YOUNG DELINQUENTS AND YOUTH AT RISK:
DATA AND REFLECTIONS ABOUT A COMPLEX PROBLEM
WITH REGARD TO COMMUNITY LEVEL CRIME PREVENTION EFFORTS

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I. IS JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND CRIMINALITY ON THE INCREASE TODAY?

In many States, also in Europe, the public is quite concerned, in some countries even highly concerned about the trend and a perceived new "quality" of child delinquency, juvenile delinquency and criminality. The commonly held belief is that "things get worse and worse" in these times. Partially influenced by media hype in actually happening cases of heinous crimes committed by sometimes quite very young people, the public in general, but also many practitioners and politicians, get the firm impression that in particular youth violence is getting out of control. Is that perceptual "picture of the evil" being founded in objective data?

There is no clear-cut answer to that question. All too often the available official crime statistics are incomplete. Or the categories are not very useful for detailed and scholarly sound analyses. Or the counting rules allow for a lot of discretion that may prevent the authorities from putting the optimal type of information on the forms used later on for creating the relevant crime statistics.

But even if we take all those and other problems into consideration: It seems as if there was *actually* a true and substantial rise in juvenile delinquency, especially youth crime, during the last decades in many countries of the world.

In Western Europe the period between the late 80's and the 90's of the last century was seemingly the period with the most dramatic development since some 40 years.

It seems as if this development was, in a manner still waiting to be fully understood or reasonably explained, "influenced" by the so to speak "big ground wave" of sudden social, economic and political changes preceding and accompanying the downfall of communist regimes/states in Eastern Europe. The fundamental processes of social change led in a couple of respects even to social turmoil. As young persons are very perceptive of all sorts of "news" and irritating/mind-provoking events it seems plausible to conclude thereof that they have also disproportionally been influenced by the generalized turnover of many state and societal circumstances. Delinquency and crime can, from this perspective, be seen as kind of outward directed "solutions" of tensions deeply felt even if not explicitly recognized as such.

This approach to the phenomenon of rising youth crime rates in the last decade or so would be well in accordance with the Anomie-Theory of Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist and criminologist, who lived in France in the late 19th century, and who is considered as one of the founding fathers of criminology as a science. This classical anomie-theory says: Whenever big changes in basic structures of societies are about to happen or do actually happen, people become concerned in a very deep-rooted substantial manner. They develop feelings of being endangered. They feel their values becoming de-valuated. They become uncertain of whether or not societal norms will remain firm and valid. In the extreme a generalized state of vaguely defined, but emotionally nevertheless strongly felt "normlessness", will spread out. Older persons tend to become more careful and cautious, younger persons tend, in the opposite, to become more agitated, unruly, restless, and daring.

This approach would help to understand, perhaps even really to explain, why the most dramatic "spikes" in the youth crime field occurred in East Germany and the States of Central and Middle-East Europe. This approach would predict eventually, what is actually happening now, at least in the majority of West-European countries: The rise of juvenile delinquency and of youth crime came to a halt. In some countries it remains on a high plateau without further increase. In some other countries it shows a decrease. In empirical terms, however, no one can sufficiently predict whether the new facts indicate a stable trend towards less youth crime or whether this is nothing but a temporary "pause" in the ever rising amount of youth problems in

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modern societies. Every region in the World deserves so far to be analyzed in its own right, that is with a careful evaluation of the whole population size and age distribution, the level and type of distribution of wealth and income, the prevailing family structure, the school system, the labour market, the force and also integrity of the authorities, and so on. This cannot be dealt with here.

Irrespective of middle range changes in youth crime there are also some long-term trends. And one can reasonably say that these trends indicate a mix of structurally high offence proneness among young people on the one hand, and of increases in actual offending rates in difficult times or under difficult socio-economic conditions in state and society.

Let us look at some data from Germany. In order to show the long-term trend of youth crime in this country I set the starting point with the year 1984. In that year the system of creating the crime statistics was being fundamentally overhauled. The most important issue, in my opinion, was the possibility for the police to individualize from then on an offender as one and the same person if someone was arrested a couple of times during the same year and dealt with by different agencies. So the figures presented on e.g. age and gender groups relate to true "persons". The last year taken into consideration here is the year 2001.

As one can see in Figure 1, the young generation came to the attention of the police to a much higher degree than the full adult generation. And the increase in offenders among the population was higher among the young than among the older. There is a stark difference in the level between the male and female populations, but no substantial difference in the basic trend except the circumstance that the female populations' trend curve is comparatively steeper in the young age groups.

Figure 1:

**The Rise of Criminality in Germany in the Last Decades:
Comparing Different Age Groups and Male and Female Offenders**

(Source: Police Crime Statistics)

Age Groups	Level of Crime Rate in 2001 Female Offenders	Level of Crime Rate in 2001 Male Offenders	Percentage of Increase Among Females 1984-2001	Percentage of Increase Among Males 1984-2001
Juveniles < 18	3,813	10,066	+ 119 %	+83 %
Adolescents < 21	2,858	11,293	+ 82 %	+68
Young Adults < 25	2,169	8,372	+ 50 %	+ 51 %
Mature Adults 25 +	820	2,734	+ 7 %	+ 8 %

The crime statistics show in addition that violent crimes did share that general trend. Some crimes like robbery, but not sexual assault, demonstrated even a still more pronounced increase among the young generation. There are some pieces of research, however, that allow for the assumption or, in scholarly perspective, the hypothesis that at least part of that particular development is not based on hard facts of "youthful criminal behaviour" but rather on the consequences of heightened public concern about youth crime. To put the problem in more mundane terms: We have reason to believe that the understandable irritation of many people about the worsening crime situation led them to a change in their reporting crimes to the police. They may have informed the police particularly more often if and when they fell victim of or were informed about violent crimes as committed by young people.

One indicator is the fact that German youth courts (and adult criminal courts alike) acted comparatively reluctantly in these years. As criminal court statistics show, the rates of convicting people did increase but much less than the rates of suspects and/or arrestees. And the "gap" between the two trends became greater among young defendants than among older defendants. No sensible person would easily tend to assume that the youth courts and the criminal courts in a country discard real trends of more intense and more excessive crime, and even condone heavy youth crime.

Figure 2 can be used as additional evidence. Researchers in the Northern German city of Hannover, and in the Southern German city of Munich co-operated with the city police forces in the analysis of the internal files that contain detailed information about the concrete quality of criminal acts, about the suspected offender(s) and, less often, about the victim(s). Here only the information about the offences as such shall be presented. The concrete harm caused by those violent crimes committed by young people in both cities was quite obviously not much different.

For many purposes in theory, anti-crime policy, crime control practice, and crime prevention efforts it is viable to know as much as possible about the hidden crime events. The total of those events is usually called "dark field" or "dark number". When one is trying to elucidate this dark field by modern social/criminological social science research methods one uses so-called self-report studies, either in the version of offender surveys or of victim surveys. The bulk of those studies are being performed in the United States of America. Also England and the Netherlands are comparatively good in repeated national surveys of that type. I shall for the sake of consistency, however, stay with German studies. They are irregularly administered, and pertain mostly to certain regions or cities or towns.

The substance of the results is, however, quite similar to the big studies in the other countries: Delinquency and crime are "normal" among young people as general phenomenon. That means more than half of the young population commit the one or the other offence during their life development until they reach adulthood. If one looks at minor offences like department store theft or fare dodging at public transport (trains, buses, subways, etc.) the rates of "culprits" may even approach the 100 per cent line. Severe crimes, however, are rather rare events, also in the dark field. Only a minority of youngsters commit them, and if they do so, they normally do not tend to become repeaters or career offenders. So: Heavy crime is still statistically not normal among the upcoming generation.

Males are more active than are females, also in the dark field. The difference is the more pronounced the more we look at heavy offences. With growing age, the young persons turn from more simple offence types to more sophisticated ones. With growing age, youngsters turn to illegal goods and services that represent the "needs" of their law-abiding counterparts. To give just one easily understandable example: Also in the dark field children prefer bicycles, juveniles prefer motorbikes, and adolescents or young adults predominantly turn to cars.

Figure 2:

**Physical Harm Inflicted on Crime Victims by Young Offenders
in the Federal Republic of Germany**
- Comparing 2 German Cities in Similar Time Periods —
(Source: Pfeiffer et al. and Elsner/Molnar)

City and Type of Crime	Type of Harm	Share in Per Cent in the Year 1989 (Munich) and in the Year 1993 (Hannover)	Change between the Starting Year and the Final Year Munich = 1998 (10 year Period) Hannover 1998 (5 year Period)
Munich: <u>All Violent Crimes</u> as Committed by Young Persons Below 25 Years of Age <u>(511 and 640 Cases</u>)	No Substantial Physical Harm Some Harm, But No Substantial Treatment Necessary Substantial Harm: Medical Treatment Necessary Severe Harm: Clinical Treatment and/or Surgery	20.2 47.9 25.2 6.7	+ 3.9 - 3.5 + 1.1 - 1.1
Hannover: <u>All Cases of Robbery</u> as Committed by Young Persons Below the Age of 21 <u>(123 and 203 Cases</u>)	No Substantial Physical Harm Some Harm, But No Substantial Treatment Necessary Substantial Harm: Medical Treatment Necessary Severe Harm: Clinical Treatment and/or Surgery	57.7 22.8 16.3 3.3	+ 10.3 - 0.6 - 7.4 - 2.3

Additional Information on Munich: Life Threatening Consequences: 2 Cases in 1989 and 9 Cases in 1998 // Homicides: 2 Cases in 1989, 4 Cases in 1998.

Figure 3 demonstrates the difference between major offences and minor offences, and the difference between young males and young females. It summarizes the main average results of all reliable studies on self-reported offending in Germany among young people up to 1996. Let us consider for example the left part of the graph. We see: On their path to adulthood between 97 and 54 per cent of the young males, depending on the exact age group and the exact time frame and other moderator variables, admitted to fare dodging at least once. The young females are not so far away from that very high figure: between 89 and 21 per cent of them declared themselves as offenders so far. Let us then turn to the right part of the graph, concerning the crime of robbery (including violent extortion): here the maxima are 27 and 10 per cent "only", the minima are 5 and 1 per cent.

