

Part of the Toolbox on

# **FAMILY-BASED CRIME**



**European Crime  
Prevention  
Award 2020**



“

This publication reports on the 2020 edition of the European Crime Prevention Award, dedicated to the topic of family-based crime. It outlines the nine projects or programmes that competed in the contest, with a special focus on the top three and the jury's assessment of them.

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We are grateful to the members of the jury, who devoted their time to meticulously analyse the applications and assess them on their merits.

- Ms Ivonne Danneberg, representing Germany;
- Mr Ivan Pakšič, representing Croatia;
- Mr Tomaz Persolja, representing Slovenia;
- Mr Denis Mottier, representing France;
- Prof. dr. Rita Haverkamp, University of Tübingen;
- Dr. Anna Sergi, University of Essex;
- Ms Meike Lommers, Centre for Crime Prevention and Safety (CCV).

Most of the information in this paper was contributed by the leaders of the projects or programmes it describes. It is provided as is.

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## Author

Stijn Aerts, Research officer, EUCPN Secretariat.

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**All the papers which make up the EUCPN toolbox on family-based crime are available for download at**

<https://www.eucpn.org/toolbox-familybasedcrime>.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b><u>Acknowledgements</u></b>	<b>3</b>
	<b><u>Preface</u></b>	<b>6</b>
	<b><u>Introduction</u></b>	<b>8</b>
	<b><u>ECPA winners</u></b>	<b>11</b>
<b>01</b>	The Greentown Project (Ireland).....	12
	Brief description.....	12
	Expert review.....	13
<b>02</b>	The “Untouchables” Approach (the Netherlands).....	14
	Brief description.....	15
	Expert review.....	15
<b>03</b>	The Initiative TICKAN and the Phase model” and “Unlawful Influence(Sweden).....	16
	Brief description.....	17
	Expert review.....	17
	<b><u>Remaining ECPA entries</u></b>	
	<b>18</b>	
	Germany: U-turn.....	19
	Finland: Intact Family family camps.....	19
	Croatia: I have a choice.....	20
	Lithuania: We are.....	20
	Italy: Free to choose.....	20
	Bulgaria: With a thought from the future.....	21
	<b><u>Notes</u></b>	<b>24</b>



# **PREFACE**

This paper reports on the 2020 edition of the European Crime Prevention Award. This edition was organised by the German Presidency of the EUCPN and was dedicated to the topic of family-based crime.

This paper outlines the nine projects or programmes that competed in the contest, with a special focus on the top three and the jury's assessment of them.

The other papers which along with this one make up the EUCPN Toolbox on Family-Based Crime are a theoretical background paper and a paper on the effective prevention of family-based crime. They are available for download at <https://www.eucpn.org/toolbox-family-based-crime>. More information on the European Crime Prevention Award and the contending projects is available at <https://eucpn.org/service/bpc-ecpa>.

# INTRODUCTION





Every year in December, the Chair of the EUCPN organises the Best Practice Conference and European Crime Prevention Award (BPC-ECPA). The main objective is to exchange information and best practices in the area of crime prevention. In 2020, the German Presidency organised the BPC-ECPA on the theme of “family-based crime”. The call for projects specified it as follows:

“In most countries, there are insular milieus conflicting with state authority and clashing with the legal system. These groups are often defined by their actual or perceived family structures and far-reaching disregard of state institutions and the law. Their income consists of proceeds from criminal activities in various areas. It is very difficult for law enforcement but also for prevention initiatives to penetrate these groups. This is a major challenge for criminal prosecution and prevention policies. For dealing with criminal members of such subcultures, both a wide repressive approach as well as a strong preventive approach would be a conceivable response from the government. The projects, one per Member State, submitted to compete in the ECPA contest, should address the prevention of family-based organized crime.”

