

SPENDING FOR SECURITY : A LOCAL APPROACH

Since the early 1970s, the CESDIP has studied what crime costs France, at the national level : the *Cost of crime*. On the basis of broad categories, the evolution of spending, both public and private, for the prevention and control of crime has been studied and a monetary estimation advanced for various types of offences¹.

However, these surveys are too comprehensive to be in a position to consider the variety of specific and/or local initiatives - with regard to prevention in particular - or to break down spending at the local level.

The decentralization of policy-making and financing, as well as the growing role of local communities in determining security policies make this national estimation inadequate for the assessment of the highly diversified local policies, with their many different sources of funding.

At the request of the *Délégation Interministérielle à la Ville et au Développement Social Urbain*, the CESDIP has undertaken an exploratory study of the costs of prevention and control at the local echelon². The idea was to construct a grid for the collection of data on local costs, so as to obtain an overview of all expenditures, including those financed nationally and locally, for the control of crime in general.

The study first focussed on a study of the conditions of feasibility of a survey of this type : it inventoried and sorted out the actors and institutions involved in this type of action, and then the methods for estimating the sums invested. At the end of this preparatory phase, any local communities interested in doing so will be able to engage in the replication of data-collection using this method.

CHARTING COSTS

The first problem encountered in charting costs at a local level is the definition of the geographic area, and this necessarily involves choices.

It was decided that the *département* was the best unit for observation. The laws on decentralization have placed *départements* in charge of social action and the implementation of urban policies instigated by the prefects, in conjunction with the specific local communities, (such as the negotiation of territorial contracts for urban social development), thus making them increasingly powerful. They are frequently the driving and organizing force behind prevention policies.

Concretely, in an attempt to evaluate the costs of crime prevention on the one hand and of control on the other hand

1 - Godefroy (Th.), Laffargue (B.), *Les coûts du crime en France. Données pour 1988 à 1991*, Paris, CESDIP, Etudes & Données Pénales series, n° 66, 1993.

2 - This research project was funded by the *Délégation Interministérielle à la Ville et au Développement Social Urbain*.

as accurately as possible, the following distinctions are made :

- first, between the actors and action involved in the control of crime and those concerned with the prevention of crime ;

- next, the prevention of crime in contradistinction to broad-based social prevention in general ;

- last, between public and private sources of funding.

Control / Prevention

The question of the boundaries between the control and prevention of crime arises because the two fields are not completely distinct. More specifically, it is clear that some actors in the control system have preventive as well as law enforcement activities. Some of the actors involved in the punitive side of criminal justice (the police, *gendarmerie*, magistrates from the public prosecutor's office and judges on the bench, to which we must add those involved in corrections - the prison administration, probation committees and those providing assistance for released prisoners, or the public revenue department) are at the crossroads of control and prevention. This is the case for the police and the *gendarmerie*, but also for certain judges (juvenile court judges, or judges in charge of enforcing penalties, for instance). Similarly, there are some actors other than those specialized in control, who are engaged in repressive action without belonging to any criminal justice institution. This is the case of municipal police departments, or of private security guard companies, whose activity, although mainly preventive, often leads to crime-control procedures.

Last, some actions of the punitive type, such as fines or prison sentences, or other forms of punishment, may have prevention as one of their objectives. This is the case of community service work, suspended imprisonment with supervision or compulsory treatment, and may even be the case of a prison sentence.

Prevention of crime / Social prevention

The notion of prevention is not a single, directly accessible construct. To the contrary, both research work and writings³ point out how difficult it is to define this object scientifically, a difficulty that is particularly flagrant with the tendency, since the turn of the 1980s, to integrate crime prevention action in more comprehensive policies for the development of the urban social fabric, where previously there were only general, not particularly prevention-oriented, State policies directed at regulating employment, training, immigration, etc... These new efforts were then only some of the many measures (including attempts to combat rejection, measures for the social and occupational integration of young people, etc.) that make up those transverse policies, the ultimate goals of which include the enhancement of local security. The prevention of crime is therefore located all along a continuum ranging from highly specialized action to the broadest social intervention. To avoid losing sight of its specificity, it is

3 - Robert (Ph.), (Ed.), *Les politiques de prévention de la délinquance à l'aune de la recherche. Un bilan international*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1991.

essential to analyse action concretely : present-day prevention of crime is not confined to penal agencies only (police, the justice system) : it galvanizes a wide variety of other local or institutional actors and tends to prompt the development of types of practitioners whose competency in the field is not self-evident. It is important, then, to identify not only the traditional actors but those people who participate in local crime prevention policies.

A distinction may be made, then, between action conducted by public agencies and what is undertaken by "society at large", including citizens' groups, private security guard companies and insurance companies, for instance.

Public funding / Private funding

Some spending for prevention and control is covered by public funds. This is the case for specialized agencies such as the police department, the *gendarmerie* and the justice system.

Other expenditures for protection are privately financed : this is the case for insurance policies, protective devices or private security guards.

The costs are broken down into public spending for prevention and control and private spending for protection.

