DEFINING THE CENTRAL TERM OF CRIME PREVENTION BY KEY PEOPLE IN THE FIELD OF PREVENTION IN ESTONIA

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Abstract - This is part of a larger research project and doctoral thesis. This is a narrow description of the results of a qualitative crime prevention study with a snowball sample, where there is plurality of the term crime prevention in question both in society in general and in key individuals.The answers and the connections between them formed five main groups of topics, that describe the term of crime prevention: laws, classical models, youth work, formation of attitudes and the aspect of analysis. The interrelationships between these topic groups and the interrelationships with the framework of limitations have been further examined.

Keywords - Crime prevention, network, snowball sample, Estonia, central term.

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper is the result of a question that arose in the framework of my doctoral dissertation:what is crime prevention or how is it understood? Since the object of my research is crime prevention, when processing the available information, I came to the knowledge that in order to understand crime prevention, one has to know what it is, what is included or how it is at least understood by other people. In my previous research, I have tried to find an answer about what prevention is, but I had to admit that there are many definitions of prevention and because of this plurarity it is easier to say that it is not [1] and in my experience almost everyone in the field has a different understanding or with a different name for the same thing.For example, in the last thirty years, three different terms have been used in the Estonian language literature, law's and documentation for the concepts of crime prevention, first was Estonian term kriminaalpreventsioon[2] (Here and hereafter Estonian in italics, unless otherwise indicated.), which is a direct translation, followed by kuriteoennetus[3], which is Estonianization, and now in use is süüteoennetus[4] (literal translation to English is Offence prevention), which compensates for kuriteoennetus's shortcomings between the narrow legal definition of crime and broader scope of crime prevention [5], thus the legal definition of offence includes all crimes and all other violations of the law. This change of term, in addition to the various possibilities, raises a question of time, which is expressed in the fact that at one point in time kuriteoennetus summed up the whole term of crime prevention, but now it is only part of kriminaalprevetsioon or süüteoennetus. In this paperI have gathered the perceptions of key Estonian crime prevention people about crime prevention as such, on the one hand it must provide an answer for a doctoral thesis, on the other hand it must provide food for thought for all researchers doing research on contact points between social sciences and law.

II. SAMPLING AND METHODOLOGY

The selection of the sample was based on the idea that it is necessary to know the network of prevention in order to understand prevention in the country. To achieve this, the snowball sample was selected, the starting person was EUCPN (European Crime Prevention Network) national contact – same methodology and starting point for every country in research – and in every interview there was question about persons, who should be interviewed in the future. The resulting network of 12 key personsis shown below in the Fig.1.

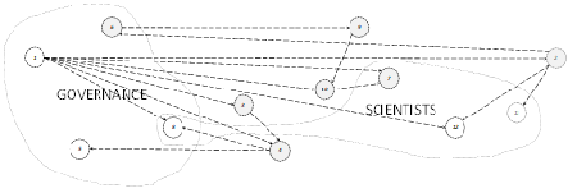


Fig.1. Snowball sample of crime prevention key peoples in Estonia

The research method is a relatively free-form interview, in which, if necessary, are used guiding questions from the checklist for topics not covered. At present, only the definitions of the key term prevention and the basic parameters describing the respondents are considered: order of interviews, status (active, inactive) and type of respondent (governance, practitioner or scientist).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. General responses about the idea/term of crime prevention

The following diagram Fig.2.shows the respondents' responses about their ideas of crime prevention (what it is?), relationships between different terms, special target groups and logical conclusions.Regarding prevention, five main themes (I – V) emerge from the responses, the first four of which focus on defining

prevention, its target groups or objectives, while the fifth theme deals with measurability and probability.

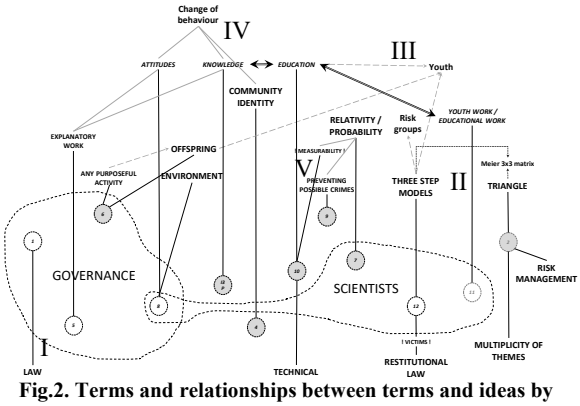


Fig.2. Terms and relationships between terms and ideas by responding key peoples Estonian crime prevention network