Figure 3:
Juvenile Criminality in Germany: MiniMax Results of Self-Report Studies up to 1996
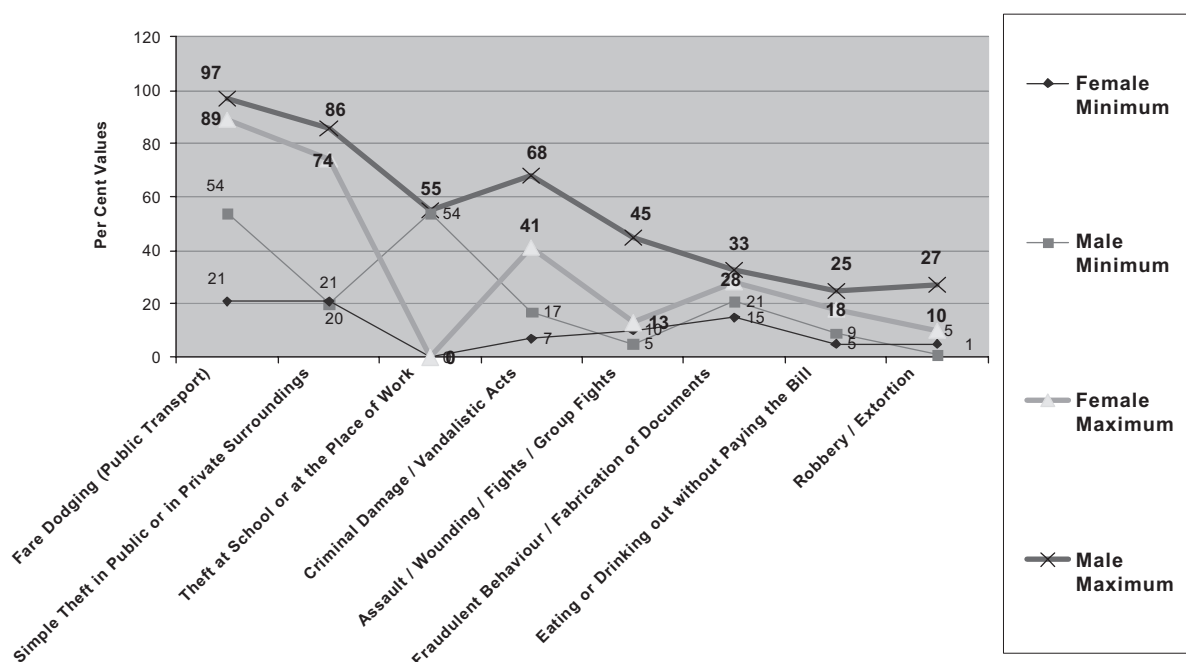
Of course the amount of self-reported crime should come out most differently, for various reasons (e. g. actual behaviour, remembrance of bygone events), when one compares short time periods with long time periods. Short periods deliver more accurate and more reliable results. The differences can be aptly demonstrated with a study done in the German city of Manheim. This citywide representative study aimed at unveiling a couple of developmental issues among young people. Here I shall only take out the dark field issue, and group similar offences together in four groups for the sake of clarity of the structures in offending. As one can see on the left hand side of the graph the young people in Mannheim confessed, 82 per cent for their life time, and 51 per cent for the period of the "last year" before the interview was taken, to have committed at least one offence belonging to one of those four crime groups. (Actually: many of them confessed to much more than just one offence, but the details are not important here). Apart from the overall figure: Fare dodging was – again – the most common offence, followed by theft and fraudulent offences. Violent acts, even when including acts of damaging property, occurred seldom. The new offence of so to speak computer pirating will be now considerably higher than in the early 90's, in my opinion.

Figure 4:
Juvenile Criminality in Germany: Self Reported Offences of Young People in the City of Mannheim (14-21 Years of Age) 1991
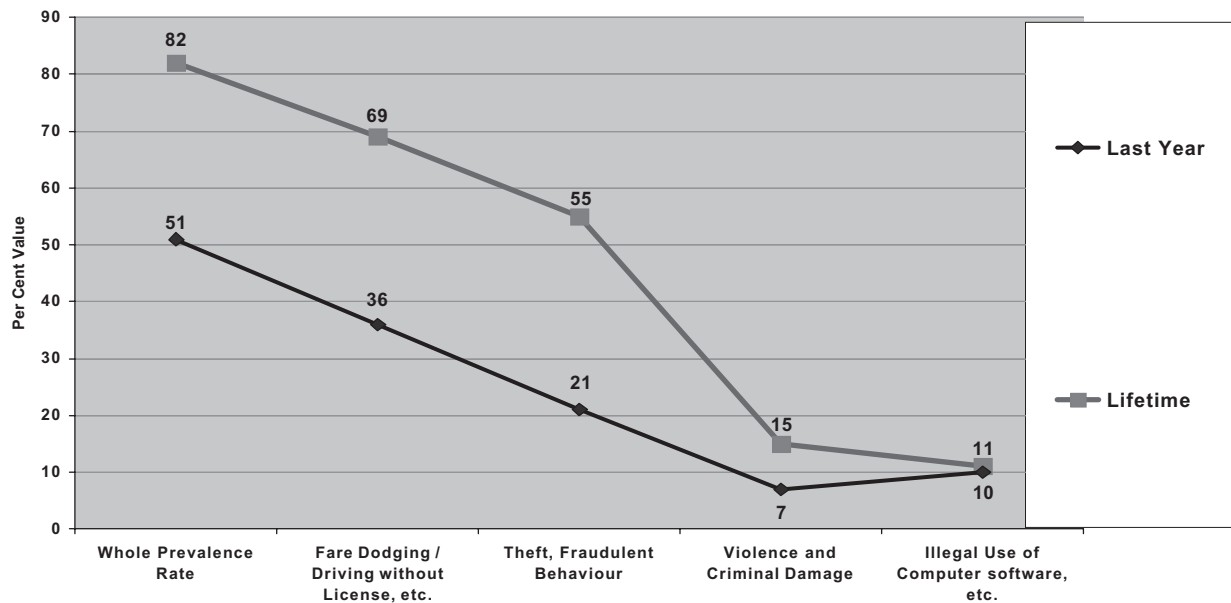
In terms of *individual prevention* not all offences indispensably or even urgently deserve to be prosecuted. Not every offender will be "sucked" or "forced" into a delinquent or criminal career if some or all of his/her offences go undetected. There is normally no kind of deterministic "way into crime" or an imminent danger of auto dynamic life complications that may eventually end up in deviant life styles intersected with occasional or continuous criminal acts. We do know from many research studies, and from statistical data analyses, that most young offenders commit crimes under opportunistic circumstances. Many other young offenders commit crimes on of the spur of the moment (e. g. acts of spontaneous rage or jealousy), a condition that will diminish in the course of maturation. Other young offenders commit crimes only during a rather short and clearly delineated period of time, and grow out of that as soon as the specific life situation is terminated (e.g. orientation crises in school during puberty).

So far (and only so far) it is not a heavy reason for concern to learn that only a very tiny part of all offences young people commit comes to the knowledge of the police. Even repeated offending does not necessarily lead to truly high detection rates. This can aptly be demonstrated with *Figure 5*. Here researchers asked some 1,500 male first year students from three universities in East and West Germany whether they had committed selected offences belonging to the category of "control dependent" acts and, if so, how often they did commit them. After that they asked the subjects in how many events the police were notified of the acts or detected them by their own crime scene control strategies (like in the case of drunk driving). Figure 5 shows only the whole numbers for all three universities together. The most "prolific" offenders had a detection risk of maximally 10 per cent. The less prolific but still considerably active offenders told the researchers they had not been detected at all in three of the four crime categories, but reported the opposite – the highest rate of all groups on drunken driving.

Figure 5:
**Offending Among German Students: Rate of Offences Becoming Known to the Police (1,519
Males at 3 Universities, 1991)**
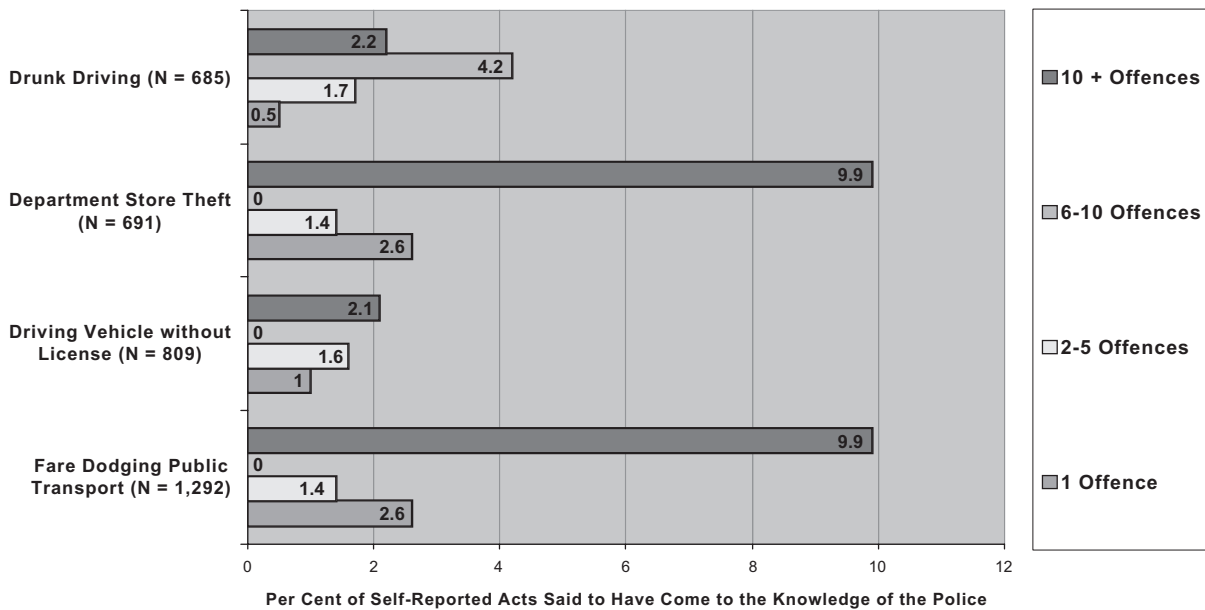
This result has some implications also for general preventive as well as for individual preventive efforts of the police. Even doubling or tripling the efforts of controlling young people and potentially "critical" places and situations would presumably lead to only a limited increase in clearing rates, in detecting and apprehending young offenders. This leaves open an important other function of publicly visible if not deliberately somewhat symbolically exaggerated extensive and/or intensive policing: Reminding (potential) offenders not to become too daring or reckless, and ensuring (potential) victims the police would be already present or come to the scene within a short period of time in the case of a victimizing event.

