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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

EVALUATION

of the

**EUROPEAN CRIME PREVENTION NETWORK
2012-2022**

{SWD(2023) 202 final}

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Glossary

<i>Term or acronym</i>	<i>Meaning or definition</i>
CEPOL	European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DG HOME	Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs
ECPA	European Crime Prevention Award
ECPC	European Crime Prevention Conference
EFUS	European Forum for Urban Security
EMCDDA	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction
EMPACT	European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats
ENAA	European Network on the Administrative Approach tackling Serious and Organised Crime
EQ	Evaluation question
EU	European Union
EUCPN	European Crime Prevention Network
EUROPOL	European Union's Law Enforcement Agency
ExCom	Executive Committee

ICPC	International Centre for the Prevention of Crime
ISEC	Prevention of and Fight against Crime
ISF	Internal Security Fund
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs
LEWP	Law Enforcement Working Party
MAS	Multi-Annual Strategy
MASP	Multi-Annual Strategic Plan
NCP	National Contact Point
NCPC	National Crime Prevention Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NR	National Representative
OAP	Operational Action Plans
OPC	Organised Property Crime
SOCTA	Serious and Organised Crime Threat assessment

1. INTRODUCTION

Organised crime is a real and increasing threat to our societies, democracies and economies. As organised criminal groups look to sustain and expand their activities, they take advantage of their position to recruit their members and leaders of tomorrow. Individuals raised in criminal environments and in socio-economically deprived areas are most vulnerable to recruitment for criminal activities. Most activities within the criminal justice system, such as investigations, prosecutions, and the imposition of sanctions are carried out after the crime has been committed. However, in order to prevent people from joining a life of violence and crime, and in order to raise the resilience of society, it is **paramount to invest in crime prevention policies and tools**.

A multidisciplinary and inter-agency approach to crime prevention can contribute to reducing the likelihood of criminal activity, by raising awareness among potential victims, or providing support to vulnerable individuals and communities to reduce the risk of falling into a criminal lifestyle. Crime prevention involves a **wide range of stakeholders**, including schools, families, the community, the social welfare sector, civil society and the private sector; and their **cooperation and partnerships** are of vital importance. Therefore, as laid down in the Organised Crime Strategy¹, the Commission aims to enhance the exchange of knowledge and best practices on crime prevention through the **European Crime Prevention Network** (hereafter referred to as EUCPN or the Network).

The EUCPN was set up in 2001 by the Council of the European Union.² Currently, Council Decision 2009/902/JHA³ ('the Council Decision') sets out the aim to **develop a platform for the Member States to exchange knowledge and best practices in the field of crime prevention, with the aim to reduce or otherwise contribute to reducing crime and citizens' feeling of insecurity**⁴. The Network supports tangible crime prevention activities and contributes to formulating EU policy and strategy on crime prevention. The EUCPN was set up to be a point of reference for its target groups: practitioners⁵ and policymakers working on crime prevention at local and national level, as well as for policymakers at the EU and international level. The Network is funded by the European Commission and contributions from the Member States.

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the EU Strategy to tackle Organised Crime 2021-2025, COM/2021/170 final

² Council of the European Union (2001), 'Council Decision 2001/427/JHA of 28 May 2001 setting up a European crime prevention network', Official Journal of the European Union, L 153, 8 June. The creation of the EUCPN was launched at the initiative of France and Sweden.

³ Council of the European Union (2009), 'Council Decision 2009/902/JHA of 30 November 2009 setting up a European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN) and repealing Decision 2001/427/JHA', Official Journal of the European Union, L 321, 8 December.

⁴ Council Decision 2009/902/JHA, Article 2.

⁵ Anyone directly involved in crime prevention: this would include law enforcement, but also social workers, psychologists, schools and NGO's, for example.

10 years since its last evaluation in 2012⁶, the EU and national policies to counter crime have undergone significant developments. **Crime prevention** has been fully recognized at the EU level to be an essential component of an effective strategy to tackle crime. The preventive dimension of crime has been included in several EU policies, from drugs, to trafficking in human beings, radicalisation and child sexual abuse. Furthermore, the network underwent **important changes**: EUCPN has aligned its crime prevention activities with the priorities of the **European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats (EMPACT)**⁷, the EU flagship instrument for multidisciplinary and multiagency operational cooperation to fight organised crime at EU level. In order to ensure the adequate involvement of the Network in the EMPACT platform, the Network's **Secretariat** was strengthened from 2 to 7 full-time members, and the Network's **budget** was increased up to EUR 2 million for a period covering two years.⁸

In light of these and more developments, it was decided to perform a **new evaluation** and an assessment of the implementation of recommendations in 2012, as recommended by the 2012 evaluation, to ensure that the available knowledge and practical tools on crime prevention are used to their full potential.

This staff working document (SWD) presents the findings of the evaluation of EUCPN for the period 2012 - 2022. In line with the Better Regulation guidelines, the Commission assesses the **effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, EU added value and relevance** of the Network. The evaluation covers the Network's achievements since the last evaluation in 2012, and provide the useful evidence base to address weaknesses.

In order to provide the evidence base for the evaluation, **a study of the Network's progress and results since 2012 was conducted by an external contractor between March 2019 and June 2021** ('the external study'). **This study involves all Member States**⁹. A wide range of stakeholders was consulted as part of the study. These included Member States competent authorities at the national, regional and local levels; the Network's members, crime prevention practitioners and policy makers, academia and researchers, as well as relevant Commission services, and EU agencies.

In order to carry out the external study, a range of **methodological tools and techniques** were used. These included the review of 164 documents, 58 interviews with relevant

⁶ 2012 Evaluation of the EUCPN, COM (2012) 717 final.

⁷ EMPACT is a mechanism of structured cooperation at EU level between law enforcement, customs, tax authorities, magistrates, European institutions and agencies and, where relevant, third countries, international organisations and the private sector, all working together to address the priority crime threats where collective action is needed. For the 2022-2025 cycle priorities, see <https://www.europol.europa.eu/crime-areas-and-statistics/empact>. EUCPN is the coordinator of the Common Horizontal Strategic Goal 7: prevention and harm reduction, assistance to victims, awareness raising.

⁸ Grant no. 101056705 of call ISFP-2020-AG-IBA-EUCPN. Current grant amount is EUR 2,105,262.45 (1 July 2022- 30 June 2024) of which 5% co-financed by Member States.

⁹ For the United Kingdom until its withdrawal from the Network on 1 December 2014.

stakeholders (EUCPN members, law enforcement, local authorities, academics, NGOs, EU institutions and agencies), a dedicated online survey targeting the same stakeholders, 4 specific case studies on selected actions of the EUCPN Multi-Annual Strategy 2016-2020, an analysis of 12 comparable EU networks¹⁰, and a public consultation through the Have Your Say website of the Commission.

Several **limitations** were identified throughout the course of the evaluation. Not all information and data on aspects relevant to the evaluation was available, especially about costs relevant for the assessment of efficiency, such as the hours/days spent on goals and actions of the Multi-Annual Strategy. Moreover, the sources identified at national level, such as national laws and institutional websites, provided a rather heterogeneous pool of information, which made it difficult to make clear comparisons. There were also several limitations on the information collected with the **field research**. One of the main issues was the high turnover among National Representatives, making it more difficult to acquire information from experienced National Representatives. These limitations were overcome with specific mitigation measures, for example by interviewing former Representatives and the former head of the Secretariat¹¹.

This evaluation covers the period from the EUCPN's last evaluation in 2012¹² until September 2022. Developments after the completion date of the external study have been included in this evaluation by the Commission. The descriptions of the most recent developments are based on fact finding, based on open sources and interviews and contacts with the EUCPN Secretariat and the National Representatives.

¹⁰ Euroguidance; Europe DIRECT - European Documentation Centres (EDCs); Europe DIRECT - Information Centres (EDICs); European Centre of Expertise in the field of labour law, employment and labour market policies (ECE); European Competition Network (ECN); European Innovation Partnership Network (EIP-AGRI); European Network for Rural Development (ENRD); EURYDICE; Green spider network (GSN); Informal Network of ESF Information Officers (INIO); National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC); National Europass Centres (EUROPASS).

¹¹ More information about the methodology and its limitations can be found in Annex II.

¹² 2012 Evaluation of the EUCPN, [COM\(2012\) 717 final](#).

2. WHAT WAS THE EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE INTERVENTION?

The European Crime Prevention Network was set up primarily in order to **exchange and develop knowledge and best practices on crime prevention at the local, national and EU level**. This section describes the **policy context**, how the Network is **structured** and works towards achieving its objectives, and the **intervention logic**. The section concludes with the 2012 evaluation¹³ findings as the point of comparison.

2.1 Description of the intervention and its objectives

2.1.1. Policy Context

The EU's **policy on crime prevention** focuses on facilitating exchanges of experience and best practices to mitigate factors that encourage crime and recidivism, including on preventing people from ending up in vulnerable situations that may lead them to engage in criminal activity. The **Security Union Strategy**¹⁴ names close cooperation with local and regional administrations as well as civil society as key for crime prevention. Furthermore, the EU works towards prevention of corruption as well as of criminal infiltration of the economy and society **Prevention is an integral part of EU policy** on cybercrime¹⁵, anti-radicalisation¹⁶, environmental crime¹⁷, drugs¹⁸, trafficking in human beings¹⁹, child sexual abuse²⁰, domestic violence²¹ and firearms.²²

Since crime prevention includes **all the activities that contribute to halting or reducing crime as a social phenomenon**, its definition can be broad, and may depend on the specific context. In 2019, the Network defined the concept of crime prevention as '*Ethically acceptable and evidence-based activities aimed at reducing the risk of crime occurring and its harmful consequences with the ultimate goal of working towards the improvement of the quality of life and safety of individuals, groups and communities*'. The Network classifies

¹³ COM(2012)717 Final

¹⁴ COM(2020) 605 Final

¹⁵ [Cybercrime \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)

¹⁶ [Prevention of radicalisation \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)

¹⁷ For example [1_1_179760_prop_dir_env_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu), and [The EU Approach to Combat Wildlife Trafficking - Environment - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)

¹⁸ EU Drugs Strategy 2021-2025, [EUR-Lex - 52021XG0324\(01\) - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021XG0324(01) - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu))

¹⁹ EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings 2021-2025, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0171&rid=7>

²⁰ [EUR-Lex - 52022PC0209 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52022PC0209 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)) and https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/child-sexual-abuse-prevention-network-csapn_en

²¹ Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating violence against women and domestic violence, COM/2022/105 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52022PC0105>

²² 2020-2025 EU action plan on firearms trafficking, [20200724_com-2020-608-commission-communication_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)

crime prevention into four different types of interventions²³. In **developmental prevention**, the goal is to prevent the onset of criminal behaviour. Insights from psychology, education, medicine and public health can guide these activities, for example with parenting and early childhood support. Secondly, **community prevention** aims to influence behaviour by changing the social conditions and institutions in the community. Examples of community prevention are neighbourhood watch programmes and police outreach to the public. Thirdly, **situational prevention** has a prime interest in the criminal event itself. By changing conditions, such as installing alarms, the opportunity to commit a crime and/or the likelihood to be victimized is reduced. Lastly, **criminal justice interventions** mostly take place after crime has been committed, but can also have a future-oriented dimension, for example with general deterrence and rehabilitation programmes.

In the **Organised Crime Strategy**, it is stated that the Commission will enhance the exchange of knowledge and best practices on crime prevention through the EUCPN. The Network's activities and outputs involves crime prevention in all its aspects, as described above. The next section explains how this is done, by elaborating on the Network's mandate, objectives, tasks and structure.

2.1.2. The EUCPN: goals, tasks and structure

The overall objective of the EUCPN, set by Council Decision 2009/902/JHA, **is to contribute to 'developing the various aspects of crime prevention at the Union level, in accordance with EU policy on crime prevention'**. The Network shall support crime prevention activities at the national and local level, as laid down in Article 2.1 of the Council Decision. It will cover all measures that intend to reduce or contribute to reducing crime and increasing citizens' safety, while acknowledging the multi-disciplinary nature of crime.

In the pursuit of the strategic objectives of the EUCPN, the Network is headed by a **Board of National Representatives** from each EU Member State, chaired by the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The National Representatives are civil servants from national administrations, who carry out this task next to their nationally appointed position. The Board is supported in its activities by an **Executive Committee**²⁴ and the Secretariat. The **Secretariat** aims to provide general administrative, technical and analytical support to the Network, and represents the Network externally. The **European Commission** acts as observer, both in the Board and in the Executive Committee. Since **2011, the Network is supported by an enlarged Secretariat** whose functions and role have been progressively strengthened over the years. The Secretariat now consists of 7 full-time members.

²³ EUCPN (2020), published in [Crime prevention - a European definition | EUCPN](#).

²⁴ The Executive Committee is led by the Chair and is additionally composed of up to two National Representatives selected by the Board for the term of 18 months and four National Representatives from the outgoing, current and the two incoming Presidencies of the Council of the European Union, as well as a Representative designated by the European Commission.

evaluation is summed up in the figure below, showing the needs addressed.

2.2 Point of comparison

The baseline for the EUCPN was mainly constructed by relying on the previous evaluation of the Network conducted by the Commission in 2012²⁹, with the support of an external study³⁰. This provides an adequate frame of reference, as the objectives set by for the EUCPN by the Council of the European Union have not changed. The 2012 evaluation stated that following the adoption of the 2009 Council Decision and follow-up activities, the Network had undertaken successful steps to foster better cooperation, contacts, and exchange of information, and the quality and quantity of its outputs had improved.

