N years after release

Country	Release period	N	Age range	Imprisonment Rate *	Percentage of prisoners reconvicted at N years after release							
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Netherlands	1996-99	69,602	18 and up	85	43,4	55,5	62,0	66,0	67,0	71,1	72,9	74,1
Scotland	1999	5,738	16 and up	120	46,0	60,0	67,0	71,0				
England & Wales	2001	14,569	18 and up	127		58,2						
France	1996-1997	2,859	13 and up	89					51,9			
N. Ireland	2001	703	17 and up	52		45,0						
Iceland	1994-98	1,176	18 and up	44			37,0		53,0			
Switzerland	1988	6,393	18 and up	79	12,0	26,0	34,0	40,0	45,0	48,2		
USA (15 states)	1994	33,796	18 and up	600	21,5	36,4	46,9					

* Approximate figures per 100,000 population from the International Centre for Prison Studies/World Prison Brief

logistics of the interventions imposed, and account for differences in measurements being made. At the same time, it is a good way to learn about different systems of criminal law, variations in the application of penal interventions, and the consequences these variations may have for the level of recidivism. So, since a growing number of countries produce standard statistics on recidivism, why not make the most of it and add international comparisons to the agenda of criminological research?

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Bouke Wartna is a senior researcher and Laura Nijssen a researcher at the WODC.

ESC Working Groups *Continued from page 3*

around the ESC annual conference in Bologna, Italy, 26-29 September 2007. The working group aims to organise one or more panels on developmental and life course criminology in Bologna.

While much DLC research is quantitative, the EDLC emphatically invites developmental theorists and qualitative researchers to participate.

The working group is co-chaired by Arjan Blokland and Paul Nieuwebeerta (NSCR). If you work on DLC research and would like to join, please send your name, position, affiliation, and a description of your current research to:

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E-mail: edlc.esc@nscr.nl

The EHR

Homicide is a dramatic and tragic offence. It has high priority in research, public opinion, policy, and prevention in the European nations. Unfortunately, it is one of the most

difficult crimes to study due to its low frequency and high variability. Most statistical sources in European countries are not cross-nationally comparable. Knowledge about homicide in Europe is extremely limited.

Therefore, it is important to stimulate study of homicide in European countries. There is a need to describe differences in homicide patterns across European countries and to examine explanations for cross-national differences. Violent crimes result from complex interplays between individual and contextual factors, including societal and legal institutions. Since these institutions differ cross-nationally, homicide patterns may also do so. Cross-national research is essential for gaining knowledge about homicide and testing for criminological theories.

To stimulate homicide research in Europe and to promote contact among European researchers working on homicide studies, the ESC has established the European Homicide Research (EHR) working group. Its aims are to facilitate research on homicide in Europe, enhance collaborative multi-national studies and maximize international dissemination of homicide research

results (see: <http://www.esc-eurocrim.org/workgroups.shtml>).

ESC members involved in homicide studies are invited to join the EHR Working Group. The first meeting will be held around the next ESC annual conference in Bologna, Italy, 26-29 September 2007. The working group aims to organise one or more panels on homicide research at the conference.

The working group is chaired by Paul Nieuwebeerta (NSCR). If you work on homicide research and would like to join, please send your name, position, affiliation, and a description of your current research:

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Stan C Proband is a free-lance criminologist who regularly contributes to diverse journals.

The European Journal of Criminology *Continued from page 3*

team can then pursue. In addition, we hope to publish special sections within issues. These may consist of two or three related papers, or possibly two papers representing different perspectives on a particular topic.

The country surveys that appear in almost every issue will be continued. In addition we hope to host a seminar at the annual ESC meeting at which the author(s) of the latest country survey will present a brief oral version of the survey and respond to questions about crime, criminology and criminal justice in that jurisdiction.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to encourage members of the European Society of Criminology to consider the journal as an outlet for