However, differentiation between public and private spending cannot be based on the actors only, but must also consider the source of the funding. For instance, a preventive initiative instigated by a public agency may be partially privately or semi-privately funded (the Paris subway system invests money in preventive summertime programmes). Conversely, privately instigated preventive action may be supported by public funding, as is often the case for action carried out by informal citizen-based networks.

Last, funding must be broken down into national, *départementale* and local (the *commune* level).

This complex picture has led to use of a classification based on action rather than on the actors involved.

One advantage of this approach is its avoidance of the risk of confusion between actors, decision-makers and funding agencies : some funders of one or several prevention actions are not actors in the implementation of these, while,

conversely, the actor in a preventive intervention is not systematically the funder.

Be this as it may, monetary evaluation of action is often quite delicate. The data available are usually taken from budgets. These accounting documents rarely break expenditures down on the basis of the classification used here. Estimation and apportionment must often be resorted to, then. This method only yields an approximation of the actual spending, but it is unavoidable, given the multiplicity of activities of the different actors.

This method, and the options taken, result in the construction of a grid for data collection and of a chart for costs at the local level. The latter may be used to cross the various actions undertaken to control criminality, including "implementation of penal control", "public prevention-oriented action", "privately initiated protective action" with the different sources of financing (national, *départementale*, local and private).

SOME FINDINGS

The study was conducted in one *département* located in the Ile-de-France region, and was obviously not intent on representativity. This was simply an easy-to-explore area. Several remarks may be made, however :

- private spending for security was found to be considerably greater than public spending. It should be added, nonetheless, that these private expenditures may have been overestimated owing to the method adopted for calculating them ;
- State spending tends to go mostly to control whereas *département* level spending is devoted more to prevention, through some of the social action and specialized preventive interventions ;
- local *commune* funds first go to the municipal police department, and secondly to comprehensive socially-oriented action (prevention being taken in a broader acceptance here), in which the prevention of crime is only one of a number of objectives ;
- local spending for preventive purposes is greater than State spending for the same goal ;
- generally speaking, more money is spent for prevention than for control, even if a narrow definition of the terms is applied.

Action and spending for prevention and control in one Ile-de-France *département*

ACTIONS	FINANCING			
	in millions of francs			
	State	<i>Département</i>	Local	Private
A IMPLEMENTATION OF PENAL CONTROL	338	8	m.p.	m.p.
1 Law enforcement and security	233		m.p. (1).	m.p. (1)
2 Courts and sentencing	55			
3 Enforcement of sentences	50	8		
B PUBLIC PREVENTION-ORIENTED ACTION	202	188	65	
1 Action implemented by criminal justice system actors (2)	158	27		
2 Action connected with the implementation of specialized prevention (3)	27	159	3	
3 Action connected with the implementation of a crime prevention programme (4)	17	2	1	
4 Other prevention-oriented action initiated by public agencies (5)	m.p. (6)	m.p. (6)	61	
C PRIVATELY INITIATED PROTECTIVE ACTION (7)				1 057
TOTAL	540	196	65	1 057
<p>(1) The action of municipal police departments and private security guards is mainly preventive. They are mentioned here as a reminder, since they occasionally trigger off crime-control procedures.</p> <p>(2) Police, <i>gendarmerie</i>, judicial protection agencies for juveniles.</p> <p>(3) Essentially social assistance for juveniles, clubs and prevention teams.</p> <p>(4) summertime prevention programmes, action-prevention contract, prevention of drug abuse.</p> <p>(5) Subsidies for citizens' groups and municipal police departments.</p> <p>(6) The subsidies granted by the State and the <i>Département</i> to citizens' groups have been counted with action for the implementation of a crime prevention programme.</p> <p>(7) Security guards, protective devices, insurance.</p> <p>Source : CESDIP</p>				

FEASIBILITY OF REPLICATION

The replication of this study in other *départements* seems feasible.

However, the investment required for data collection is considerable, because of the multiplicity of actors and of sources of funding.

To reduce the cost of the operation, a combination of the national and the local approach would be worthwhile.

The national data could be used to estimate "implementation of penal control" and "privately initiated protective action", since the actors and action can be singled out more accurately here, and there is hardly any problem in defining the notions of control and private security. The national figures would be applied to the given area, using the statistics for activities (for the public administrations) or for the population of the *département* (for private spending for security, for instance).

Local data collection would be confined to "public prevention-oriented action". It should rely on specific

questionnaires sent to *communes* and *départements*, and which are the only way of clarifying what is included in the notion of prevention, and consecutively, the costs involved. It is a fact that the activities pertaining to crime prevention are less well delineated at the *commune* and *département* levels, and are not mentioned separately in budgets. Although recourse to questionnaires does not completely remove the ambiguities, it does shed light on options on the basis of the purposeful discourse of actors as well as of actual funding. Two evaluations of spending for crime prevention should be done, one narrow and the other broad.

There is no doubt that these findings are of limited portent. A moot question does arise, however, as to a possible redistribution of roles between the State and local communities, with the former concentrating its action on

control, whereas the latter are more involved in prevention (in the broadest sense), irrespective of the sources of funding.

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For further information, consult :

Lombard (F.), Godefroy (Th.), Laffargue (B.), *Les coûts du crime, prévention et répression, une approche locale*, Paris, CESDIP, collection Etudes & Données Pénales n° 68, 1993.