However, the evaluation also identified **a number of weaknesses**:

- (1) **insufficient evidence** that EUCPN activities are **always linked to the crime prevention priorities** facing the EU and Member States;
- (2) EUCPN is in general **less successful in reaching target groups at local level** than at national or EU level;
- (3) a substantial amount of **crime prevention projects** supported by the ISEC programme are implemented without associating or even informing EUCPN;
- (4) 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;
- (5) many of the **contact points do not sufficiently contribute** to the functioning and visibility of the EUCPN and in a variety of Member States there are no contact points;
- (6) more needs to be done to **raise the EUCPN profile** in general.

The objectives set out in the Council Decision and the 2012 recommendations have set out clear expectations for the development of the Network. The EUCPN should:

- further facilitate the **cooperation and exchange of practices** between all relevant stakeholders;
- establish **closer relationships** with relevant partners;
- take a more **strategic approach** towards contributing to EU, national and local crime prevention needs, while improving the **evidence base** of its products;
- work to strengthen its contribution to implementing **effective crime prevention measures and policies at national, regional and local level**;
- monitor and support the **impact** of crime prevention measures;
- ensure a **broad dissemination and awareness** of its products and activities;

²⁹ [COM \(2012\) 717 final](#).

³⁰ Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services (2012), Evaluation of the European Crime Prevention Network, Final Report.

- further **align its priorities to agreed EU priorities and strategies** and contribute to the **development of EU policies and projects** in the field of crime prevention.

In terms of the **organisational set up, set out in the Council Decision**, the Secretariat was expected to play a key role in supporting the activities of the Network, while the National Representatives were expected take a more active role in developing its activities.

3. HOW HAS THE SITUATION EVOLVED OVER THE EVALUATION PERIOD?

This chapter describes **the development of the EUCPN** since the 2012 evaluation, and how the Network has worked towards achieving its intended goals, as set out in the intervention logic.

3.1. Facilitate cooperation, contacts and exchanges of best practices

The EUCPN aims to provide a **platform for practitioners and policy makers to connect and exchange best practices** across the EU, by organizing conferences, seminars and by providing support to national, regional and local stakeholders. In order for these services to reach the intended audience, the EUCPN has taken a number of measures in order to facilitate exchanges between practitioners at the national and local level. In order to facilitate the exchange of best practices, the EUCPN organizes **several events**. The EUCPN organizes an annual conference for sharing and disseminating experience and knowledge of Best Practices in preventing crime and increasing safety and security in the EU Member States (BPC). Here, the European Crime Prevention Award (ECPA) is handed out, for which Member States can propose crime prevention projects on a theme chosen by the Presidency of the Network. Furthermore, the EUCPN organizes biannual Crime Prevention Conferences, where all the target groups of the Network (policy makers and practitioners at EU, national and local level) meet to exchange knowledge on a chosen topic. Aside from events and conferences, the

Secretariat also reaches out to and connects with practitioners directly.³¹ The Secretariat has participated in many international, regional and local events to present its products. Moreover, the Secretariat was involved in other organisations' events and activities, such as the European Network for the Administrative Approach (ENAA), CEPOL, Europol and Eurostat. In order to improve cooperation with other networks and organisations, the Secretariat has engaged with several other entities by organising **dedicated stakeholder meetings**, or by **attending relevant events**.³²

According to the **division of labour** laid down in the Council Decision, each National Representative shall promote the Network's activities at the national and local level and can be supported by National Contact Points in doing so. However, National Representatives have not been able to take up a proactive role in creating a network of local and national contact points and their input to the work of the EUCPN has been relatively modest. According to the findings, most National Representatives face difficulties in reaching out to stakeholders due to the lack of translated material, and their limited capacity for outreach due to the requirements of their position in the national context.

However, the Secretariat has created occasions for the **development of a network of local and national contact points**, such as the meeting between the National Crime Prevention Councils, which was first organised in March 2018. Moreover, the Secretariat regularly participates in and shares expert groups and workshops, for which experts from Member States are invited³³.

3.2. Develop knowledge and expertise on crime prevention

The Network has **strived for a common approach to research on crime prevention**, by establishing an agreed definition of crime prevention in 2019, in consultation with practitioners, academics, and stakeholders: 'Ethically acceptable and evidence-based activities aimed at reducing the risk of crime occurring and its harmful consequences with the ultimate goal of working towards the improvement of the quality of life and safety of individuals, groups and communities.' This development is part of a stronger shift and emphasis on **evidence-based policy making**.

In order to contribute to the development and provision of knowledge and expertise to policy makers and practitioners, the Network produces a **variety of written outputs**, which are addressed to different target audiences: **monitors, policy papers, toolboxes, reports and information about funding sources**.³⁴ The EUCPN publishes these outputs on its website.³⁵

³¹ For an overview of events, see [Events | EUCPN](#)

³² Stakeholders involved between 2016-2019: Council of the European Union, European Commission, Europol, CEPOL, ENAA, EMCDDA, UNODC, ICPC, EIGE, Open Society, IJJO, EFUS, ICPCR

³³ For example, see <https://www.eucpn.org/event/eurocrim-2020>

³⁴ In the period from 2016-2020, the EUCPN produced 24 newsletters, 7 EUCPN documents, 8 policy papers, 6 toolboxes, 4 reports, 5 documents on funding and 2 campaigns.

³⁵ [Knowledge Centre | EUCPN](#)

The range of activities and topics is wide and can encompass all the dimensions of crime prevention policy mentioned in section 2.1.1. The Toolbox on street gang prevention (2022)³⁶ for example, covers developmental prevention (family-oriented interventions, among others), community prevention (social development in neighbourhoods) and criminal justice prevention (disengagement and rehabilitation). There are many more topics, ranging from cybercrime, to trafficking in human beings, to community-oriented policing, for example. The EUCPN publishes these outputs on its website.³⁷

EUCPN products are varied but categorised according to their contents and intended use. First, the EUCPN Secretariat, in cooperation with the EUCPN Presidencies, conducts research and analysis on the themes selected by the Presidencies. The outputs stemming from these activities include **Toolboxes**, which are published twice a year and include practical tools for practitioners for addressing the Presidencies' themes, and **thematic papers** that provide information for policymakers for helping them deepen their knowledge on the selected themes.

Secondly, the EUCPN carries out research **activities independent from the themes selected by the Presidencies**, whose results are published in **booklets, research reports, and monitors** that present recent data and preventive measures for facing crime phenomena. In order to support evidence-based policy making, the Secretariat has published '**Mythbusters**' that aim to dispel common misconceptions about crime prevention.

Furthermore, the Network produces material for conducting **crime prevention campaigns** at the European, national, and local level. Finally, the Secretariat **collects information**, on national crime prevention policies and strategies and on EU-funded projects and, mainly, on procedures to apply for the funding. However, **information about national crime prevention strategies is incomplete and sometimes outdated**, and the information on **interregional information exchange**, for which the Secretariat started working on a paper to illustrate policy similarities between states and regions in the EU, **is limited**.

In 2022, the EUCPN has made further steps to improve the **evidence base of their products**. The Network announced the establishment of an **Advisory Board**, consisting of academic experts, who can provide independent scrutiny and expert peer review on the commissioning of research.³⁸ Furthermore, the EUCPN has founded a **dedicated working group**, which³⁹ developed a **minimum list of criteria** for crime prevention which will have to be met it can be disseminated by the EUCPN as a 'good practice'.⁴⁰

³⁶ [2206_Toolbox_FR_LR.pdf \(eucpn.org\)](#)

³⁷ [Knowledge Centre | EUCPN](#)

³⁸ EUCPN Board Meeting minutes, 21 June 2022

³⁹ EUCPN Board Meeting minutes, 8 December 2021

⁴⁰ There is a clear description of the crime problem(s) the activity wishes to address, there is a clear description of the way in which the intervention addresses the identified problem(s) and why it is expected to be effective, there should be a robust and positive outcome evaluation, or at least strong indications of theoretical plausibility and there is sufficient information available about the nature of the intervention, its original context, and the implementation of the activities to help practitioners select, replicate or innovate from it.

3.3. Disseminate knowledge and expertise to facilitate implementation

The Network strives to play an important role in the **dissemination of qualitative knowledge on crime prevention**, which could be shared to enable to improve crime prevention policy and tools in the EU. This entails collecting, sharing and communicating information on relevant crime-related problems, interventions and good practices, as well as on effective means of implementation.

Regarding outreach and communication, the Network established a **communication plan** in 2018, which has resulted in the creation of a new **website**, an increased presence on **social media** (Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook), an updated **newsletter**, which has been disseminated more and more (in 2018 6 newsletters, in 2019 13 newsletters and in 2020 15 newsletters), the production of promotional material and the creation of videos, which can be viewed on the website. The website is the main platform for knowledge dissemination and contains a **'knowledge centre' database** where users can find EUCPN outputs such as research articles, toolboxes and campaigns.

Regarding dissemination, the **National Representatives** have reported to face **difficulties** in fulfilling their role, according to interviews conducted by the external study: three National Representatives declared they have no channel to directly communicate with local stakeholders and are unaware of whether the information they share at the national level ultimately reaches the local level. Among surveyed stakeholders, 41% of responding national, regional or local authorities declare to not receive information from their National Representatives. For local policymakers and practitioners, this share increases to 80%.⁴¹ The interviewed stakeholders report no instances of feedback requests from their Representatives or the EUCPN in any capacity.

In order to partially mitigate the challenges in reaching out to the national and local level, the EUCPN Secretariat has increased its presence on social media in order to reach the local practitioners without intermediaries. However the **language barrier** remains an issue as the EUCPN communicates and produces output almost entirely in English.

Translation of materials is a key factor that affects the dissemination of materials. The range of outputs of the EUCPN suffers from a scarce availability of material translated into national languages. The Network is aware of the importance of providing translations. However, up to now, only few documents are translated in all EU languages, due to a lack of resources.⁴² Even though on occasions, National Representatives have facilitated translations, they reported that usually there is no budget earmarked for this. Since the finalisation of the

⁴¹ On a scale "Yes/No", 22 responses received of which: "Yes" (N=12), "No" (N=10). As for "Yes", National authorities (N=11), NCP (N=1). As for "No", National authorities (N=9), NCP (N=1).

⁴² the "Toolbox 3 - Evaluation of Crime Prevention Initiatives Manual (2013)" was translated in 22 national languages. "Toolbox 13 - Preventing individual fraud (2019)" was translated in French, German, Bulgarian; "Toolbox 14 - Community-Oriented Policing in the European Union Today (2019)" was translated in 21 national languages; "Toolbox 15 - Preventing the Victimisation of Minors in the Digital Age (2019)" in French, German and Romanian, and "Booklet EUCPN - Criteria for the evaluation of crime prevention practices (2016)" in Lithuanian.

external evaluation, the Secretariat has continued their work on knowledge dissemination, by organising **webinars and trainings**. Furthermore, the EUCPN has worked on developing **trainings** for practitioners. In 2022, the EUCPN Secretariat will develop a training on **crime prevention knowledge and evidence**, for which National Representatives are responsible for the further dissemination to their Member State.⁴³

Regarding implementation, the 2012 evaluation recommended that the EUCPN should strengthen its role in making **inputs to policy making** in the crime prevention field. However, **the EUCPN does not systematically monitor whether Member States adapt best practices implemented in other Member States**. Moreover, interviews from the external study review that stakeholders lament the **lack of support to adapt best practices to the local context**. The Network acknowledges its lack of capacity in this regard.

3.4. Contribute to various aspects of crime prevention at the EU level

From a strategic perspective, in 2015 the Network decided to align its activities to the priorities of the **European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats (EMPACT)**. This decision enabled it to put the emphasis on the illicit activities carried out by organised crime groups. Since 2018, the **EUCPN has participated in operational actions** carried out within the EMPACT priorities organised property crime, trafficking in human beings, child sexual exploitation and environmental crime.

In the new EMPACT cycle 2022-2025, approved by the Member States, the EUCPN is tasked to **coordinate the Common Horizontal Strategic Goal 7: Prevention and harm reduction, assistance to victims, awareness raising**. The **Secretariat represents** the Network in EMPACT meetings and can **advise and support the drivers and action leaders on preventive actions**. Furthermore, the Secretariat can **propose preventive actions** for priorities in which there is no preventive action yet. Moreover, depending on the resources available, the Secretariat could also **take the lead** in EMPACT priorities.

In terms of **EU level cooperation**, the EUCPN mainly collaborates with the **European Union's Law Enforcement Agency (Europol)**, notably in the framework of EMPACT, and the **European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL)**. On 23 June 2020, a Working Agreement with CEPOL was signed. The Agreement allows participation of the EUCPN Secretariat in CEPOL training sessions and CEPOL staff in EUCPN activities and enhances the dissemination of crime prevention initiatives and research. The 2012 evaluation recommended a closer cooperation with Eurostat in order to gather statistical information on crime prevention at the EU level. The EUCPN continued to monitor its cooperation with **Eurostat** until 2017, but has not continued this cooperation on a systemic basis.

In the Council, the EUCPN regularly presents its activities. In 2018, the EUCPN addressed the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI) in relation to Community Oriented Policing. A position paper was drafted together with

⁴³ [EUCPN webinar: the evaluation of crime prevention | EUCPN](#)

CEPOL to explain the training plans. The EUCPN regularly presents its activities to the Law Enforcement Working Party (LEWP).

4. EVALUATION FINDINGS

4.1. To what extent was the intervention successful and why?

4.1.1. Effectiveness

The section below analyses whether the four intended results as set out in the intervention logic have been obtained.

Cooperation, contacts and exchange of best practices

Since 2012, the EUCPN created **new and more varied opportunities to facilitate cooperation, contacts and exchanges between practitioners and policymakers at EU, national and local level**. The National Representatives use their contacts in order to reach out to practitioners, and some events, such as the European Crime Prevention Conference, are advertised on the EUCPN website and social media.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the Secretariat participates in a range of international, regional and local events in order to reach practitioners directly and present its products. The Network has strengthened its cooperation with several organisations working on crime prevention, notably by organising dedicated stakeholder meetings.

