



# European Crime Prevention Award and EUCPN Best Practice Conference 2010 Project Entry Form

The theme for this year's European Crime Prevention Award and EUCPN's Best Practice Conference is ***"A secure home in a safe community, through prevention, community policing and restoration"***.

According to this theme, the projects may focus on:

- the protection and the feeling of being protected against crimes (e.g. domestic burglary, computer crime, domestic violence, theft, itinerant groups, ...)
- the protection of the surroundings in the pursuit of a secure home (e.g. the prevention of nuisance, neighbourhood mediation, camera surveillance, environmental design, community workers, community guards, ...).

The list is not exhaustive. The projects may address any question relevant to this year's theme.

Please complete the attached form (the boxes are expandable). Note that the last point is for a one-page description of your project.

As we intend to compile a visual presentation of the entries, we kindly ask you to provide material for this (videos, photos, leaflets, etc)

Entries should be in English, but may be accompanied by a version of the entry in the national language if wished. Each country may enter one project as its ECPA entry and up to two other projects to be presented at the conference. Projects should be submitted only through the National Representatives. The full ECPA rules can be found at [www.eucpn.org](http://www.eucpn.org)

Deadline for entries is **October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010**.

Send your entry or entries to: [eucpn@ibz.eu](mailto:eucpn@ibz.eu) .

If you have any questions, please contact Anneleen Van Cauwenberge at [eucpn@ibz.eu](mailto:eucpn@ibz.eu) .



## ECPA/BPC 2010

### Please answer the following questions in English.

1. Is this your country's ECPA entry or is it an additional project? (Only one ECPA entry per country plus up to two other projects.)

*This is the Belgian ECPA entry.*

2. What is the title of the project?

*PARENTS TOGETHER – the parental role in the prevention of domestic violence*

3. Please give a short general description of the project.

*In 2004 an inter- and multidisciplinary cooperative was started up in the province of Limburg between the police and justice and assistance services on the subject of domestic violence. Since 2006 there has been a scenario by means of which domestic violence is treated in a uniform manner, with a very good result. Victims, perpetrators and (ex-) couples are being referred to assistance services much faster, which leads to fewer escalation and recurrence.*

*As prevention is still better than cure, a structural prevention plan was drawn up for the entire province. That long-range plan focuses on nine target groups: the general public, 6 to 12 year old children, 12 to 21 year old youngsters, pregnant couples, young parents, separating couples, health professionals, foreign speakers and elderly people.*

*With the project PARENTS TOGETHER the province of Limburg wants to sensitize and support (young) parents in particular to prevent or break through domestic violence. The focus lies on the stages of life with increased stress for parents: pregnancy, young parenthood and a possible divorce.*

*In order to give young parents a head start, the campaign 'PREGNANT TOGETHER, PARENTS TOGETHER' was elaborated. Central is a unique brochure with information and practical advice from and for young parents on all sorts of difficult moments during the pregnancy and the first, often hectic, baby months. On the other hand, the campaign wants to offer health professionals – through a referral slip and a training - concrete guidelines in order to react as appropriate as possible when partner violence during and after the pregnancy is suspected or found.*

*Moreover, the provincial administration of Limburg has been investing for years under the name 'SEPARATING TOGETHER' in all sorts of initiatives that aim to fight the number of ugly divorces. These initiatives concern the promotion of mediation in the case of divorce and parenthood as a peaceful and often more efficient alternative to settle conflicts, as well as the publication of a practical guide that informs all partners in the field of action on the subtleties of the elaboration of a conflict avoiding residence and visiting arrangement.*

4. Please describe the objective(s) of the project.

- **Objectives of the Limburg approach of domestic violence**

- *A more efficient and effective, but also integral and integrated approach of domestic violence, on the preventive, curative and repressive level;*
- *A close cooperation of police, justice and assistance, by means of an inter-departmental scenario and a better knowledge of each other's functioning;*
- *A sound regional approach of domestic violence.*

- **Objective 'PARENTS TOGETHER':** *sensitize and support parents directly or indirectly in order to prevent or break through domestic violence. This way, we aim to let the number of cases of violence decrease and to improve the well-being of the children present.*
- **Objectives 'PREGNANT TOGETHER, PARENTS TOGETHER'**
  - *Provide young parents with approachable information and advice from other young parents on the subject of the difficult moments during the pregnancy and the parenthood and refer them to the appropriate assistance.*
  - *Sensitize and inform victims of violence during and after the pregnancy on the assistance possibilities and give them a number of security advices.*
  - *Sensitize health professionals, namely midwives, general practitioners and gynaecologists, on domestic violence during and after the pregnancy.*
  - *Provide health professionals with guidelines to learn to recognize, guide and adequately refer victims.*
- **Objectives 'SEPARATING TOGETHER'**
  - *Decrease the number of ugly divorces.*
  - *Promote mediation in the case of divorce and parenthood as an often efficient and definitely more conflict avoiding alternative than a procedure in court.*
  - *Stimulate the networking between the different professionals and the cooperation between the Limburg recognized mediators in family matters.*
  - *Prevent conflict supporting stipulations and lack of clarity on the subject of the residence and visiting agreement in judgments.*

