

Future preventive policing

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Introduction

Many elements make future preventive policing very challenging for both practitioners and researchers. The most important elements to be taken into account are the network structure and model of contemporary prevention, the nature of security knowledge, the global and ambiguous nature of the threats to be prevented and the emerging possibilities and innovations of 'virtual' preventive policing of the Internet.

The modern police service is based on the principle of prevention. The origin of this principle can be traced for instance to influential writings like 'A Treatise of the Police of the Metropolis' by Patrick Colquhoun in 1795. According to him, the objectives of a system of policing should be the prevention and detection of crime, the maintenance of order and the improvement of morals. However, prevention of crime was not a new idea even then. The Anglo-Saxon methods of 'keeping the peace' and the later system of mutual pledging included the notion that crimes could be prevented by the vigilance of one's neighbours or by obedience to a higher authority. (Pike 1985, 133). The roots of a policy of preventive policing in the nineteenth century were in ancient traditions of communal self-policing (Reiner 1985, 14).

The principle of prevention, since Colquhoun, Peel and the others, can be seen in the practices and strategies of the modern police. For academics, researchers

and police scientists the tremendous elasticity of the term prevention has caused a lot of problems. As argued by Gilling 'the term prevention is clothed in ambiguity' (Gilling 1996, 101). Crime prevention is an essential part of proactive policing, community policing, proximity policing and all their variants. The main purpose and goal of intelligence-led policing is prevention too. Prevention has today the same ethos as in the eighteenth century but a broader meaning, well described in the book of Bruggeman, van Branteghem and van Nuffel (eds), *Toward an excellent police function* (2007): *'Prevention (preventive measures) is aimed at preventing situational and direct causes and reasons of the problems of security, liveability and criminality and limiting their consequences.'*

Perhaps the most significant element in broader definitions is that in addition to crime prevention, security is included. Crime has been reconceptualised as security risk (Zedner 2009, 71), and insecurity and threats to security are to be prevented too. It can be argued that crime prevention has been securitised. In many security strategies today phenomena like social exclusion are the first priorities for prevention, not as the root cause for crime and criminal behaviour but as a security threat as such. For instance in Finland's Internal Security Strategy (2008), social exclusion is seen as the biggest threat to security (Virta 2010). This means that preventing social exclusion is a part of preventive policing as well. The forthcoming *Internal Security Strategy for the EU* will also have a very strong preventive ethos. According to the Spanish Presidency's

strategy draft, 'Towards an European Security Model' (January 2010) key elements for EU internal security are integration, social inclusion and the fight against discrimination. The proactive and intelligence-led approach of the forthcoming internal security strategy will guide preventive policing in Member States in the future.

Preventive policing has many dimensions. The aim of this chapter is to deal with the complexity of preventive policing and especially radicalisation prevention, in the context of counter-terrorism. Scenarios and the making of future policing in Europe cannot ignore terrorism and radicalisation. The police have to think globally and act locally. Virtual preventive policing will be introduced at the end of the article; in Finland the police already have a positive experience with virtual prevention measures on the Internet (Facebook, Twitter, IRC-Gallery and some other forums). The new challenges for preventive policing, police training and education and police research are enormous.

Precautionary principle

Crime prevention and preventive policing have a long tradition in Europe, and it has been argued that over the past three decades there has been another 'preventive turn' and preventive policing and partnerships have become a defining attribute of contemporary crime control and its interface with wider social and urban policing in a way that is both novel and demands critical contextual scrutiny (Crawford 2009, xv). The EU itself has also invested in crime prevention and funded projects like the AGIS programme and the Secucities Cultures of Prevention project of the European Forum for Urban Security (EFUS), in search of a European model of crime prevention and common prevention culture (EFUS, 2006).

In the broader social and political context, the growing sense of uncertainty surrounding the terrorism issue has resulted in a new mood of prevention, pre-emption and precaution. The nature of policy-making processes follows the 'Precautionary Principle'. Terrorism made precautionary logic obvious after 9/11, and politics in general have taken a dramatic turn aimed at making

precautionary logic part of everyday life ⁽¹⁾. In terrorism research, 11 September 2001 has refocused the issue of pre-emption and introduced the notion of 'preventive war', but there is also a dichotomy between the criminal justice and the war models of countering terrorism (Ranstorp 2007, 15). Counterterrorist policy and strategies increasingly draw upon a transnational policy community. The Hague Programme (2004), the EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment (2005), the EU Counter Terrorism Strategy (2005) and its Action Plan on Combating Terrorism (2006) and some other common security and policing strategies, are the results of such policy-making processes in the EU policy community. They count on policing, and especially preventive policing and community policing, as vital tools for local level counter-terrorism. Prevention is the key element and objective in the strategies.