The different tools the EUCPN uses are valued differently and in a different way across categories of stakeholders: some products are seen as more useful than others. The

⁴⁴ [European Crime Prevention Conference 2022 | EUCPN](#)

capacity of the Network to organise meeting opportunities stands out as favourite output among stakeholders.⁴⁵ Interviewed target groups praise the network for sharing practical toolkits, thematic insights and best practices, and for providing networking and knowledge-sharing opportunities.

However, there are some **differences in the perceived benefits per stakeholder group**. National Representatives and national authorities are generally satisfied with the opportunities provided for cooperation and exchange of information, while local stakeholders find the services of the EUCPN comparatively less relevant and useful. Generally, the Network seems to have **difficulty in reaching target groups below national level**. Among surveyed stakeholders, 41% of responding national, regional or local authorities declare to not receive any information by their National Representatives. When looking at local policymakers and practitioners, the share jumps to 80%, which aligns with the increased dissatisfaction with the ability of National Representatives to interact with the local level compared to the past, when practitioners and academics were more involved in the activities of the Network.

The development of knowledge and expertise on crime prevention

Based on the positive responses received from stakeholders, the EUCPN effectively **collects and produces qualitative knowledge on crime prevention** and has managed to **raise the quality of outputs** produced through the continuous collection and dissemination of good practices. Stakeholders also report indirect benefits resulting from the work of the EUCPN. They report using the Network as a platform to scout for partners for EU funded projects, they interpret EUCPN materials in order to know what the key topics of interest are when writing project proposals, and they use evaluated best practices shared by the Network for prevention activities within their own administration.

Concerning the EUCPN's efforts to develop a common approach to crime prevention, the **2019 adopted definition of crime prevention** resonates with and aligns to stakeholders' understanding of crime prevention. The vast majority of surveyed stakeholders (75%) recognised the contribution the EUCPN is making towards spreading the culture of evaluating crime prevention activities.

The external study examined whether policymakers and practitioners find the materials **useful**. The publication of national crime prevention strategies on the EUCPN website are considered to be quite useful by stakeholders, but reports are considered of less practical use. Respondents have a clear preference for practical toolboxes. **The target group that finds EUCPN materials to be the most useful are the national authorities, while the target group that finds them the least useful are local practitioners.**

⁴⁵ On a scale from 1 (Very low satisfied) to 5 (Very high satisfied): 54 responses received on average for each question. The average rating for the EUCPN meetings is: 4.3 Best Practice Conferences (N=37), 4.1 Workshops (N=40), 3.9 Seminars (N=32), 3.6 World café (N=22).

Knowledge dissemination and implementation of crime prevention policies and tools

The new EUCPN **communication strategy** has been effective in raising awareness about the Network, both at EU and national level, as concluded following interviews carried out in the external study. The **website** is the main gateway to promote the results of the Network and represents a drastic improvement both in terms of accessibility and production value over the one operating in 2012. Through its **social media** presence, the EUCPN Secretariat is able to reach out to its target groups directly. This is corroborated by survey responses, as 21 respondents out of 72 (30%) found social media channels as being “highly” or “very highly” effective in disseminating information on the Network, with an additional 29 (40%) considering them moderately effective. Only 22 respondents considered the effectiveness of social media channels as having a “low” or “very low effectiveness”. Amongst the latter, about half (10) of responses came from academics. The website was also positively assessed by survey respondents, with 46 out of 76 respondents (60%) considering it as being “highly” or “very highly” effective in disseminating information on the Network.

However, these developments are not enough to reach all target groups. According to the outcomes of stakeholder interviews, **problems with dissemination** are attributed to a combination of factors, some linked to the Network itself, such as the **limited capacity for active involvement** of the National Representatives in general, and the obstacles they face to efficiently disseminate materials and knowledge to the local level. Moreover, the Network’s limited resources to **translate materials in national languages** is acknowledged by stakeholders as an important factor hindering the ability of the EUCPN to disseminate its products and is the most commonly reported impediment.

Another factor hindering the Network’s outreach is the **lack of feedback collection** from their target groups in order to produce output tailored to their needs, such as support to contextualising best practices, guidance on evaluating crime prevention projects, or simply translated materials. This explains in part why local stakeholders make the least use of EUCPN knowledge products and consider the Network to be adding the least value compared to national and local initiatives.

Here again, the EUCPN is not sufficiently equipped to reach its intended user base. Target groups that are more easily reached by the EUCPN are also the most satisfied by its activities. Stakeholders would like the Network to provide **guidance on how to replicate best practices** in different contexts, and how to approach application at a local level.

Some of the obstacles hindering the EUCPN ability to contact some of its target groups are external to the Network: they can be of **cultural, administrative or organisational** nature, and little can be done by National Representatives to overcome them. Not all Member States can count on **National Crime Prevention Councils** to facilitate the dissemination of EUCPN materials. Another possible obstacle is the fragmentation in **administrative structures**: the more decentralised governments operate, the more difficult it is to reach the local level. When comparing the EUCPN to other networks, as done in the external study, the

EUCPN is disadvantaged compared to other networks due to its **weak dissemination channels**. Other networks can count on more established national and local relays.⁴⁶

Finally, crime prevention as a topic can be of **varying importance** per Member State: if there is no strong prevention culture present, or if crime prevention is not as high on the political agenda as other security topics, this will have an impact on the amount of attention devoted to the EUCPN.⁴⁷

Contribution to EU crime prevention policies and actions

The EUCPN has been working on building the foundations to become a stronger **point of reference on crime prevention in the EU**, by aligning its priorities to EU priorities, by taking part in EMPACT, and developing working relationships with EU agencies. Since EUCPN only started as coordinator of the preventive angle for the 2022-2025 Cycle, it is too early to see the results of its efforts as coordinating entity.

The Network has followed a **structured approach** to reach out and establish relationships with other EU actors in the field of security, and now mostly cooperates with EUROPOL in the framework of EMPACT and joins efforts with CEPOL in providing information and trainings on crime prevention.

Still, EU stakeholders indicate that the Network **needs to improve** on its outreach and expertise in order to successfully contribute to EU policy making on crime prevention. The Network's contribution is generally appreciated by EMPACT stakeholders,⁴⁸ but interviewees noted that the EUCPN does not always bring the required expertise to the table, therefore limiting the impact of its contribution. Based on interviews carried out in the external study, it was noted that **National Representatives rarely offer inputs** for the EUCPN in EMPACT.

Even so, there is untapped **potential** for the Network to contribute further to EU crime prevention policies and actions, in terms of coordinating input from its members and intensifying contacts with relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, there is scope for further efforts to increase synergies with EU policies and strategies. In stakeholder interviews, involved parties appreciate the Network for bringing the prevention perspective to the table and developing operative actions and quality outputs promoting EMPACT priorities.

⁴⁶ The external study included a comparison of the EUCPN with the following other networks: Euroguidance, EDICs, ECN, EIP-AGRI, ENRD, EURYDICE, GSN.

⁴⁷ A) "Are there external factors that hinder the possibility to cooperate and exchange information and experience within the EUCPN?": total responses: 24 of which: "No" NRs (N=16); "Yes" NRs (N=3), NCPs (N=2); "Do not know" NRs (N=3).

B) "Are there external factors that hinder the capacity of the EUCPN to contribute to EU policymaking on internal security?": total responses: 22 of which: "No" NRs (N=21); "Yes" NRs (N=1).

C) "Are there external factors that affect the capacity of the Network to implement actions?": total responses: 24 of which: "No" NRs (N=14); "Yes" NRs (N=8), NCPs (N=1); "Do not know" NCPs (N=1).

⁴⁸ Interviews: 1 CEPOL, 1 EMCDDA, 1 Europol, and 2 law enforcement authorities involved in EMPACT consulted.

4.1.2. Efficiency

In order to establish whether the Network is efficient, the section below analyses the European Crime Prevention Network's cost-effectiveness in executing its tasks, as well as the appropriateness of the allocation of its resources to implement those tasks.

The assessment of the efficiency of the Network was influenced by **several limitations**. Both the subject matter of crime prevention (how to measure whether a crime has been prevented?) and the limitations to the amount of data the external study was able to collect, made it extremely difficult to quantify the EUCPN's cost-effectiveness. Nevertheless, an attempt was made to provide a qualitative overview based on stakeholders' views.

The main question to gauge the point of view of stakeholders concerning the overarching efficiency of the Network was the following: "to what extent costs and benefits of the Network are proportionate?". In total, 29 responses were received from EUCPN National Representatives or substitutes and EUCPN Secretariat members. A majority of EUCPN practitioners (19/29) which responded to the question reported that the costs and benefits of the Network are commensurate to a high or very high extent. In general, target groups of the Network bear virtually no cost, which explains why the Network is unanimously considered good value for money.

For the National Representatives and Contact Points, the picture is different: they can face **costs unaccounted for by the EUCPN budget**, such as overtime work and financial costs for dissemination activities. Moreover, several National Representatives indicate that their role is **an additional task on top of other full-time commitments**. There are also Representatives who report that the administration they work for does not allocate **budget for EUCPN activities**, such as for translating and printing campaign materials. The effort and time spent by National Representatives to find the necessary financial resources is reported as a cost in itself.

Moreover, the Network struggles with **operational inefficiencies** stemming from its organisational setup. The EUCPN is an Internal Security Fund - Police funded project managed by the Belgian Ministry of Interior, so the Secretariat has to navigate both the financial regulations of Belgium and the European Union. Especially in the past, this has led to large parts of the budget remaining unspent (see p. 10 for the overview). The 5% contribution from Member States to the Network, is also subject to issues. Member States' delayed payments cause additional inefficiency.

The implementation of EUCPN activities also encounters some inefficiencies, related to the **division of roles and responsibilities** within the Network. Even though the Council Decision and Rules of Procedure are clear in setting roles and responsibilities, the **Secretariat** takes on a **disproportionate part of the responsibilities**, in an effort to compensate for National Representatives' limited involvement.

Notably, **the implementation of actions under the Multi-Annual Strategy 2016-2020 fell almost entirely on the Secretariat**. National Representatives appear to be only marginally involved or not involved at all, despite the fact that there are several actions that identify them as responsible for the implementation. The establishment of a permanent

Secretariat in late 2011 and its further consolidation throughout the years might have initiated or compounded this behaviour.

This causes inefficiencies, not only because the **Secretariat is using its time and resources on tasks for which the other EUCPN members are better placed**, but also because the National Representatives and the National Contact Points are the key to the EUCPN's **network function**. Without their active involvement and contacts, the EUCPN's is not sufficiently able to reach its target groups. Furthermore, members of governance share the opinion that the **high turnover** among National Representatives entails considerable costs for the Network and influences its ability to pursue its objectives, since new Members need time to familiarise themselves with the work of the EUCPN, and the Network is less able to draw from past experience.

4.1.3. Coherence

The third component that contributes to establish the Network's success is its coherence. Internally, this entails examining how the Network's activities relate to one another and to its legal basis. Externally, the Network's objectives in relation to other EU initiatives are evaluated, in order to identify possible synergies, inconsistencies and/or duplications.

Regarding the **Network's internal coherence**, its objectives are **sufficiently coherent** with one another, and the actions carried out under the MAS 2016-2020 are **generally consistent** with and aligned to the objectives established by the Council Decision.

However, interviews with stakeholders show that in the Annual Work Programmes, there is a **greater focus on achieving administrative tasks** mentioned in the work programmes (such as setting up the website, updating the database of contacts etc.) **than achieving the more overarching goals of the Network**. In general, the belief within the Network has been that the Multi Annual Strategy 2016-2020 is too inward looking, as current actions are often aimed at strengthening the Network itself rather than providing policy orientation. Notably, both National Representatives and the Secretariat pointed out that the lack of cooperation between National Representatives influenced to some degree the ability to implement some of the actions of the Multi-Annual Strategy 2016-2020, indicating a lack of commitment towards achieving the Network's common goals.

Regarding the Network's **external coherence**, there have been many developments in EU policymaking. The Network's intention to align itself more to EU policy has fostered **more coherence with EU goals and priorities**. From 2018, the preventive dimension became one of the Common Horizontal Strategic Goals (no. 7) of EMPACT, and in the EMPACT cycle 2022-2025, the Network became the coordinator of Goal 7. However, due to the Network's recent involvement, the **EUCPN needs more time to get fully integrated in EMPACT**, and the Secretariat spends considerable time on trying to be included in the various EMPACT groups. Still, the Network's participation in EMPACT has **further potential to grow** and develop, as the EUCPN gets more and more involved in its working groups and establishes contacts.

As the sole EU organization that exclusively focuses on crime prevention in all its aspects, the EUCPN is well positioned to complement the actions of **EU Agencies** active in the field of justice and security and works to build relationships with others. The relationship established with CEPOL and Europol, in particular, produced tangible results achieved in collaboration by the parties. However, **the cooperation is not used to its full potential yet**. According to interviews with the EU agencies, this may be either attributed to the early stage of the collaboration or to an uneven level of commitment existing between the parties. Moreover, it was pointed out that the EUCPN may risk **overlapping or duplicating the activities of other EU activities** when setting out its priorities.

4.2. How did the EU intervention make a difference?

The evaluation found that the EUCPN has generated EU added value as far as it achieved results that national or other EU initiatives would not otherwise have achieved:

- The EUCPN provided **uniform access** to the same services and knowledge products on crime prevention to its target groups;
- The Network **facilitated exchanges** between practitioners in the field, which would have not have otherwise occurred with the same regularity and to the same extent without EU intervention; When the **EUCPN got involved in EMPACT**, national and EU authorities could benefit from its readily available contributions to coordinated operational actions.