## 5. How was the project implemented?

*Important for the success of the campaigns was that:*

- 1) *the professional partners in the field were well involved and informed on the campaigns, because the biggest part of the success of the campaign depends on their efforts;*
- 2) *the specific target group, namely the parents, receives clear and approachable information, preventive advice and referrals to the existing assistance;*
- 3) *the broad public clearly receives the preventive message.*

- **PREGNANT TOGETHER, PARENTS TOGETHER**

- *For the professional target public:*
  1. *a one-day training for health professionals; this training has already been organized twice and will be repeated regularly;*
  2. *a mailing with an information letter on the campaign, a sample of the brochure and a referral card, an order form for the campaign material and a registration form for the training;*
  3. *publication of an article on the campaign in the magazine of the 'Provincial Health Service' that almost all health professionals receive;*
  4. *500 plastic brochure holders to have the brochure distributed by the professionals.*
- *Specific target group:*
  5. *the campaign materials have been distributed through a stand at the yearly baby and child fair (13 and 14 February in Hasselt (Limburg), where a lot of pregnant couples and young parents were reached;*
  6. *the brochure was also included in the fair bag each visitor received;*
  7. *young parents consult the brochure at 'Child & Family', almost all Limburg gynaecologists, general practitioners, midwives, maternity hospitals, baby and children's stores, ...*
- *The broad public:*
  8. *the campaign was launched with a press conference and a press release;*
  9. *the campaign regularly came and comes into the provincial media mix: newspapers, magazines, local television, ...*
  10. *through the website [www.limburg.be/samenzwanger](http://www.limburg.be/samenzwanger)*

- **SEPARATING TOGETHER:**

- *For the professional target public:*
  11. *a mailing with an information letter on the campaign, a sample of the brochures, flyer and poster, an order form for the campaign material, a registration form for the extra training;*

- 12. a yearly provincial network meeting for recognized familial mediators;
- 13. a workshop for zeroth-line and primary referrers;
- 14. an information afternoon for magistrates, lawyers, notaries, health professionals, ...
- Specific target public:
  - 15. The spread of the posters, flyers and brochures through the bars, the assistance services, notaries, houses of justice, social services, local authorities, courts, ...
  - 16. monthly information sessions;
  - 17. visits to all possible referrers during the 'Week of the Familial Mediation';
  - 18. advertisements in the local newspaper and on local television.
- The broad public:
  - 19. the campaign was launched with a press conference and a press release;
  - 20. the campaign regularly came and comes into the provincial media mix;
  - 21. the website [www.limburg.be/scheidingsbemiddeling](http://www.limburg.be/scheidingsbemiddeling).

6. Were partners involved in planning and/or development and/or implementation of the project? If so, who were they, and what were their roles?

- **PREGNANT TOGETHER, PARENTS TOGETHER**

- Province of Limburg – Service Police, (Traffic) security and Public order /Service Equal Chances / Service Health: coordination
- Limburg Focal Point 'Support for the Upbringing of Children and Youngsters': expertise, development, implementation
- Non-profit organization 'Zijn' – Movement against violence: expertise, development, implementation
- Child & Family Limburg: expertise, development, implementation
- General welfare services 'CAW Sonar' & 'CAW 't Verschil': expertise, development, implementation
- Colleges of higher education midwifery: expertise, development, implementation
- Ghent University Hospital (International Centre of Reproductive Health): expertise, development, implementation
- Maternity care & home help: expertise, development, implementation
- European project partners from Hungary, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden: expertise, experience and knowledge exchange

- **SEPARATING TOGETHER**

- Province of Limburg – Service Police, (Traffic) security and Public order /Service Equal Chances / Service Health: coordination
- Magistrates of the Limburg justices of the peaces court, juvenile courts, First Instance, Summary proceedings, Court of Appeal and the public prosecutors of the court districts of Tongeren and Hasselt: expertise, development, implementation
- Notaries of the province of Limburg: expertise, development, implementation
- Bar of Hasselt and Tongeren: expertise, development, implementation
- House of Justice Hasselt and Tongeren: expertise, development, implementation
- Syndic of the Limburg bailiffs: expertise, development, implementation
- General welfare services 'CAW Sonar' & 'CAW 't Verschil': expertise, development, implementation
- Advice Centre Child Abuse: expertise, development, implementation
- Limburg centres for public welfare: expertise, development, implementation
- Local police: expertise, development, implementation
- The Limburg (recognized) independent mediators in family matters: expertise, development, implementation
- Federal Institute for the Equality of Women and Men: expertise, development, implementation
- The following associations and companion groups have been heard: Women Advice Centre Genk, Focal Point Abiding Parenthood, Fathers 4 Justice: expertise, implementation
- European project partners from Hungary, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden: expertise, experience and knowledge exchange

7. How did you build in plans to measure the performance of the project? Has the project been evaluated? How, and by whom?

