Client Report :

Review of Scientifically
Evaluated Good Practices for
Reducing Feelings of Insecurity
or Fear of Crime in EU Member
States

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Executive Summary

This report is intended to raise awareness and understanding of fear of crime or feelings of insecurity across EU member states.

The study was commissioned to identify levels of fear of crime across Europe and highlight interventions to reduce it. Extensive research across EU Member States revealed little in the way of scientifically evaluated examples of studies that measure with any degree of validity the extent or otherwise of fear of crime or feelings of security. There were also few scientifically evaluated examples of measures or initiatives that reduce fear of crime. Research on fear of crime is mainly theoretical.

However by using a combination of theory and qualitative methods we have identified some of the main drivers of fear of crime and provide examples of best practice across member states, which reassure and therefore are likely to reduce or remove risks associated with fear of crime.

All people have a right to fulfil potential by leading healthy, active lives free from the fear of crime. At various times, feelings of insecurity or fear of crime affect people across all communities, social groups and cultures. Fear of crime is a universal phenomenon that can be temporary or permanent; its effect can range from minimal to debilitating.

There are three main theoretical models that explain behaviour for fear of crime but our investigation reveals the concept to be elusive making it difficult to define measure and evaluate. Fear of crime is about perceptions and diversity and is fermented by a complex mix of aggravating factors. Perceptions of safety are influenced by social, economic, cultural, environmental and demographic factors.

There are many examples of low or average crime areas where nevertheless, fear remains disproportionately high. Some groups experience fear of crime disproportionate to actual risks when compared against crime rates in the locality i.e. the elderly and minority groups. In contrast there are examples of places where people remain unaware of crime risks. In these examples if awareness were raised crime might be prevented i.e. pick pockets in town centres, motor vehicles left in public car parks displaying visible property, care of credit cards, late night leisure areas.

Gender was a significant factor. From the few scientifically evaluated studies that we were able to review females were consistently reported as registering greater fear of crime than males.

Evaluated studies across the EU to measure fear of crime have in the main been conducted by way of questionnaire. Where the study has been conducted using this method alone validity of the reported outcomes may be limited due to the way the questions are structured and how they impact on perceptions of the respondents. Reaching all groups within a locality with a questionnaire can be problematic due to demographic complexities of diverse communities. It can be argued that despite the absence of risk merely asking people questions to ascertain awareness alone can in

itself be an aggravating factor instrumental in raising fear. The lesson is to take great care over the way the question is asked to ensure a valid response

Fear is more prevalent in deprived inner city, high crime areas with high levels of physical disorder. Greater fear is experienced by vulnerable individuals and groups who are excluded from the main stream and therefore difficult to reach. Questionnaires alone often fail to engage these communities. Research must be validated by the range of methods used. These should be planned according to circumstances and context. There should be focus leading to clarity on how or why the study is to be undertaken. A menu of options for conducting valid research to ascertain levels of fear within local communities must be considered.

An audit should be held to identify the communication channels already in existence and established in the locality for other consultation purposes i.e. citizens panels, young people, minority groups, socially excluded groups, elderly people, women, males etc. Different methods for different groups and locations must be carefully considered, for example surveys may be appropriate for the general population however qualitative methods such as focus groups, one to one interviews or a combination of both may be more appropriate in order to reach and ascertain the experience of excluded hard to reach groups.

In Member States, high crime, anti-social behaviour, drug & alcohol abuse, deprivation, waste, abandonment, decline, lack of educational, social and business institutions are environmental factors that cause feelings of insecurity. Businesses are less likely to flourish in these areas leading to a spiral of decline, fear and abandonment.

Condition of the environment, crime levels, awareness of risk, poor communication, media reporting, feelings of helplessness, lack of empowerment are important factors affecting perceptions of safety or otherwise.

Evidence disclosed by a review of the literature reveals that deprived neighbourhoods remain demoralizing places to live. Residents who face poor living conditions and difficult personal circumstances are at greater risk of becoming victim to crime or anti-social behaviour. Inevitably fear of crime will be higher in deprived urban localities. There is the perceptual fear of being at increased risk of victimization, these feelings are reinforced in local streets and open spaces that are scarred with graffiti, litter and abandoned cars. A bleak urban environment serves to reinforce feelings of insecurity.

There is also deprivation in rural areas: rural communities also suffer from poverty and are more likely to be isolated than urban areas. The focus of main provision of public services is often fixated at the urban level to the detriment of rural more isolated communities. Those who live in rural localities also suffer from crime, victimization and feelings of insecurity. They should be targeted and engaged by public services to ascertain how safe they feel and must not be forgotten or ignored.

Across all EU States, any measures which reverse spirals of decline in the most disadvantaged communities will significantly reduce feelings of insecurity. Measures that reverse decline involve working with communities from the grassroots to deliver economic prosperity and jobs, efficient transport, good education, decent housing, improved health care. Collectively these are instrumental in fostering a strong sense of a safer community.

In reducing feelings of insecurity much can be achieved through architectural design by designing out crime at the planning stage or by auditing public space through crime opportunity profiling, understanding the problem through analysis, implementation of responses, monitoring and evaluation of impact.

To reduce fear and increase feelings of security it is necessary to tackle the anti-social behaviour which undermines the quality of life in communities, especially in the most deprived neighbourhoods.

The main symptoms and causes of anti-social behaviour can be described as:

- noisy, violent, threatening or intimidating neighbours,
- disaffected nuisance youths
- public littering and fly tipping
- dog fouling,
- abandoned vehicles,
- illegally parked vehicles,
- motor vehicles driven at speed, dangerously or recklessly particularly in urban and residential areas,
- graffiti and vandalism,
- drunkenness,
- drug abuse and open drug markets.

EU State communities will feel safer if they are engaged by the public services, are kept fully inclusive and basic minimum standards of public services are delivered. This is especially so in the most deprived neighbourhoods and for the most vulnerable groups.

To reduce fear of crime the awareness of public services and support agencies statutory and voluntary across EU States should be raised to improve understanding of feelings of insecurity and its impact on quality of life.

There is a lack of available information in the form of published scientifically evaluated studies. More should be done to raise awareness of this phenomena and how its impacts on quality of life in terms of health and welfare on EU citizens particularly those in deprived urban or rural communities and/or part of a vulnerable or socially excluded minority group such as:

- Ethnic
- Suffering ill health
- Female

There is evidence that in some groups the fear of crime is disproportionate to the actual risk i.e. those who are elderly or can be described as vulnerable even in low or moderate crime areas.

In this context, there has been very little research on the impact of media reporting and how the sensationalized style can often convey a false perception of actual risk particularly to more vulnerable groups. Undeniably there has been a vast expansion of the media sources available, from local press, national press, TV 24 hour news channels, internet, and mobile phone technology and so on.

It is recommend that when undertaking research to ascertain the level of feelings of security nationally or locally, the impact of media should be a factor included in the research methods used by way questionnaires, surveys, focus groups or one to one interviews.

There is evidence that some groups would benefit from an increased awareness of crime risks. In the UK young people between the ages of 14 and 25 years form the highest victim group; young males are at particular risk. An increased awareness would reduce the risk of crime and victimization with this group. The same principal can be applied to crime risk areas such as shopping and recreational areas and car parks. Often simple messages raising awareness can reduce crime, victimization and being empowered by the knowledge can increase feelings of security.

There appeared to be no examples of scientifically evaluated studies of the link between domestic violence and how it impacts on feelings of insecurity and fear not only on the victim but the effect on family, friends and neighbours, all those who are touched by the experience. The same can be said for alcohol or drug related violence and how it impacts on feelings of insecurity within local communities.

Those who are charged with providing public services, safety and security should work in partnership with local communities and conduct regular research to establish levels of fear and the causes.

Communication strategies should be developed in partnership with public services, agencies and communities at the local level to target messages of reassurance. Messages should be consistently targeted towards different groups in accordance with the research data. A variety of communication styles should be adopted, good news messages, information about crime reduction activity in local areas, raising awareness to prevent crime without raising fear, consistent messages specifically designed and aimed at the relevant identified groups. Local media should be encouraged to take up membership of any local communication partnership.

In the study a number of schemes are discussed. The merits of these schemes are apparent but few have been scientifically evaluated.

The main outcome of this study is the lack of valid data on this phenomenon across the EU States. There is an urgent need for rationalization of an accepted definition and agreement around means of measurement.

The whole agenda around fear and feelings of insecurity is complex and challenging. Despite the problems there must be a concerted effort to overcome the difficulties of diversity and apply greater scientific rigour to the study of this phenomenon. At some point in time fear of crime will impact on the lives of all citizens in a positive way by raising awareness or in a negative way which affects health, welfare and quality of life.

Contents

Introduction

This research was commissioned by the EC in response to the challenge of fear of crime in the Member States. It is intended to identify levels of fear of crime across Europe and show interventions to reduce it. The European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN) has defined fear of crime as one of its priorities. An important goal for the EUCPN is to make results of good practices or evidence based interventions known to various target groups, such as crime prevention practitioners, researchers and police. Effective planning and evaluation of crime prevention policies at a European level are dependent on our understanding of empirical knowledge and the level and structure of crime and public opinion. This knowledge allows targeted intervention, policy options and crime prevention measures to be implemented taking into account evidence based solutions and cultural diversity across Europe.

Fear of crime is now widely recognised in Europe as one of the most pressing concerns affecting people's quality of life (ESRC 2003). Across the EU there is a growing awareness of the detrimental effects of fear of crime. Research is vital in order to increase understanding about fear of crime and identify what initiatives are effective so that they can be implemented more widely.

Fear of crime affects many people throughout the EU and can be influenced by many factors. Research has shown that fear of crime has a harmful effect on many people and can lead to increasing isolation and withdrawal from 'normal' social life and mistrust in authority, such as the police and government. Further, fear of crime has been shown to be highest in the more vulnerable members of our society, such as the elderly, who, incidentally, may well also be at least risk of actual crime.

The three main theoretical models of behaviour for fear of crime can be categorised as:

- Victimisation model – fear is caused by a high crime levels which leads to high levels of fear in anticipation of becoming a victim

- Vulnerability model – fear of crime is caused by personal characteristics, some people consider themselves to be physically or socially vulnerable

- Social control model – fear of crime is caused by feelings of a lack of social control

In areas where there are high crime rates, fear of crime can be seen as a rational response. In these cases, crime reduction strategies to reduce crime, if they are highly visible to the communities involved, should also lead to a reduction in fear of crime.