Looking at possible alternatives to the EUCPN, interviewees⁴⁹ report **no other comparable forum** for meeting and discussing crime prevention topics in a cross-cutting, multi-disciplinary way. The initiative with the most point in common with the EUCPN is the European Forum for Urban Security (EFUS), although EFUS is mainly addressed to municipalities.

The EU added value is not uniformly perceived across all target groups. Stakeholders at the **local level see less value** in the EUCPN, either because they are not aware of the full extent of EUCPN products and service or because they consider them responding to their needs to a lesser extent than what is available domestically. The same is true for stakeholders from **Member States with a strong culture of crime prevention**, whose ‘domestic market’ already satisfies their needs.

In light of this, the most likely consequences of **a reduction or withdrawal** of EU involvement, with an interruption of the functions carried out by EUCPN, would entail greater difficulties for users to find and access the same, relevant information and services

⁴⁹ Stakeholder groups interviewed were: NRs; NCPs; EUCPN Secretariat; National and local authorities; EU Institutions/services; Academics and crime prevention experts; International Organisations; NGOs and CSOs.

and less opportunities to exchange best practices among EU Member States. The impact of no EUCPN will fall disproportionately on national stakeholders that do not have a strong culture of crime prevention.

However, the potential for growth and development of the Network depends on the **degree of political interest in Member States**. Limited political interest can make it difficult for the Network to make crime prevention mainstream. Given the fact that the National Representatives strongly depend on the Secretariat, the cooperation and the coordination between Member States would likely not persist in the absence of the Network. Even so, as an EU network, the EUCPN should respond to the needs and requirements of the Member States, and if it does not do that sufficiently, its EU added value is at risk.

4.3. Is the intervention still relevant?

Overall, the objectives of the Council Decision are still relevant to the EU needs of supporting the development of crime prevention measures in the EU. The framework devised by the Council Decision proved to be sufficiently flexible to enable the EUCPN to remain relevant over the years.

Compared to 2012, the EUCPN has **increased its relevance** at the EU level as it expanded the range of its activities to include emerging EU crime priorities in order to respond to the need to develop the various aspects of crime prevention at the EU level. All EU stakeholders recognise the EUCPN is making relevant contributions to EMPACT and works together with Europol and CEPOL in order to include crime prevention in EU activities.

In order to stay relevant, the Network needs to respond to the needs of its target groups. However, the **EUCPN does not systematically collect input or feedback** from its target groups on their needs. Exceptions are the ‘EUCPN event feedback tool,’ which is limited to the participants’ opinions on the Best Practice Conference and the European Crime Prevention Conference. Similarly, there is no indication on activities or output produced by the Network which are tailored to the needs of national and local stakeholders.

Aside from aligning to strategic priorities at the EU level, there is **no evidence** that can indicate whether **actions implemented have been relevant to the identified needs**. EUCPN members have identified new challenges in board meetings, such as migration,⁵⁰ cybercrime,⁵¹ big data⁵² and radicalisation.⁵³ However, the topics chosen demonstrate that **little attention** is devoted to **coherence with other EU initiatives**.

⁵⁰ EUCPN (2015), Minutes EUCPN Board Meeting, Board Meeting 23 September 2015 Luxembourg City, Luxembourg.

⁵¹ EUCPN (2015), Minutes EUCPN Board Meeting, Board Meeting 16 December 2015 Luxembourg City, Luxembourg.

⁵² EUCPN (2016), Minutes EUCPN Board Meeting, 13 December 2016 Bratislava, Slovakia.

For the national level, 70% of interviewees consider the activities of the Network to be **relevant to the development of national strategies on crime prevention.**⁵⁴ The respondents who answered positively indicated that the activities of EUCPN play a significant role in gathering knowledge concerning crime prevention, and that the principles and recommendation of international documents and best practices of EU Member States in the area of crime prevention are taken into consideration in the formulation of national crime prevention strategies. Stakeholders also mentioned that EUCPN activities such as conferences, meetings, seminars, campaigns and projects are extremely relevant in this field.

On the local level, the **EUCPN's activities had close to no impact on local strategies and projects**, also due to the limited awareness of the Network at the local level. Generally, the group most satisfied with the work of the EUCPN is also the most represented within the governance, mostly consisting of representatives from national ministries and law enforcement agencies.

⁵³ EUCPN (2018), Minutes EUCPN Board Meeting, 14 March 2018 Sofia Bulgaria. Radicalisation was identified as an important theme where the prevention dimension could be further spurred and in 2019 another booklet "European Crime Prevention Monitor: radicalisation and violent extremism" was released.

⁵⁴ Total responses: 42 of which: "Yes" National authorities (N=14), NRs (N=12), NCPs (N=2), Academic and/or crime prevention expert (N=1); as for "No", NRs (N=4); "Do not know" NRs (N=4), National authorities (N=4), Academic and/or crime prevention expert (N=1).

29 out of 42 survey respondents. It is interesting to note that most "no" and "do not know" respondents were from EUCPN National Representatives or substitutes (eight out of 13).

5. WHAT ARE THE CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED?

5.1. Conclusions

Since 2012, the EUCPN has put in motion a **long-term process that gradually consolidated its activities** on several fronts, in particular by setting out Multi-Annual Strategies and Annual Work Programmes that help steer the different activities.

On the evaluation criteria, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The EUCPN has been **moderately effective** in reaching its objectives and achieving the expected results. The EUCPN has been moderately effective in reaching its objectives and achieving the expected results in supporting the development of knowledge and exchange of best practices on crime prevention. The Secretariat has increased its efforts to facilitate cooperation and exchanges among practitioners and policymakers at the EU, national and local level. Furthermore, the Network has considerably developed its written output and increased its focus on research. Necessary steps have been made by the Secretariat to increase the Network's visibility, with the renewal of the website and its active presence on social media (LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter). The Network has aligned its activities with EU priorities, built relationships with relevant EU agencies such as Europol and CEPOL, and has worked on involving and embedding the preventive dimension within the EU, in particular through its involvement in EMPACT as coordinator of Common Horizontal Strategic Goal 7 on crime prevention.

However, there are several factors that prevent the Network from reaching its full potential. Firstly, outreach to its target groups, mainly to the local level, stays behind expectations, as the network and its output is not sufficiently visible, due to a lack of effective dissemination and tailoring to specific contexts. A second important factor hampering effectiveness is the lack of involvement and lack of structural feedback collection from the relevant stakeholders. Further efforts are also needed to increase synergies between the Network's activities and other preventive initiatives at EU level.

- In spite of the limitations to data collection which influenced the study's ability to assess the Network's cost effectiveness, stakeholder surveys revealed that the EUCPN is an **efficient** initiative as it provides direct and indirect value to its target groups with relatively modest funding. However, the EUCPN faces operational inefficiencies, due to the limited resources available to enable National Representatives to fulfil their tasks. Due to its organisational structure, the EUCPN faces administrative obstacles when aiming to comply with both the EU and the Belgian internal financial procedures. Moreover, even though the distribution of tasks is clear, the active involvement of the National Representatives and Contact Points is limited, due to a lack of capacity and prioritisation, and the high turnover among National Representatives leads to a lack of continuity and experience to draw from.

- Regarding **coherence**, the Network is sufficiently internally coherent, in that its objectives and actions are aligned to the objectives of the Council Decision. Regarding coherence vis-à-vis other initiatives, the Network's objectives are in line with the broader EU crime prevention policy objectives. However, both its **involvement in EMPACT and cooperation with other actors are not used to its full potential yet**. The development of prevention policies in the EU requires the EUCPN to increase its interaction with EU policymakers and to follow closely EU initiatives, set out in the different EU strategies and action plans as well as in EU funded projects.
- The EUCPN provides **EU added value** since it offers access to knowledge on crime prevention to policy makers and practitioners across the EU and facilitates exchanges of best practices between policymakers and practitioners from different EU Member States. However, EU added value differs per target group. Since the Network is less visible at the local level due to a lack of adequate dissemination, EU added value is lower for practitioners and policymakers at this level. Furthermore, not every Member State has the same culture of crime prevention, so EU added value is higher for Member States with less developed crime prevention policies.
- The objectives of the Council Decision are still **relevant** to address EU needs regarding the development and implementation of effective crime prevention policies and measures while providing enough flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances. Still, when deciding on priorities and relevant actions, the Network does not sufficiently take into account activities conducted by other EU networks, initiatives or projects playing a role in preventing criminality. This diminishes opportunities to complement and support other initiatives and in the worst case, leads to duplication of efforts. In addition, the Network does not systematically ask for input and collect feedback from its target groups, to ensure that its activities and products are relevant to all.

Overall, the EUCPN has progressed towards meeting its objectives, but stayed behind expectations in several areas. Systemic issues persist that affect the overall performance of the network, notably related to the involvement of the National Representatives, as well as regarding the EUCPN's engagement with its intended audience, to ensure that its products are targeted and valued.

5.2. Lessons learned and suggested areas for improvement

While the Network is expected to deliver in many strands of work and activities, given the limited resources and other obstacles identified in this evaluation, the Network needs to better structure its priorities and activities to increase the impact and visibility and generate

effective results. A starting point should be an active involvement of the National Representatives as core elements of the Network as well as other forms of cooperation with relevant stakeholders at European, national and local level. The design of such activities should be part of the Multi-Annual Strategy, setting concrete actions as laid down in the Annual Work Programmes. Their implementation needs to be regularly monitored coupled with corrective measures where necessary.

Existing dissemination and communication channels have proven to be insufficient and need to be strengthened. This is where the **National Representatives** and **Contact Points** are of crucial importance. While their limited engagement has been an issue over many years and efforts have been undertaken to increase the level of engagement, the situation has still not significantly improved. **Measures to address this could include:**

- Commitments to implement and support actions as outlined in the Multi-Annual Strategy and Annual Work Programme, for instance through the appointment of National Representatives to lead specific actions to ensure leadership and accountability;
- Measures allowing National representatives to fulfil their role, including guidance by the EUCPN Secretariat on the intended target audience of EUCPN deliverables, Member States making available the necessary resources and the development of an introduction programme for National Representatives and Contact Points.

Facilitating cooperation and exchanges between relevant stakeholders, providing evidence-based knowledge and guidance that help the stakeholders designing and implementing the necessary crime prevention measures crucially relies on a **proper assessment of the needs, expectations as well as feedback channels** on the usefulness and added value of EUCPN deliverables. **It is therefore suggested that the EUCPN:**

- Routinely maps Member States' priorities and needs, with a structured approach that could foresee the inclusion of up-to date information regarding national crime prevention strategies to be available for consultation, on the EUCPN website;
- Provides for opportunities for feedback from National Representatives and Contact Points on their use of EUCPN materials and services, to ensure that the Network meets the needs of its members;
- Collects and processes relevant feedback from target groups to develop better-tailored products and services.

The effective implementation of crime prevention measures requires the development of tools that help **adapting guidance developed at EU level to the relevant national or local context** and that help assessing the effectiveness of any such measures. The EUCPN should further deepen the evidence base for crime prevention measures but also explore ways to facilitate the implementation of crime prevention measures at local level, while staying up to

date and being responsive to new developments. **This can be achieved in different ways, including through:**

- Cooperation with other relevant organisations and EU initiatives, projects and networks, in order to combine insights and create synergies when developing and disseminating knowledge and best practices;
- Enhanced cooperation with relevant networks or crime prevention councils at national level, in order to improve the EUCPN's outreach to target groups;
- An increased focus on responding to new developments and converting research products into practical knowledge and tools, geared towards practitioners' needs, both in terms of content and form (including making available budget for translations).

The EUCPN plays an increasing role in contributing to the **development of EU policies in the field of crime prevention**, in particular through its involvement in EMPACT. **The Network's contribution to the various aspects of crime prevention at the EU level could be improved by:**

- Deepening working relationships within EMPACT -notably with EMPACT drivers and EU agencies in order to broaden its active contribution to embedding crime prevention measures in operational actions.
- Establishing closer links between the National Representatives and the National EMPACT coordinators, so as to ensure coherence in the Network's contribution of EMPACT and enhance awareness of EMPACT procedures and working methods;
- Fostering its cooperation with the European Commission, to ensure alignment with current and future EU policies, strategies, networks and projects.

1. Lead DG, Decide Planning/CWP references

The Evaluation Roadmap for the initiative was published by DG HOME on the Commission's 'Have your say' webpage⁵⁵ in February 2019. The Terms of Reference were drawn up for engaging a contractor to carry out the external study as part of the evaluation. A request for service was issued on 27 January 2019, and a contractor selected by an evaluation committee. The study began in March 2019 and ended in December 2020. The agenda planning (Decide) reference assigned to the evaluation is PLAN/2021/13100.

2. Organisation and timing

As per the Better Regulation Guidelines, an inter-service steering group was used within the Commission to oversee the evaluation. The Secretariat General, DG JUST and the Legal Service were invited to nominate representatives to the steering group.

The meetings of the steering group were chaired by DG HOME. The steering group was regularly consulted over the course of the external evaluation, typically in conjunction with the submission of specific draft reports by the contractor responsible for carrying out the external study. These consultations took place both in the context of regular meetings, via email and telephone.

3. Exceptions to the better regulation guidelines

In conducting the evaluation, no exceptions from the usual procedural requirements described in the Better Regulation Guidelines were required.

4. Evidence and sources

The evaluation drew on different types of documents. Firstly, the external contractor examined EU policy and legislative documents and guidelines, in order to provide the overarching policy framework to be considered when assessing the coherence of the Network and its actions, and to assist in designing recommendations for the future. In order to provide the evidence base for the analysis of the Network's objectives and tasks since 2012, EUCPN outputs were examined. Outputs include the Multi-Annual Strategies and Annual Work Programmes, but also the Reports, Toolboxes, Crime Monitors and newsletters. In order to complete the information on the Network, various back-office documents were included in the list of sources. These documents include meeting minutes, reports on activities written by the Secretariat for the members of the EUCPN, financial documents and stock-taking documents on the progress of actions under the Multi-Annual Strategy, among others.