- **Limburg approach domestic violence:**

A scientific research institute has started the execution of a large-scale scientific assessment study of the Limburg approach of domestic violence, in close cooperation with the key actors of the project. This study needs to trace bottlenecks, provide points of interest to optimize the project and to execute an effect measurement.

- **PREGNANT TOGETHER, PARENTS TOGETHER**

- The success is measured by the provincial authorities in consultation with the working group.
- The quantitative measurement is done by means of the number of brochures and referral cards that has been distributed, the number of professionals who ordered material, the number of citizens who ordered material directly and the number of health professionals that registered for the training.
- The qualitative measurement is done by means of a survey of the professionals. A slight adjustment has been made by means of conversations with professionals, spontaneous reactions of citizens and professionals, ...

- **SEPARATING TOGETHER**

- The success is measured by the provincial authorities in consultation with the partners involved.
- The quantitative measurement is done by means of the number of flyers, posters and brochures that has been distributed, the number of professionals who ordered material, the number of citizens who ordered material directly, the number of participants at the information sessions, the number of professionals who registered for the network meeting, the extra training and the workshop.
- The qualitative measurement of the promotion campaign divorce mediation was primarily done in May 2010 by means of an assessment meeting with the professionals involved. As far as the practical guide is concerned, this autumn there will be a survey of the professionals with an eye on the publication of an updated version.

## 8. What were the results? How far were the objectives of the project achieved?

- **Limburg approach domestic violence**

- Every year 1200 people, generally (ex-)couples, are helped in Reception Points Partner Violence.
- The number of escalations and recurrences of domestic violence is clearly decreasing, according to local police. These findings have to be concretized by the scientific evaluation that starts in November 2010.

- **PREGNANT TOGETHER, PARENTS TOGETHER**

- The campaign is very visible in the waiting rooms of maternity hospitals, gynaecologists, etc. which has lead to more attention to the issue.
- Young parents say that they feel very supported by the advice, the information and the stories from the brochure. The brochure, which is in fact drawn up for parents with young children, sketches a realistic image, with attention to both great and difficult moments.
- Striking: the campaign also really appeals to young fathers.
- Health professionals say that they are very satisfied with the fact that they now have an instrument to act (more specific) and to refer when there is proof or a presumption of violence.

- **SEPARATING TOGETHER**

- The result of the promotion campaign for mediation was that, on the one hand, more people inquire spontaneously about mediation, and, on the other hand, that more magistrates refer to mediation during sessions.
- The practical guide – that already circulated for a while within the sector before the official launch – has lead to the fact that, according to the magistrates and lawyers in the working group, the conflict avoiding quality of the judgments visibly has improved in a very short time.
- The practical guide is requested and used within the entire country.
- The functioning within the 'Network Residence and Visiting Right' made the ideas firmly mature for the creation of a sort of a 'divorce shop'. It concerns a provincial platform and cross-sector turntable that coordinates and centralizes the multiplicity of information on divorce and mediation and that makes it transparent. This will be linked with a website, approachable brochures and a qualitative reception from a certain basic attitude and vision (preventive, conflict avoiding, mediating at the intake talk). There is also a pilot project in preparation in which, when for the first time a conflict occurs about the reorganization of the

parenthood after the divorce, people are obligatory referred to a type of mediation service. The body offering this service, will take up the role of organizer and draw up a detailed parenthood plan together with the parents. The organizer will take up the role of approaching case manager or counsellor.

- The last year, even more agreements on conflict control in divorces with mutual consent have been drawn up, in which agreements are made on parental consultation and good parenthood and in which is determined how one will cope with possible conflicts in the future.

9. Are there reports or documents available on the project? In print or on the Web? Please, give references to the most relevant ones.