However, in some areas the fear of crime is disproportionately high compared to the actual crime rate. For example, the British Crime Survey (2001/02) indicated that, although the chances of becoming a victim of violent crime in the UK is just 4%, 31% of respondents stated that fear of crime had a moderate impact on their quality of life, with a further 6% stating that their quality of life was greatly affected by it. In these cases, other strategies to reduce fear of crime should be put into effect, such as regeneration of neighbourhoods and promoting neighbourhood renewal.

Of course fear of crime can also be diametrically different to crime levels when looking at crime type. For example in town centres where there are plenty of people the people presence may lead to a fear of crime reduction but an increase in certain types of crime such a pick pocketing

Some groups in society are more vulnerable to fear of crime than others and it can have a devastating effect on people's lives. Women and the elderly are especially vulnerable.

The type of area also affects fear of crime. For example, in the UK, people living in social housing, with a high level of physical disorder and in the type of area where people do not communicate or help each other, are more likely to experience greater feelings of insecurity (British Crime Survey 2001) often termed 'fortress mentality'.

> Research is needed to identify the main drivers of fear of crime in EU member states and what interventions work, or do not work, to reduce it. This information will assist key players working in crime reduction to target their approaches more effectively to reduce fear of crime.

Aims and objectives

The main aims of this research are to:

- Raise awareness of fear of crime issues across EU member states

- Provide guidance on effective measures to reduce fear of crime

- Motivate key crime prevention workers and policy makers to consider and apply proven good practices for reducing fear of crime

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Review of Scientifically Evaluated Good Practices for Reducing Feelings of Insecurity or Fear of Crime in EU Member States

This research has the following key objectives:

- Examine trends in fear of crime in EU member states

- Review current crime prevention and intervention policies on fear of crime

- Present crime prevention strategies and programs and examples of best practice that have proven effective and/or contain important lessons, in reducing fear of crime

Overview of the report

This report is set out as follows:

Chapter One outlines the methodology used to collect data for the report.

Chapter Two provides analyses of fear of crime trends in all EU member states. Also included is a mini-review of other countries for comparative purposes.

Chapter Three provides the main findings from both the literature review and interviews with key players in crime reduction. It includes the submitted research that had not been sufficiently evaluated to include in Chapter Four. The findings are presented under the following key themes:

- Definition

- Methodological problems

- Background information

- Vulnerable groups

- Strategies to reduce fear of crime

Chapter Four reports on the key examples of good practice that have been identified as being particularly successful, or that provide useful lessons, in reducing fear of crime

Chapter 1 - Methodology

The research involved in this review consisted of the following steps:

- A literature review to examine background research on fear of crime and crime prevention initiatives to reduce it

- A questionnaire emailed to crime prevention experts across the EU to gain information and views on Fear of Crime

- Telephone and email interviews with selected key experts to elicit further details of examples of good practice to reduce fear of crime

- Analysis of data to examine trends in fear of crime

- A query posted on the discussion forum on the DOCA (Designing Out Crime Association) website, again to find examples of good practice

- Setting up a website for interested parties to examine the research and make contributions if desired

Questionnaire

One of the steps mentioned in the work programme was the use of a questionnaire. This questionnaire was sent to selected networks across the EU in order to gain the necessary information for this research. The questionnaire was sent out in May 2004 and can be found in this report as appendix 1. The development of the questionnaire and the website were conducted in close collaboration with the DSP- Group in Holland who were conducting similar research for the EC into costs of crime.

The questionnaire was emailed to over 300 key personnel across Europe. These included:

- **EUCPN** – the European Crime Prevention Network (national representatives and their substitutes)

- **AGIS 2003** - participants

- **Hippocrates programme 2001/2002 participants** - the European Commission funded the 'Secure Urban Environments' project as run by the Universities of Salford (UK) and Sheffield Hallam (UK).

- **CEN TC325** – the European network drafting standards on crime prevention, which includes crime prevention specialists on a very practical level (police, local/regional, research, insurance, academics) from all European countries.

- **ICA** – the International CPTED Association, a worldwide network of crime prevention researchers and practitioners specializing in environmental and situational crime prevention

- **E-DOCA** - European Designing Out Crime Association, the European chapter of the ICA

- **DOCA** - Designing Out Crime Association, the UK chapter of the ICA

- **UK CDRPs** - Local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in the UK

The response was sparse and a follow up sent out a month later did not improve matters. However, responses received did provide some useful information. Most of the responses indicated that they did not know of any evaluated examples of good practice in reducing fear of crime. Where appropriate those who replied were contacted by telephone and/or email to elicit further details.

Due to the low response rate, a third attempt was made to contact EU crime experts. Tailored, individual emails were sent to all EUCPN representatives and personal contacts in France, Germany and the Netherlands. There was no response at all to this wave of emails.

It is possible that the limited number of replies may be due to a lack of evaluated examples of good practice for reducing fear of crime. As we have found in this research, fear of crime is a difficult subject to measure and evaluate so it may be that, although there is a plethora of studies on the subject, actual evaluated examples of good practice are lacking.

The majority of submitted examples were found to be insufficiently robust to be included in the examples of scientifically evaluated examples of good practice for reducing fear of crime. These were included in the main findings chapter.

Website

As previously stated, the email contained an introduction to the research and an attached questionnaire. It also provided a link to a website created for the purpose of this research: www.ecprc.net. The website offered a short description of the project, progress reports, a literature list, web links and the opportunity for an online debate.

The website has been temporarily closed awaiting EC approval to disseminate the results. Subject to approval, the website can be brought back online to disseminate the findings that result from this research and to provide an online discussion forum for interested parties.

Interviews

From the responses and personal contacts open interviews were conducted with experts across Europe

Chapter 2 - Trends in Fear of Crime[1]

Background

The International Crime Victim Surveys (ICVS) provide information on crime and victimization through a standard questionnaire, the results of which are internationally comparable. To ensure this, all aspects of the methodology have been standardized to the maximum possible extent.

The first round of international surveys was done in 14 countries in 1989, providing a measurement of crime in 1988, by the Ministry of Justice of The Netherlands in cooperation with the Home Office of the United Kingdom and the University of Lausanne, Switzerland. The interviews were conducted over the phone using CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) techniques. That year pilot studies were also done in Indonesia (Jakarta) and Poland (Warsaw). UNICRI (United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute) became involved in 1991 with the aim of providing a wider geographical coverage to the project to include countries where telephone interviewing was not possible. A specific face-to-face methodology was developed for this purpose and to increase comparability it, was agreed that face-to-face surveys would be mainly conducted in the capital (or largest) cities in participating countries. Pilot studies were carried out to test the comparability of results obtained with the two different methods.

The second round of surveys took place in 1992 with a total of 33 participating countries, including 20 countries using the face-to-face methodology. The third round of surveys was conducted in 1996 in 48 countries (36 face-to-face). The last round of surveys was done in 2000 with a total of 48 participating countries again, including 30 face-to-face. To date, over 140 surveys have been conducted in over 70 different countries. The countries in Western Europe, East-Central Europe and the rest of the Industrialized countries are shown in Table 1, along with the number of successful interviews conducted in each year. In total data were collected from 162,346 interviews in the 40 countries displayed, over the 12 years recorded.

The 2000 version of the survey includes 400 questions. The majority of the questions consider actual crime, and respondent demographics. Three questions were included which can be used to rate fear of crime:

Q 300. How safe do you feel walking alone in your area after dark? Do you feel: very safe, fairly safe, a bit unsafe, or very unsafe?

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[1] Special thanks are given to UNICRI and Deputy Director Jan Van Dijk, for permission to use the ICVS database for this report, http://www.unicri.it/icvs.

Q301. How safe do you feel when you are at home alone after dark? Do you feel: very safe, fairly safe, a bit unsafe, or very unsafe?

Q302. What would you say are the chances that over the next twelve months someone will try to break into your home? Do you think this is very likely, likely or not likely?

Each of these questions can be considered in more detail to determine the fear of crime apparent in the respondents. There are further questions in the survey concerning attitudes to crime, policing and sentencing, but these extra questions do not add to the possible description to the fear of crime.

Table 1 Responses to questionnaires by year and country.

GLOBAL REGION	COUNTRY	YEAR OF THE SURVEY									Total
		1989	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	2000	2001	
western europe	England & Wales	2006	2001	0	0		2171	0	1947		8125
	Scotland	2007	0	0	0		2194	0	2055		6256
	Northern Ireland	2000	0	0	0		1042	0	1511		4553
	Netherlands	2000	2000	0	0		2008	0	2000		8008
	Germany (west)	5274	0	0	0		0	0	0		5274
	Switzerland	1000	0	0	0		1000	0	4234		6234
	Belgium	2060	1485	0	0		0	0	2501		6046
	France	1502	0	0	0		1003	0	1000		3505
	Finland	1025	1655	0	0		3830	0	1782		8292
	Spain	2041	0	1634	1505		0	0	0		5180
	Norway	1009	0	0	0		0	0	0		1009
	Sweden	0	1707	0	0		1000	0	2001		4708
	Italy	0	2024	0	0		0	0	0		2024
	Austria	0	0	0	0		1507	0	0		1507
	Malta	0	0	0	0		0	1000	0		1000
	Portugal	0	0	0	0		0	0	2000		2000
	Denmark	0	0	0	0		0	0	3007		3007
	Catalonia	0	0	0	0		0	0	2909		2909
	Total	21924	10872	1634	1505		15755	1000	26947		79637
rest industrialized countries	USA	1996	1501				1003		1000		5500
	Canada	2074	2152				2134		2078		8438
	Australia	2012	2006				0		2005		6023
	New Zealand	0	2048				0		0		2048
	Total	6082	7707				3137		5083		22009
east-cental europe	Estonia		1000			1173	0	0	1700	0	3873
	Poland		2033			0	3483	0	6337	0	11853
	Czech Republic		1262			0	1801	0	1500	0	4563
	Slovakia		508			0	0	1105	0	0	1613
	Russia		1002			0	1018	0	1500	0	3520
	Georgia		1395			0	1137	0	1000	0	3532
	Slovenia		1000			0	0	2053	0	3886	6939
	Latvia		0			0	1411	0	1201	0	2612
	Romania		0			0	1091	0	1506	0	2597
	Hungary		0			0	756	0	1513	0	2269
	Yugoslavia		0			0	1094	0	0	0	1094
	Albania		0			0	1200	0	1498	0	2698
	Macedonia		0			0	700	0	0	0	700
	Croatia		0			0	0	994	1532	0	2526
	Ukraine		0			0	0	1000	1509	0	2509
	Belarus		0			0	0	999	1520	0	2519
	Bulgaria		0			0	0	1076	1505	0	2581
	Lithuania		0			0	0	1176	1526	0	2702
	Total		8200			1173	13691	8403	25347	3886	60700

The following notes are made:

The Spanish surveys (region Malaga) in 1993 and 1994 were based on a mixture of the 1989 and 1992 questionnaires

USA 1992 was a shorter version of the 1992 CATI questionnaire

There were minor versions between the 1996 and 1997 Face to Face questionnaires

Switzerland 2000, victimisation items are based on the 2000 CATI, but large parts of the P, S and D items are missing

Australia 2000, sexual offences moved to the end of the questionnaire

How safe do you feel alone after dark?