The police could, however, try to co-operate with so-called informal agents of social control. This abstract scholarly term encompasses e.g. peers, youth club leaders and personnel, youth associations on the local level, kindergarten nurses, schoolteachers and, not to forget, parents. With regard to initiating or to enhancing person-to-person, and therefore potentially very forceful crime prevention efforts, the police could activate them to take juvenile delinquency more seriously in principle, to look at with more scrutiny those they are living with or directly responsible for, and to initiate procedures of counselling, help and eventually strict control if things start to get out of control. The police could also serve as a kind of facilitator agency for other societal or community groups that do not have the capacity to offer advise and support for young people but quite often do not know enough about where problem areas are situated or where young people are becoming endangered most.

How important that idea might be can clearly be demonstrated with *Figure 6*. Here researchers in two German cities performed detailed self-report studies combined with a survey on values, life concepts and perceptions of crime and crime control among young kids. As one sees, friends are, simply due to group life and group behaviour, very well aware of acts of criminal damage and theft. Parents do know considerable amounts of thefts and assaults their kids have committed. Teachers are at least informed about a certain part of the assaults, of course mainly those occurring on school grounds.

Figure 6:
Offences Committed by School Kids in Germany: Amount of Knowlege Among other Persons

(1,912 Self-Reported Offences of 13-17 Year Old Kids in 2 Cities, 1987)
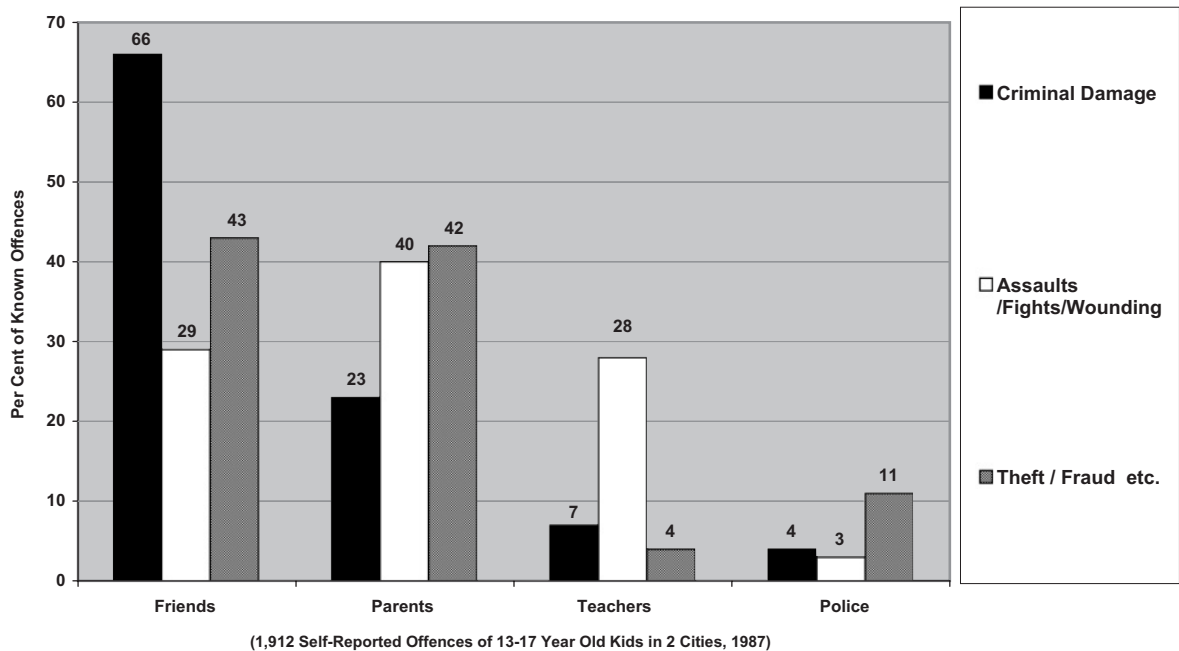
II. THE IMPORTANT BUT NEVERTHELESS LIMITED ROLE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE IN DEALING WITH YOUTH CRIME AND, AS A POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCE OF ITS INTERVENTIONS, IN PREVENTING FURTHER OFFENCES AND EVENTUALLY CRIMINAL CAREERS

Let us turn now away from those research results on the "realities" of youthful offending, and turn to the further question whether (police as crime controllers or so-called law enforcers) public prosecutors and youth court judges can contribute their part to preventing crimes and juvenile or adolescent criminal recidivism, and so cut off imminent long- term criminal careers.

The generalized answer to that question, based on many research studies in many countries, and sometimes even convincingly backed up by experimental studies, goes like this:
- It is important that the juvenile justice system does function in a consistent and predictable manner.
- It is important that the juvenile or youth justice practitioners try consistently to interact with the local police on the one hand, and with youth institutions, juvenile volunteer workers, schools and other "agents of education and professional knowledge" on the other hand, in order to get first hand knowledge on what the situation is all about and what means and ways community resources could provide for young people at risk or in danger.
- It is important that the youth justice system sticks with proportional sanctions, utmost with the idea not to get automatically stronger or stiffer in general, and deliberately not so in cases of offenders, which show up, repeatedly with rather minor offences. Intensive early interventions bear the real danger of paving the way for more intense further offending instead of preventing it.
- It is feasible and not leading to increases in youth crime, sometimes even leading to faster pathways out of crime, to make use of quick informal reactions instead of formal ones in cases of youth presenting only minimal risk.
- It is feasible and not leading to increases in youth crime, sometimes even leading to faster pathways out of crime, to offer/administer socially inclusive community based programmes instead of imposing criminal sanctions in cases of youth with medium risk.

A couple of countries, including Germany, changed their juvenile policing and juvenile justice policies accordingly from the 70's of the last century on. The first guiding idea is that sometimes the experience of having been caught and interrogated is in itself a sufficient "sanction" for good mannered young people. The second guiding idea is that informal procedures can be more aptly "tailored" along the different requirements of individual cases and along the different "needs" of individual offenders. The third guiding

idea is that if and insofar as young people learn to understand the "personal implications" of their offences for others in processes of direct educational communication, this will be followed by comparatively long lasting resocialization effects.

Figure 7 demonstrates that the German juvenile justice system continued also in the years from 1980 to 2000 on its generalized pathway towards informal and/or educational handling of cases dealing with young offenders.

Figure 7:
Juvenile Justice in Germany: On the Path towards Informal Procedures
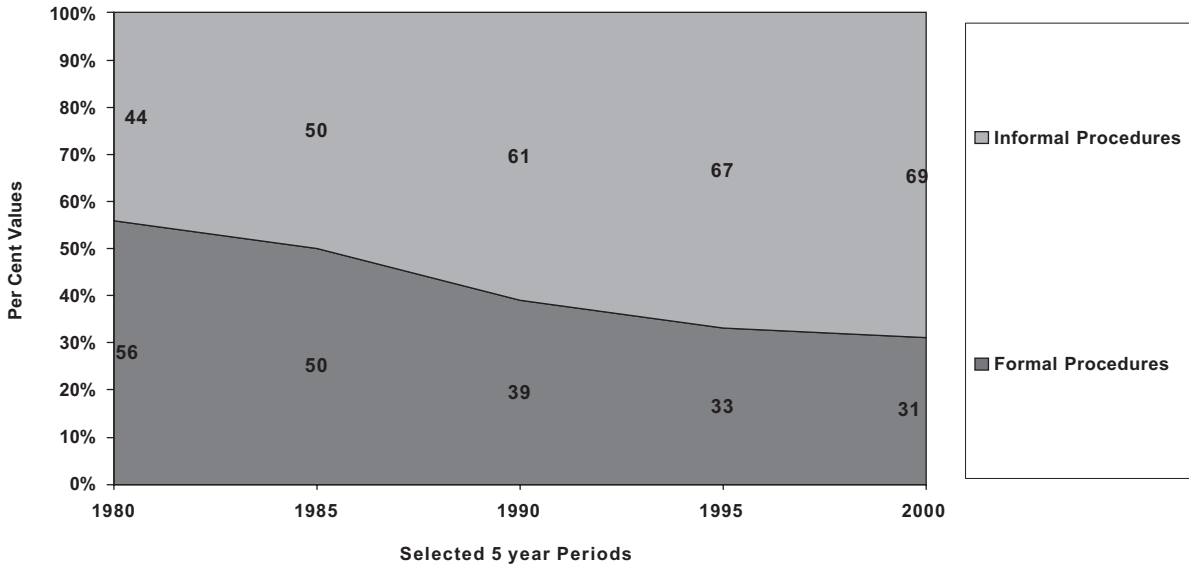**1980-2000**

Figure 8 demonstrates the steadily increasing role of the juvenile prosecutor in the course of that development.