The following reports and documents are available on request:

- the Limburg scenario 'Anticipate partner violence' (in Dutch)
- the training 'Anticipate partner violence' for the local police (in Dutch)
- the standard report partner violence for the local police (in Dutch)
- the prevention plan 'Together we beat violence' (in Dutch)
- assessment reports of different campaigns (in Dutch)
- the practical guide residence and visiting right (in Dutch)
- the project description of the European project: 'An inter- and multidisciplinary approach of tackling domestic violence: European interactive training programme'

Information on the Limburg approach and the campaigns is also available on:

- [www.limburg.be/domesticviolence](http://www.limburg.be/domesticviolence)
- [www.limburg.be/samenzwanger](http://www.limburg.be/samenzwanger)
- [www.limburg.be/scheidingsbemiddeling](http://www.limburg.be/scheidingsbemiddeling)
- [www.geweldenzwangerschap.be](http://www.geweldenzwangerschap.be)

10. Please, write a one page description of the project:

*In 2004 an inter- and multidisciplinary cooperative was started up in the province of Limburg between the police and justice and assistance services, as a result of the increasing number of reporting of domestic violence and some serious incidents. Since 2006 there has been a scenario in Limburg by means of which domestic violence is treated in a uniform manner. Victims, perpetrators and (ex-) couples are being referred to the assistance services much faster, which leads to fewer escalation and recurrences. Every year 1200 people, generally couples, are helped in the Reception Points Partner Violence.*

*Because of the positive results, the province of Limburg won the Belgian Security and Crime Prevention Award in 2007. And in the framework of a European project in cooperation with Hungary, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden, the province will assess its scenario, optimize it together with these European partners and present it by the end of 2012 as a European training programme.*

#### **Prevention and sensitization**

*As prevention is always better than cure, a structural prevention plan was drawn up. That long-range plan focuses on nine target groups: the general public, 6 to 12 year old children, 12 to 21 year old youngsters, pregnant couples, young parents, separating couples, health professionals, foreign speakers and elderly people.*

*With the project TOGETHER PARENTS the province of Limburg wants to sensitize and support (young) parents in particular to prevent or break through domestic violence. The focus lies on the stages of life with increased stress for parents: pregnancy, young parenthood and a possible divorce. With the project, the province wants to decrease the number of cases of domestic violence and improve the well-being of the children present. This project won the Belgian Security and Crime Prevention Award in 2010.*

#### **PREGNANT TOGETHER, PARENTS TOGETHER**

*In order to give young parents a head start, the campaign PREGNANT TOGETHER, PARENTS TOGETHER was elaborated. Central is a unique brochure with information and practical advice from and for young parents on all sorts of difficult moments during the pregnancy and the first, often hectic, baby months. The following themes are put forward: getting pregnant, pregnancy symptoms; lack of sleep and irritability, baby blues and postnatal depression, crying babies and baby colic, sex life, work*

and family, (grand)parental advice, relational stress and in a worst case scenario partner violence. The brochure informs, provides advice and leads the way to assistance.

Most parents pass this new period ultimately stronger and unscathed. For some couples the adaptation does not go as smoothly and at that moment partner violence enters the relationship. International research shows that 3 to 8% of the women become a victim of partner violence during the pregnancy. Also after the pregnancy there is a higher risk of partner violence. Therefore, a training of 8 hours on this theme was elaborated specifically for health professionals who have contact with pregnant women and young parents, in cooperation with amongst others the Ghent University Hospital (International Centre of Reproductive Health). During this practical training guidelines are provided to learn to recognize victims of violence. Also the guidance of victims and an adequate referral are included. For that purpose a discrete referral card has been developed and distributed.

### **SEPARATING TOGETHER**

We often see in the case of separating parents painful and expensive (ugly) divorces that are baleful for themselves and the children. Ex-partners face each other with their knives drawn and often a court order is just not observed. Not complying with the residence and visiting agreement can lead to problems that are often an important factor for the arising of domestic violence. The province therefore has been investing for years in all sorts of initiatives that want to fight ugly divorces and this primarily in the interest of the child.

One of the conclusions was that mediation in the case of divorce and parenthood can be a more efficient and humane alternative in conflicts for a court procedure. However, many couples have not heard of mediation and go directly to a lawyer in order to start up a procedure. Therefore the province of Limburg is an active promoter of mediation. The following initiatives have been taken: the creation of a provincial working group mediation, an announcement campaign with poster, flyer, website and approachable brochure, a monthly information session, a yearly 'Week of the family mediation', a yearly network meeting for the recognized Limburg mediators, a Limburg extra training offer for the recognized family mediators, initiatives concerning policy influencing and a workshop about divorce and parenthood.

Another conclusion was that we had to work on the prevention of conflict supporting stipulations and the lack of clarity in judgments: because the visiting rights often start with the content of the judgment. Therefore a number of recommendations regarding the content of judgments is compiled in a practical guide 'residence and visiting right' for professionals. The aim of this guide is to inform all partners in the field of action on the subtleties of drawing up a conflict avoiding residence and visiting agreement, and this by providing a directional, non-binding text in which a few specific situations are treated. The text can inspire magistrates when drawing up their judgments. Lawyers can use it as a guideline when drawing up conclusions and claims. The text will also be helpful for the elaboration of agreements concerning a divorce with mutual consent.