Nine Member States competed for the ECPA. These projects were rated by a Jury, composed as follows<sup>1</sup>:

- three experts on (the prevention of) family-based crime, whose votes accounted for 25 % of the final score: Prof. dr. Rita Haverkamp (Tübingen University), Dr. Anna Sergi (University of Essex), and Mrs. Meike Lommers (Centre for Crime Prevention and Safety, CCV).
- representatives of four Member States, whose votes accounted for 50 % of the final score: Germany, Croatia, Slovenia, and France;
- the QUALIPREV tool, accounting for 25 % of the final score.<sup>2</sup>

The following sections outline the winner and runners-up, along with the jury remarks, and provide a brief description of the remaining six nominees.



# ECPA WINNERS

# 01



## **THE GREENTOWN PROJECT (IRELAND)**

### **Brief description**

The Greentown Project is an evidence-informed and design-led targeted community intervention which aims to reduce the influence of criminal networks on children. The programme's objectives are to reduce network capability for recruiting children to commit crime and to provide an exit route for children who are already engaged or embedded. The Greentown Project is informed by a significant evidence base which includes multiple primary studies, evaluation

findings and deliberation with international academics in the area of organised crime, and national experts in the areas of youth justice, child welfare, policing and community development.

The programme includes four interdependent pillars. The first is network disruption. It is led by law enforcement and disrupts networks by creatively employing criminal justice and child welfare executive powers. The second pillar refers to community efficacy or activities focused on improving the capacity and capability of the affected community to withstand and repel network influence. The third pillar refers to pro-social opportunities and consists of focused efforts to assist the child to leave the network environment and re-connect with school or training. The fourth pillar, finally, is an intensive family programme to protect the child and family from exploitative network relationships. Collectively, they are designed to address the complex issues confronting a child and family when a dominant criminal network is operating in their neighbourhood. The Greentown Project offers new opportunities for practical law enforcement and academic community collaborations to support crime prevention efforts.

## **Expert review**

The Greentown Project is a particularly promising crime prevention project. Essentially a research-policy cooperation (with the University of Limerick), the project boasts an unparalleled theoretical foundation. It is well-designed, methodical, and holistic, as is evidenced by the four pillars of the project, which each focus on different crime prevention mechanisms. The project is a good example of a multi-agency approach. Relevant partners and stakeholders each play their part: the Department of Justice and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, An Garda Síochána (law enforcement), Tusla (the child welfare and protection agency), the Probation Service, as well as academia, civil society and local community actors. The project is well-documented and as a result should be replicable in other EU countries. It is still in an early phase, but considered as one to keep a close eye on in the future, especially as more evaluation results become available.

# 02



## **THE “UNTOUCHABLES” APPROACH (THE NETHERLANDS)**

## **Brief description**

The “Untouchables” Approach from the Municipality of Maastricht is characterized by cooperation between the judiciary, the municipality and care and service-providing partners. The objective of the “Untouchables” Approach is to restore liveability in the neighbourhood, regain trust in the authorities and restore the authority of the government. The approach is led by an independent project leader. All involved partners have developed a shared sense of urgency and a support base among authorities for a joint approach. Using this approach, an integrated team no longer ignores criminal families and offers structural solutions for the neighbourhood, the family’s criminal leaders and the family members. The project combines criminal, civil, and administrative law while focusing on the criminal and looking at the responsibilities of the other family members. There is an early investment in young children (the youngest family members) and the approach aims to break the inter-generational trend.

## **Expert review**

The project addresses a phenomenon that occurs throughout the EU: the impression that certain members of society are above the law (“untouchable”). The Untouchable Approach stands out because it is so focused and localised, targeting just a few families in a specific disadvantaged area in Maastricht. It integrates crime control into crime prevention, but preventive actors are in the lead. This is also reflected in the partners involved: the municipality, local police, and the public prosecutor work alongside schools, welfare organisations, and social work. The approach boasts good evaluation methods with excellent results, fosters social inclusion, and is a good example of the preventive use of deterrence. While oriented to a specific local setting, the approach is considered replicable to other settings.