Figure 8:
Juvenile Justice in Germany: The Change from Formal to Informal Procedures, and the
Rising Influence of the Juvenile Prosecutor
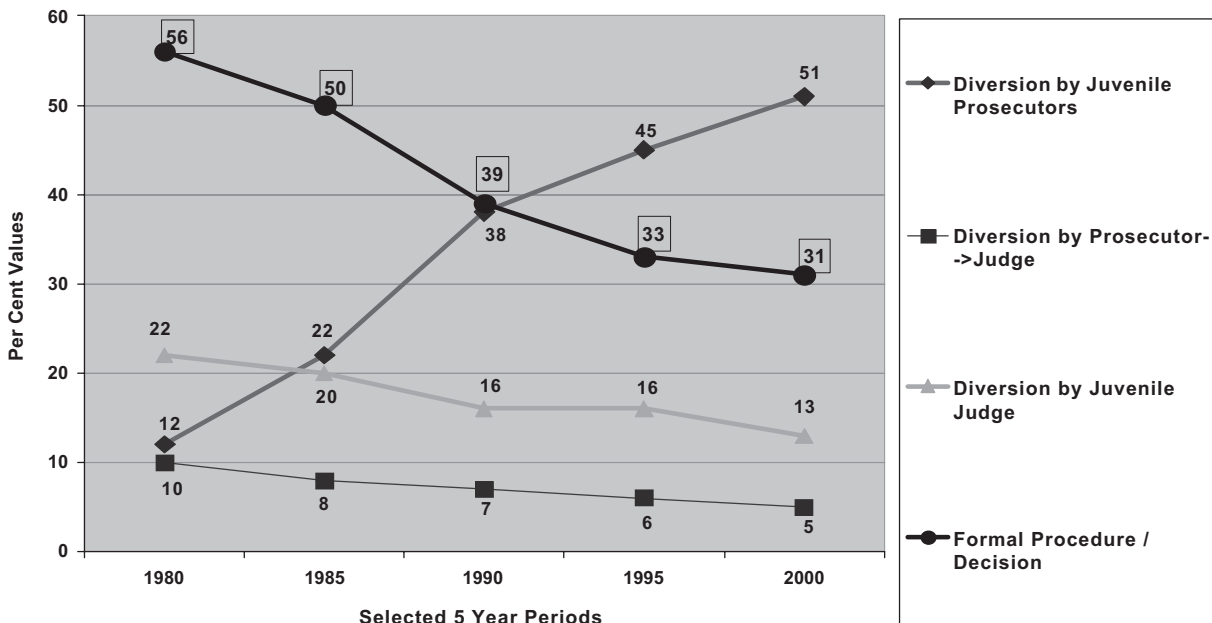**1980-2000**

Figure 9 indicates that this juvenile justice system felt not constrained or "forced" in these difficult years to turn the pace of events: Instead, it made less use than ever before of short term youth detention measures; and it administered the criminal penalty of youth imprisonment in a consistently cautious manner.

Figure 9:
Juvenile Justice in Germany: Development of the Sanctioning Structure
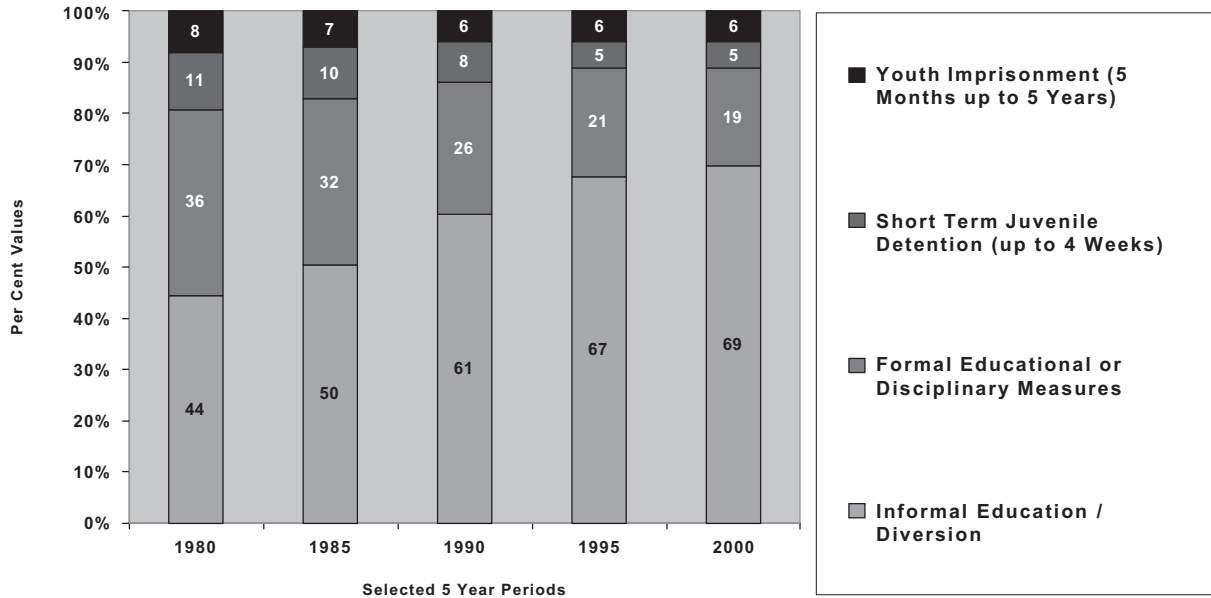**1980-2000**

Figure 10 shows that there are still some differences in the amount the different German states make use of informal procedures and decisions in youth crime cases; however, the differences are smaller now than they used to be some 30 years ago when the new development started. Our so-called city-states among the now 16 "Laender" of the federation stay traditionally on the top; however, the new states in East Germany adopted this policy in a remarkable manner within a few years after the unification.

Figure 10:
Juvenile Justice in Germany: State Policy and Practice Differences with Regard to Diversion
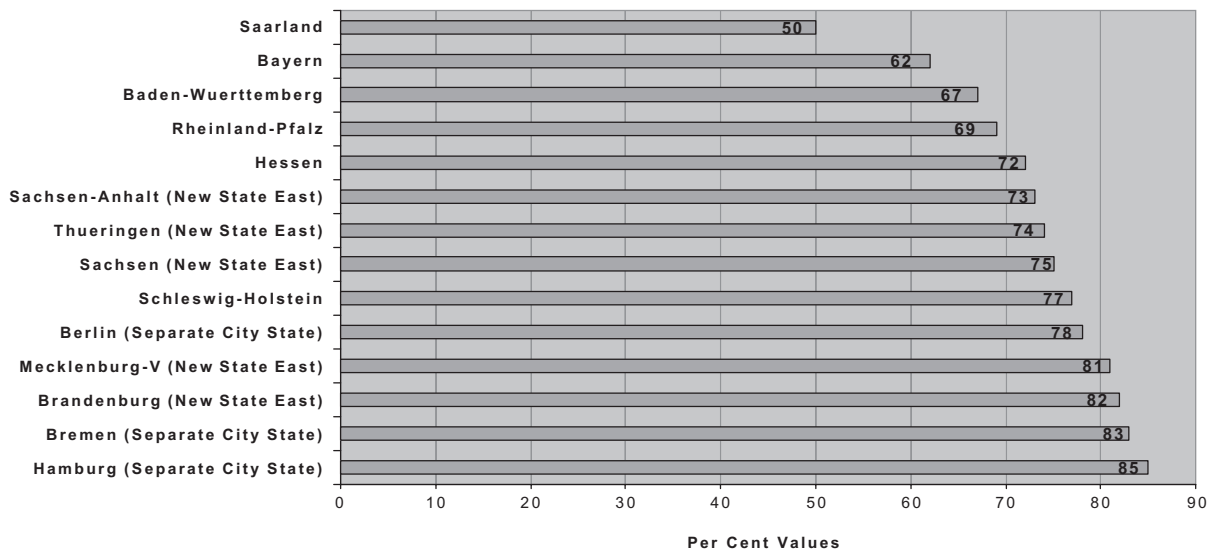
III. SELECTED MEASURES, INITIATIVES, PROGRAMMES AND SANCTIONS THAT SHOWED TO BE HELPFUL ABOVE THE AVERAGE IN EDUCATING AND TREATING YOUNG OFFENDERS, AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT PREVENTIVE EFFORTS

Research results and statistical analyses provide us internationally with always the same message: one should not expect to change young peoples' offence-related behaviour patterns or their whole lifestyle at once due to how ever conceived or tailored measures and/or sanctions and/or penalties. In the middle time range (that is up to 5 or 6 years) different interventions tend to "produce" not so much different "results" in terms of further offending or, not to forget, also desistance of crime. The reasons have a lot to do with habits and ingrained behavioural patterns on the one hand, with complex environmental and interactional factors on the other hand. However, many young persons do respond nevertheless rather quickly in a positive way if they are being offered measures and sanctions that bear for them the immediate perceptual "appeal" of being personally, interpersonally or socially meaningful. I shall point at some of them, as used (also) in West European countries, that proved to be better in practice than other measures and sanctions, and that are worthwhile to be tested more intensely in the future. Only a few of them are in a more than preliminary or superficial way already backed up by valid and reliable scientific data. So they need further intense scholarly scrutiny, too.

Figure 11:

Prevention of Youth Crime: Community Oriented and Multi-Agency Initiatives and Institutional Programmes in Continental Europe

- "Task Sanctions"
- Deferred Prosecution
- Pre-Probation
- "Prosecutor Initiated Diversion Courses"
- "Community Service Orders" with supervision and work guidance
- Peers as "Conflict Mediators" in Schools
- Houses of Youth Justice
- Neighbourhood Justice Centres
- "Treatment instead of Punishment": Self-Obligating Placement in Intensive Drug Education and Treatment Houses
- Vocational Education in Youth Prison: Inviting normal Youngster to Join in
- Victim-Offender Mediation

- So-called **task sanctions** have been invented in the Netherlands. Here the police are transferring young offenders, after first giving them a thorough interrogation and addressing their "needs", immediately to specialized local juvenile task forces or youth offending teams. These offer the young culprits in a clear manner some possibilities on how fast and how intense they could and should "work off" their "debt toward society" caused by the offence(s). If the young person consents a kind of contract is initiated, the parents and the prosecutorial office are informed by telephone, and the youngsters are sent directly to the place where they can deliver their work and fulfil the "task" to show practical repentance. For example: They repair, if necessary with repeated efforts, a children playground that has been damaged by themselves, by their comrades or by unknown other youths. If more appropriate, the youth team sends the young person home to their families and asks them to talk to their parents first, and then to return in order to start their efforts.