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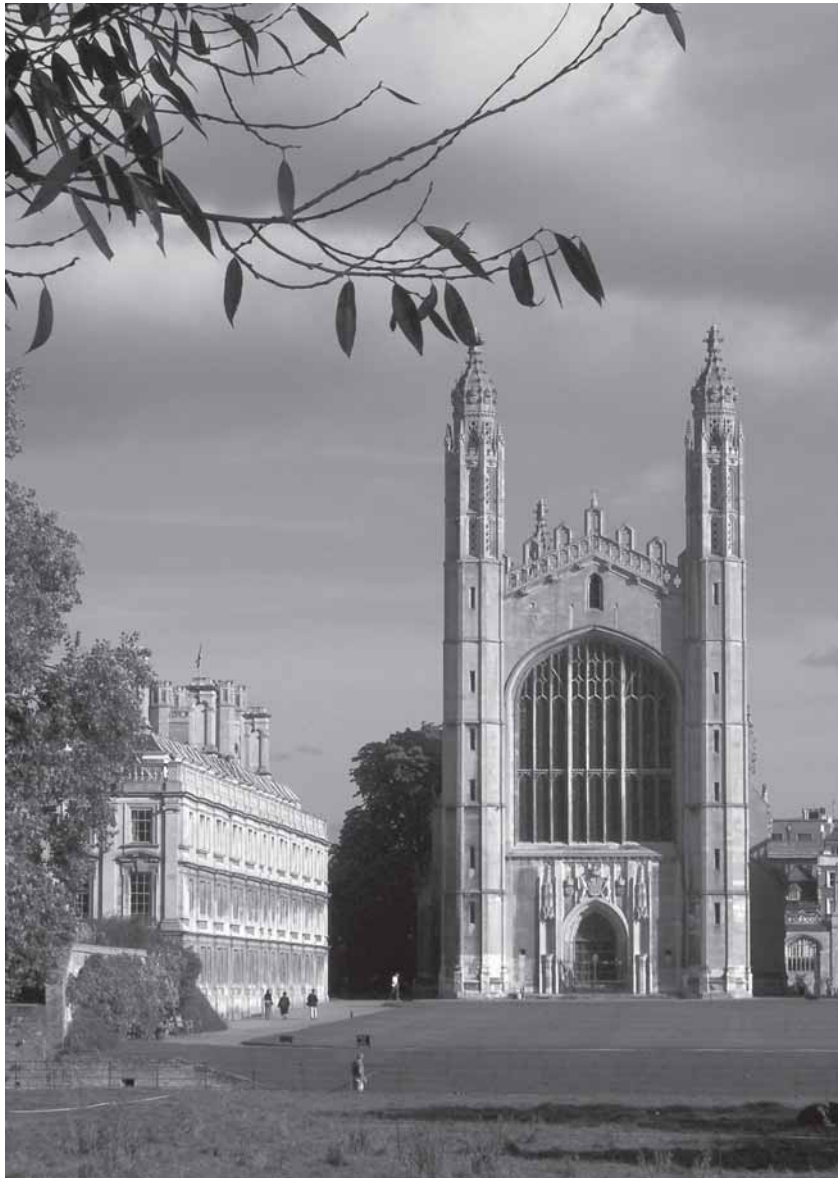
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Julian Roberts is editor of the 'European Journal of Criminology.'

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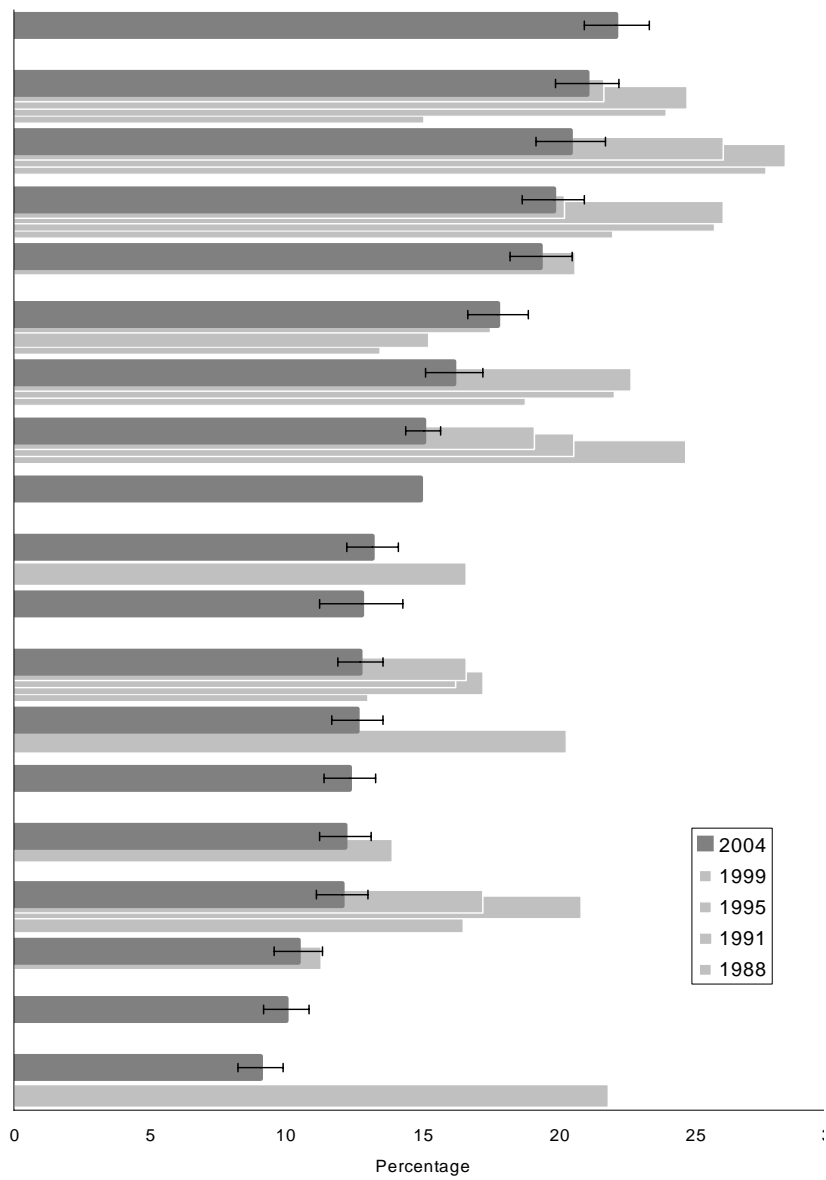
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What Comes up Goes Down Continued from page 3