# 03



## **THE INITIATIVE TICKAN AND THE PHASE MODEL” AND “UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE (SWEDEN)**



## **Brief description**

The multi-agency initiative TICKAN, designed to counter a family-based criminal network, is based on working in line with the Phase model. In phase 1 (ca. 2015–2016) the police took a visibly repressive approach. In phase 2 (ca. 2016–2017) the focus was on location-based work and dialogue with the family network. Five knowledge-based methods were implemented. In phase 3, in 2017, the TICKAN initiative was launched to counter the family-based network, while work in phases 1 and 2 continued. All the different tools of the participating agencies to tackle hidden criminality in the local police district were used.

The work of the police was targeted at the network and cases were handled rapidly to reduce the risk of witnesses and plaintiffs withdrawing from the legal process. Other actors also stepped up their efforts to tackle the network. Social services, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, the Swedish Tax Agency, the emergency services, and others, contributed their tools, for example. The City launched a special initiative against unlawful influence.

The long-term multi-agency initiative is still in progress. It is headed by the local police district in partnership with agencies at regional and national level and the City of Gothenburg.

## **Expert review**

The TICKAN Initiative is a multi-phase approach to tackling existing crime problems. Whereas the first phase is repressive in nature, later phases are progressively more preventive. As such, the first phase might not be considered prevention, but is considered a prerequisite for the initiation of prevention. The integration of repression and prevention is regarded as innovative. The project is theoretically underpinned by the procedural justice theory and broken window theory, although the latter may now be considered discredited. It is essentially a policing strategy, depending heavily on police involvement. The TICKAN Initiative and the Phase model are well-documented, but in order to be successfully replicated in other settings, law enforcement should adhere to the same community-oriented policing strategies as the Swedish police.

# REMAINING ECPA ENTRIES

## **Germany: U-turn**

North Rhine-Westphalia has set itself the task of reducing or preventing the manifold effects of clan crime on the population by means of preventive measures. First, recourse was taken to the “Kurve kriegen” (U-turn) initiative within the federal state, which has effectively and successfully been in place for many years and has been scientifically evaluated on several occasions. To this end, five of the 23 U-turn sites have been specially set up for this phenomenon (additional specifically trained pedagogical staff, specific crime-prevention measures, deployment of specialised language and integration professionals). U-turn also collaborates closely with the Ruhr Security Cooperation, whose interdisciplinary and repressive steering group was staffed with an experienced criminal investigation officer exclusively responsible for the (further) development, implementation and coordination of existing or new preventive measures and for the synergetic dovetailing with repressive approaches. In addition, the entire prevention project is scientifically monitored and partially evaluated.

## **Finland: Intact Family family camps**

Intact Family activity has built a family camp model that has proven to be an effective support for the family and close relationships of people serving a prison sentence. The family camps are closely linked with the theme of the contest, and the participants are prisoners whose background has included organised crime committed by family-based or clan-like criminal groups. The content of camp activity, built with a planned and goal-oriented work approach, is unique both in Finland and abroad. By supporting intimate relationships, Intact Family strives to prevent repeat offending by connecting convicted prisoners to crime-free family life and, by extension, to society. Open discussion of parenthood also helps prisoners to consider the circle of cross-generational criminal behaviour and intoxicant abuse, and breaking free from it. The methods applied at the camp enable the learning of new action models among both individuals and whole families. During the camps, a confidential discussion link is formed between participants and counsellors. This serves as an intensive and memorable intervention in the clients' life situation and binds families to continue using the services once released.

## **Croatia: I have a choice**

The crime prevention project “I have a choice” was created in response to serious problems in the local community. The problems were recorded by citizens, who reported them to the police, who in turn involved interested social stakeholders to eliminate the problems and reduce their impact on the community. The project is one of few that have progressed past the test phase, and is based on scientific foundations, with proven effectiveness and evaluations conducted by independent evaluators. The project focuses on problem families using methods of focusing on risk factors. The ultimate goal is to develop a relationship of trust between the police and young people and to break the chain of hate that they have inherited from their parents. Thanks to its quality, the project has evolved from the local level to the national level and is being implemented in all environments that show indications of deviant and antisocial behaviour among young people.