- **Deferred Prosecution** is predominantly used in Austria. The new Juvenile Justice Act there entitles the juvenile prosecutors (and, in a later stage of the procedure the juvenile judge, too) to postpone officially and explicitly cases where there is no doubt about the young persons authorship of the act, his/her legal guilt, and the necessity to enter an educational procedure. Then the prosecutor can offer the young defendant and his/her parents to either develop within a short period of time own

ideas as how things could and would be "rectified" again. If this seems not suitable or promising he will direct them to municipal youth service institutions and/or to local volunteer associations that offer e.g. so-called social training courses lasting up to six months. The probationary period can be up to two years duration. If the programme is successfully terminated, the case will be closed.

- **Pre-Probation** is quite similar in substance to deferred prosecution. It pertains, however, to juvenile court judges' jurisdiction in more severe cases where the penalty of youth imprisonment seems under normal conditions indispensable. This crime prevention measure was invented, some decades ago, by juvenile court judges in Southern Germany. If a young person is charged by the prosecutor with a rather heavy offence or with a whole series of offences of so to speak only middle quality, the judge may check, assisted by the local youth court aid agency, whether the young defendant has shown promising signs of personal or behavioural improvement since the time of committing the offence(s) and since the time of having been caught and interrogated. If this is clearly the case, the judge pronounces the appropriate penalty. But then he declares to hold the case open for a maximum of six months. He orders the youngster to turn to a "personal counsellor" who may be a probation officer, a youth court aide, or an experienced volunteer. If things develop well, perhaps even in an optimal manner, the judge will decide, after these six months, to grant probation for two to three years. Otherwise he has now convincing evidence that this young guy deserves to be sent to prison.

- **Prosecutor-initiated** diversion courses are local crime prevention schemes being run in many regions e.g. in Germany, the Netherlands or Belgium. Some local prosecutorial offices "invented" such courses themselves. Others were and still are helpful in establishing and stabilizing such courses, also by providing financial support by means of so-called "poenas" (summary monetary obligations) imposed on (wealthy) adult offenders. The prosecutor tells the young person that the prosecution will be terminated as soon as he/she has participated constantly and in a provable active manner in the course activities. These activities can be and actually are wide spread. The range goes from traffic education to environmental improvement work up to intense trial programmes.

- **Community service orders with integrated supervision and work guidance** arrangements are being used in German cities with the aim to reach those young offenders that are capable of doing manual work but because of one reason or another are not able to master the requirements of stable and durable engagement necessary for a job or a standard vocational education programme. The juvenile prosecutor or, after a charge, the juvenile judge imposes a certain amount of community service units (e.g. 150 hours of work for a charitable organization), and sends the young person to specialized schemes provided by youth probation associations. These associations hire and support qualified "work trainers" which accompany the youngsters rather closely during the first hours of their work in the community, and teach them how to cope, how to get and maintain motivated, and so on. If this is successful, the intensity and frequency of guidance is gradually diminished. Eventually the substantially improved youngster will be helped in finding either a place/firm where he can enter a regular vocational education programme or a decent job to start with on his way back into normal society.

- **Peers as conflict mediators in schools** have been used for the last ten years all over Germany in cases of severe bullying or violent fights or intense damaging of school property or other persons belongings. Volunteer students receive up to 50 or even more training hours, paid for, for example, by the communities or voluntary associations or victim support initiatives. Those who qualify are then appointed officially as conflict mediators or "conflict guides". Students acting out or repeatedly being aggressive or oppressive towards their classmates or towards other schoolchildren are sent to these guides. But the guides can take also initiative out of their own motion. If they can solve the conflict eventually so that the victim, the class teacher, the school principal, the parents of the victim, the parents of the offender, and finally the offender himself declare their being content with the result, the case will not be reported to the police or the prosecutor. Alternatively the teacher or the school principal may feel obligated to report the case to the competent authorities, or school regulations may require them to report. In this case they can inform the juvenile prosecutor by phone, explain the situation to him, and ask for his consent to retain the case within the realm of school affairs. If the prosecutor is eventually informed about the successful regulation, he is legally entitled to qualify the informal procedure as "sufficient diversionary endeavour". This allows him then to close the case officially without any further intervention.

- **Houses of "Youth Justice" or "Neighbourhood Justice Centres"** in neighbourhoods with a large population of young people are active, for example, in France, Belgium and, in the last five to ten years, also in some German cities. They offer integrated services for victims, offenders, relatives, family members and other people concerned about or affected by a crime or its consequences. Depending on the local traditions and/or resources, social workers, youth workers, municipal administrative specialists, part time therapists, members of victim assistance associations, probation officers with part time assignments, police community liaison officers, juvenile prosecutors with part time assignments, or even a juvenile judge (ad hoc) can and will collaborate and cooperate. In the optimal case this guarantees a fast, efficient and effective solution of conflicts, either conflicts that led to an offence, or conflicts that developed out of an offence.

  In the South-Western German city of Stuttgart the State ministry of justice, the mayor of the city, the community youth authority, the local youth prosecutors office, the local youth court and the police created, in the suburb of Cannstatt, a "House of Youth Law". There all these institutions are working in close partnership. They have day-to-day working contacts. They enter into detailed and very concrete discussions about the "needs" of every offender. And they try hard to come to as much consensual decisions as possible of what should be done and who should do it and who should take the responsibility for the case management and its termination.

- The **concept of "treatment instead of punishment"**, as it is called colloquially in Germany, was inserted by a special Act of law into the German Drug Law already many years ago. It allows the youth prosecutor as well as the adult prosecutor to defer the execution of a court sentence of imprisonment between one month and two years in adult cases, and between six months and two years in juvenile cases. He can do so, if the young drug dependant offender (irrespective whether he has been punished for a drug crime or for another offence) offers convincingly that he or she will turn voluntarily to a private or municipal intense drug treatment programme offering a residential place there with other drug dependant persons. Those others could be offenders, too, or also non-offenders or ex-offenders living there due to other reasons, but in any case on a voluntary base. If suitable the prosecutor can take the initiative, tell the young offender about the chance, send him to the programme activists, and eventually ask him, at a pre-fixed date, whether he is prepared to volunteer. If he does so, and if the programme managers report successful termination of the treatment, the prosecutor quashes the execution of the prison term.

- The central youth prison of the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg in Adelsheim has, inter alia, a professionally equipped **vocational education department** where young prisoners can enter an apprenticeship qualifying them eventually for some 20 different job careers as defined in state and employers associations' regulations. The machinery there and the additional technical devices are so elaborated that no other firm or plant in the whole rural region where the youth prison is being located can offer comparable possibilities for young people. This led the prison warden, the work masters and the teachers to the idea to open the prison vocational education department for young people from outside. They offered this to the local community, other communities of the region, and to selected firms with a good reputation. After some hesitance and deliberations and visits to the prison, the offer was accepted.

  Nowadays young prisoners learn and work side by side with perfectly "normal" young apprentices from outside. They experience, seeing everyday living role models, what social integration means. The young "normals" on the other side learn to understand severe offenders as persons and not just as "those hopeless criminals". A third group of young people consist of offenders, which make use of that opportunity as part of a diversionary programme they were assigned to, or as a voluntary accepted condition in the realm of a probation order. This programme has convincing success as such. Practical experience demonstrates also its beneficial consequences in blocking off a further criminal career on the part of the offenders. No single case was up to now reported where a "normal" young apprentice was induced to commit a crime due to his working in the prison environment and due to his close contacts with problematic offenders.

- **Victim-Offender Mediation** is embedded in a world-wide new movement towards alternatives to the juvenile justice system in general or at least towards more meaningful reactions within that system, be it as a diversionary measure, be it as part of probation or parole arrangements, or be it as a measure in its own right which eventually may lead to a discretionary termination of the procedure,

in severe cases but to a mitigating of the sentence to be imposed.

The leading idea of VOM is to engage the victim and the offender, if necessary also their family, their friends and other implied persons, in a dynamic procedure of mutually demanding, but eventually "healing" meetings. The conflicts leading to a crime and/or the conflicts resulting out of the crime and its consequences shall be dealt with in an open atmosphere by way of mutually helpful talks, discussions, exchange of views or, quite often at least in the first stages, highly emotional expressions of sadness, fear, rage or despair. Therefore it needs a well trained mediator or another experienced conflict solution facilitator who masters the task to remain neutral, to guide the participants through the whole demanding "affair", and to let them eventually find nothing but "their" own mutually acceptable or even rewarding "solution". Concepts related to VOM are, for example, on a rather concrete level, **Restitution** of the damage done or the personal harm caused and, on a rather high and more penal policy level, **Restorative Justice**. There exists already a whole host of books, articles and other documents. Therefore it may suffice here just to mention the basic approach.

IV. CRIME PREVENTION CONCERNING REPEAT OR CHRONIC OFFENDERS

Repeat and chronic offenders make out an only limited part of the total of (young) offenders. But they commit so many offences that they take a more than proportional share of the total amount of crime as stemming out of the whole birth cohort they are belonging to. International research and experience shows, that - as a thumbnail rule – within a given year some 3 to 5 per cent of the members of a birth cohort are responsible for some 30 to 40 per cent of all crimes. Under a longitudinal perspective the relationship remains structurally the same. However, the dimensions change as the levels go up. This can aptly be demonstrated with *Figure 12*. It shows the results of a research study performed by the criminological research unit of the Bavarian Police in Germany. All 14-year-old youngsters living in Munich, who became known to the Munich police for a criminal offence, were followed up for the next five years in a prospective design.

