



FEDERAL RESEARCH PROGRAMME ON DRUGS

SUMMARY

SOCPREV2

SOCIAL PREVENTION OF DRUG-RELATED CRIME: FOLLOW-UP AND IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT – SOCPREVBIS

Charlotte Colman (Ghent University), Jorne Vanhee (Ghent University),
Lieven Pauwels (Ghent University), Freya Vander Laenen (Ghent
University)

SOCPREV2

SOCIAL PREVENTION OF DRUG-RELATED CRIME: FOLLOW-UP AND IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT – SOCPREVBIS

Contract - DR/00/88

SUMMARY

PROMOTORS: Charlotte Colman (Ghent University)
Lieven Pauwels (Ghent University)
Freya Vander Laenen (Ghent University)

AUTHORS: Jorne Vanhee (Ghent University)





Published in 2022 by the Belgian Science Policy Office (BELSPO)
WTCIII
Simon Bolivarlaan 30
Boulevard Simon Bolivar 30
B-1000 Brussels
Belgium
Tel: +32 (0)2 238 34 11 - Fax: +32 (0)2 230 59 12
<http://www.belspo.be>
<http://www.belspo.be/drugs>

Contact person: Charlotte Colman
Tel: +32 (0)9 264 84 22

Neither the Belgian Science Policy Office nor any person acting on behalf of the Belgian Science Policy Office is responsible for the use which might be made of the following information. The authors are responsible for the content.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without indicating the reference :

Colman, C., Vanhee, J., Pauwels, L., Vander Laenen, F. ***Social prevention of drug-related crime: follow-up and implementation project – SOCPREVBIS***. Summary. Brussels : Belgian Science Policy Office 2022 – 6 p. (Federal Research Programme on Drugs)

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Do you want to know whether you are achieving the objectives of your prevention project or do you want to improve your project's operation? Is the funding agency asking you to demonstrate the results of your project?

Then you need to evaluate your project.¹ This SOCPREV manual and accompanying workbook will guide you through the various steps of this process and help you to conduct a high-quality registration and evaluation of your project.

This manual was created within a scientific study² into the social prevention of drug-related crime and nuisance. As part of this study, along with actors in the field, we developed this manual to help you evaluate projects within the theme of social prevention.

However, it is especially important to remember that this manual is based on general principles. There is no magic formula by which you can evaluate all prevention projects. Each intervention is unique, with a specific effect that acts on concrete and local situations. The key, then, is to translate the principles and examples in this manual to your local situation.³

WHAT PROJECTS CAN BE EVALUATED THROUGH THIS MANUAL?

This manual⁴ supports the evaluation of specific interventions and thus guides project evaluations.⁵ This manual focuses on the evaluation of projects aimed at the **social prevention of drug-related crime and/or nuisance**.

These broad concepts include several aspects, namely "(1) negative consequences for problem users, (2) acquisition crime and trafficking of small amounts of drugs for self-sufficiency, (3) negative consequences for the citizen and society of problem use such as auditory and visual nuisance, and (4) drug-related systemic crime (maintaining drug markets) for profit in (especially) border and transit municipalities."⁶

Such a project or intervention is a deliberate action aimed at reducing the risks of drug-related crime and/or nuisance and its potential harmful consequences.⁷ Thus, a project has a clear and preventative purpose here. This may range from a temporary project to a more embedded operation. Social prevention prevents problematic behaviour from developing and/or escalating further by addressing the underlying social causes of this behaviour.⁸ These relate to vulnerabilities within different areas of life, such as (mental) well-being, employment, education, as well as to norms and values, cognitive abilities, social interactions, etc.⁹

Unlike situational prevention, with its focus on immediate environmental factors and triggers, social prevention focuses on the 'causes of causes'. As a result, it is often difficult to

evaluate the effects of social prevention, especially in the short term. The effects often become noticeable only after several months or even years.¹⁰ These effects also often go beyond initial expectations. Indeed, underlying social factors also drive other forms of behaviour. For example, in addition to a decrease in drug-related crime, you can also find positive effects on employment, level of education, mental well-being, etc.¹¹ These broader effects also mean that some projects do not explicitly focus on drug-related crime and/or nuisance. They do so to avoid potential stigmatisation, but in addition, the main goal of these projects lies precisely in those broader positive effects. In other words, they have an indirect effect on drug-related crime and/or nuisance. This manual supports both types of projects. In other words, your project may have both **direct and indirect** effects on drug-related crime and/or nuisance.