⁵⁵ [European Crime Prevention Network - evaluation \(europa.eu\)](https://european-criminal-justice.europa.eu/)

The list of sources also includes relevant studies and reports, including scientific literature focusing on the current state of play of crime prevention in Europe. The previous evaluation of the Network in 2012 was also consulted. Finally, national and international measures on crime prevention, including legislative acts, standards and procedures, were consulted, in order to gain insight on the extent to which EU Member States have benefitted from the outputs of the Network.

Aside from a review of the relevant documents, the evaluation also relied on extensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders. These consultations served as opportunities to collect new data or to confirm the validity of already collected data. Additional information on the stakeholder consultations is provided in Annex V.

1. Methodology

The external evaluation study was carried out by **Ernst & Young ('EY')** following a call for services under a framework contract. The evaluation was conducted through a mixed methods approach and was informed by the triangulation of a variety of sources. A range of methodological tools and techniques were used.

The evaluation study included a broad **desk research** that focused on a review of all relevant studies and literature. It covered EU policy and legislative documents and guidelines, EUCPN outputs, EUCPN back-office documents, relevant studies and reports, including scientific literature, and national and international measures on crime prevention. In order to identify additional information that could contribute to framing and explaining the evidence collected on the performance of the EUCPN, the Team sought to understand how other European networks operate, with the aim of identifying what works best and what could be done differently.⁵⁶

A **wide range of stakeholders were consulted** as part of the external study. The consultations included an online survey with stakeholders, targeted interviews and EUCPN meeting attendance (see Annex V for the synopsis report of the consultation study), and a public consultation carried out by the European Commission. Furthermore, EY carried out **four case studies** within the scope of selected actions within the Multi-Annual Strategy 2016-2020, to examine more in depth the key aspects of the evaluation criteria:

- the promotion of EUCPN output in Member States' crime prevention campaigns and Projects
- collection and dissemination of methodologies to assess the impact of crime prevention
- the alignment of EUCPN's crime prevention activities to EMPACT
- insights on the added value of EUCPN support to Member States

⁵⁶ Comparison to the following networks: Euroguidance; Europe DIRECT - European Documentation Centres (EDCs); Europe DIRECT - Information Centres (EDICs); European Centre of Expertise in the field of labour law, employment and labour market policies (ECE); European Competition Network (ECN); European Innovation Partnership Network (EIP-AGRI); European Network for Rural Development (ENRD); EURYDICE; Green spider network (GSN); Informal Network of ESF Information Officers (INIO); National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC); National Europass Centres (EUROPASS).

Furthermore, the contractor carried out a **traffic light assessment** of all 25 actions foreseen in the EUCPN's Multi-Annual Strategy 2016-2020.

2. Timing

While the Evaluation Roadmap, which was published in February 2019, indicated that the external evaluation should have been completed in the first quarter of 2020, the actual completion date was in the second quarter of 2021. In order to allow enough time to process and analyse the outcomes, the Commission **opted to extend the evaluation timeframe** into the second quarter. As a result of the COVID19 pandemic, the contractor and the Commission agreed to extend the duration of the supporting study. In order to mitigate the temporal gap between the conclusion of the external study and this evaluation, developments after the completion date of the external study have been included in this evaluation, when relevant for the assessment of the development of the Network. The descriptions of the most recent developments are based on fact finding by the Commission, based on open sources and interviews with the EUCPN Secretariat.

3. Limitations

The external study encountered some difficulties when performing the **desk research**, most of which have been addressed with adequate mitigation measures.

In particular, difficulties relate to:

- **Information gaps on EUCPN**: it was challenging to retrieve enough elements to evaluate efficiency.
 - o **Solution**: the contractor reached out to the EUCPN Secretariat to request further documentation (i.e. budgetary documents) and asked for documentation that would help addressing the evaluation questions on efficiency. Despite this, it was not possible for the contractor to measure the hours/days spent on each MAS goal and/or MAS action or compare Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) dedicate to communication activities.
- **Lack of consistency in EUCPN documentation**: some of the information needed to address the judgement criteria was available but scattered across different types of documents (e.g. number of participants to meetings, seminars and the Best Practice Conference (BPC) and European Crime Prevention Award (ECPA)), to the point that it was not possible to reconstruct the full picture.
 - o **Solution**: The Team collected the information available across all documents into partial tables and requested the Secretariat to fill the data gaps. The Secretariat was able to fill the information gaps only partially, as it does not collect some of the information needed do address the judgement criteria (e.g. N. of participants to BPC-ECPA, number of downloads from the EUCPN website).
- **Not all indicators assumed to be relevant to meet the judgement criteria were adequate**: As mentioned above, some of the information we expected to be able to retrieve from the Network in order to address the judgement criteria was not as relevant as expected.

- **Solution:** the contractor had to discard some indicators.
- **Limited comparability of information found at the national level:** The variety of source types identified at the national level related to crime prevention strategies (e.g. national laws, institutional websites) resulted in heterogeneous information with a low degree of direct comparability.
 - **Solution:** The contractor developed a matrix of convergence structured around key areas of analysis in order to limit differences and ensure a common minimum ground of comparability. This template was slightly adjusted while progressing with the desk research in order to ensure its relevance to available information.

The study encountered some difficulties when performing the **consultations**, most of which have been addressed with adequate mitigation measures.

- **National Representatives:** Not all NRs were able to provide informative input to our questions. As a consequence of the high turnover experienced by the EUCPN Board, several NRs or substitutes were relatively new to the EUCPN at the time of the interview and were not knowledgeable enough about the Network over the period covered by this study.
 - **Solution:** While NRs remained the primary focus target of our stakeholder consultation strategy, the contractor devised some mitigation measures to compensate for the information gaps.
 - The contractor acted to identify, contact and interview knowledgeable stakeholders, formerly involved with the EUCPN, that could fill in the information gaps.
 - To gain a broader understanding of the Network as a whole, the contractor interviewed the former head of the Secretariat and the crime prevention expert who developed the Standard Conceptual Framework for the Description and Exchange of Good Practices for the EUCPN.
 - The contractor decided to conduct a group interview with the Secretariat to gain specific information on questions that NRs were not able to answer.
- **Stakeholder classification:** When asked to present themselves, several interviewees fit more than one of the stakeholder categories identified within the scope of this study. This can be in part attributed to the multidisciplinary nature of crime prevention. In two occasions interviewees were not confident to say whether they could be considered NCPs of the Network, as their services have not been requested in years.
 - **Solution:** While the original plan was to always use specific interview guidelines for every type of stakeholder, when facing an interviewee fitting multiple profiles, the contractor opted for extending the questioning, in view of retrieving the information the interviewee was knowledgeable about to the maximum extent possible.

- **Unresponsive organisations for the benchmarking exercise**: Despite multiple attempts to contact different members of these organisations, the Team did not receive any response.
 - o **Solution**: the contractor agreed to conduct desk-based research on relevant European networks instead.
- **Limited responses to the public consultation**: the public consultation only received two responses.
 - o **Solution**: the public consultation was deemed not to be an adequate basis for analysis.

As for the collection of information through the **online survey**:

- **Survey refinement and consequent delay**: the first draft of the questionnaire was not exhaustive enough in presenting the object of the inquiry, especially for people unfamiliar with the Network.
 - o **Solution**: To make sure the questionnaire would collect meaningful responses from the stakeholders involved, the team reviewed extensively the questionnaire to prevent 1) inaccurate answers stemming from unclear questions 2) lower response rate resulting from ‘drop-outs’ who abandon the survey mid-way through.
- **Survey fatigue**: Several stakeholders approached by the contractor, either in person or via email, told us they had already been interviewed.
 - o **Solution**: The contractor included a specific alert in the presentation email to distinguish the survey from the others and sent targeted reminders that significantly increased the number of responses.

Despite the difficulties encountered, the **quality of the information gathered is generally satisfactory** thanks to a combination of additional actions taken on the part of the contractor and the role played by stakeholders in validating the information that was collected. The information is satisfactory both in terms of quality and of breadth of representation from different categories of stakeholders, and Member State representation.

4. Commission assessment of the work of the contractor

Overall, the Commission is satisfied with the work of the external contractor, and the solutions adopted when faced with limitations. Following the external study, the Commission chose to simplify and streamline its work, in order to get a more targeted set of conclusions and recommendations. The Commission opted to only use Council Decision 2009/902/JHA as the basis for the Network’s mission and objectives and regarded the MAS 2016-2020 as strategic

document that sets out to achieve these goals. This led the Commission to simplify the intervention logic and base the evaluation on the four identified objectives and results set out.

ANNEX III. EVALUATION MATRIX

<i>Sources</i>	
PROGR	<i>EU policy and legislative documents establishing the Network and setting its priorities</i>
OUTPUT	<i>Includes all outputs of the Network (e.g. Toolboxes, Crime reports, etc.)</i>
OFFICE	<i>Backoffice documents from the Secretariat</i>
LIT	<i>Any paper/study that can be relevant, including previous evaluations</i>
NATLIT	<i>Documents at national level such as reports by public authorities and crime prevention bodies</i>
SOC	<i>Online discussion forums/social media networks</i>
OPC	<i>Open public consultation</i>
Stakeholders	
BOARD	<i>EUCPN NRs</i>
SEC	<i>EUCPN Secretariat</i>
NCPs	<i>EUCPN National Contact Points</i>
ACAD	<i>Academics and crime prevention experts</i>
EU	<i>Representatives of EU bodies and institutions</i>
NAT	<i>National and local authorities specialised in crime prevention</i>
CS	<i>civil society, including specialised NGOs, CSOs which deal with crime prevention</i>
INT	<i>International organisations which deal with crime prevention</i>

	Judgement criteria	Indicators and/or descriptors	Baseline indicators/ POCs (From 2012 Evaluation and 2016 Impact measurement report)	PROGR	OUTPUT	OFFICE	LIT	NATLIT	ONLINE	BOARD	SEC	NCPs	ACAD	EU	NAT	CS	INT	SURVEY	OPC	Answer to the evaluation question
EQ1	Effectiveness 1	To what extent have the EUCPN activities contributed to achieving specific and general objectives laid down in the Council Decision 2009/902/JHA and the Multi-Annual Strategy (2016-2020)? In particular in: sub-questions 1.A; 1.B; 1.C; 1.D.																		
	Understanding	The analysis will focus on the comparison between expected results as stemming from the objectives of the network and results achieved, as stemming from the outputs of the Network, documents impacted by the activities of the Network and opinions of stakeholders. The question is split in four sub questions (as per ToR) that have been matched with the strategic and specific																		

J 23.2	Activities determined by Council Decision are consistent and aligned with the relevant EU legal regime as identified by the Steering Committee	► Matrix of coherence between activities of the Council Decision and the EU legal regime		x			x																prevention policy.
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	whole	- evaluated best practices shared by the Network are used as leverage for lobbying internally in favour of prevention activities within members' their own administration.	
<p>Economic costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct • Recurring 	Public Administrations (at EU and national levels)	<p><u>Direct costs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ISF funding to support the EUCPN, currently amounting to approx. 1 million euros per year (5% co-financed by EUMS) <p><u>Indirect costs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Costs incurred by participation of EUCPN members (translation, attendance of meetings, preparation of contributions to EUCPN output) 	<p>While the direct costs to the EU budget were easy to quantify, indirect costs incurred by the Members of the EUCPN were not, due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Varying national administrative structures and networks - Differences in translation burden depending on the language - Differences in time spent and costs of this time

1. Objectives of the consultation

A series of consultations with key stakeholders was carried out in support of the evaluation to help assess the effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, EU added value and relevance of the European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN).

The overall architecture of the study is based on several activities that are closely linked to each other. These are, accordingly:

- The development of an evaluation framework, which consists in setting up and operationalising the overarching methodology for the study, and which has been undertaken in the “Inception Phase” of the study;
- Undertaking a Literature review, Consultation activities and Case studies, which are aimed at gathering evidence to answer the evaluation questions, as part of the “Fieldwork phase” of the study;
- Completing the data Collection and analysis, which is mainly focused on the analysis of the evidence gathered.

The evaluation focused, *inter alia*, on the structure, functioning, performance and more generally at the work of the EUCPN. It assessed the performance of the Network against the objectives laid down by its legal basis, vis-à-vis the five evaluation criteria mentioned above. In doing so, the study covered the MAS and the Annual Work Programmes (AWPs); Outputs of the Network, as well as Policy documents mainly related to crime prevention at EU, national, and sub-national levels.

2. Consultation methods and tools

Involvement of the EUCPN Board, EUCPN Secretariat, EUCPN National Representatives/National Contact Points (NRs/NCPs) was ensured throughout the Study. These provided input through exploratory and targeted interviews, helping to both set the expectations of the external study and to help validate and triangulate the desk research, also helping to fill in any gaps with regard to the assessment of the baseline situation.

Moreover, individual **interviews** were conducted with key stakeholders (National, Regional and Local authorities, EU officials, practitioners, Non-Governmental Organisations/Civil Society Organisations (NGOs/CSOs), selected benchmarking organisations (such as European Migration Network (EMN), European Forum for Urban Security (EFUS), International Juvenile Justice Observatory - IJJO) and academia).

A **survey** was deployed using the contractor's survey tool, addressed to all the stakeholders mentioned above, along with relevant international organisations involved in crime prevention activities. In total, 87 responses were received, 22 from academics and experts, 8 from EU Institutions or Agencies, 24 from EUCPN NR / NCP, 7 from EUCPN Secretariat, 4 from international organisations, 20 from National, Regional or Local authorities, and 2 from NGOs and CSOs.

Consultation of the general public was ensured by means of a **public consultation** in all EU official languages.