The results are clear-cut. Just to point at the extremes here. The one-time young offenders shared roughly 34 per cent of the offender total, but contributed only roughly 5 per cent to the offence total. The multiple offenders who committed 20 or more offences took a share of some 10 per cent of the total offender group, but they contributed with some 52 per cent to the offence total.

Some of those multiple offenders are basically "bad guys". That means: whatever the real causes of their criminal propensity may be, and how decisively we may be convinced to get them eventually out of their delinquent habits: their offences are not (visibly) related to any psychological impairment or to any family problem or to any environmental distortion, to name just a few of possible correlates of crime.

However, the majority tends to have complex personal or socio-psychological or economic problem constellations. They really need quite often substantial educational and correctional interventions in order to enable and empower them in the middle or long run to turn (themselves!) their way of live and their deep rooted problematic behaviour patterns around, that means towards a normal and socially integrated way of living.

The question is now: Are there concepts or/and instruments with which we can distinguish those among them being definitely at risk of entering into a long lasting and stable criminal career, as opposed to the others who are at present in difficult personal and/or life conditions but not already on the way towards chronic offending?

Based on the ground laying work of Professor Hans Goeppinger, the founder of the now some 40 years ongoing "Tuebingen Criminal Behaviour Development Study, TCBDS", we use in Tuebingen the so-called "Method of Ideal-type Oriented Comparative Individual Case Analysis" (MIVEA in German: Methode der idealtypisch vergleichenden Einzelfallanalyse). This method proved to be astonishingly good in discriminating between those young persons already (but not necessarily in a deterministic and invariable manner!) crime prone, and the others being only in temporary risky situations or in acute risk of deviating.

Figure 12:
Offenders and Offences: The Role of Repeat or Chronic Offenders for the Impact of Crime on Society
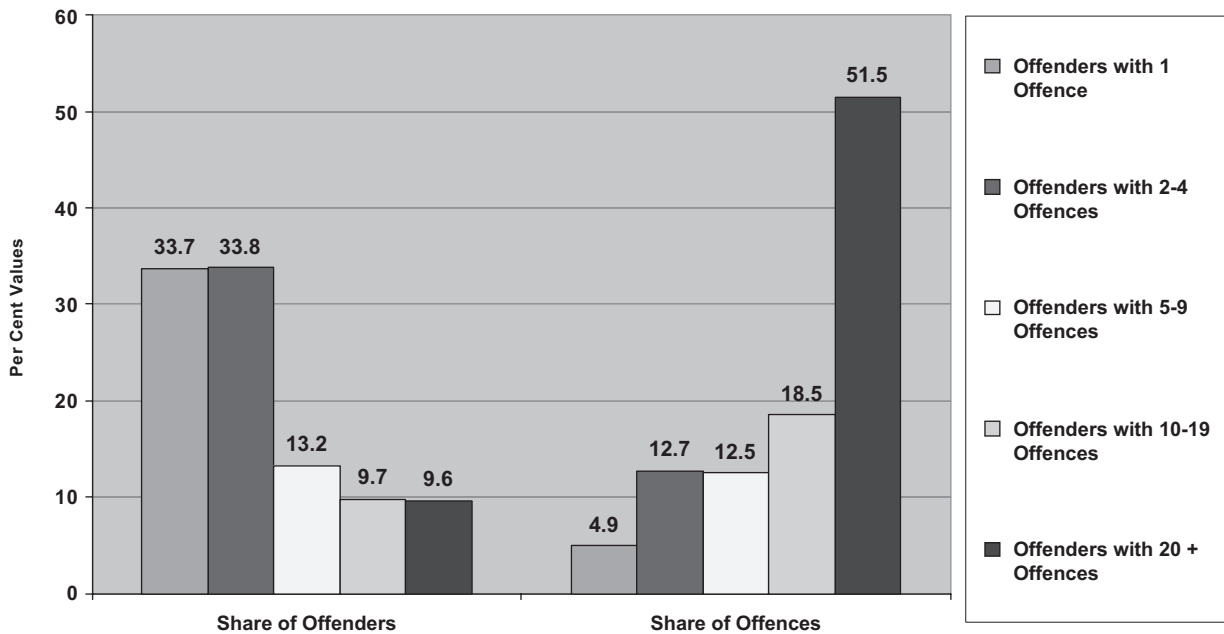
Offences Recorded by the Munich Police for 14 Year old Juveniles in 1991: Follow-Up = 5 Years

Figure 13:

Crime Related Behavioural Syndrome
= Set of Factors among Young Persons
Indicating a High <u>Individual</u> Risk to Become Delinquent
or Even Criminal in the Near Future

Interrelated Elements of the Syndrome:

- Denial or Avoidance of Duties at Home,
  together with

- Denial or Avoidance of Duties at School or in other Institutional or Social Relationships
  together with

- Unreasonable/Unsound Use of Money and/or Individual Posessions
  together with

- Total Lack of Structure in Leisure Time Use Respectively Activities
  together with

- Total Lack of Life Plan/Highly Vague or Unrealistic Ideas About Own Future Existence

The central criterion is the so-called "Kriminovalente Konstellation" which may suitably translate into English as "Crime Related Behavioural Syndrome". *Figure 13* depicts that syndrome and its core elements. In order to be considered as a real syndrome in the methodological sense of the term *all* single elements must be there *at once* and *provable* to exist by clear pieces of evidence. There are explanatory rules about what the exact meaning of the terms is, and when a given symptom can be regarded as sufficiently developed to be coded accordingly. *Figure 13* delineates only the set of factors as such.

Under regular conditions one may find one or more single elements of the syndrome among occasional offenders or even among otherwise fully normal young men. In this case these elements are of limited individual prognostic value, as are any other isolated or singled out elements of a person in its social relationships. They may be considered, then, as a kind of risk factor [ses below]. The *whole* syndrome, as a "complex unit of interacting and interwoven elements", is a peculiar "property" so to speak of (future) repeat or chronic offenders. This should not be misunderstood as a kind of static concept of personality or, in the extreme, as a kind of negative determinism. The concept allows, in the opposite, for change. Already Goeppinger, the scholar who was laying the ground for the methodology, made it quite clear that people can change their attitudes, mind sets, and behavioural patterns, even if one would be basically sceptical, as he was indeed, with regard to the more fundamental anthropological/psychological/psychiatric/psychotherapeutic question whether their "personality" as such could be changed.

Therefore Goeppinger advised his collaborators to be reluctant, and not to predict any further development with a time frame of more than five years at the maximum. He insisted that each and every client/offender be freshly, and in as neutral a manner as possible, studied on any occasion where decisions about his future life were to be prepared. For it could never be excluded that in the course of life at least one and possibly an important negative factor has faded away, and been substituted by a positive factor. To put this in practical perspective: Even if a young offender did show all elements of the crime related behavioural syndrome at the time of adjudication, he deserves to be given a chance to prove change during his prison term, if it comes to a decision to deny or to grant parole or conditional release. The syndrome as a whole would, so to speak, "disappear" if only one and single element had turned toward "normality", e.g. if the prisoner had been enabled by correctional programmes, or been capable enough out of his own endeavours, to become a duty-oriented young man. In that case the remaining elements could and should be included in an expertise that weights "chances" (= favourable factors) with "risks" (= unfavourable factors) in the present life situation.

Compared to this crime related syndrome which is therefore an instrument for an individually oriented *prognosis*, the other syndromes we use, e. g. for expertise in court or in youth prisons for conditional release decisions, are in substantial and methodological perspectives of no direct prognostic value. I shall here only show two of these syndromes. The first one is called the "School Syndrome" *(Figure 14)*:

Figure 14:

School Syndrome
= Set of Factors Among Young Persons Indicating an Unspecific Risk for Juveniles to Become
Delinquent or Even Criminal in the Near Future
Highly Relevant if Interrelated with the
Crime Related Behavioural Syndrome

Elements of the School Syndrome:

- Extensive and Intensive Truancy
- Lack of Attentiveness when Present
- Irregular or Lazy Fulfilment of Homework
- Avoidance of Any Extracurricular Activity
- Lack of Achievement Orientation
- Negative Emotions toward Teachers
- Negative Feelings about Well Behaving Students
- Disciplinary Problems
- Self-Image as "Bad Student" or "Loser"

The second syndrome is called the "Contact and Leisure Time Syndrome" *(Figure 15, below)*.

Those syndromes are, seen in methodological perspective, just another example of what psychologists and developmental criminologists tend to call *predictors*. They indicate a certain *heightened risk* for each and every young person showing the main elements of the relevant syndrome(s) to offend once or twice or even a couple of more times in the near future. But this is predominantly an *aggregate risk* or, put into more everyday language, a rather unspecific danger for young persons as a collective. If nothing improves in their everyday life situation or with regard to their prevailing behaviour pattern by appropriate guidance/educational offers/help to parents in terms of secondary crime prevention for these youth at risk, the danger of falling into crime may become more imminent for them in due course of time.

Figure 15:
Contact and Leisure Time Syndrome

= Set of Factors Among Young Persons
Indicating an Unspecific Risk for Juveniles to Become Delinquent or Even Criminal
in the Near Future
Highly Relevant if Interrelated with the Crime Related Behavioural Syndrome

Elements of the Contact and Leisure Time Syndrome:

- Socializing mainly with "Pals" instead of close friends
- Leaving Home Without Parents' Knowledge
- If at Home: No Useful Hobbies: "Dependent" on Videos, PlayStation
- Preference of Violent Media Content
- Strolling Around Without Any Clear Idea of What Might Happen or Could be
- Done in the Next Few Hours
- Sensation Seeking: "Lust" for Noisy and/or Risky Environments
- Restlessness/Penchant towards Vehicles/Joy Riding

One has nevertheless to bear in mind: There are youth living a life "at the edge" for some months or even for one or two years who master it later on, alone or with the help of caretakers and parents, to get out of the dangerous life constellation. In any case: It is always worthwhile to *offer* those persons afflicted multifaceted and multi-agency programmes in school and the community that provide the endangered juveniles an incentive to join in *voluntarily* with others they know or get easily acquainted with.