The possible answers to this question can be given a value:

1 = very safe

2 = fairly safe

3 = a bit unsafe

4 = or very unsafe

By taking the average of the responses within each country and for each year, where the question was asked, it is possible to get a simple comparison between countries on the level of fear, see Table 2. The higher the number the greater the average fear. Parametric comparisons cannot be made on these values, but they provide a very simple measure of difference. Non-parametric comparisons can be made to compare ranked responses across countries and between years.

Table 2 Responses to "how safe do you feel alone after dark?" by year and country.

GLOBAL REGION	COUNTRY	YEAR OF THE SURVEY								
		1989	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	2000	2001
western europe	England & Wales	.	2.23	.	.	.	2.25	.	2.15	.
	Scotland	.	.	.	.	.	2.11	.	2.02	.
	Northern Ireland	.	.	.	.	.	1.93	.	2.09	.
	Netherlands	.	1.90	.	.	.	1.90	.	1.86	.
	Germany (west)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	Switzerland	.	.	.	.	.	1.82	.	1.94	.
	Belgium	.	1.87	.	.	.	.	.	1.91	.
	France	.	.	.	.	.	1.92	.	1.97	.
	Finland	.	1.75	.	.	.	1.77	.	1.76	.
	Spain	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	Norway	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	Sweden	.	1.70	.	.	.	1.59	.	1.71	.
	Italy	.	2.21	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	Austria	.	.	.	.	.	1.82	.	.	.
	Malta	.	.	.	.	.	.	1.87	.	.
	Portugal	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.16	.
	Denmark	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1.75	.
	Catalonia	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.21	.
rest industrialized countries	USA	.	.	.	.	.	2.01	.	1.80	.
	Canada	.	1.90	.	.	.	1.99	.	1.82	.
	Australia	.	2.22	.	.	.	.	.	2.28	.
	New Zealand	.	2.37	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
east-cental europe	Estonia	.	2.44	.	.	2.29	.	.	.	.
	Poland	.	2.42	.	.	.	2.30	.	2.41	.
	Czech Republic	.	2.37	.	.	.	2.36	.	2.61	.
	Slovakia	.	2.41	.	.	.	.	2.80	.	.
	Russia	.	2.91	.	.	.	2.84	.	2.67	.
	Georgia	.	3.17	.	.	.	2.04	.	2.19	.
	Slovenia	.	2.07	.	.	.	.	2.16	.	1.99
	Latvia	.	.	.	.	.	2.80	.	2.64	.
	Romania	.	.	.	.	.	2.63	.	2.67	.
	Hungary	.	.	.	.	.	2.34	.	2.68	.
	Yugoslavia	.	.	.	.	.	2.39	.	.	.
	Albania	.	.	.	.	.	2.43	.	2.40	.
	Macedonia	.	.	.	.	.	2.10	.	.	.
	Croatia	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.05	2.06	.
	Ukraine	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.91	2.79	.
	Belarus	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.79	2.70	.
	Bulgaria	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.84	2.83	.
	Lithuania	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.61	2.86	.

In general, respondents feel "fairly safe" in Western Europe (1.94) and other industrialized countries (2.07). The fears are slightly higher in, New Zealand, Australia, Italy and England and Wales. The level of fear tends to be slightly higher in East-Central Europe (2.48), This difference is significant (K-W test, $\chi^2=4139$ df=2 $p<0.001$). The fear level also appear to be fairly consistent in each country not going up or down significantly across the years.

Table 3. Differences in responses to "how safe do you feel alone after dark?" across year and by country.

GLOBAL REGION	COUNTRY	Differences		
		92/96	96/00	92/00
western europe	England & Wales	1%	-4%	-4%
	Scotland		-4%	
	Northern Ireland		8%	
	Netherlands	0%	-2%	-2%
	Germany (west)			
	Switzerland		7%	
	Belgium			2%
	France		3%	
	Finland	1%	-1%	1%
	Spain			
	Norway			
	Sweden	-7%	7%	0%
	Italy			
	Austria			
	Malta			
	Portugal			
	Denmark			
	Catalonia			
rest industrialized countries	USA		-10%	
	Canada	5%	-8%	-4%
	Australia			3%
	New Zealand			
east-cental europe	Estonia*	-6%		
	Poland	-5%	5%	0%
	Czech Republic	0%	11%	10%
	Slovakia*	16%		
	Russia	-2%	-6%	-8%
	Georgia	-36%	7%	-31%
	Slovenia*	4%	-8%	-4%
	Latvia		-6%	
	Romania		2%	
	Hungary		15%	
	Yugoslavia			
	Albania		-1%	
	Macedonia			
	Croatia*		0%	
	Ukraine*		-4%	
	Belarus*		-3%	
	Bulgaria*		0%	
	Lithuania*		10%	

* Data from 1995, 1997 and 2001 have been used where available.

There is very little difference between years for any one country. Where there is data for more than one year the differences are shown in Table 3 as a percentage of the first year compared. For example, in England and Wales, there was a 4% decrease in average rating in 2000, compared to either 1992 or 1996, and only a 1% increase between 1992 and 1996. Much larger differences were seen in some East-Central European countries. In Slovakia there was a 16% increase between 1992 and 1997. Whereas, in the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Hungary there was an increase of more

than 10% in 2000, and in Georgia there was a massive decrease of over 30% after 1992. Georgia is the only country where the average response has changed from feeling a "bit unsafe" to "fairly safe". For over half of the countries there was insufficient data to make such a comparison.

How safe do you feel when you are at home alone after dark?

This question was only asked in the 2000 survey. As with the previous question, the possible answers to this question can be given a value:

1 = very safe

2 = fairly safe

3 = a bit unsafe

4 = or very unsafe

By taking the average of the responses within each country and for each gender, where the question was asked, it is possible to get a simple comparison between countries on the level of fear, see Table 4. The higher the number the greater the average fear.

Table 4 Responses to "how safe do you feel when you are at home alone after dark?" by gender and country for the year 2000, and actual reported crime.

GLOBAL REGION	COUNTRY	YEAR OF SURVEY			population	
		Male	Female	2000	(millions)	risk per 1000
western europe	England & Wales	1.34	1.59	1.47	52.00	99.44
	Scotland	1.27	1.51	1.40	5.00	84.63
	Northern Ireland	1.34	1.64	1.52	1.60	74.95
	Netherlands	1.22	1.45	1.34	16.10	72.90
	Germany (west)	.	.	.	82.40	76.03
	Switzerland	.	.	.	7.20	37.60
	Belgium	1.36	1.70	1.54	10.30	82.39
	France	1.30	1.57	1.45	5.20	74.19
	Finland	1.12	1.39	1.26	5.20	74.19
	Spain	.	.	.	41.00	22.52
	Norway	.	.	.	4.50	73.35
	Sweden	1.17	1.43	1.31	8.90	136.51
	Italy	.	.	.	57.50	38.36
	Austria	.	.	.	8.10	69.17
	Malta	.	.	.	0.40	42.54
	Portugal	1.65	1.81	1.75	10.00	36.33
	Denmark	1.10	1.28	1.20	5.40	93.38
	Catalonia	1.36	1.59	1.50		
	Total	1.28	1.54	1.43		
rest industrialized countries	USA	1.19	1.45	1.34	291.00	39.89
	Canada	1.25	1.53	1.39	31.30	75.17
	Australia	1.43	1.76	1.61	19.50	73.30
	New Zealand	.	.	.	3.80	112.43
	Total	1.31	1.60	1.47		
east-cental europe	Estonia	1.96	2.53	2.25	1.30	44.46
	Poland	1.75	2.05	1.92	38.60	32.82
	Czech Republic	1.42	1.81	1.62	10.20	38.38
	Slovakia	.	.	.	5.40	16.45
	Russia	1.54	1.91	1.78	144.10	20.49
	Georgia	1.58	1.90	1.75		
	Slovenia	1.29	1.61	1.47	2.00	33.81
	Latvia	1.39	1.64	1.53	2.30	21.83
	Romania	1.87	2.29	2.09	22.40	15.79
	Hungary	1.51	1.83	1.70	9.90	45.52
	Yugoslavia	.	.	.		
	Albania	1.90	2.13	2.02		
	Macedonia	.	.	.		
	Croatia	1.31	1.70	1.54		
	Ukraine	1.62	2.13	1.93		
	Belarus	1.72	2.08	1.94		
	Bulgaria	1.94	2.34	2.16	8.00	17.34
	Lithuania	1.96	2.37	2.21	3.50	23.53
	Total	1.65	2.00	1.85		

The values are all lower than the corresponding values in Table 2, which implies that respondents felt safer in their home alone at night than elsewhere. Females were slightly more fearful on average compared to males and this was consistant across different countries. There is a similar difference between regions with the East-Central countries having an average rating slightly higher than western Europe and the rest of the industrialized countries.

The last two columns consider the number of recorded crimes within a country per 1000 of the population based on a report from Barclay and Tavares (2003). Interestingly the recorded crime is much higher in many of the Western European Countries and industrialized countries. The USA, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Switzerland are the only exceptions. In each of these countries the rates are very similar to those shown in East-Central European Countries. The low rates either represent a low crime area, or a tendency for crime to go unreported. It is likely that both of these possibilities occur in the sample of countries, but it is unclear which one applies in any one country. It can be inferred that fear of crime is higher in areas where the rate of recorded crime is lower, with the exception of the USA.

What would you say are the chances that over the next twelve months someone will try to break into your home?

The possible answers to this question can be given a value:

1 = very likely

2 = likely

3 = unlikely

By taking the average of the responses within each country and for each year, where the question was asked, it is possible to get a simple comparison between countries on the level of fear, see Table 5. The higher the number the greater the average fear.

Table 5 Responses to "What would you say are the chances that over the next twelve months someone will try to break into your home?" by year and country.