## **Lithuania: We are**

The main objective of the project “We are” was to reduce the number of criminal acts and other violations of law related to family-based organised crime, to break down the wall and help people who are at high risk of being involved or are already involved in family-based crime activities, but who want to break free. Their problems have no simple solutions, but being aware of the facts can help people deal with them and make better choices. The implementation of the voluntary activities (police supporters, young police supporters, safe neighbourhood groups) and improving their quality intensified the existing link between police and the public. They increasingly trust the police and the public is more willing to cooperate with the police and provide relevant and useful information to officers. The project was awarded ‘Best Crime Prevention Project’ at the National Prevention Projects and Community Initiatives Awards 2020 in the Republic of Lithuania.

## **Italy: Free to choose**

Juvenile crime, above all when the mafia is involved, requires specific interventions that are specifically calibrated to the unique issues involved. The “Liberi di Scegliere” (Free to choose) project aims to address this phenomenon by using a multi-disciplinary approach that makes teamwork the distinctive element within

juvenile justice services, in an effort to provide services to minors within a system framework and disengage them from the deviant trajectories on which they find themselves.

### **Bulgaria: With a thought from the future**

Society as a social phenomenon is the result of the joint activity and coexistence of groups of people in pursuit of the common good. In order for this coexistence to be complete and constructive, the separate groups must be united around the achievement of a common goal, observing uniform rules of conduct and norms. Assessing the socio-cultural and ethnic characteristics of different groups in society and in particular the marginalised, the Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Interior (RDI) of Veliko Tarnovo, together with its partners, realised the need to develop and implement a more systematic and organised model for working with this marginalised group. As a result, in 2016 RDI Veliko Tarnovo, together with Amalipe Centre and other partners, started working on the project “With a thought from the future”, which aims at achieving better interaction with closed groups of the Roma community. The role of interaction is to increase the trust of Roma groups/clans in institutions, to achieve a change in their value system and their integration into society.

# EUROPEAN CRIME PREVENTION AWARD 2020 ON FAMILY-BASED CRIME

HAVE A LOOK AT  
THE WINNERS

## 01

### THE GREENTOWN PROJECT

(IRELAND)



An evidence-informed and design-led targeted community intervention to reduce the influence of criminal networks on children.

Expert review:

- ✓ well-designed, methodical, and holistic
- ✓ a multi-agency approach
- ✓ replicable in other EU countries

## 02

### THE “UNTOUCHABLES” APPROACH

(THE NETHERLANDS)



Cooperation between justice, the municipality and care and service-providing partners to restore liveability in the neighbourhood, regain trust in the authorities and restore the authority of the government.

Expert review:

- ✓ focused and localised
- ✓ preventive actors are in the lead
- ✓ good evaluation methods

## 03

### THE INITIATIVE TICKAN AND THE PHASE MODEL” AND “UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE

(SWEDEN)



A multi-agency initiative to counter a family-based criminal network by working in line with the Phase model.

Expert review:

- ✓ Innovative: integration of repression and prevention
- ✓ a multi-phase approach
- ✓ theoretically underpinned

# NOTES

- 1 For additional information on the rules and regulations of the ECPA, see European Crime Prevention Network, Rules and Procedures for Awarding and Presenting the European Crime Prevention Award, Brussels: EUCPN, 2018, <https://eucpn.org/document/ecpa-documents-2020>.
- 2 QUALIPREV is a tool developed for the EUCPN that makes it possible to comparatively evaluate crime prevention projects on objective grounds. For more information, see 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>.









## **CONTACT DETAILS**

EUCPN Secretariat

Email: [eucpn@ibz.eu](mailto:eucpn@ibz.eu)

Website: [www.eucpn.org](http://www.eucpn.org)



[TWITTER.COM/EUCPN](https://twitter.com/EUCPN)



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