As those multi-problem crime prone young offenders are concerned on the other side, it is a very hard and time and energy consuming endeavour to correct them, and to eventually enable them to turn themselves viz. their life around in the direction of a law abiding and more or less decent life. Our recent European experiences with longitudinal studies show us that the average time one would need to educate those difficult young people accordingly amounts to some seven years. There is, if only a real substantial treatment effort takes place, so far no substantial difference between treatment in institutions and treatment in the community. Even youth imprisonment, which I would in principal like to be reduced to an absolute minimum – guided by the idea of last resort in cases of very heavy crimes and/or very threatening young offenders – cannot be discarded in that respect.

Due to complex psychological predispositions and due to their often negative and frustrating life experiences from early childhood on many of these young persons do show what can be characterized, in rather abstract terminology, as *delayed maturation*. They need, in other words, more time to overcome adaptation difficulties and to develop a full or at least moderately stable adult identity. The delay has, as far as we can see from German data and experiences, a time/life span of some five to ten years compared to average young persons out of the standard population. This timeframe seems typical for West-Europe in general. Other regions of the world, however, may have other psychosocial or biosocial or bio-psychological conditions, which influence the modal way of maturation among their upcoming generations in general. This may eventually lead, then, to shorter or longer timeframes for the maturational delay of the difficult young persons than it is the case in Europe.

Developmental psychologists and scholars in the field of sociology of youth argue that nowadays the somehow "extended" phase of youthfulness among young persons in e.g. Western industrial countries should be set around 25 years, even if they can, and in general are to be, considered as young adults that have to take responsibility for their acts and omissions. This implies that the more immature deviants could then be expected to adapt accordingly from this "critical" phase of life development on. Actually we could show, in a specially designed follow-up analysis of the TCBDS-subjects, that the bulk of changes among the repeat offenders that eventually got out of a criminal career occurred in the life period between 25 years and, at the latest, 35 years.

If this result could be replicated with other studies in other countries, the difficult but eventually promising task of educators, psychotherapists, probation officers, prosecutors, judges and correctional officers, to name but a few, would be not to give up but to keep going with repeated efforts to get these offenders on the right track. To put it in a kind of slogan: Patience, stamina, strict guidance and consistency need to be combined!

An analytical frame of concepts of and prospects for the whole field of crime prevention shall be added here, in order to demonstrate how complex the issues are when considered in detail, and how careful one should remain before setting up a cost expensive programme.

V. CRIME PREVENTION BROADLY DEFINED

The topic or field of crime prevention can be delineated as the complex task of guarding and protecting society against criminal offences. There has been no clear-cut and precisely defined definition till now of what crime prevention is really all about. This situation is not likely to change in the near future. The main reasons for this sceptical expectation are to be found in the theoretical and practical complexity of the subject matter having particular significance for the aim of dealing with youth at risk.

VI. TRADITIONAL THREE AREA APPROACH

A rather traditional, but nevertheless basically still useful approach is to make a difference between three areas of crime prevention which are, in analytical perspective, nicely separated from each other, but which are, under practical circumstances in real world situations of the committal and control of offenders and offences, somehow interconnected and interrelated. In problem areas of communities, within so-called multi-problem families or among multi-problem neighbourhood peer groups practitioners may even be confronted with the heroic task of dealing with an intricate mixture of those areas in all possible dimensions of social problems and individual disadvantages. In what way ever this might be addressed in concrete countries, regions, towns, villages or small neighbourhoods, the basic concept is always identical:

- Primary Crime Prevention = directed at the community (or particularly the young generation) as a whole,
   - in order to strengthen the socio-psychological power of the community elements at large;
   - in order to empower people (particularly young persons) for the increase in immunity against deviant temptations and seductions;
   - in order to enhance positive emotions and values by teaching or by advisory methods;
   - in order to provide ample opportunities for behavioural patterns during leisure time; and
   - in order to develop measures for enlightening youth.

- Secondary Crime Prevention = aimed at groups of people at risk, especially young persons at risk, on the one hand, or aimed at reducing opportunities to commit an offence on the other hand.

- Tertiary Crime Prevention = targeting people who have already been dealt with for delinquent acts (like status offences among children or juveniles) or have been convicted of a crime, and eventually sentenced or otherwise been formally dealt with by the competent authorities.

VII. THREE AREA APPROACH REGARDING VICTIMS

The same distinction can be applied in a fruitful manner to victims of crime: Primary prevention of becoming victimized in general, secondary prevention of becoming victimized in particular situations or under specific vulnerable conditions like youth at risk in run down public housing environments, and tertiary

prevention of becoming repeatedly victimized after having fallen victim to a crime. Among young persons, for example pupils in schools, "Victimization Prevention" may actually be easier and faster accomplished in practice than "Crime Prevention" respectively "Criminality Prevention".

VIII. MODERN APPROACHES OF CRIME PREVENTION

There exist a couple of more modern conceptions of crime prevention. They are theoretically and conceptually not at all, or at least not in the first or second instance, directed towards "changing/sanctioning/treating" (young) persons as such or towards "teaching" persons in an intentional and directed manner new behavioural patterns or habits or values or morals. They are rather "object-oriented". That means they try to re-shape environmental conditions in manifold ways.

This re-shaping will, in the event, cause psychologically determined "perception blockades" among (young) deviants or persons at risk of becoming delinquents regarding the opportunity structure for committing offences. That part of the issue is dealt with in the theory and practice of so-called situational crime prevention. Other conditions will make the costs of committing an offence or of gaining a desired valuable good seemingly (if not actually) much too high for youth at risk respectively potential (young) offenders, as they would dare to act out. That part of the issue is dealt with in the theory of target hardening.

There exists some empirical evidence that such object-oriented crime prevention measures are even more suitable than victimization prevention measures in enabling practitioners to harvest rather immediate and, sometimes, also enduring successful results in reducing the amount and intensity of (youth) crime in communities.

IX. THEORY-PRACTICE CONTRADICTIONS

In a host of countries, like in my home country GERMANY, the importance of crime prevention for crime policy and practical law enforcement as well as for the way in which those persons at risk of committing an offence (or multiple offences) are treated, and how offenders are dealt with, has - for rather a long time – occupied a prominent position in scholarly theory and in common sense political statements in public. When it comes to practice, however, many of those countries have been rather negligent in actually implementing crime prevention as an integrated institution under everyday conditions in communities and among collaborating authorities. Even such nice concepts like problem oriented policing or community policing were often given more lip service among top-level officers (and city majors or party leaders) than real serious consideration with the aim to implement them in due course of time.

In Europe the Scandinavian countries were the first to change that situation. In Asia and Far East, Japan is internationally renowned for its scheme of local policing which can, to some extent, be theoretically delineated as a kind of "making formal social control partially informal" by continuous and stable community immersion.

In the so to speak reluctant countries, like Germany, new developments have been arising since the early 1990's. They are directed towards activating authorities, private associations and organizations, and community interest groups (even grassroots movements) to develop interconnected initiatives and local schemes for crime prevention and victimization prevention. So, for example, the first state-wide Crime Prevention Council and the first additional living examples of local or regional Crime Prevention Councils have been founded, on the soil of the Federal Republic of Germany, in the northern State of Schleswig-Holstein in 1992. At present some 2,000 to 3,000 initiatives and institutions are working in Germany as a whole in a very dedicated manner. Information about these can be found at the website of the German Federal Criminal Police Office (Bundeskriminalamt, BKA, http://www.bka.de)

X. THE ENDURANCE OF LOCAL CRIME, AND THE PIVOTAL NEED FOR COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION INITIATIVES AND INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

The globalization of crime and the activity of transnational crime notwithstanding: Still, and also today, a large proportion of day-to-day crimes, particularly among young persons, takes place at a local level, according to the experience of practitioners, and backed up by the results of modern scholarly research. The offences as such are "local events". The offenders are, to a certain extent, but the "products" of local

conditions and circumstances, of sometimes very idiosyncratic concrete, nevertheless enduring, "breeding factors or syndromes".

The same is very often true for victimization events and for the individual victims. Therefore it is vital and of utmost importance to develop clear and convincing concepts of community crime prevention. Community crime prevention concentrates, on the one hand, its energies on the modification, reduction or ultimately even full eradication of crime as an "actual occurrence".

On the other hand, community crime prevention showed, in the last decades, its capacity to serve as an efficient tool in reducing or avoiding peoplesÅL fear of crime, particularly the fear of crime among elderly persons as young (potential) offenders in the community are concerned. As we all know, fear of crime is an important factor hampering the quality of life of decent people. In towns and particularly big cities it can affect the whole set of daytime living patterns, of nighttime precautionary measures and of ways to see the world as either safe or dangerous. Such a set may develop into a complex and very stable kind of basic worldview with related behavioural patterns. The set could be suitably condensed in the term "habitus" French social scholars tend to use for delineating different social classes or social strata from each other. It may eventually prevent people (inhabitants and travellers alike) to visit certain parts or ecological areas of the city.

Fear of crime among citizens is also enhanced, sometimes even mainly caused, by conditions that seem, from the point of view of police practitioners and with regard to local crime statistics, to have nearly nothing to do with "objective" conditions viz. manifest crime. This is the message explicated in a very influential manner firstly by Wilson and Kelling in their "broken windows theory". The core issue pertains to signs of decay and dereliction in public places and/or of continual disturbances as perceived to exist or as actually existing at a higher than tolerable level. Such situations are considered by citizens to be the outward sign of an underlying threat of crime or of the phenomenon of actual crime. A lack of reaction on the part of the police or (other) responsible local authorities can eventually result in a widespread loss of trust in the validity of the law and in the guarantee of internal security. However, the relationships between the various factors are to be considered to be much more complex than many adherents of the broken-windows theory seem to recognize. Nevertheless the basic mechanisms have been repeatedly reiterated in the Federal Republic of Germany with some 30 citywide crime surveys or so-called citizen surveys.