GLOBAL REGION	COUNTRY	YEAR OF THE SURVEY								
		1989	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	2000	2001
western europe	England & Wales	2.54	2.41	.	.	.	2.44	.	2.57	.
	Scotland	2.61	.	.	.	.	2.66	.	2.71	.
	Northern Ireland	2.71	.	.	.	.	2.64	.	2.66	.
	Netherlands	2.62	2.61	.	.	.	2.62	.	2.73	.
	Germany (west)	2.40	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	Switzerland	2.52	.	.	.	.	2.65	.	2.65	.
	Belgium	2.59	2.52	.	.	.	.	.	2.40	.
	France	2.55	.	.	.	.	2.35	.	2.46	.
	Finland	2.91	2.84	.	.	.	2.88	.	2.86	.
	Spain	2.44	.	2.50	2.55	.	.	.	.	.
	Norway	2.75	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	Sweden	.	2.61	.	.	.	2.82	.	2.83	.
	Italy	.	2.49	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	Austria	.	.	.	.	.	2.84	.	.	.
	Malta	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.63	.	.
	Portugal	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.37	.
	Denmark	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.76	.
	Catalonia	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.60	.
rest industrialized countries	USA	2.61	.	.	.	.	2.70	.	2.80	.
	Canada	2.61	2.59	.	.	.	2.62	.	2.64	.
	Australia	2.41	2.36	.	.	.	.	.	2.51	.
	New Zealand	.	2.30	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
east-cental europe	Estonia	.	2.35	.	.	2.54	.	.	2.40	.
	Poland	.	2.52	.	.	.	2.68	.	2.64	.
	Czech Republic	.	2.28	.	.	.	2.38	.	2.38	.
	Slovakia	.	2.44	.	.	.	.	2.21	.	.
	Russia	.	1.94	.	.	.	2.12	.	2.17	.
	Georgia	.	1.71	.	.	.	2.58	.	2.50	.
	Slovenia	.	2.14	.	.	.	.	2.32	.	2.43
	Latvia	.	.	.	.	.	2.14	.	2.26	.
	Romania	.	.	.	.	.	2.33	.	2.50	.
	Hungary	.	.	.	.	.	2.57	.	2.55	.
	Yugoslavia	.	.	.	.	.	2.11	.	.	.
	Albania	.	.	.	.	.	2.48	.	2.32	.
	Macedonia	.	.	.	.	.	2.27	.	.	.
	Croatia	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.50	2.29	.
	Ukraine	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.14	1.97	.
	Belarus	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.29	2.05	.
	Bulgaria	.	.	.	.	.	.	1.94	2.03	.
	Lithuania	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.23	2.17	.

Respondents felt that the likelihood of a Break into homes was, on average, least likely in Georgia and Russia in 1992, and in Bulgaria in 1997, see Table 5.and 6 This situation appears to be no better in later years in Russia and Bulgaria, but there was an enormous improvement in ratings in Georgia in 1996 compared to 1992. Belgium was the only Western European country to show a consistently increasing feeling that a break in was likely between years.

Table 6. Differences in responses to "What would you say are the chances that over the next twelve months someone will try to break into your home?" across year and by country.

GLOBAL REGION	COUNTRY	Differences		
		89/92	92/96	96/00
western europe	England & Wales	-5%	1%	5%
	Scotland			2%
	Northern Ireland			1%
	Netherlands	0%	1%	4%
	Germany (west)			
	Switzerland			0%
	Belgium*	-3%		-5%
	France			5%
	Finland	-2%	1%	-1%
	Spain	2%		
	Norway			
	Sweden		8%	1%
	Italy			
	Austria			
	Malta			
	Portugal			
	Denmark			
	Catalonia			
rest industrialized countries	USA*		4%	4%
	Canada	-1%	1%	1%
	Australia*	-2%		7%
	New Zealand			
east-cental europe	Estonia*		8%	-6%
	Poland		7%	-2%
	Czech Republic		4%	0%
	Slovakia*		-9%	
	Russia		9%	3%
	Georgia		51%	-3%
	Slovenia*		9%	4%
	Latvia			6%
	Romania			7%
	Hungary			-1%
	Yugoslavia			
	Albania			-6%
	Macedonia			
	Croatia*			-9%
	Ukraine*			-8%
	Belarus*			-10%
	Bulgaria*			5%
	Lithuania*			-3%

* Data from 1995, 1997 and 2001 have been used where available.

When looking at burglary there may also be a fear of crime lag factor. For example, in the United Kingdom in recent years burglary has been a high priority for policing and burglary figures have improved. But highlighting the crime and publicising the success can increase the fear of crime for a period leading to a fear of crime time lag. That is a crime is going down but fear of crime does not go down as fast and may initially rise.

Chapter 3 - Main Findings

Definition

In the Oxford English Dictionary (7th Edition 1989):

- fear is defined as *'painful emotion caused by impending danger or evil, state of alarm'*

- safety is defined as *'being safe, freedom from danger or risks'*

Even though these concepts have different meanings, they are often used interchangeably in fear of crime research, initiatives etc. During the course of this research many different expressions were found for fear of crime. These not only include 'fear of crime' and 'feelings of safety', but also 'security', 'probability of victimisation', 'afraid', 'fearful' and 'worried'.

Fear of crime is a very abstract concept. It means different things to different people. "Traditionally the concept of 'fear of crime' has been treated in an abstract way. Unlike a mugging[2] or a theft, fear of crime has not been considered as a tangible phenomenon. It does not refer to a particular incident that may be circumscribed in time and space. Instead, it refers to ways of thinking, feeling and acting that are more universal and somewhat more difficult to qualify" (Pinkerton James, 1993). However, as Fattah and Sacco (1989) point out, those who are vicariously victimised, like those who are directly victimised, may be said to experience the costs of crime.

"Generally, fear of crime is taken to represent individuals' diffuse sense of danger about being physically harmed by criminal violence. It is associated with concern about being outside the home, probably in an urban, alone and potentially vulnerable to personal harm" (Stanko, 1996).

Fear of crime covers a wide range of reactions to the thought of becoming a victim of crime, from mild anxiety, such as that brought on by the thought of being burgled, to real terror, such as feeling brought on by walking down a quiet lane at night and hearing footsteps behind. It can be felt by an individual through to a whole company. For example not investing in an area where fear of crime is reputed to be high

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[2] Typically a physical assault in the street and then theft of property

Methodological issues

Fear of crime is extremely difficult to measure, mainly because it is based on people's perceptions and these perceptions can fluctuate. In some research, issues of 'safety' and 'fear of crime' are measured separately and in some research they are measured intertwined. In some studies the term 'safety', 'security' and 'fear' are measured in a general sense, in others they are broken down into different types of safety, for example at certain times of the day or night or in particular places.

Attempting to quantify fear of crime is a complex and difficult task (Atkins et al 1991). Fear of crime is difficult to define and measure so evaluating measures to reduce it also have inherent difficulties. A further complication when trying to evaluate good practice in reducing fear of crime studies is that the outcomes are also measured in different ways, for example sometimes as a reduction in fear of crime overall, sometimes at specific times or in specific places.

There is no clear consensus in the existing research as to what the 'fear of crime' is, or how it can be measured. As Hale (1996) observes, "…one of the principal reasons for conflicting findings concerning fear of crime lies in the confusion and lack of agreement in the construction of empirical instruments" (Hale, p. 80). A further difficulty is the lack of a threshold for measuring an 'acceptable' level of fear of crime.

According to Farrall (1997), our understanding of the fear of crime is a product of the way it has been researched rather than the way it is. Several commentators have raised doubts over the validity of the ways used to generate these findings. A range of methodological problems have been identified which cumulatively raise the possibility that the incidence of the fear of crime has been significantly misrepresented.

There is concern as to the most accurate way of measuring the fear of crime is surveys of the public. Research by Farrall (2003) suggests that being surveyed can, in itself, exaggerate people's feelings about crime. There can also be discrepancies depending on when you do surveys and how you ask the questions (Crime Reduction Toolkits, 2003). Another weakness is that in many of the surveys on fear of crime, respondents are required to answer hypothetical questions, for example on whether they feel safe when going to, for instance, the town centre late at night. In reality, many respondents do not go to the town centre at night, so they need to imagine how they would feel if they did go.

Background

Considerable research has been carried out in the area of fear of crime and the findings are often diverse and contradictory.

Research exploring the emotional responses to crime experienced by citizens of several major European and North American countries has suggested that a significant proportion of the residents of these countries 'fear' crime (Farrall and Gadd, 2004). However, the research also suggests that few people fear crime frequently.

Chambers and Tombs (1984) reviewing the 1982 British Crime Survey Scotland found that "more than half of the respondents (58%) said that at some time in the past they had been concerned about the possibility of being a victim of crime".

Fear of crime is a prevalent social problem. It can constrain a person's social activities, affect travel and many different types of activities, creates psychological stress and can often limit people's liberty to come and go as they please.

Recent years have witnessed an increased interest in the fear of crime from both academics and policy makers. A wealth of studies, including several sweeps of the British Crime Survey   have concluded that the fear of crime impinges upon the well being of a large proportion of the population (Farrall, 1997). According to Hale (1996), the fear of crime represents a major growth area since the 1960's for academic research and policy initiatives, particularly in the USA and Britain.

Fear only becomes a problem when it inhibits people's well being and restricts their social life (Yin, 1985). Fear of crime can affect many people's daily lives. According to David Bamber, Home Affairs Editor (2003), one in three people has been deterred from travelling through fear of robbery, physical attacks and vandalism.

Thirty one per cent of respondents to the British Crime Survey interviews conducted in the 2001/02 financial year said that fear of crime had a moderate impact on their quality of life, with a further six per cent saying that their quality of life was greatly affected by this. Yet the same survey put the statistical probability of becoming a victim of violent crime at just four percent. The theory of the 'disproportionate fear of crime' began to appear in official statements. But worry about crime is also 'associated with' real facts. There is an obvious gap between the public perception of crime and the reality. But it also interesting to note the discrepancy between actual and fear of crime levels narrows in high crime areas. Suggesting that people who suffer the most are far better at predicting their risk

However, fear of crime can be useful. If people did not worry about crime they would not lock their doors when leaving the house, nor would they avoid secluded alleyways or poorly lit streets at night. Simple precautions can reduce the risk of becoming a victim (Wiles, Simmons and Pease, 2003). If fear of crime is reduced too much, caution could also be reduced and this could lead to increased exposure to victimisation risks.

Worry about crime is sometimes measured separately from fear of crime. In 1999, 32 per cent of the British Crime Survey's respondents said that it was 'very likely' that something would be stolen from their car in the following twelve months. Twenty nine per cent said they expected to have their car stolen in the next year (Dennis, 2004). Results from British Crime Survey interviews conducted in the 2001/02 financial year indicated that 51% and 41% of people respectively, were worried about becoming a victim of burglary and mugging (Crime Reduction Toolkit, 2003).