Figure 1
One year Prevalence Victimization Rates for 10 crimes in 2004 and Results from Earlier Surveys



been the first Western country to emerge from the crime epidemic of the 1960s – 1980s, but almost all European countries have followed suit. The European epidemics started in the 1980s and seem to have reached their peaks between 1995 and 2000. Since then many types of crime, including burglaries and thefts, have shown dramatic decreases. Figure 1 shows figures by country but without identifying individual countries¹.

The data in figure 1 show that the level of crime across the EU countries shows curvilinear trends since the mid-1980s in all countries participating in several sweeps of the study. Results for the first four waves can be found in Nieuwbeerta 2002. The key finding of the 2004 ICVS presents a clear challenge for epidemiological criminology.

What macro-level factors in Western societies can explain the upward trends in crime till 1995-2000 and the downward trends thereafter? Conventional notions that crime is mainly driven by poverty cannot provide the answer. Nor can competing perspectives that crime is driven by affluence.

Politicians and practitioners have understandably been keen to claim the drop in crime as evidence of the success of anti-crime policies introduced over the past twenty years. Available statistics about policing and imprisonment shed doubt on the validity of this 'claim'.

Across the Western world both policing and sentencing policies have shown huge variation during the period under study. Imprisonment rates are almost ten times higher in the USA than in the EU but crime rates have plummeted across the EU as well. In some EU countries such as Finland, Poland, and Estonia, imprisonment rates have decreased since 1990. Crime rates went down there to the same extent as elsewhere. There is no prima facie evidence that crime rates in Europe have been driven down by more severe sentencing.