Instead of disturbances also "disturbing persons" may cause alertness and concern. Among them are quite often young persons hanging around public places. In Germany these were for many years predominantly punks and minority youths (e.g. second and third generation foreigners). It may be interesting to note so far that in some of our big cities like Frankfurt and Stuttgart around 25 per cent of the population is of foreign origin. Many are still non-nationals after many years if not decades of living in Germany due to - inter alia – restrictive laws and a rather reluctant state naturalization bureaucracy. In more recent years two new groups of young people became somehow the "substitutes" for the old problem groups. These are in the East, which means in the so-called new States, very aggressive respectively violent rightwing youngsters, mostly skinheads with a strong penchant towards Nazi ideology.

In the West, in the so-called old states, and with a certain concentration in southern and south-western states or areas, one finds instead second generation "Russians" from German descent. Their families used to live predominantly in Kazakhstan and other remote provinces of the defunct Soviet Union being now independent states. They returned in high numbers to their old "fatherland" Germany immediately after the tumbling down of the wall and the falling down of the iron curtain. They are still coming in large numbers, but much lower ones compared to the early 1990's. Young boys among those arriving late, i.e. after 1995, seem to be particularly at risk of becoming delinquent and later on criminal. We shall cite only a few of a whole plethora of reasons and causes for that. Those youngsters were much more integrated into the culture of their land of birth than were their older siblings and the parents, not to speak about the older generation. For them their Kazakh peers were their natural friends. They learned the Russian language as fast and as natural as any other children playing around during free time and/or going to public schools with an "indigenous" majority. For them "Germany" did not exist as a kind of real country one had always to think of and thrive to belong. It was rather but another tale or old story Grandma and other older people were telling about on every suitable and, from the youngsters perspective, even more unsuitable occasion.

The decision to emigrate and to "return" to merry old Germany was, as we learned (also) from our own research project on processes of integration and disintegration, quite often taken by the parents and elders without even asking the young persons pro forma about their own opinions, not to speak about their emotions. From their view they had been forced to leave their home, their peers, their "habitat" and their everyday living conditions providing stable orientation. When they arrived in Germany they were confronted with an intricate situation. German constitution and German law consider(ed) them as being "Volksdeutsche", a term that means- to simplify the matter a bit - pertains to being German by blood heritage. According to that rule the "Late Re-Immigrants" (Spaetaussiedler) are entitled to receive a German passport as soon as possible after settling (provisionally) down. They are further entitled to particular social benefits. These circumstances are considered, to a wide degree, as an unjustified privilege by indigenous Germans but, sometimes even more explicitly, by the not so German minorities. So it happens that these new Germans are called Russians and considered the true foreigners by the nominal foreigners living in the country already for long time.

Those circumstances and situations cause a lot of tensions. Particularly for youngsters their lack of mastering German comes as an additional burden. They can hardly follow school education. They are hampered also in vocational education and in their place of work. In the event, many of the young boys, as opposed to young girls, play truant at school, become heavily defiant at home, turn to strong alcohol (with repeated episodes of binge drinking), get used to or even early addicted to illegal drugs, and quite often join either retreatist groups or bluntly violent gangs. In pursuance of what they had experienced in their country of birth they expect e.g. police to be rather brutal, and are prepared to beat them up when caught committing an offence or when strongly suspected of having committed one or a series of offences. Since German police do not normally turn to such kind of behaviours the youngsters quickly tend to consider them as being weak persons. They are, from the youngsters' perspective, feminized or, just to quote one of the more derisory terms, "sissies" which deserve contempt and eventually open defiance if not a manifest physical attack.

The more elaborated signs of deviance, delinquency and criminality are nevertheless concentrated among only a small minority of this minority. So the available sources draw an ambivalent picture. On the one hand, the general crime rate of the relevant young generation, in as much as it can be measured at all, seems not that much exaggerated as it is discussed publicly or even among academic circles. On the other hand regional and local police forces do report relatively high numbers of violent acts, committed alone or in groups or gangs. And in the youth prison system those young male offenders can be found in rising numbers. For example in the central youth prison of Baden-Wuerttemberg some 10 per cent of the inmates are of "Russian" origin, which is much higher than their share of the general population.

Many communities are still more or less desperately trying to develop a valid concept of reintegrating the young "latecomers". Since these boys tend more and more to call themselves "Russians", and to communicate with each other nearly exclusively in the Russian language, the authorities are more often than not "blocked off" in a very broad sense of the term. More successful communities started to run special multi-agency or multi-faceted deviance and delinquency prevention programmes. They hired young adults or full adult persons out of the law-abiding members of the minority that have direct linguistic and otherwise culturally pre-determined access to the difficult youngsters. Or they relayed to private charity organizations or individual volunteers. Strict but not aggressive, and permanently visible, control strategies on the part of the police are being so to speak "intertwined" with a mix of positive offers like special discos or entertainment opportunities (- primary crime prevention -), of social education or qualification courses for the very young at particular risk (- secondary crime prevention -), and of clear cut enforcement policies with regard to public troublemaking and the committal of particularly street crime (- tertiary crime prevention -).

As far as the right-wing young East-Germans are concerned, but also with regard to their West-German counterparts with whom they tend more and more to establish loosely knit but nevertheless rather stable networks, the German federal government inaugurated, a couple of years ago, several special programmes. Two of them are of particular interest.

The one programme having meanwhile terminated was called AGAG, meaning an action programme against aggression and violence. Some millions of Euros were used to enable local associations and the communities themselves to develop schemes of intense treatment of those youngsters. Quite often the

associations and communities contracted services out to experienced street-workers, youth aides from specialized branches of (Western) youth authorities or to new associations that were deliberately created anew just for the sake of dealing with those particular issues. The results of the programme have never been very thoroughly evaluated. As far as one can see from limited evaluation studies the results were mixed ones. Some street-workers and others could at least diminish the amount of annoying and dangerous behaviours, and help the young male extremists to "live out" their phase of development without eventually landing before court or in prison. But there were also cases where the "caretakers" were either much too tolerant towards the ideology and its expression, or where they even seemed to have been somehow sucked into the right-wing scene. This seems to have led in a few extreme cases to stabilization if not a further promotion of the Neo-Nazi scene.

The other programme was run by governmental agencies that sometimes relied on private persons or organizations, too. The most active governmental agencies were, and still are, the secret services called "Verfassungsschutzaemter", literally translated as "authorities for defending the constitution". They installed, inter alia, some telephone hotlines. They put adverts in newspapers and magazines. They launched interviews on radio and television networks. And they got themselves additional budgetary means to run those activities in a more than just superficial manner. The central aim of all this was and still is: To actively approach members of the right wing or Neo-Nazi scene and to offer them virtual assistance and, later on, real advice and (substantial) help in order
- to get out of the scene,
- to cut off all relations to their radical and quite often very violence prone peers,
- to tear off the emotional and ideological strings with the older core persons providing and hammering in the particular ideology and hate orientation, and eventually
- to return to a decent life as a normal citizen.

How successful the programme has been in quantitative terms is impossible to evaluate so far. However, the authorities had some spectacular cases where they succeeded in turning around so to speak publicly known "figures". This indicates that the particular approach is at least principally sound and worthwhile to follow further on.

A few years ago, the German Federal Ministry of Justice began installing, apart from but connected to a loosely knit crime prevention information network, a task force on hate crime. This task force is expected to analyse the different concepts of "hate crime" and to develop new initiatives to tackle those crimes and their perpetrators firmly.

XI. EARLY INTERVENTION FOR YOUTH AT RISK

Early intervention for youth at risk is, in principle, a valid concept and a worthwhile scheme for short-term effects or reducing manifest deviant or delinquent behaviour, and in the best case also long term tools for securing the social and social-psychological integration of young persons in the community at large.

XII. ASSESSMENT SCALES AND SIMILAR INSTRUMENTS OF RISK-CALCULATION

Assessment scales and similar instruments of risk calculation are somehow necessary. However, it is often overlooked that all of such instruments and methods do not provide more than "predictors" for future behaviour. They provide decent probabilistic "indicators" of what *groups of people* with certain characteristics may do to a certain extent, which normally never reaches the point of certainty. Therefore, scholars and practitioners need to develop and make use of person-oriented methods, which allow for individual variance, and provide eventually, in lieu of statistical predictors, individual "prognostic" factors. [See above].

XIII. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF A FLEXIBLE DISPOSITION AND TREATMENT SYSTEM

The establishment and management of a flexible disposition and treatment system with the aim to tackle child delinquency, juvenile delinquency and youth crime is also somehow necessary. However, it is often overlooked that such a system is easier to talk about in a general manner than to conceive of in a stringent and coherent and practically suitable way.

The relevant problems are grounded in e.g.:
- Different "world concepts" of people joining different institutions and/or organizations and/or authorities.
- Different organizational and operational "philosophies" of authorities themselves, as developed and strengthened or even "hardened" by years or decades of running the business and dealing with their everyday workload.
- Inertia effects at all levels of groups, institutions and authorities.
- Inter-relatedness of the individual, family, neighbourhood, school, and other fields and factors resulting in a "mix" of problems and obstacles to fast and efficient and effective change of things and persons.
- Expected but not realistically achievable deterrence effects, at least in the short and middle range, of repressive sanctions.
- Expected but not realistically achievable "turning effects", at least in the short and middle range, of counselling and treatment effort and measures with regard to the "personality" and the ingrained "habits" of (young) people.

XIV. AS POLICING, PROSECUTORIAL DECISION MAKING, AND JUDICIAL DECISION MAKING ARE CONCERNED

There is mounting evidence that one has to develop patience with young offenders instead of trusting in the immediate real effect of interventions, not to speak of believing in the full social re-integration of young heavy or repeat or even so-called intensive or chronic offenders. The new concept of "desistance from crime" tells us stories that are somehow opposed to what we learned from so-called recidivism studies concentrating on kinds of "criminal careers". Terminating a criminal career is an option that can be "activated" at each and every step respectively after each and every conviction, sentence or prison term. Offenders must decide themselves to "do it now". But they can be helped in coming to that decision, and to develop than the endurance to carry the whole difficult task to a successful end.