An alternative approach to fear of crime is shown in research by Dr Stephen Farrall, who suggests that fear of crime may not be as serious a problem as previously imagined by Britain's politicians and policy makers. The study found that such fear has been routinely over estimated in previous surveys. His report calls into question current official calculations as to the extent of the problem. Contrary to previous research suggesting that about a third of people in the UK were 'very' worried about the fear of crime, the new study found that only around 15 per cent had felt 'very' or 'fairly' fearful in the past year. Of these, only eight per cent felt fearful frequently.

Of course, as suggested above, fear of crime, like crime itself, is not evenly distributed and will vary considerably, often dependent on local crime rates and publicity.

Reasons for fear of crime

According to the British Crime Survey, people are fearful of crime for a number of reasons, including: they live in an area of high crime, they have already been a victim of crime, they feel vulnerable, they are poorly informed, they feel powerless and isolated or they are subjected to persistent anti social behaviour (Crime Reduction Toolkits, 2003).

Early studies concentrated on two main factors as possible correlates of fear. Firstly, the concept of vulnerability (physical, psychological or economic), and secondly, the level of crime experienced directly through knowledge of neighbours' experiences or popular media coverage. Much of this work was stimulated by the observation that fear of crime was more prevalent than the actuality of crime itself and that the most fearful often appeared to be those least at risk (women and the elderly).

Theoretical Models of Fear of Crime

There are three main models of fear of crime (Crime Reduction Toolkit).

Victimisation Model

In this model high crime levels lead to higher numbers of victims, resulting in higher levels of fear due to anticipation of becoming a victim.

Vulnerability Model

This model proposes that personal characteristics are a contributory factor in people's fear of crime. Some people perceive themselves to be physically vulnerable and therefore unable to resist an attack on them or their property. Others perceive themselves as being socially vulnerable and fear being exposed to victimisation that they won't have the capacity to resist.

Social Control Model

According to this model, social control, or rather a lack of social control, is the source of fear. This model also covers concerns about perceived inactivity by those in authority and increased social disorder. Incivility, disorder and neighbourhood decline lead to actual or symbolic threats which enhance fear of crime.

Vulnerable groups

The effects of crime and disorder are not evenly distributed. They are concentrated within certain communities, and the most vulnerable people in society are affected (Crime Reduction Toolkits, 2003). Two groups, the elderly and women, are seen to be particularly disproportionately worried about crime. Age and gender, differences in lifestyle, experience of crime and understanding of societal violence predict variability in perceived risk and fear of personal violence (Tulloch, 2000). This is seen to be consistent right across Europe not varying by region or country.

Physical vulnerability

Age

Vulnerability seems to be particularly helpful in explaining seemingly disproportionate fear levels among women and the elderly. In research by Killias and Clerici (2000), a representative sample of Switzerland's population (n=726) was interviewed on various aspects of the fear of crime in the public sphere. All respondents were asked how they assessed their own ability to escape or resist in case of an attack by a young assailant. It concluded that, in comparison to demographic and contextual (neighbourhood) variables, physical vulnerability seems to play an important and consistent role in the genesis of fear of crime.

Women and the elderly are found to have an objectively comparatively low rate of victimisation and a subjectively high fear of crime. Young men, in contrast, have a high-risk rate and a lower fear.

The British Crime Survey found that older people's risk of experiencing a household or a personal crime is much lower than for other age groups. Despite their lower level of victimisation, older people have similar levels of worry for most crime types to those of other age groups. Older women are more likely than older men to experience fear of crime. Older people's disproportionate levels of fear of crime may be explained by the fact that they suffer from worse health than other age groups and the British Crime Survey found that people who perceive their health to be 'bad' or 'very bad' worry more about crime than people who perceive their health to be 'fair' or 'very good'.

A report entitled 'Crime Prevention for Older Australians' by Pinkerton James (1993) found that, although fear of crime is experienced more by elderly women than elderly men, fear cuts across socioeconomic barriers and bears no relationship to the actual level of crime in particular neighbourhoods. In fact, one of the most fearful groups was found to be single, elderly people living alone in comparatively trouble free areas. Their fears, apparently, stemmed not from direct experience, but from a general vague perception of crime statistics (Midwinter, 1990).

Another explanation is that it is a lack of social cohesion, with its corresponding level of individual social isolation, that is the major factor in who, among the elderly, are the most fearful of crime (Pinkerton James, 1993).

However, according to LaGrange and Ferraro, the impact of age on fear of crime is not only overestimated, but also misplaced. The elderly, they claim, are no more afraid of crime than anybody else when it is measured concretely, but they are somewhat more fearful of, or more anxious about crime when it is expressed as a general, 'formless' fear. Typically, older people adopt lifestyles that protect themselves from risk (Tulloch et al, 1999).

'Crime, Policing and Justice: the Experience of Older People' (Chivite-Matthews and Magg 2002) collates findings from the British Crime Survey to create a perspective of crime and the over 60's. The key findings from this report indicated that older people's risk of suffering from a household or a personal crime is much lower than other age groups and older people are more likely to report violent incidents of crime to the police and much less likely to suffer from repeat victimisation. From 1991 to 1999 the share of incidents of crime against the over 60's has remained more or less constant-between 12 per cent and 14 per cent.

Pinkerton James (1993) asks why the elderly are fearful of crime. One of the reasons offered is their increased vulnerability. A high prevalence of reduced or low income means that any loss of economic resources is more serious. Even the problems of replacing pension books, library tickets, cheque books and other documentation after a purse snatch may become more demanding and tiresome for older people (Midwinter, 1990). Ageing is a period of decreasing physical strength and agility, which means resistance is both less effective and more dangerous than for younger persons. Even relatively minor injuries may result in serious and perhaps permanent physical damage to the older victim and psychological effects can be devastating.

It is not surprising that older people are particularly fearful of being the victim of street crimes (Midwinter, 1990). The increased risks involved, which are often magnified by social isolation, are an integral part of this fear.

Another significant aspect of fear of crime amongst the elderly is the over-dramatisation of certain crimes in the media. Once again, social isolation affects older people's feelings of vulnerability; the media is often the only form of contact with the outside world (Pinkerton James, 1993).   Another example from a focus group of elderly Afro Caribbean women in a small market town in the United Kingdom, asked if they were aware of any actual crimes in their neighbourhood, the answers were negative. But when then asked if they went out at night, again their response was no and the reason given was because they were frightened of crime. Further questions suggested that their fear was driven by the general media emphasising crime and not the local reality

Gender

Gender has emerged as probably the biggest single demographic factor related positively to fear of crime. Women's fear of crime has been described as stemming from heightened social and physical and social vulnerability, from fear of rape, from general fear of men, from fear for their families or from irrationality (No author).

The British Crime Survey (2001) found that women, irrespective of their age, are more worried than men about being:

- Burgled

- Mugged

- Physically attacked

- Racially attacked

- Insulted or pestered

The Islington Crime Survey, conducted by the Centre for Criminology in an inner city area of London, found that there is a virtual curfew of a substantial section of the female population with over half of women often or always not going out in the dark because of fear of crime (Young, no date).

Women especially are concerned about using public transport. They are particularly nervous about the walking and waiting parts of the journey, as well as travelling at night (Crime Reduction Toolkits, 2003).

Women have come to occupy a central position in police discourse about public safety (Stanko, 1996). Yet, according to Home Office's own data, young men are most at risk of personal violence in public. Women report fear at levels that are three times that of men, yet their recorded risk of personal violence, especially assault is, by all official sources, lower than men's. Indeed, there is a mismatch between women's and men's reported risk of violent criminal victimisation and their feeling of falling victim to such violence. Those who admit feeling safest, young men, experience the greatest proportion of personally violent victimisations.

Health

Connections have also been made between levels of concern and health. Fear of crime erodes quality of life and is associated with poorer health. Those respondents who perceived their health to be in poor condition also worried more about crime than those who perceived themselves to be in good health (Chivite-Matthews and Magg 2002). Green et al (2002) found significant associations between fear of crime and health status and suggested that feelings of safety when out alone after dark is the most consistent predictor of health status. Mental health is the strongest correlate and is probably a consequence rather than a cause of feelings of safety.

People who feel physically vulnerable, whether due to age, gender or ill health, appear to experience disproportionately more fear of crime than other groups. Their fears are not linked to their risks of actually becoming a victim of crime.

Poverty

Research in Europe has found that 'Europeans with lower incomes tend to feel less safe in their neighbourhoods' (Van Dijk and Toornvliet 1996). This may be as a result of their living near to places with high crime rates and to their limited resources to deal with the consequences. The link between poverty and feelings of unsafety is illustrated by the fact that unemployed people are more likely to have high levels of feelings of unsafety: unemployed males in the EU are twice as likely to feel unsafe (19%) than those employed (8%).

The fear of crime among poor people should not be seen in isolation from other insecurities which they may experience as a result of local, national, and international processes (Pantazis, 2000).

Prior victimisation

Skogan (1995) shows that prior victimisation affects fear related attitudes and behaviour in clear and consistent ways, although the effects on different groups are themselves, consistently different.

Rural vs urban

The British Crime Survey (2001) asked people how safe they feel when walking alone in their area in the dark and when they are alone in their homes at night. The findings were that:

- People living in rural areas are less likely to report feeling fear of crime than people living in urban areas

- 8% of rural respondents compared to 15% of non-rural respondents reported feeling 'very unsafe' walking alone in their area after dark

- 15% of rural respondents compared to 22% of non-rural respondents reported feeling 'a bit unsafe'

- 1% of rural respondents and 2% of non-rural respondents reported feeling 'very unsafe' when alone in their own homes at night

- 5% of rural and 7% of non-rural respondents reported feeling 'a bit unsafe' when alone in their homes at night

- 68% of rural respondents and 55% of non-rural respondents reported that fear of crime had a minimal impact ton their lives.

The report also found that rural areas experienced lower levels of crime than urban areas.

Race

The first crime surveys consistently found that black people were more anxious about crime than were whites (e.g. Biderman, et al, 1967). Later reviews of the field, particularly Skogan (1995) reassessed these contributions, and concluded that blacks are more likely to be fearful and that there are probably good reasons for this (in America they are more likely to be victimised, and more likely to live in neighbourhoods where serious crime is more frequent). Further, among whites, residential proximity to black people is related to their fear of crime, and racial prejudice and fear of crime are related in ways independent of the proximity of whites to black people.

An article by Escholz entitled 'Racial composition of television offenders and viewers' fear of crime' explored the relationship between television viewing and the fear of crime. For African Americans there is a correlation between time spent viewing television and fear of crime. For whites, the relative frequency of African-American offenders in the television programmes is more important for predicting fear of crime than the amount of television they watch.

Findings from the UK (Salisbury and Upson 2004) show that people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were more likely to experience high levels of worry about burglary, car crime and violence than white people. This was found to be generally the case even when the type of area lived in and experiences of crime were allowed for.