3. Results of the consultation activities

4. Interviews and attendance in workshops

Given the priority attributed to face-to-face interviews, interviewees were mainly selected based on their availability at events organised by the EUCPN. In December 2019, the contractor attended the Board meeting and Best practice Conference in Helsinki to interview EUCPN NRs, while in February 2020 the contractor travelled to Brussels for the National Crime Prevention Councils (NCPCs) meeting and the European Crime Prevention Conference, with the objective of engaging a mix of crime prevention practitioners and NRs.

These meetings provided a great opportunity to address the stakeholders directly. The European Crime Prevention Conference in particular, was effective in attracting suitable respondents, both in terms of quantity and variety of profiles, but created a disproportionate availability of Belgian nationals, which, at some point, the contractor had to discard to avoid ending up with an unbalanced sample of respondents.

In addition to the 4 exploratory interviews, a total of 54 interviews were performed (some individual, some interviews involving more than one stakeholder); several individuals (including key EUCPN stakeholders) were interviewed more than once. The figure and the table below provide a breakdown of interviews performed by stakeholder category.

Figure 1 - Distribution of stakeholders involved in the interviews



Table 4 - Stakeholders targeted in the interviews

Tool	Categories of stakeholders	Interests represented	Nr of stakeholders targeted
Exploratory interviews	Chair of the EUCPN Board	EUCPN Member States	1
	Commission representative on the EUCPN Board	European Commission, DG HOME	1
	EUCPN ExCom member	EUCPN Member States	1
	EUCPN Secretariat	EUCPN management	1
Interviews	EUCPN Secretariat	EUCPN management	4
	EUCPN NRs/ NCPs	Member States	23
	Local authorities specialised in crime prevention, including: <i>- Law enforcement;</i> <i>- Judiciary authorities;</i> <i>- Other governmental (e.g. National Crime Prevention Councils)</i>	Local stakeholders involved in crime prevention activities	13
	Academics and crime prevention experts (<i>other than NCPs</i>)	Various specialists dealing with crime prevention	6
	Specialised NGOs/CSOs	Not-for-profit organisations dealing with crime prevention activities	3

Tool	Categories of stakeholders	Interests represented	Nr of stakeholders targeted
Interviews	EU Institutions, Bodies and Networks, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>European Union's Law Enforcement Agency (Europol);</i> - <i>European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL);</i> - <i>European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA);</i> - <i>European Network on the Administrative Approach (ENAA)</i> 	Various European agencies or bodies dealing with and involved in activities related to crime prevention	5

The following sections provide a summary of the views expressed on the different evaluation criteria.

Effectiveness

The Network improved sensibly its effectiveness by building on the recommendations of the 2012 evaluation, however, this progress is uneven across the board. Visibility has improved, both at the national and EU level, the network is gradually stepping up its collaboration with EU stakeholders, and the quality of outputs is generally appreciated, both in terms of materials and networking opportunities. The Network is contributing to policymaking at the EU level; however, this is not mirrored by greater influence on crime prevention policies at the national and local level. Dissemination still lags behind and the Network struggles to reach the local level, due to both internal and external factors.

The visibility of the Network has increased in Member States in recent years. The communication strategy which combines a new visual identity with visual assets, well-crafted campaigns and special events such as the 'focus days' on specific crime topics were mentioned as effective activities in raising the attention.

The visibility has also increased at the EU level, as the Network pursued and established relationships with key partners, notably Europol and CEPOL. The extent of collaboration is described as limited yet baring high potential. The Network is also actively contributing to EMPACT groups. Involved parties appreciate that the EUCPN has brought the prevention perspective to the table.

The output of the network is generally appreciated by the great majority of interviewees, with a clear preference for practical materials (e.g. Toolboxes) and informative sessions on concrete crime prevention projects (e.g. Best Practice Conference and European Crime Prevention Award - BPC-ECPA). However, stakeholders lament the lack of

support to contextualise best practices, which is seen as a priority to support crime prevention activities at the national and local level.

In general, the Network encounters difficulties in reaching beyond the national level. Stakeholders reported no instances of feedback requests, and the Network recognises it does not have the capacity to collect, nor process, feedback from the local level.

Problems with disseminations are attributed to a combination of factors. Some linked to the Network itself, namely lack of proactivity from NRs and lack of capacity to translate materials in national languages. Others depending on external factors which obstruct the work of NRs, including: clash of competences between NRs and other public bodies; fragmentation in administrative structure; lack of a national relay network able to reach intended stakeholders (e.g. national/local crime prevention councils); cultural and/or political factors, namely the lack of interest in prevention *tout court* or, conversely, strong confidence in national resources on crime prevention which leads stakeholders to disregard what comes from the rest of the EU.

While the membership is internally split about the extent to which the evidence-based criterion should dictate what is shared by the Network, stakeholders overwhelmingly recognise the meaningful contribution the EUCPN is making towards spreading the culture of evaluation of crime prevention activities across the EU, even when they disagree with the proposition itself.

Efficiency

The Network is unanimously seen as positive initiative, yielding more benefits than costs. To the target groups of the Network the balance could not be any different. No matter how little they make use of the services of the Network and how small the benefits they reap/gain, no unintended costs emerged from the stakeholder consultation. All interviewed stakeholders ultimately agree that the Network is good value for money.

Target groups of the network list several benefits. Some are aligned with the Network stated objectives while others are spill over benefits. Within the first category, target groups praise the network for sharing practical toolkits, thematic insights and inspirational best practices, and for providing networking and knowledge-sharing opportunities which, some say, give form to substance as they embody the multidisciplinary nature of crime prevention. Within the second category, some see the Network as a platform to scout for partners for EU funded projects. Some reported using EUCPN materials to interpret what are the key topics of interest to the Commission when writing project proposals, while others use evaluated best practices shared by the Network as leverage for lobbying internally in favour of prevention activities within their own administration.

While recognising these benefits, NRs also report costs connected to their position. The majority indicate that their role as NRs is just an extra task on top of other full-time commitments, among them some consider it still a manageable activity, others share the opinion that their role requires a bigger time investment than expected. NRs also report

financial costs connected to the dissemination of Network materials that they are unable to cover, namely translation and printing costs, for which no resources have been earmarked by the body they represent.

All stakeholders involved in the EUCPN governance share the opinion that the high turnover of NRs entails a considerable cost for the Network. The lack of continuity within the Board results in an inefficient use of time during Board meetings and impoverishes the quality of discussions since newer NRs are less inclined to provide their contribution.

The Secretariat itself faces a number of administrative hurdles which make its work considerably less efficient. With the Network being an Internal Security Fund (ISF) funded project managed by the Belgian Ministry of Interior, the Secretariat has to navigate two financial regulations which result in considerable resources spent on untangling red tape. The obstacles to budgetary flexibility have emerged as a key factor hindering the efficient management of a financial envelope otherwise considered adequate by the majority of stakeholders consulted. The current funding mechanism, which renews the grant to the Network on a yearly or bi-yearly basis, has reportedly another negative side effect. Relevant stakeholders approached by the Network are less willing to invest in a relationship when there is no guarantee that the EUCPN will still be there in a couple of years.

Coherence

When looking at internal coherence, according to stakeholders consulted the Network was able to pursue the goals and implement the actions of the MAS within the framework set by its legal basis. Questions arise on whether the responsibility borne by the Secretariat to represent the Network within EMPACT, a task considered to be out of scope of the Secretariat's mandate set by the legal basis could represent an exception. None of the interviewees opposes the choice to have the Secretariat fulfil this role. There appears to be tension on whether the mandate, as laid down in Council Decision 902/2009/JHA, might have to be adjusted to the current needs and expectations of the governance of the Network. One shared opinion across the board is that to fulfil current expectations, the next MAS should reflect the level of ambition of the Network and that the legal basis could be an impediment to that.

When looking at external coherence, the governance of the Network highlights the efforts made to explore, establish, and cultivate mutually beneficial relationships with key stakeholders to ensure coherence and complementarity of the objectives and activities of the Network with the objectives and activities of relevant EU Agencies, namely Europol, EMCDDA, CEPOL, and other relevant initiatives in the field of security (e.g. European Network on the Administrative Approach - ENAA). The counterparts report positive however limited scope of collaboration, while noting that the level of ambition of the Network is greater than what has been accomplished so far.

When looking at coherence with Member States' initiatives, it could be argued that these vary from unique and context specific – therefore leaving no room for any real alignment

but presenting no issue of duplication as well – to initiatives that are so aligned that potential for complementarity, but also duplication, are extremely high. The latter may be the case of NCPCs, which often fulfil at the national level what the Network aims to do at the EU level. Since 2018 the Network works more closely with NCPC to explore areas of complementarity and demarcation.

EU added value

The value of having an EU-wide initiative dedicated to crime prevention which provides networking opportunities, develops relevant materials, collects and shares best practices, is recognised by all consulted stakeholders, even by those who declare that the level of support does not meet their expectations. The Network covers topics otherwise unaddressed by many Member States. Stakeholders agree that these activities, at this scale, would have not been achieved without EU intervention.

Interviewees report no other comparable forum for meeting and discussing crime prevention topics in a cross-cutting, multi-disciplinary way. Other initiatives mentioned are theme-specific (e.g. Confederation of European Probation) or many addressed to specific profiles (e.g. academics, European Society of Criminology).

Several interviewees report ongoing collaboration with people met through the EUCPN on initiatives not connected to the Network. Some, for instance, report entering in project-based collaboration loops lasting over the years, indicating that the exchanges set in motion by the Network have a sustainable component.

The collection and sharing of best practices on crime prevention, however, is not an exclusive monopoly of the EUCPN. Several stakeholders report using alternative sources, often from countries with a more developed culture of prevention (e.g. Sweden, the UK, Canada), regional similarities (e.g. Nordics, Baltics, Luxembourg with bordering regions) or sharing a common language (e.g. Austria, Germany, Switzerland). Some states are sufficiently served by national production."

Interviewees overwhelmingly agree that the absence of the EUCPN Prevention would bring negative consequences, as crime prevention would lose its voice at the EU level. Some are confident that something else would take its place explaining that crime prevention is a necessity that would require to be addressed anyway, however losing the EUCPN would mean staring over, less developed and with a lower level of ambition.

Relevance

Interviewed stakeholders unanimously recognise that the EUCPN worked to systematically align its priorities to the ones identified by EMPACT.

The Network started by contributing to three European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT) groups in the 2018-2021 EMPACT Policy Cycle – Organised Property Crime (OPC), Trafficking in human beings (THB), and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) – and further expanded its output to cover other EMPACT priorities such as environmental crime and synthetic drugs. As mentioned in the section on

effectiveness, evidence suggests that the EUCPN still needs to get accustomed to the EMPACT internal workings. However, involved parties consider the contribution of the Network to be relevant as it brings the prevention perspective to the table.

Opinions are mixed on the Network's alignment to EMPACT priorities, and to EU priorities in general. Some strongly support it and would like to see this trend even further reinforced, as they consider the alignment as vital for an EU network to stay relevant. Others lament the Network's new direction as a shift in focus away from crime priorities more commonly addressed at the national and local level by prevention activities (examples mentioned: domestic violence, youth crime, prevention of re-offending, restorative justice), making its work less relevant for its target groups. Another common opinion falls somewhat between the two; stakeholders in this third group recognise that the priorities the Network is focusing on can vary sensibly from the ones in the Member States, however, they consider this to be an advantage as it guarantees a broader coverage of topics. Member States can continue to work on their national and local priorities, while the Network addresses topics that have a stronger cross-regional dimension, making the Network even more relevant.

Opinions also differ on the impact of the rotating Presidencies on the relevance of the Network. The choice of a new topic to focus on every six months is seen either as an effective tool to reconcile EU and national priorities, or as a forced compromise; some Member States do not feel completely free in picking the desired topic during their chairmanship, as they feel pressured to select something falling within the scope of EMPACT.

Some target groups describe the rotating Presidencies as an asset that provides the Network with the necessary flexibility to adapt to current and emerging needs in crime prevention. Others contest the very notion of "emerging needs" in crime prevention, as they consider it an abused term to indicate old issues newly elevated to a political priority.

5. Stakeholder survey

At the cut-off date 13 March 2020, the survey totalled 78 responses. However, at the time of the analysis, 87 completed questionnaires were received, and used as source of input. The Team restructured survey responses into a working dataset to conduct the analysis of responses contained in this report. The online survey was designed so as to invite respondents to answer only questions related to their stakeholder group.⁵⁷ The identity of respondents was determined based of the responses given to the introductory section of the questionnaire. The table below provide a breakdown of survey respondents by stakeholder category.

⁵⁷ Stakeholder groups were: NRs; NCPs; EUCPN Secretariat; National and local authorities; EU Institutions/services; Academics and crime prevention experts; International Organisations; NGOs and CSOs.

Table 5 - Stakeholders engaged in the survey

Categories of stakeholders	Interests represented	Nr of stakeholders engaged
EUCPN Secretariat	EUCPN management	7
EUCPN NRs or substitute	EUCPN Member State	21
EUCPN NCPs	EUCPN Member State	2
National and local authority	National and local stakeholders involved in crime prevention activities	20
Academics and crime prevention experts	Various specialists dealing with crime prevention	22
NGO and CSOs	Non-profit groups dealing with crime prevention activities	3
EU institutions/services	Various European institutions and services dealing with and involved in activities related to crime prevention	8
International organisations	Various international bodies dealing with and involved in activities related to crime prevention	4

The following sections provide a summary of the views expressed on the different evaluation criteria.