None of this means that you can only apply this manual to the topic of drug-related crime and/or nuisance. Even though our guidelines, advice and tasks were primarily drawn up for the evaluation of projects that prevent drug-related crime and/or nuisance, you can also use this manual as instructions for the evaluation of social prevention of other phenomena, such as domestic violence, truancy or problematic drug use.

WHO IS THIS MANUAL FOR?

This manual will guide practitioners, project coordinators, policy officers, or others closely involved in project implementation and monitoring during the evaluation of their intervention.

The demand for evaluation may come from the funding authority, but it can also be started at one's own initiative. In addition to creating transparency and accountability, evaluations also allow you to continue what is going well within your project and to make adjustments if necessary. In this way, evaluations provide valuable information for knowledge-based practice.¹²

HOW DO I USE THIS MANUAL?

An evaluation consists of several steps. This manual will guide you through these various steps and translate them into **four modules**. In so doing, you will learn, in order:

1. Module 1: What evaluation involves and how to get started;
2. Module 2: What data to measure to evaluate your project and how to do this;
3. Module 3: How to bring this data together in an evaluation and what statements can be made this way;
4. Module 4: How to further disseminate and use the results.

Evaluating in this way seems like a straightforward process, but it certainly is not. Each project will ideally schedule an evaluation at the start as an integral part of its operation, so that people do not perceive it as an additional task to be performed at the end.¹³ In other words, evaluation is not an add-on, but an integral part of project operation. In addition, it is also a **repetitive process**, especially as the project moves forward. Projects do not take place in a vacuum, and the context in which these projects operate is constantly changing.¹⁴ It is therefore advisable to continue to evaluate and make adjustments where necessary. An evaluation is part of building change and change takes time.¹⁵ Evaluation allows us to steer that change in the right direction.

You will be given a **task** after each module. This is how you put the new knowledge into practice and get to work with the manual. You will find these tasks in the **workbook**. Together, these exercises provide a high-quality evaluation of your project.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. EMCDDA, *Evaluating Drug Policy: A Seven-Step Guide to Support the Commissioning and Managing of Evaluations*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2017.
2. L. Pauwels, F. Vander Laenen, E. Maes et al., *The Social Prevention of Drug-Related Crime (SOCPREV)*, Brussels: Belspo, 2018, http://www.belspo.be/belspo/organisation/Publ/pub_ostc/Drug/DR75SummRes_en.pdf.
3. A. Rummens, W. Hardyns, F. Vander Laenen, and L. Pauwels, *Criteria for the Evaluation of Crime Prevention Practices*, Research report, Brussels: EUCPN, 2016, <https://eucpn.org/document/eucpn-criteria-for-the-evaluation-of-crime-prevention-practices-0>.
4. However, you can also evaluate general policies or strategic plans. Interested? Then be sure to consult this publication by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction: EMCDDA, *Evaluating Drug Policy: A Seven-Step Guide to Support the Commissioning and Managing of Evaluations*.
5. Ibid.
6. Pauwels et al., *The Social Prevention of Drug-Related Crime (SOCPREV)*.
7. European Crime Prevention Network, *Crime Prevention: A European Definition*, Brussels: EUCPN, 2020, <https://eucpn.org/definition-crimeprevention>; P. Ekblom, *Crime Prevention, Security and Community Safety Using the 5is Framework*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
8. This form of prevention can be further divided into structural prevention, development prevention and community-based prevention. Structural initiatives are part of broader social measures that are not only relevant to crime prevention, but also improve general well-being and social conditions for all. Developmental prevention is a form of prevention that aims to minimise certain risks or support certain reinforcing factors as early as possible in an individual's life. Finally, community-based prevention focuses on the social and physical conditions within a community that guide our behaviour. More information can be found here: Pauwels et al., *The Social Prevention of Drug-Related Crime (SOCPREV)*.
9. Ibid.
10. D.P. Farrington and B.C. Welsh, *The Science and Politics of Crime Prevention: Toward a New Crime Policy*, in: D.P. Farrington and B.C. Welsh (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Crime Prevention*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
11. B.C. Welsh, D.P. Farrington, and B.R. Gower, *Benefit-Cost Analysis of Crime Prevention Programs*, *Crime and Justice* 44 (2015), <https://dx.doi.org/10.1086/681556>.
12. HM Treasury, *Magenta Book: Central Government Guidance on Evaluation*, London: HM Treasury, 2020.
13. EMCDDA, *Evaluating Drug Policy: A Seven-Step Guide to Support the Commissioning and Managing of Evaluations*.
14. Pawson and Tilley, *Realist Evaluation*.
15. Royse et al., *Program Evaluation: An Introduction*.