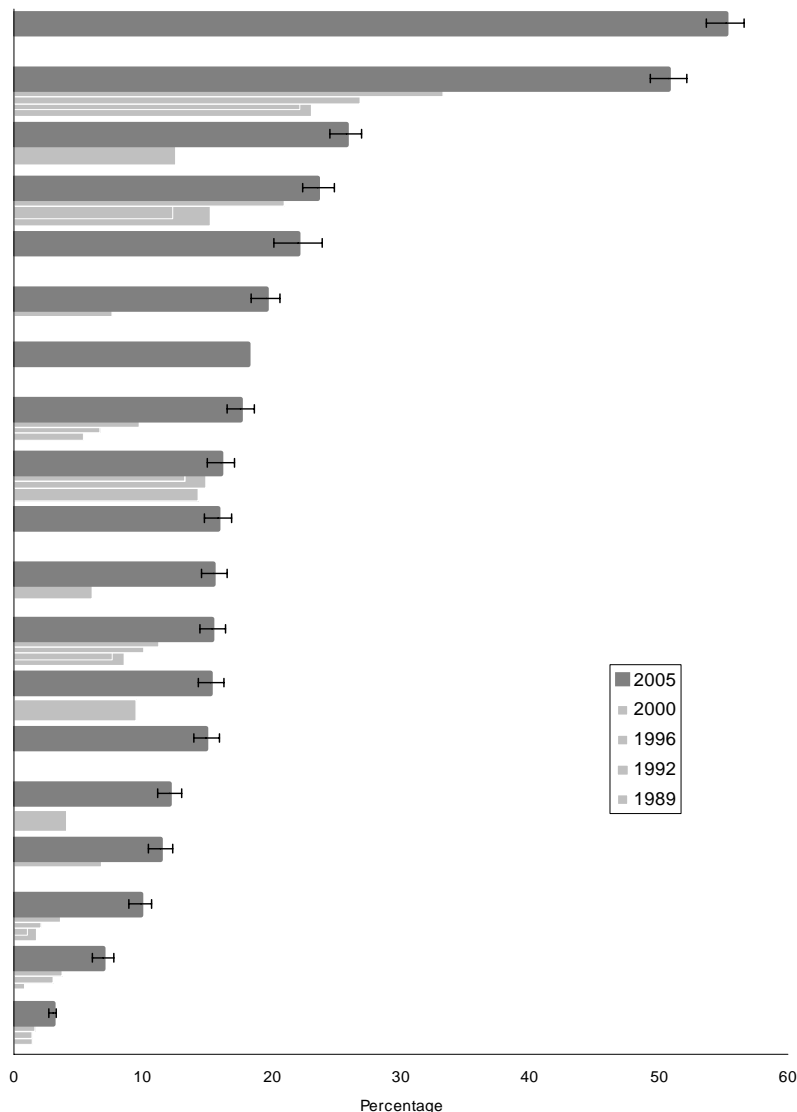
Resources available for policing show similar high variation across countries. Numbers of police officers per 100,000 vary in Europe from around 200 in Scandinavian countries and Holland to 300 in Austria and Belgium, 400 in Portugal, and 600 in Italy. In some countries police resources have gone up since 1990 and in others

down. A general upward trend in policing efforts since 1990 is definitely not in evidence. It seems unlikely therefore that increased policing has been the driving force behind decreasing crime rates.

The most plausible driving factor behind the curvilinear trends in crime is the availability of suitable targets of crime. Opportunities for crime have gone up together with increasing affluence since the post-war economic boom. This has resulted in epidemics in volume crime across the Western world. The finding that crime started to boom latest in Ireland is in line with this interpretation since economic growth came relatively late to that country. As forecast in a 1994 article in the *British Journal of Criminology* (van Dijk 1994), crime booms seem to have

What Comes up Goes Down *Continued from previous page*

Figure 2
Percentage of Households Possessing a Burglar Alarm in 2005 Plus Results



invest in self-protection. The role of governments has been of secondary importance. There seems little reason for triumph among the champions of ‘tough on crime’ policies. Crime rates are decreasing everywhere in the Western world, regardless of national anti-crime policies. Countries that have invested comparatively little in their state-based anti-crime policies are reaping the benefits of crime drops against considerably lower costs for the tax payer. Governments are well-advised to rely more strongly on market forces in the fight against volume crime. Anti-crime efforts should focus more on the regulation of crime markets through financial interventions in the use of crime prevention than in conventional criminal justice initiatives alone.

Notes

1 Results of the EU/ICVS 2005 have not been released by the organising consortium due to ongoing communications with the EC.

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catalysed spontaneous counter-forces in the form of better security and demands for more community-oriented policing. Around 1995-2000 the availability of suitable targets seems to have reached a ceiling with more and more householders and businesses having secured their property against crime. This seems to have been the determining force behind downward trends in volume crime. Figure 2 presents ICVS-based evidence on consistent increases in the use of burglar alarms across Europe. Rates of burglar alarms vary

across countries in relation to types of housing. But in all countries alarm use has gone up significantly since 1990. Unlike resources for policing or imprisonment, private investments in anti-crime measures have universally gone up. Better security against crime by mainstream society seems increasingly to have discouraged potential offenders from committing volume crimes such as burglary or theft and thereby driven rates of volume crime down. Credit for the crime drops should go primarily to the increased readiness of the public to

* * * * *

Jan van Dijk is director of Intervict, Tilburg University.

New Criminology Books from Willan Publishing



European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics – 2006 (3e)

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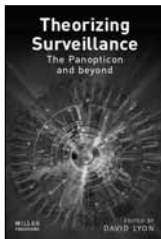


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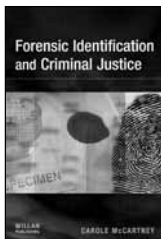


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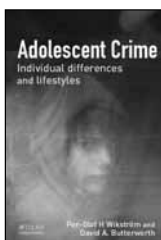


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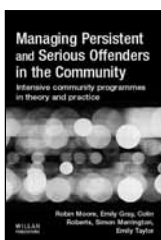


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