Environment

As well as individual fears and concerns, some situations and circumstances can also contribute to a heightened fear of crime, in particular the environment and how people travel to and from it. Certain environments can foster fear of crime. Narrow alleyways, subways, poor street lighting and the design of many housing estates can all make people reluctant to use them for fear of crime. Residential building can also affect residents' fear of crime levels far more significantly than it affects their risk of crime; "the larger the building, the higher the level of residents' fear" (Newman and Franck, 1980). In a study of 407 adults living in 21 tower blocks in the city of Liverpool, Green et al (2002) found that fear of crime is generally much lower in the home than in Britain as a whole and much higher out on neighbouring streets at night. the report concludes that elderly residents believe tower blocks provide safe accommodation. However, feelings of safety in these 'fortresses' do not generally extend to walking in neighbouring streets.

The British Crime Survey 2001 identified that levels of concern about crime and the fear of crime were high in areas where the interviewer assessed physical disorder to be commonplace (Kershaw et al, 2001). Those who perceived high levels of disorder in their area were more concerned about crime and their own safety. The survey also revealed that those living in inner city areas and council estates with high levels of physical disorder are particularly concerned about crime and the fear of crime.

Individuals who report that they live in neighbourhoods characterised by disorder, such as crime, vandalism, graffiti, danger, noise, dirt and drugs, have higher levels of fear and mistrust. Living in a neighbourhood with a lot of perceived disorder significantly affects mistrust and the fear of victimisation, adjusting for socio-demographic characteristics. Perceived neighbourhood disorder and social ties significantly interact: informal social ties with neighbours reduce fear and mistrust that produce the effects of disorder (Ross and Jang, 2000).

Fear of crime can have a detrimental affect on a community. It can lead to a pattern of avoidance – the 'fear avoidance cycle' or 'spiral of decline'. People with choice, perceiving that they might become a victim of crime or disorderly behaviour start to avoid an area. The more people avoid the area, the greater becomes the perception of danger, and so the more the area is avoided by those with choice. Those who cannot leave the area feel increasingly isolated and reluctant to become involved in the community. Eventually, the anti-social elements start to target the area simply because there is an ever diminishing chance of censure, and in the end, what started off as a perception becomes a reality, and the danger becomes actual.

The media

General levels of fear of crime have always been putatively associated with coverage in the mass media (President Commission, 1967).

Cultivation theory suggests that widespread fear of crime is fuelled in part by heavy exposure to violent dramatic programming on prime time television. The results of a study by Romer et al (2003) indicate that across a wide spectrum of the population and independent of local crime rates, viewing local television news is related to increased fear of and concern about crime.

In research by Gross and Sean (2003), local news exposure accounted for an agenda setting effect but did not cultivate fear of being a victim of crime. By contrast, direct experience had no agenda setting effect but did predict fear.

According to Professor Paul Wiles, Home Office Statistics, people who read different newspapers have different beliefs about what is happening with crime (Cozens, 2003). Tabloid readers were more than twice as likely to fear being mugged, with 16 per cent admitting they were "very worried" about a possible assault compared with just 7 per cent of broadsheet readers (Cozens, 2003).

Summary of initiatives and strategies to prevent and reduce fear of crime

Tackling the fear of crime cannot be carried out in isolation. In order for any approach to be successful, it needs to take into account the many and varied social, environmental and personal factors that may be contributing to the fear of crime (Crime Reduction Toolkits, 2003).

Attempts to tackle the fear of crime can also have some unexpected outcomes. For example, lighting a dark area may reduce fear; it may also enable criminals to see their targets, leading to an increase in attacks (Crime Reduction Toolkits, 2003).

In areas that are experiencing high crime, being fearful of crime is arguably a rational response. When this is the case, the first priority there should be the introduction of an effective crime reduction strategy. Communities themselves should be encouraged to become part of the solution and have the ability to challenge crime so that it does not become tolerated and sustained in a community. It should be recognised that crime is usually only one of the factors contributing to fear of crime in these areas. Other policy tools to reduce fear of crime include:

- Putting policies in place to regenerate the neighbourhood

- Increase social cohesion

- Promote neighbourhood renewal

- Effective communication can help ensure that the community knows all about the action that has been taken to address problems. Action which is not visible to the community may not have an impact in terms of reducing fear

In those areas where local crime levels are low but the public is still unrealistically frightened about crime, a coherent fear of crime strategy could have a real impact on

public views and perceptions, and significantly reduce the fear of crime and therefore improve the quality of life (Crime Reduction Toolkits, 2003).

Research in London suggests ways to reduce fear of crime in Hackney (2003). These include keeping the public informed about the positive achievements of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, raising awareness and using public safety campaigns, maximising the use of CCTV in crime prevention, developing public reassurance activities and anti-social behaviour reduction work.

Crime Reduction Toolkit – Fear of Crime

The Home Office in the UK produce a Fear of Crime Toolkit (Crime Reduction Toolkit). It is available on the web (www.crime-reduction.gov.uk/toolkits) and is primarily intended for use by local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs). The toolkit it broken down into the following sections:

- Introduction. This contains a Fear of Crime Matrix which is designed to assist partnerships identify local fear of crime issues and indicate the best approach for their area. It provides advice on approaches when there is high crime, high fear; low crime, higher fear in addition to three theoretical models for fear of crime.

- Why people are fearful. This identifies some of the drivers for people's fear of crime: living in an area of high crime, already having been a victim of crime, feeling vulnerable, being poorly informed, feeling powerless and isolated, being subject to persistent anti-social behaviour and other factors (the environment and transport).

- The bigger picture. This includes sections on joined up government and academic research.

- Measuring fear. This provides details of questions asked in the British Crime Survey and guidance on how problems with measurement can be overcome to some degree.

- Putting it into practice. Both within the partnership and the wider community.

- Good communication. Fear of crime can be generated by word of mouth, media coverage and lack of information from the authorities. This section of the toolkit examines what can be done to help reduce fear of crime through good communication, for example understanding the relationship between risk and fear; the best way of getting the message across, working with the media, talking to the public. It also provides practical advice on damage limitation and many practical ideas to improve communication.

> This toolkit provides exceedingly comprehensive information and advice to local authorities on how to reduce fear of crime. However, as it is intended as a guide, it is not possible for it to be evaluated.

Community Cohesion

If social interaction builds interpersonal commitments which generate feelings of security, less cohesive communities may benefit from increased levels of interaction among residents. Stronger, more cohesive communities can effectively take action against such things as abandoned buildings or noisy neighbours. It is also important to encourage interaction between all members of the community, but particularly intergenerational communication (Pinkerton James, 1993). An individual's alliances and connections with neighbours can buffer the negative effects of living in a neighbourhood characterised by disorder on fear and mistrust (Ross and Jang, 2000).

Pinkerton James (1993) suggests that residents in poor areas often experience greater difficulty in developing a sense of community. In these instances community involvement and a multi agency approach are crucial to any crime prevention and fear reduction programmes for elderly people. Specific problems in specific areas can be targeted.

If fear of crime is caused by individual anxieties or distorted information which exaggerates the actual risk, it may be possible to reduce this fear through community confidence building strategies. These may lead to more social cohesion. Pinkerton James (1993) suggests the following measures to reduce fear of crime amongst the elderly:

- Hold regular meetings to keep older people informed of crime levels in their local areas and place particular emphasis on the fact that the elderly are not special targets of crime

- Monitor crime reporting in the mass media to promote a more moderate and less sensationalist picture of crime in the community

- Use the local media to promote community awareness programmes for older people, to let them know what services are available in their local community

- Promote a more positive picture of ageing in the general community by portraying older people as a resource, not a burden

- Engender a feeling of order in the community by addressing such problems as litter, graffiti, etc. A perception of incivilities increases older people's fear of crime

- An increased police presence may lead to more positive judgements about the police, and greater satisfaction with the performance of the police role.

According to Pinkerton James (1993), all of these would ideally be achieved at the community level under the auspices of local government. Local councils could, in fact, act as the umbrella organisation in integrating the expertise of relevant service providers, educational institutions, the police, and older people's organisations.

Designing out crime

In many areas, the fear of crime is nearly always worse than the reality of crime. Designing out crime is not only about reducing physical opportunities to commit a crime it is also about influencing people's perceptions about an area and reassuring them it is safe. To reduce the fear of crime it is necessary to remove the 'Environmental Cues'. These are the signs of urban decay, poverty and a general lack of respect for the environment, for example litter, broken windows, illegal fly posting, signs of vandalism and graffiti. These 'cues' are recognised both by offenders and the rest of the community. To the offender they will suggest a safe environment to commit crime to the residents it suggests an area of risk and fear. Broken windows theory (Kelling 1982) proposes that reducing fear of crime involves the creation of a non-threatening environment in which people instinctively feel safe through the establishment of minimum levels of order, where crime is remarkable rather than the norm and where the overall 'climate' encourages good, rather than bad behaviour. It also suggests that if problems do occur, such as 'broken windows', they have to be dealt with rapidly. If not, the message to offenders and the community is no one cares and it is safe to commit minor crime. This can then be the start of the 'spiral of decline' discussed earlier.

Improving the physical environment can have an effect on crime and the fear of crime. Open visible spaces, improving lighting, natural surveillance and the physical appearance of an area and the creation of defensible space can all have an impact on crime as well as fear of crime. The application of higher than average environmental maintenance standards in high crime areas could help to maintain better appearances.

Many crime prevention schemes focus on environmental changes, not only to reduce actual crime but also to make people feel safer. The belief is that if people feel ownership over local space and feel happy and confident using it, there will be less fear of crime and fewer opportunities for crimes to be committed.

Pinkerton James (1993) suggests various CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) methods of improving feelings of insecurity which older people may feel. These include:

- Examination of traffic areas to ensure optimum safety for older pedestrians and perhaps increase pedestrian areas.

- Reassess underpasses, subways, access to communal properties, multi storey car parks, poorly lit areas and all other environmental trouble spots which provide sport for criminals and vandals.

- A sensitivity to public housing tenants. Special needs and anxieties of older people should be taken into account.

- Carefully consider possible sites for facilities for older people. These would include day care or residential care homes.

- A clean tidy, orderly area is important for reducing levels of fear in individual communities.

- Encourage social cohesion and reduce the isolation which characterises the lives of many older people (Pinkerton James, 1993).

The Women's Office

In Vienna, the Co-ordination Office for Planning and Construction Geared to the Requirements of Daily Life and the Specific Needs of Women ensures that the needs of women, with respect to architecture, urbanism, traffic and landscape planning are given more attention. It believes that it is essential to examine and capture women's requirements regarding their built environment in a targeted way and take account of this when planning. The office wants to promote design-related possibilities to increase both actual security levels and people's subjective sense of security.