Effectiveness

The first issue explored in the survey concerns the definition of crime prevention⁵⁸ within the EUCPN, to understand whether it aligns with that of the Member States. 73 stakeholders answered this specific question. The vast majority of stakeholders (75%) reported that this was the case, with only 14 (19%) stating that there was no alignment between the definition of crime prevention of the EUCPN and that of their Member States. It is interesting to note here that responses indicating an alignment with the new definition of crime prevention adopted by the EUCPN are spread fairly equally across the different categories of stakeholders considered, despite the different orientations of, for instance, practitioners and academics towards knowledge. With regard to the activities performed by the network, the questions posed to stakeholders were aimed at understanding (i) whether they are aware of the tools and materials made available by the

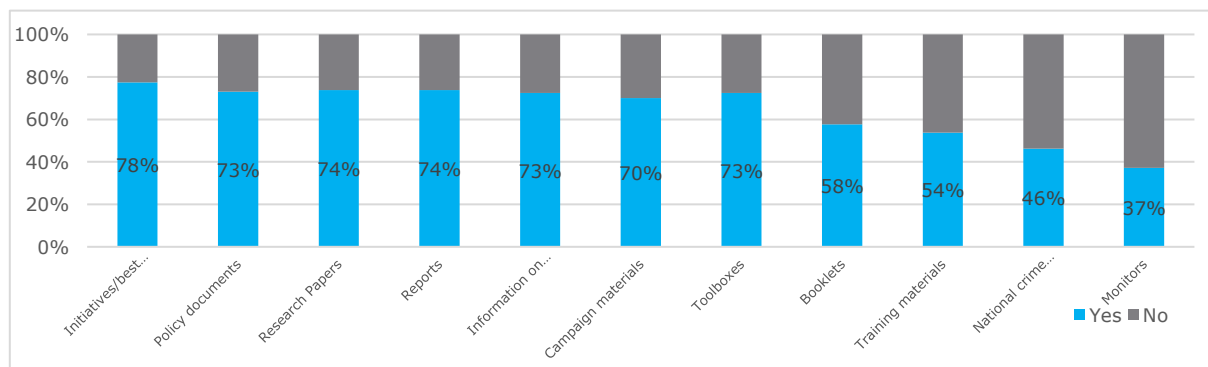
⁵⁸ Crime prevention are ethically acceptable and evidence-based activities aimed at reducing the risk of crime occurring and its harmful consequences with the ultimate goal of working towards the improvement of the quality of life and safety of individuals, groups and communities

EUCPN and (ii) whether they find such materials useful and effective. The list of materials for which these questions were posed is as follows:

- Initiatives/best practices from EU Member States;
- National crime prevention strategies;
- Information on European Crime Prevention Award candidate and winning projects;
- Campaign materials;
- Toolboxes;
- Research papers;
- Policy documents;
- Training materials;
- Reports;
- Booklets;
- Monitors.

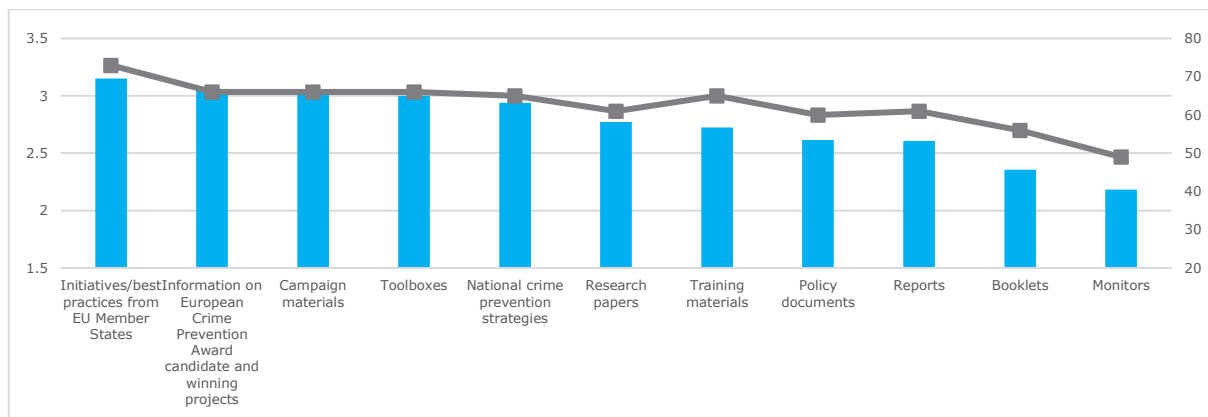
In total, 80 stakeholders responded to these questions, with the results reported below.

Figure 2 - Responses to question “Are you aware of the following materials provided by the EUCPN?”



From the Figure above, it is clear that there is significant heterogeneity within practitioner responses in the overall knowledge concerning the tools made available by the Network. While more than 70% of respondents are aware of best practice dissemination, reports, policy documents and research papers, fewer than 60% of respondents were aware of more operational material such as booklets, training material, national crime prevention strategies and monitors.

Figure 3 - Responses to question “To what extent do you make use of the following materials provided by the EUCPN?”



Besides the knowledge of the material, the survey was also used to gauge whether practitioners make an effective use of the tools made available by the EUCPN. Results are reported in the Figure above: the primary axis provides a normalised⁵⁹ average of responses for each of the materials listed above, while the secondary axis indicates the number of respondents. In order to magnify differences, the scale in both the primary and secondary axes is not set to zero. These results lead to some expectable conclusions but also to some surprising results. For instance, it is to be expected that the most know tool (best practices) is also the most used, and that Monitors, of which stakeholders are least aware, are the tool that tends to be less used. However, it is surprising to see that, on the one hand, national crime prevention strategies, while not widely known, are considered quite useful by the stakeholders that are aware of them; and that, on the other hand, reports, which are widely known amongst practitioners, tend to see less practical use.

Another interesting point explored in the effectiveness dimensions concerns the extent to which the division of roles and responsibilities between the Board, the Executive Committee, the Secretariat and the National Contact Points clear. Open responses concerning this point clearly indicate that the issue at stake is not so much the clarity of roles; rather it concerns the active engagement on the part of Member States (or lack thereof). For instance, one respondent mentioned that “*roles are clear, but except during their presidency, most national representatives are not much involved. Information exchange on Board Meetings is unidirectional, from Secretariat to Board.*” Other responses echoed this sentiment: “*roles and responsibilities are clear, the implementation thereof is however lacking or skewed. [...] National contact points are almost non-existing. The Secretariat drives the Network.*”

This perceived lack of engagement on the part of Member States also seems to drive responses to the question “to what extent is the information flow between the Secretariat and the Board effective?” Open responses focused on mentioning that the current workload of the Board is quite low, as the Secretariat performs most activities. This is

⁵⁹ Respondents were asked to provide their responses on a scale going from one (do not make any use at all of the material) to five (extensive use of the material). In order to achieve a normalised average the point scores were multiplied by the number of responses and then divided by the overall responses. For example, if three respondents answered “1. Not at all” and three respondents answered “2. To a small degree”, the normalised average would be calculated as $((1*3) + (2*3)) / 6 = 1.5$.

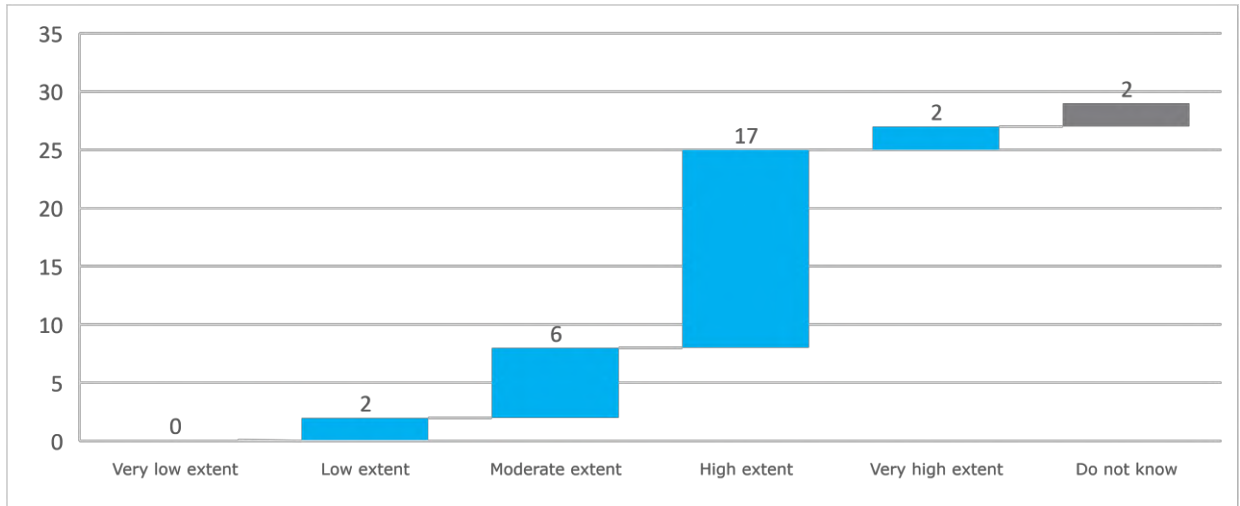
understandable, given the high-ranking functions of our Board Members and the more operational role of the Secretariat. A more active role of Member States was called for, mentioning that two face to face meetings per year between Board and Secretariat might not be sufficient to keep the Network up to date with all the ongoing initiatives. Member States also reflected this point of view, mentioning that such meetings should focus less on “giving information” to the participants, making board meetings more interactive.

Efficiency

The main question included in the survey to gauge the point of view of stakeholders concerning the overarching efficiency of the Network was the following: “to what extent costs and benefits of the Network are proportionate?” In total, 29 responses were received from EUCPN National Representatives or substitutes and EUCPN Secretariat members. As reported in the Figure below, a convincing majority of EUCPN practitioners (19/29) which responded to the question reported that the costs and benefits of the Network are commensurate to a high or very high extent. Looking specifically at the areas for improvement concerning this dimension, respondents reported a few main points:

- The Network should work on further improving coordination activities, with a view towards avoiding the risk of potential overlaps; on this matter respondents mentioned that Member States would need to inform the Secretariat more often concerning they expect from the Secretariat and from the Network as a whole;
- Building on the point above, respondents mentioned that a more active involvement of all Member States would be desirable, as some activities only make sense if a “critical mass” of respondents is reached (this is especially true for the stocktaking of policies: if only a limited number of Member States provide data and complete the templates, the Network will only be able to leverage partial information and will only be able to provide an incomplete picture, reducing overall efficiency and added value).
- To address the common points raised above, one respondent suggested to start using national focal points paid directly by the EUCPN, mentioning that while this would cost more it would solve gaps and other difficulties which now results in often limited analysis, as discussed above. In general, EUCPN meetings should be made more effective and value adding, focusing on the exchange of ideas on crime prevention with between Member States and providing a more complete picture of the situation.

Figure 4 - Responses to question “To what extent costs and benefits of the Network are proportionate?”



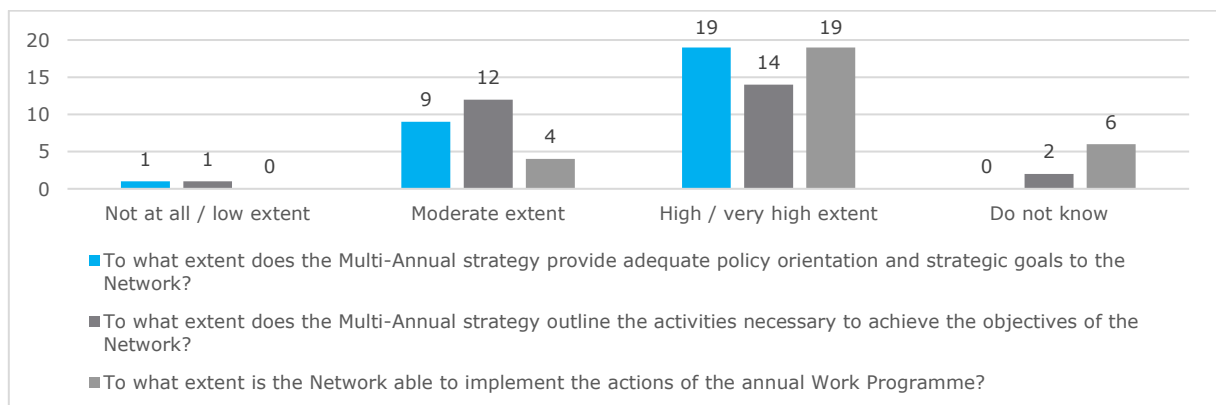
Coherence

A proxy for the overall internal coherence of the Network concerns the MAS and the implementation of the AWP. Three questions were asked on this point, concerning:

- The extent to which the MAS provides adequate policy orientation;
- The extent to which the MAS outlines the activities which are necessary to achieve the Network’s objectives;
- The extent to which the Network is able to implement the actions of the AWP.

Results are reported in Figure 5 below. The questions received 29 responses from members of the EUCPN Secretariat and EUCPN national Representatives or substitutes.

Figure 5 - Focus on Multi-Annual strategy and Annual Work Programme



As can be gleaned from the Figure, responses tended to cluster on moderate to high alignment with regard to both the Work Programme and the MAS. However, responses

(both to the question and the subsequent open comments) tend to show that there is a greater attention to achieving the “tactical/operational” goals contained in the annual WPs, while there is less focus on achieving the more overarching framework contained in the MAS. In general, consensus amongst respondents has been that the MAS have been too inward looking, and that in the future greater policy orientation and co-operation amongst Member States are key policy vectors to be sought. This highlights the tension between the coherence of the Secretariat’s long-term role against the Member States political requirements to respond operationally to immediate policy problems that arise.

With regard to external coherence, the same stakeholders responding to the questions above mentioned that risks of overlap may be present with the following EU policies and initiatives:

- EFUS;
- EMCDDA;
- EMPACT's Activities (x2);
- EMPACT (x2);
- A new initiative of the Commission to organise a network that focuses on child sexual exploitation.

The view amongst surveyed stakeholders is that in general it is better to leverage existing Networks for new initiatives, instead of creating a new one.