I. Definition by law, or precisely by Estonian Law Enforcement Act (Estonian Korrakaitseseadus) [6], is the approach of the EUCPN National Contact and summarizes an important feature of crime prevention – crime prevention itself can not be against the law – § 7 (5) of the Act provides the following for the content of the prevention: Prevention of a threat is that part of law enforcement where there is no suspicion of a threat but where a situation in the occurrence of which a suspicion of a threat or a threat will arise can be deemed possible. Prevention of a threat is, inter alia, the collection, exchange and analyze of information, and the planning and execution of actions as well as the application of measures of state supervision for countering threats possibly endangering public order in the future, including the prevention of offences. [RT I, 13.03.2014, 4 – entry into force 01.07.2014]

II. Definition by classical models of prevention and law enforcement. The classical models of prevention are represented by the 3-step model, identified by interviewee no. 12. The law enforcement perspective is based on the triangle Criminal - Victim - Venue outlined by Clarke and Eck [7], identified by interviewee no. 2, this is an approach that is common in Estonian law enforcement and by combining which with the 3-step model it is possible to reach the prevention matrix presented by Meier (2003).

III. Young people as a target that can be shaped in the right direction to prevent criminal offspring/follow-offs. This is a topic that has been widely covered in the scientific literature and therefore, due to the limited scope of the report, it will not be repeated, but the answers suggest that the topic is important and needs to be addressed in more detail in further research.

IV. Changing society's attitudes and behavior, it is deeply interlocked with youth work, but it's scope is wider. Its specific feature is the link with major problems affecting society as a whole, eg general risk behavior (railways, electricity), general security measures, neighborhood watch, etc.

V. Measurability and relativity can be understood as analyzability, the aspect of analyzability is also reflected in the legal definition in Theme I [9], and analysis and knowledge are the basis for a sound approach.

3.2. Relationship of ideas to limitations

Crime prevention has given me the experience that prevention has three main limitations, respectively: the laws (ie what is allowed), the feasibility (ie for which there are resources, time and skills) and the ethical limits (ie what society considers right, acceptable or agree to accept). The followingFig.3.is a selection of the relationships between responses and boundaries. As can be seen, the main link with the framework is doability, while prevention must not conflict with ethics and law. Thus, the laws referred to by the EUCPN contact are themselves a restrictions, and attitudes and their transformations have expressive relationship to ethical boundaries.

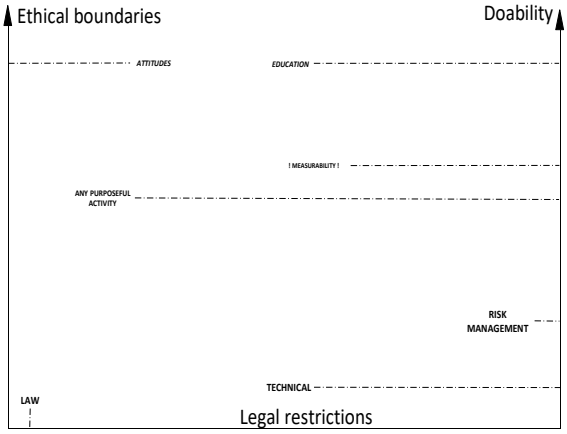


Fig.3. Relationship of ideas to the framework of limitations

IV. CONCLUSION

The following main conclusions about crime prevention term are drawn from the analysis of the interviews:

1. The answers on the central topic of crime prevention were divided into 4 topics, respectively, laws, classical models, offspring and shaping attitudes.
2. The need for analysis adds an additional feature to prevention, which increases the quality of prevention.
3. Analyzability, youth work and the development of attitudes and behavior add a forward-looking aspect to prevention.
4. The framework of restrictions and the issues raised by respondents are mainly doability relationships, but the other two restrictions also have important relationships, law both as a topic and as a limit, ie the most important limit of prevention, and attitudes and ethics, ie the formation of attitudes and ethical acceptance of the process.

5. There are certain problems with synonymy when translating terms from Estonian to English and vice versa.
6. Although the five topics and the framework of limitations do not provide a single definition of the central concept of crime prevention, but they do provide food for thought and an opportunity to understand at least the views of key people.

This paper is largely based on information from interviews, and the only external sources are either references to my starting points from previous research, references to specific themes of respondents (laws, triangle and 3-step models), or corresponding conclusions (Meier 3x3). Thus, it is only a short summary of a small part of the interviews, but at the same time it is an important starting point for understanding the situation of prevention in Estonia.

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