The objective is that in the future, 'architectural anxiety spaces' will be avoided in the planning stage and public spaces will be designed to ensure women can feel safe when using them.

Their criteria for the design of safe public spaces are:

- Structuring so that bearings are easier to find

- Uncluttered views and clear visibility

- Artificial and natural lighting

- Accessibility

- Busy public spaces

- Responsibility, positive social control

- Avoiding conflict

The Women's Office have already participated/created the following schemes in Vienna:

- 'Guidelines for a Safe City' and 'Safe Housing Developments' These two publications were produced in order to enable planners and architects to take account of the security aspect in their designs.

- Assessment of Vienna Underground. The designs for the station buildings and their environs, passageways, staircases, intermediate storeys, platforms and also general plans were evaluated with a view to their user friendliness and security. The main points were: helping users find their bearings, creating clearly structured, transparent spaces, providing good lighting, social control high-quality waiting spaces and making sure that all public spaces would be busy at all time of the day.

- Design and security concept for the housing development 'Am Schopfwerk'. On this estate tenants had expressed unease and dissatisfaction caused by badly structured access pathways, general degradation and lack of lighting fixtures as well as increasing vandalism. The estate was upgraded and the Office advised on improving the overall image of the estate, the use of lighting and design, how to alleviate the architectural defects through the use of colour and light.

> Having an objective of reducing fear of crime in the group most vulnerable to it, ie women, is a positive step in the right direction. However, again, it is simply not possible to scientifically evaluate this type of innovative programme.

Neighbourhood Warden Schemes

Neighbourhood Wardens provide a uniformed, semi-official presence in residential areas. Their aim generally is to improve the quality of life in the area. Their main tasks are to promote community safety, assist with environmental improvements and housing management and contribute to community development. They may patrol, carry out concierge duties and act as 'super caretakers'.

Neighbourhood warden schemes can improve the quality of life through:

- Reducing crime

- Reducing fear of crime

- Reducing anti-social behaviour

- Improving the quality of the environment

- Building communities

Example of a Neighbourhood Warden Scheme – Stadswacht in Holland

The first Dutch Civic Warden Scheme was set up in 1989. By 2001, warden schemes existed in over 150 municipalities. The Dutch schemes concentrate on deterring crime and anti-social behaviour.

The tasks of the civic wardens include:

- Providing a conspicuous presence and issuing warnings

- Tackling anti-social behaviour

- Acting as eyes and ears for other agencies

The wardens rely on their uniformed presence and powers of persuasion, they have no specific powers. By dealing with minor incidents, the wardens help the police to spend their time on more serious crimes. Evaluations have identified strong partnerships and high quality training as major contributors to the success of these schemes. Members of the public indicated that a warden presence has a positive and sustained impact upon the fear of crime.

Example of a Neighbourhood Warden Scheme – Knowsley in the UK

In the UK, Neighbourhood Warden schemes have been evaluated by the government (Neighbourhood Warden Schemes, Good Practice Note). Knowsley was identified as being an example of good practice in reducing fear of crime.

In Knowsley wardens have introduced a 'Walking Bus' initiative. This aims to provide a safe passage for children to and from the schools on the estate.

Wardens are also reducing fear of crime by integrating vulnerable groups. They made contact with vulnerable residents, in particular the elderly, and arranged for them to be escorted to and from social activities on the estate. This was seen as being a good way to tackle both fear of crime and social exclusion together.

The impacts of the scheme were:

- The residents have begun to mention a greater sense of security

- The scheme has brought a great deal of funding into the area and have had a ripple effect, for example the Walking Bus has led to an improvement in paths and lights, relations with schools and children have improved and truancy and bullying have been reduced.

The wardens were also active in the erection of a 'safe space' for local youth. Young people were consulted on where the shelter should be place and how it should be designed and decorated. Previously, young people had been hanging around the local shops. Traders had complained that they were affecting their trade because customers felt threatened by they young people. After the erection of the shelter, traders reported a reduction in some of the anti-social behaviour by young people outside the shops.

CCTV

Britain has seen very substantial public and private investment in CCTV surveillance since the 1990s. Part of the justification for this investment has been the assumed ability of CCTV to reduce both crime and fear of crime. A major survey of crime fear levels experienced by local visitors to a city centre both before and after installation found that a majority supported the installation of open street CCTV and that CCTV would make them feel safer. However, the survey revealed no improved feelings of safety after the installation of CCTV cameras. Respondents believed that police patrols are more effective than CCTV in making people feel safer. One-way of interpreting this is to suggest that respondents prefer natural' to 'electronic' surveillance (Ditton, 2000).

Review of Scientifically Evaluated Good Practices for Reducing Feelings of Insecurity or Fear of Crime in EU Member States

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Chapter 4 - Evaluated Examples of Best Practice for Reducing Fear of Crime

Increased Police Foot Patrols

Stadtwache Bielefeld (Germany)

The 'Stadtwache' was established in the city centre of Bielefeld by the Ordnungsamt (Agency for Public Order) and Police Headquarters in June 1998. In 1998/99 the Fachhochschule fur Offentliche Verwaltung in Bielefeld academically supported the project to evaluate its effectiveness and efficiency. The police guaranteed that at least three police officers would be available per shift, as a rule two officers or a team comprising a member of the city administration patrolled the area. The members of the Ordnungsamt wear an official uniform whilst on duty. By having recognisable and visible members of the two organisations patrol the streets, the presence of law enforcement personnel was markedly increased.

The goals of the project were:

- To enhance subjective feelings of security by providing more law enforcement personnel in 'critical areas' as well as service and welfare facilities for marginal groups

- To meet the requirements of local people as well as taking into account the interests of others, such as passers-by, small shopkeepers and members of marginal groups

- To improve the streetscape by applying security and law and order standards, i.e. by correcting deficiencies reported by members of the Stadtwache

- To enhance security by reducing incidents of incorrect behaviour, e.g. stray dogs or inconsiderate or reckless cyclists

The members of the Stadtwache also participated in the following projects:

- Drug prevention (as time passed, this became one of the main tasks)

- Establishment of a working group to improve public areas

- The activities of the Social and Crime Prevention Council

- A law enforcement partnership to fight shoplifting

Results:

Crime rates were compared for both before and after the project (the first six months of 1998 and the first six months of 1999). In addition, people in the streets were asked for their opinion five months after the commencement of the Stadtwache.

The comparison of opinion polls reveals that:

- Feelings of security improved from 67% to 72%

- Problems caused by cyclists, skaters and stray dogs decreased from 61% to 26%

Responses were:

- Ratings of law enforcement personnel have improved from 'satisfactory' to 'good'

- Downtown tidiness rating have improved from 'sufficient' to ' satisfactory'

However, actual crime rates increased due to a slight increase in street crime, violent crime and shoplifting.

> Although feelings of security improved slightly and problems caused by inconsiderate behaviour decreased significantly, the results do not allow conclusions to be drawn on whether the measures of the 'Stadtwache' have actually had an impact or whether there were new trends in the city as a whole.

Improved Security Measures

Safe As Houses (UK)

The aim of Safe as Houses is to improve home security and personal safety for older and vulnerable members of the community. The objectives are to improve household security, prevent repeat house-breakings, increase personal safety, maintain Best Value, reduce fear of crime and provide a Quality Service.

Safe as Houses is a partnership based initiative designed to benefit older and/or vulnerable people within South Lanarkshire in the UK. The initiative promotes a variety of home and personal safety and security measures which contribute towards feelings of personal safety and crime prevention. These measures include locks, door chains, door viewers, personal alarms, locking window handles and intruder alarms. Police Community Safety Department officers carry out a crime prevention survey and any items recommended will be supplied and fitted free of charge by Care and Repair fitters.

To maximise security and reduce the possibility of bogus callers, an agreed password system is used between the fitter and the client.

The initiative has been closely monitored and has proven to be effective in crime prevention and promotion of home security. The main outcomes are: Over 60% of referrals come from lone females over the age of 60, over 97% of householders felt more safe and secure in their own home. Police have recorded no break-ins, intrusion or repeated crimes to any of the households using the service and no incidences of bogus callers to households using the service.

> Both statistical and qualitative evidence clearly indicate that Safe as Houses is a successful example of a partnership approach to reducing fear of crime. However, although participants felt safer in their own homes, the measures are unlikely to have affected their fear of crime when venturing outside their homes.

Neighbourhood Foot Patrols

Neighbourhood Foot Patrols Programme (NFPP) (USA) (quoted in Dalgleish and Myhill 2004).

The NFPP was an intervention intended to improve police-community relations and involve the community in preventing crime. The evaluation was a retrospective examination of the impact of the scheme and the attitude of those involved, i.e. the police the citizens.

There were ten goals in this scheme, one of which was to increase the citizens' perceptions of personal safety. The goals were to be achieved by the introduction of neighbourhood foot patrol officers whose tasks would include:

- To engage with local residents and increase familiarity. This would be achieved by providing information on local crime and by receiving feedback about problems in the community.

- To provide crime prevention advice by way of community newsletters, public education and attending residents and businesses in the area.

- To meet with school advisory councils

The scheme showed significant gains in citizen's feelings of safety. When asked whether they felt safer because of the programme, 68% of respondents replied that they did feel

safer. Some respondents stated that this was especially the case if the foot patrol officer was well 'well known and visible' (Trojanowicz 1982).

The evaluators of this interventions stated that the evidence points to the foot patrols being cost-effective.

> The patrols achieved positive results, in particular when the numbers of officers were increased.

Street Lighting

Effective street lighting is widely believed to combat fear of crime. A study on the influence of street lighting, conducted by the Home Office in the United Kingdom (Atkins et al 1991), examined whether this is indeed true. The reasons for the research were to investigate if: increased visibility reduces the opportunities for crime, increases the probability of an offender being caught and combats fear of crime.

An eight-year phased programme was implemented. It involved the installation of over 20,000 new lights in the London Borough of Wandsworth. The location, spacing and technical specifications of the lights was influenced by considerations of public safety and security as well as more traditional considerations, such as existing locations or traffic requirements.

The methodology used to examine fear of crime was interviews with residents in areas before the re-lighting measures and repeated with the same people several weeks after the streets had been re-lit. The main aims of the interviews were to ascertain changes in public perceptions, including any modifications to travel patterns, and to examine any changes in the occurrence of non-reported crimes and incivilities.

Interviews were also conducted with residents in a control area, which was adjacent to the target area and not re-lit.