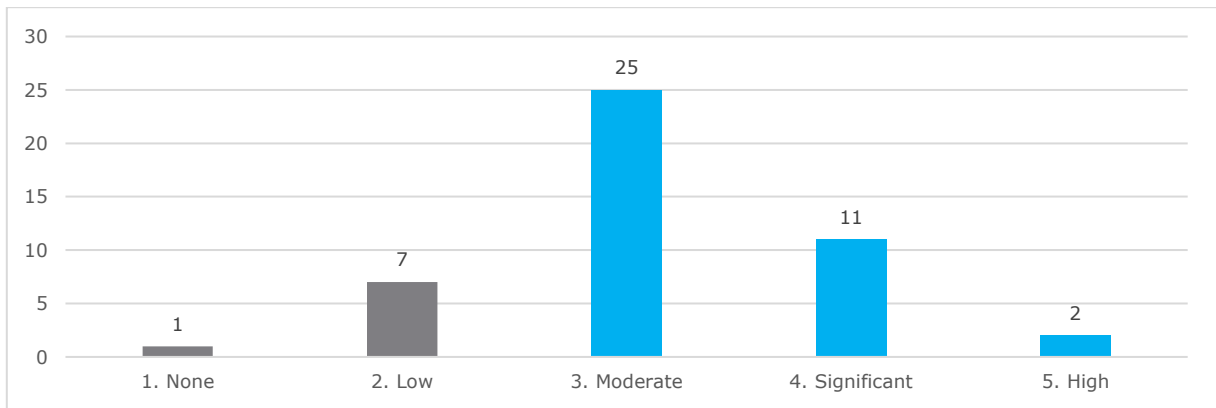
With regard to complementary networks and activities, the following were mentioned:

- EFUS;
- EMCDDA;
- EMPACT (x4), with specific reference to horizontal goal 3 of EMPACT;
- EMPACT’s activities;
- Radicalisation Awareness Network.

Note that, as expected, many areas of potential overlap are also areas where synergies are present.

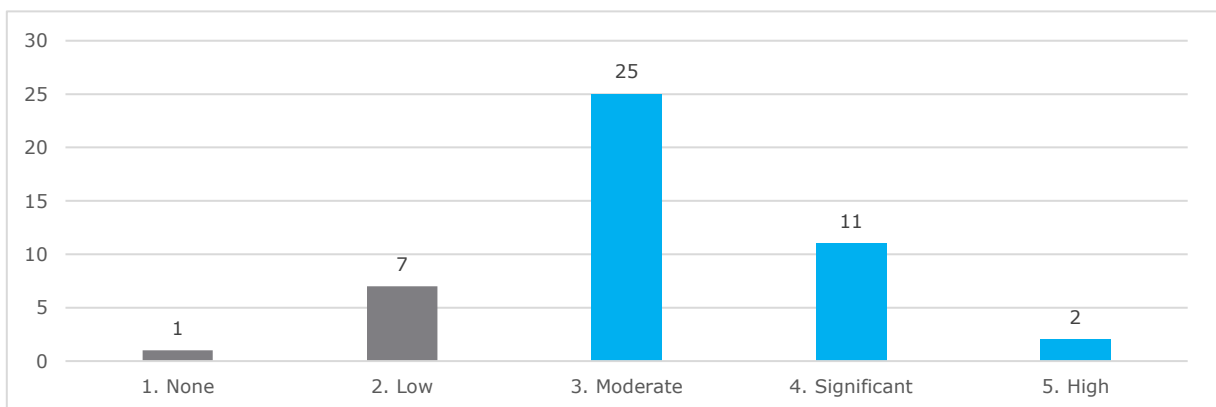
EU added value

The responses addressing this dimension mainly concern the question “Overall, to what extent do you think the EUCPN brings value compared to what exists at national and local level?.” 46 responses were received to this question and overall, close to 80% of respondents answered that the EUCPN brings a moderate to high added value compared to the national and local level, as can be gleaned from Figure 6.



It is interesting to note that this result is also robust with respect to answers individual stakeholder categories, indicating convergence in responses. Among the respondents who selected “Low” or “None,” there are only National, regional or local authorities and Academic and/or crime prevention experts. However, given the low number of responses to this question, no inference can be made, as these two categories are also the ones which tended to respond to this question to a greater degree compared to other stakeholder groups.

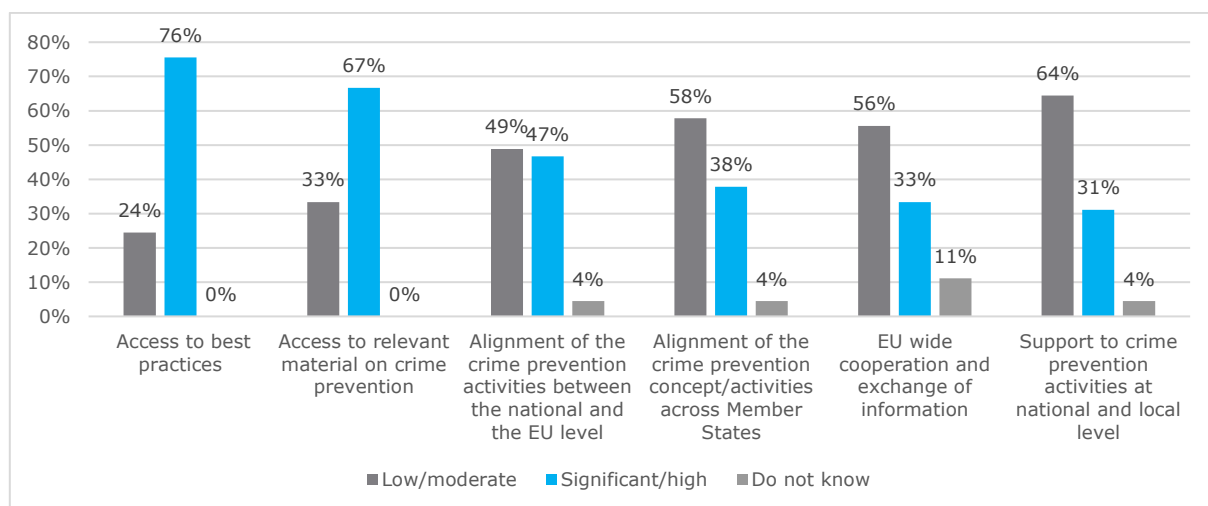
Figure 6 - Responses to survey question “Overall, to what extent do you think the EUCPN brings value compared to what exists at national and local level?”



Stakeholders that replied that at least moderate added value can be associated to the Network (38 out of 46) were then asked to identify specific elements from which such added value derives. In particular, respondents were asked to gauge the added value of the following elements: (i) access to best practices, (ii) access to relevant information on crime prevention (iii) alignment of crime prevention activities between the national and EU level, (iv) alignment of crime prevention concept/activities across Member States, (v) support to crime prevention activities at the national and local levels and (vi) EU-wide co-operation and exchange of information. Results are provided below in Figure 7. To simplify interpretation, responses were grouped in two groups: low/moderate and significant/high.

It is interesting to note that respondents tended to highly rate the added value of the EUCPN with regard to information sharing and dissemination activities; for examples, 76% of respondents reported high added value concerning the ability to have access to best practices from other Member States, and likewise 67% of respondents identified the ability access relevant material on crime prevention as a pivotal element of the network that might not be present in its absence. On the other hand, respondents were more lukewarm on the ability of the EUCPN to deliver added value with regard to operational aspects, for instance in terms of supporting crime prevention activities at the national and local level (with 64% of respondents indicating a low/moderate added value) or with regard to fostering EU-wide co-operation (56%). Finally, respondents were evenly split with regard to the added value of the EUCPN in facilitating the alignment of crime prevention concepts between the national and EU level.

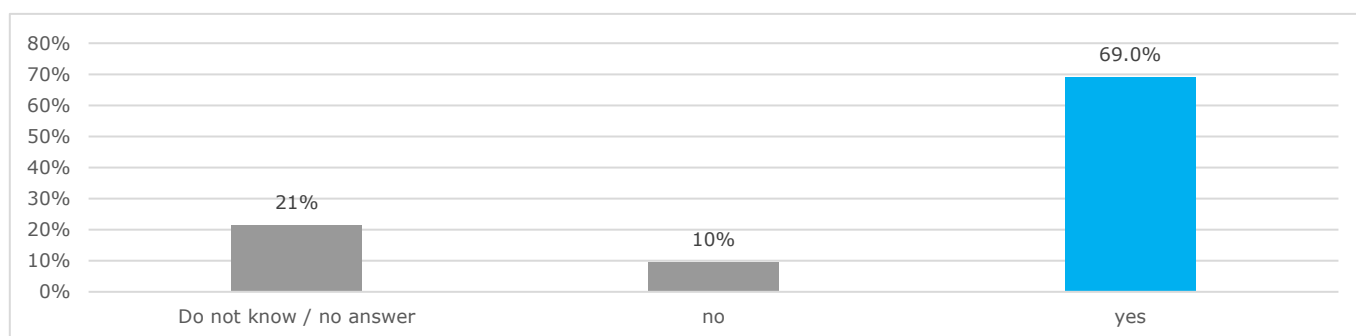
Figure 7 - Added value of specific components / services



Relevance

The survey was also aimed at gauging the relevance of the EUCPN. This was achieved, *inter alia*, by asking respondents whether in their view the activities of the Network are indeed relevant to the development of national strategies on crime prevention. 42 responses were received to this question, 22 of which from EUCPN national representatives or contact points, 18 from national, regional or local authorities and two from academic and/or crime prevention experts. Close to 70% of respondents mentioned that the activities of the EUCPN are relevant to the development of national strategies on crime prevention.

Figure 8 - Responses to question “Are the activities of the Network relevant to the development of national strategies on crime prevention?”



In order to further explore this aspect, respondents were asked to elaborate on the ways in which the Network supports such strategies. Respondents mainly mentioned that the activities of EUCPN play significant role in gathering knowledge for formulating national strategies of crime prevention and/or research projects concerning crime prevention, and that during the formulation of the results of assessments of the national crime situation, the principles and recommendation of international documents and best practices of EU Member States in the area of crime prevention are taken into consideration in the formulation of national crime prevention strategies. Moreover, stakeholders mentioned that EUCPN activities such as conferences, meetings, seminars, campaigns and projects are extremely relevant in this field. However, stakeholders also mentioned that such activities tend to focus on specific topics, which do not necessarily always feed into the development of national strategies. Moreover, the stakeholders also elaborated on the fact that there is an indirect, rather than direct link between the EUCPN and the development of national strategies. This is because the development of National strategies tends to be linked to national priorities which are aligned with EU priorities. EUCPN is aligned with EU priorities.

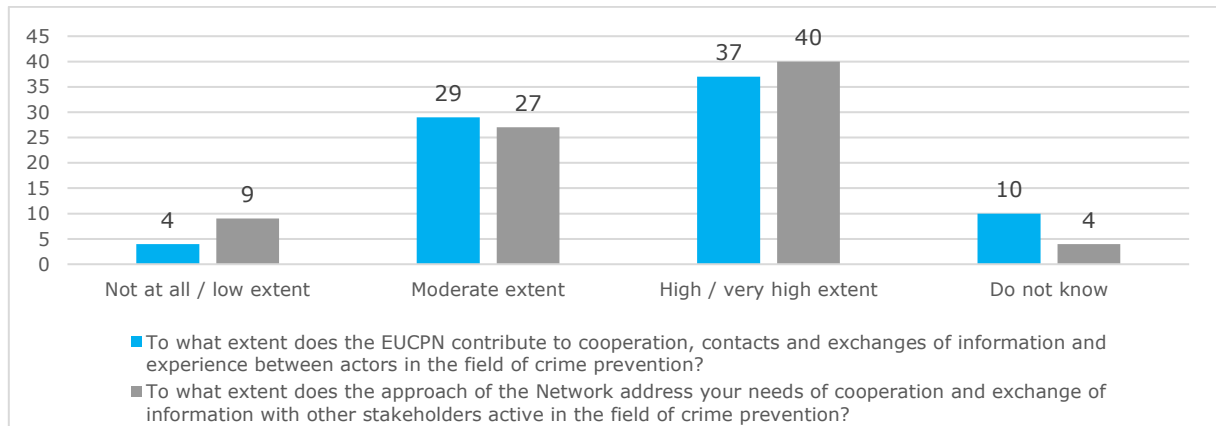
With a view to further explore the relevance dimension, stakeholders were also asked to report, in their view:

- To what extent the EUCPN contributes to co-operation, contacts and exchanges of information and experience between actors in the field of crime prevention; and
- To what extent does the approach of the Network address their needs for co-operation and exchange of information with other stakeholders active in the field of crime prevention.

Findings are reported in Figure 9 below. Each question received 80 responses, which, as can be gleaned from the results, are so far quite similar across the two dimensions, with respondents reporting a moderate to high relevance.

Figure 9 - Responses to questions concerning the extent to which the EUCPN contributes to co-operation, contacts and exchanges of information and experience

between actors in the field of crime prevention as well as other stakeholders active in the field



5. Public Consultation

The Public Consultation lasted from 25 June to 24 September 2020 and it remained open for a total of 13 weeks. The purpose of the Public Consultation was to gather stakeholders' feedback on the EUCPN and the importance of crime prevention policy in the context of internal security.

The research team got a total of 2 responses from:

- A Swedish business association actively involved in crime prevention activities at local level supporting municipalities in their crime prevention work;
- An EU citizen (a Dutch national person).

In general, both stakeholders consider crime prevention to be an important pillar of an internal security strategy to a fairly large or a large extent, while considering that not enough is done at European level regarding the prevention of criminal activity. This opinion may be also the result of the fact that only 1 out of 2 respondents affirmed to be familiar with the EUCPN.