Intelligence-led policing, and intelligence, have become an additional element to the field of preventive policing. The European Criminal Intelligence Model was adopted in the Hague Programme, as 'the' policing model for the EU. In the Spanish Presidency draft of an Internal Security Strategy for the EU (January 2010) strategic guidelines include prevention, defined as a 'proactive intelligence-led approach' ⁽²⁾.

In many national and local level prevention strategies intelligence-led policing and community policing have been reconciled so that they are seen as complementary rather than competitive models. Intelligence and intelligence-management processes (intelligence gathering, strategic analysis, targeting and exchange) improve the capacity of community policing and other preventive policing initiatives. On the other hand, community policing and a good relationship between the police and the public, play an important role in intelligence-led policing because trust and confidence towards the police is a precondition for successful intelligence gathering (especially for gathering community intelligence, which is often tacit knowledge and therefore one of the most important forms of

⁽¹⁾ About the precautionary principle and its implications see for instance Ericson 2007, Hörnqvist 2007 and Goldsmith 2008.

⁽²⁾ However, in his book *Intelligence-Led Policing* Jerry Ratcliffe (2008) claims intelligence-led policing is mainly a management model and not crime prevention model.

intelligence in local counter-terrorism context). (Virta 2008, 27-30.)

Radicalisation — a challenge for preventive policing

The EU strategy for combating radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism (2005) is part of a broader EU counter-terrorism strategy and action plan. In order to prevent radicalisation and recruitment 'the threat must be reduced by disrupting existing terrorist networks and by preventing new recruits to terrorism'. According to the strategy, the challenge is as follows: *'To counter radicalisation and terrorist recruitment, the EU resolves to disrupt the activities of the networks and individuals who draw people into terrorism; ensure that voices of mainstream opinion prevail over those of extremism; promote yet more vigorously security, justice, democracy and opportunity for all.'* (p. 3).

The strategy has a broad approach to problems and challenges, and it is not primarily a police strategy. However, when trying to disrupt the activities of the networks and individuals who draw people into terrorism, the strategy relies on preventive policing and community policing in particular.

It has been argued that at least to some extent, preventing radicalisation is something beyond conventional crime prevention. Radicalisation, as a phenomenon, has been defined as a psychological process (Silke, 2008) and a social process, and explanations of how individuals become radicalised are psychological, social, political or religious (Sinai 2007) which makes prevention efforts very complicated. Additionally, like in the security strategy of the Netherlands from 2008 to 2011, radicalisation is seen as a threat to social cohesion in a society, even without the actual perpetration of an act of terrorism. Radicalisation as such is not a crime. It means that once radicalised, a person thinks in a certain way, which is seen as unacceptable and he or she must be prevented from thinking and acting further in the direction of recruitment. In the EU strategies, there are no separations made whether the suspected radicalised target has any contact with terrorist groups or whether he or she is an individual thinker (in danger of becoming a potential suicide bomber alone, or

without any intentions at all) (Virta 2010). 'To win the battle of ideas' — objectives in the counter-terrorism strategies operate at collective level but policing unacceptable forms of individual thought may lead to thought police, when an individual's internal life, thoughts, have become a legitimate subject for public concern (Furedi, 2005, p. 155).

Therefore, radicalisation is a challenge for preventive policing. When trying to prevent radicalisation which may lead to (home-grown) terrorism the police have to assess local community context and tensions and the state of the society, and keep in mind national security threat assessments and priorities, as well as European and global terrorism threat assessments. Intelligence requirements are potentially endless. In Britain, neighbourhood policing teams have community engagement strategies which define the methods of capturing community intelligence and building a community profile (BCU Commanders Guide for Counter Terrorist Operations, 2008). Community profiling and community impact assessments are innovations in local counter-terrorism; profiling is used as a method that can be used for the purpose of preventive policing and impact assessments are made for effective organisation of the services after an attack (Virta 2010).

Community policing in transition

There are already few studies about the response of communities and community police officers to the new strategies, and about the community counter-terrorism partnerships (De Kool 2008; Spalek et al., 2008), which indicate that preventing radicalisation is something more, or different than conventional crime prevention. In the Netherlands, the Counter Terrorism Coordinator has differentiated between three indicators, which 'can prove helpful in recognising the processes of radicalisation'. These are ideology, behaviour and appearance. Indicators relating to ideology refer to changes in social, political or religious convictions (a change in a person's ideology). Indicators relating to behaviour involve a change in the way a person acts and reacts: someone refuses to shake a woman's hand, for instance. Indicators relating to appearance involve a change in outward appearance (different dress, a new beard). For police training, additional indicators have

been developed: cash, accommodation, preparation, objects, transport and forged documents, connections and changes in behaviour. (De Kool 2008, 98)

There have been numerous problems with police efforts to prevent radicalisation by community policing methods. The police lack the skills and knowledge about the cultural differences and backgrounds of ethnic groups and also about the nature of terrorism and radicalisation. The ethnic communities are insular, and the language barrier is a significant problem. At the organisational level, there are failures in sharing information between departments at the local level and between the local police and intelligence services. Community policing officers feel uncomfortable approaching people in their new role, and they have experiences of losing trust, which is the most important precondition in getting community intelligence. Once lost, trust is very difficult to rebuild. The changing role of local police in this respect has reduced the trust between the officers themselves too, between departments and individuals. (De Kool 2008, 104-107) Dave Sloggett also warned recently, that the counter-terrorism and radicalisation prevention measures of the police — especially in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threat — may have unintentionally driven people into the radicalisation processes. There should be more understanding of the processes, and the fact that once started it is difficult to provide legitimate exit routes from radicalisation processes. (Sloggett 2008; Bjorgo and Horgan 2009)

The research of Basia Spalek et al. focused on the enhanced community focus in counter-terrorism and the central role of preventive policing. It highlights the tensions for policing in a counter-terrorism context in having to negotiate adopting a pragmatic 'what works' approach within a highly politicised arena. The pathologising of Muslim youth increases the sense of alienation in 'suspect communities'. The results also show that it is harmful for trust building as people feel uncomfortable living in suspect communities and they feel pressurised to explain the construction of their Muslim identities, particularly in relation to Britishness. (Spalek et al., 2008)

The role of local police and community policing strategies in counter-terrorism is problematic as they are positioned between the EU (and its growing

intelligence requirements), national security agencies and intelligence services and local authorities, community safety partnerships and local communities. They should be able to balance tensions between secrecy, repression and national security priorities and openness, transparency and local needs and priorities. The climate of suspicion often reduces the level and willingness to engage with police for the purposes of counter-terrorism (Spalek et al., 2009). The new politics of community policing brings the state to neighbourhoods but there should still be room for local strategic priorities regarding how to translate counter-terrorism strategies into action.

There has also been a shift in preventive policing from cooperation to partnerships in the context of prevention of terrorism. The 'Secucities' (EFUS) report against terrorism (2007) introduces local counter-terrorism initiatives from some EU countries; partnerships between the cities, local authorities and the police. The practical problems that local authorities face are for example that they do not have the necessary expertise to confront all the demands of counter-terrorism, and the diversity of preventative actions requires excellent coordination between all agents involved, be they in the same organisation (horizontal cooperation) or at other levels of the state or with foreign partners (vertical cooperation). (*Cities against terrorism*, 2007, 41.) There is also research evidence that the body of experience, skills, knowledge and styles of policing, such as neighbourhood and community policing are invaluable tools in countering terrorism. Space made within policing for recognising and understanding religion, for instance, is seen as an important step for community policing approaches, and it has facilitated the recruitment of Muslims into policing, and the first Muslim police officers into counter-terrorism work, in Great Britain. (Spalek et al., 2009)

The role of local law enforcement (in the United States) is seen differently in Deflem's book, 'The Policing of Terrorism' (2010), especially when it comes to preventive policing. Hometown Security strategies of local counter-terrorism rely on police professionalism, effective crime control and intelligence work, and organisational arrangements. Community policing resources and possibilities were not discussed in Deflem's 'theory of counter-terrorism policing', which derives from Max Weber's bureaucracy theory. However, the support of

the communities for the police and the fact that local police are physically close to communities are seen as positive factors in local intelligence gathering. (Deflem 2010, 77). The focus of this approach is to prevent terrorist attacks, not a radicalisation process. Therefore it follows situational crime-prevention principles. Fighting terrorism through situational crime prevention comprises environmental manipulations that either block opportunities to commit terrorist attacks or that reduce cues motivating potential terrorists to commit such acts. The SCP approach has learned from military studies and international relations, and counts on for instance the 'EVIL DONE' diagnosis of potential targets, or other kinds of modelling and asymmetric warfare approaches. (Freilich & Newman 2009). Both of these counter-terrorism philosophies focus on terrorism as a form of crime or deviance (Deflem 2010, 11; Freilich & Newman 2009, 1), and count on police professionalism, effective intelligence gathering and exchange, and situational crime-prevention methods.

Radicalisation, therefore, is a challenge for preventive policing. Community policing and local partnerships can provide a useful and productive method in preventing radicalisation, and 'hometown security' and SCP methods could support these and focus on preventing the actual attacks. Organisationally, the solutions may vary from special local counter-terrorism units and police staff to a community-policing style of counter-terrorism work, so that radicalisation prevention will be just a part of local, community police officers' work. There is a trend in Europe that preventing radicalisation and home-grown terrorism will be more and more embedded in local community-policing practices. A special EU ISEC-programme funded project COPPRA (Community Policing on Preventing Radicalisation and Terrorism), the initiative of the Belgian Federal Police, is one example of implementation of the EU counter-terrorism and radicalisation prevention strategies ⁽³⁾. More comparative research is needed in this field.

⁽³⁾ The author is a member of the Steering Committee of the COPPRA project 2009-2010.

Future preventive policing — a challenge for practitioners and researchers

Several elements turn future preventive policing into a very challenging exercise for both practitioners and researchers:

1. the network structure and model of contemporary prevention,
2. the nature of security knowledge,
3. the global and ambiguous nature of the threats and crimes to be prevented and
4. the emerging possibilities and innovations of virtual preventive policing.

In many cases (crime) prevention itself has turned into promotion and production of security, social cohesion and inclusion. Instead of working on the prevention of something, we focus more and more on making good things happen (security, safety, well-being), in the name of the precautionary principle.

It is the mutual dependencies of the network rather than the command structure of the hierarchy that characterise almost all forms of prevention at all levels, from the EU policy-making and police cooperation level (see Den Boer et al. 2008) to the national security assemblages and community safety partnerships. Networking is also a solution for researchers, particularly in the context of embedding learning and knowledge from research into policing practice. This is also acknowledged in national strategies that aim to increase cooperation and coordination between science and policing, for instance in the Police Science and Innovation Strategy of the UK (published by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) in March 2010) and the forthcoming Policing Knowledge Strategy (UK), and in the Security Research Strategy of Finland (2009). Networks offer a lot of opportunities for preventive policing; higher chance of success, effective information exchange, learning from the others, synergy advantages in many fields and so on (de Bruijn & ten Heuvelhof 2008, 22). However, the network structure and model requires openness and transparency to be legitimate and accountable (see for instance McLeay 1998, de Bruijn & ten Heuvelhof 2008).

It has been argued that security governance today is 'governing at the limits of knowledge', thinking of the unthinkable. Preventing security threats is pre-emption by nature; it stands temporarily prior to prevention of proximate harms, it seeks to intervene when the risk or threat is no more than an unspecified threat or propensity as yet uncertain and beyond view (Zedner 2009, 85). The pre-crime logic of security makes it even more challenging. Although pre-crime counter-terrorism measures are rationalised on the grounds of preventing terrorism, these measures do not fit in the frame of conventional crime prevention. Still, it has been argued that the new paradigm in prevention means a shift from post-crime criminal justice to pre-crime national security (Mc Gullogh and Pickering, 2009).

The threats and crimes to be prevented are global and ambiguous, and often politically very sensitive; from terrorism, organised crime, human trafficking and genocide to more conventional and street-level crimes, violence and security threats. However, new kinds of innovations have emerged in preventive

policing. The police in many countries, for instance in Finland and Great Britain (for instance North Wales Police) have strategies for the police to be represented on social networking websites such as Facebook, IRC-Gallery, Twitter and MySpace. Because these are vibrant online meeting places the police can meet young people and chat with them, give advice and listen to their concerns. This is seen as a new complementary model of community policing, as internet is today very popular community. The police in North Wales and in Finland have statistics and positive experiences in working in social networks and about virtual preventive policing or web policing (see for instance Evans 2008, Kilpeläinen 2010).

Preventive policing in the future will be not just 'thinking globally and acting locally' but also networked, knowledge-led and intelligence-led, effective and outcome-orientated, accountable and legitimate policing. This will be also a shared agenda for researchers and police training, and therefore an important item on CEPOL's agenda too.

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