The results for fear of crime in the re-lit areas were:

- There was no general increase in feelings of safety about being out in the area after dark, however, there was a statistically significant improvement in women's perceptions of security following re-lighting

- Elderly women became less worried about rape and theft from cars, but became more concerned about damage to cars by vandals

- Women in general reported an increase in concern about theft from vehicles and the perceived risk of vandalism to vehicles

However, all these changes were relatively modest and caution needs to be taken when interpreting them.

As street lighting is believed to reduce apprehension about travel after dark, respondents were also asked how many evenings in the previous week they had been out after dark, whether they had walked in the local area and whether they had been on their own on these journeys. No dramatic effects on travel habits in the re-lit area were found.

When asked if re-lighting had affected their feelings of personal safety, 56% said that it had, with 41% feeling 'more unsafe' and 15% 'much more safe'. The majority of respondents mentioned improved visibility when asked why they felt safer.

A final finding was that the re-lighting scheme was undoubtedly a popular measure and the reaction of residents was overwhelmingly favourable.

No firm conclusions can be drawn from this study. All the changes in reported feelings on fear of crime and security were relatively moderate and caution is needed when interpreting them.

Community Policing

The New Earswick Project (UK)

Details of this project are included, even though it could be said to have failed, as it provides good examples of potential pitfalls when attempting to reduce fear of crime.

Over the last two decades the demand in the UK for a visible police presence has continued to rise. A sizeable gap in expectations exists between public demand for visible patrols and level of policing that the police are able to provide.

In 2000 the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust (a UK charity) purchased an additional level of policing cover for the village of New Earswick. The village did not suffer from high crime rates, nor did it have high levels of social breakdown or neighbourhood disorder, but it did reflect the kinds of concerns over security and the growing demands for reassurance that are common in many parts of Britain.

The project aimed to contribute to a visible police presence on the community's streets to provide reassurance and security to the community.

The project was terminated approximately 18 months after its start, owing to it not living up to its expectations.

Methodology included police recorded crime figures and incident logs, extensive interviews with residents and stakeholders and observational data. Plus, baseline and repeat surveys which elicited responses from approximately half of all households in the village.

An evaluation of the initiative was conducted. The findings were:

- Recorded crime figures: these fell slightly by 5% during the first year but rose by 99% during the second year. Although this rise appears dramatic, there were low levels of crime in the village at the outset of the project and much of the rise involved less serious crime. In addition, crime in the surrounding areas also rose during the same time period.

- Two extensive surveys of local residents were undertaken at the beginning and end of the project. They revealed that:

- During the life of the project, the percentage of respondents who felt unsafe while out alone after dark in the village increased slightly from 37% to 43%

- Over a third of respondents felt that the initiative had increased their concerns over security and safety. This was reflected in the increased use of security measures and devices

- Between a third and a half of respondents felt that the initiative had been unsuccessful in meeting the aims that the residents had identified as relevant

- Over three fifths reported having no direct contact with the community police officer during the project's lifetime

- Respondents' level of satisfaction with the police declined from 31% to 22% and the percentage who felt dissatisfied increased from 30% to 40%

An unintended consequence of the project was the raising of the security threshold in the village: both the residents' perceptions of insecurity and their desire for security solutions appeared to increase.

The main weakness with the project was identified as being:

- Poor managing of expectations: the residents' expectations were raised in an unrealistic manner by the launch of the project. This serves as an illustration on how an additional policing initiative can fuel both realistic and unrealistic expectations. The lessons learned for future projects are that expectations must be managed appropriately

- The commercial nature of the initiative changed the relationship between residents and the police. This again raised expectations as to the standards of service delivery

- Lack of clarity about the purpose of the project and method. This gave significant discretion and responsibility to the individual frontline police officers implementing the initiative. This led to personal traits and characteristics of the police officers determining the nature of the policing service delivered

- Staff turnover. An unexpected high turnover of staff filling the post (three officers during the life of the project) hindered the mutually beneficial relations and helped to undermine the initiative's capacity to provide reassurance

- Tension between the broad, generic demands of public policing and the narrow demands of the private contract also undermined the project. Wider resourcing demands, particularly emergencies and major incidents, pulled the designated officer away from the privately contracted duties in the village

- Managerial control and accountability: operational control of the officer remained with the police. The purchaser of the officer and the residents of the village had little control or ownership of the officer and direct accounting for the officer's activities was limited.

Conclusions:

Implications from this initiative:

- The police need to consider how they can balance selling a public resource with providing wider police services

- Community policing require the police to follow problem-oriented solutions, which draw on community capacity and local knowledge, rather than relying on existing organisational strategies

- The possible adverse effect on surrounding areas (displacement) where additional security is absent needs to be considered. This displacement may lead to reinforcement of the idea that policing and security is a commodity available only to those who can afford it

- Policing and security alone as solutions to problems of local order may serve to exacerbate residents' fears and also may fail to engage with the issues underlying these demands

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Although this project was terminated early due to its lack of success, it provides details of why it failed and so is a useful indicator for other, similar interventions.

Summary of initiatives to reduce fear of crime

This table is intended as a summary only and is not intended for comparative purposes. Each of the projects had different aims, used different measurements and there were too many other extraneous variables to allow for comparisons to be made.

Name of project	Measures taken	Main Results
Stadwache	Increased foot patrols Targeting inconsiderate and reckless behaviour Provision of welfare assistance for marginal groups	Feelings of security improved from 67% to 72% Problems with cyclists, skateboarders and stray dogs decreased from 61% to 26%
Safe As Houses	Home and safety security measures	Over 97% of householders who used the scheme felt safer in their own homes
Neighbourhood Foot Patrols Programme	Introduction of neighbourhood foot patrols	68% of respondents felt safer
Street Lighting	New and increased lighting, for which the location, spacing and technical specifications were influenced by considerations of safety and security	No general increase in feelings of safety, except for women who felt safer after dark
The New Earswick Project	Additional levels of policing, increased visible police presence	Respondents who reported feeling unsafe when out after dark increased from 37% to 43% Over a third of respondents felt increased concerns over safety and security

We have seen that fear of crime is an abstract concept and measuring both fear of crime and interventions to reduce it are fraught with difficulties. Therefore it is logical to assume that the above interventions lack both validity and reliability, i.e. they may lack transferability: what works in a particular place at a particular time will not necessarily work in the same place at a different time or in a different place at the same time.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research

The results of this research can be summarised as follows:

1. Problems with definition and measurement. Fear of crime is an abstract concept and is dependent on the perceptions of people.

2. This research has shown that there are a limited number of scientifically evaluated examples of good practice of measures to reduce fear of crime. Research on fear of crime is mainly theoretical. Furthermore, the few examples that were found cannot be compared due to differences in definition, measurement, objectives and outcomes.

3. The fact that this research was intended to study 'scientifically' evaluated research into fear of crime brought to the fore many complex methodological issues, such as whether an abstract concept like fear of crime can ever by 'scientifically' evaluated. The conclusion appears to be that at the present time it cannot. Difficulties with definition, measurement and evaluation have been disclosed. This was illustrated by the very limited number of examples of good practice that were found. Many of the submissions were rejected because they were not sufficiently evaluated.

4. Vulnerable groups. Most research agrees that certain groups are more vulnerable than others. These are the elderly, women, those in ill health and the poor. Vulnerability does not appear to be related to actual risks of experiencing crime: it is commonly found that young males are most at risk of becoming a victim of crime and yet this group consistently show lower fear of crime rates.

5. Environmental factors. Certain features in the environment can foster fear of crime. Neighbourhoods characterised by disorder, vandalism, graffiti, noise, dirt and drugs, have higher levels of fear of crime.

6. In evaluating examples of good practice to reduce fear of crime, the neighbourhood foot patrols and the extra security measures interventions appeared to be the most successful. However, as the sample was small, and due to other methodological weaknesses already discussed, they should not necessarily be seen as practices to follow. They would need to be replicated before they could be recommended as successful interventions. From all the research and interventions reviewed, plus the fact that there are many contributory factors involved in fear of crime, it seems likely it is too simplistic to say that one intervention on its own will reduce fear of crime. It is suggested that the best way forward is to take approaches that involve a combination of interventions. The following interventions are suggested as being important in this combined approach:

   a. Increase community cohesion

   b. Improve the environment – remove all signs of neglect, improve lighting

   c. Increase partnership working, rather than see fear of crime as the responsibility of the police

   d. Increase the use of community wardens

7. Information could be found on the subject of domestic violence victims and fear of crime and this could be an area in which more research could prove to be productive

8. Little information was obtained on the role of the media in fear of crime and it seems that research has so far only scratched on the surface of the relationship between the fear of crime and media portrayals of it.

Recommendations for Future Research

Fear of crime affects the quality of life of many citizens of Europe. The main theme that has emerged from this research is that it is a complex issue, difficult to define, measure and evaluate. Therefore, what is needed is a series of measures to ensure that in the future everyone involved in fear of crime reduction has a clearer understanding of what exactly it is.

In order to achieve a clearer understanding, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Produce a standardised definition of fear of crime. This will involve close liaison between leading crime experts across Europe and, ideally, establishing a steering group for co-ordination purposes. A clear definition is a necessary starting point if future studies are to be closer to any kind of scientific evaluation. Attempts should be made to pinpoint some kind of EU-wide definition, or at the very least to provide guidance. This may entail breaking the subject down into different components, for example fear of crime and feelings of safety. But it is important that everyone involved in crime reduction in the future is aware of a clear definition and which one to use in which cases.

2. Develop a template for evaluating future initiatives to reduce fear of crime. If this is utilised by all those involved in future studies, then it will make evaluation and comparisons will be more effective. It is understood that the template would need some flexibility in order to allow for local variations, however, a consistent core could be utilised.

3. Establish what an 'acceptable' level of fear of crime is so that all future interventions have the same target threshold.

4. Commission research to examine the nature and extent of fear of crime and victims of domestic violence

5. Commission research into the relationship between the media and fear of crime. It would appear that this is an area which is likely to contribute to our understanding of the fear of crime, yet it has been significantly under-researched.

Appendix 1 - Fear of Crime Questionnaire

Fear of Crime

This questionnaire is designed to find out about your knowledge of fear of crime. An increased awareness and understanding of fear of crime is required and research is needed to identify the main drivers of fear of crime and what initiatives are working and not working to reduce it. This knowledge will allow key players working in crime reduction to target their approaches more effectively to reduce fear of crime. Information on this project and the partners involved can be found on the website of European Crime Prevention Research and Consultancy (www.ecprc.net).

Please do not feel that you need to answer every question, just answer the ones you feel you have knowledge on. Questionnaires can be printed, filled in and posted or saved to Word and emailed to the addresses at the bottom of the page.

Please feel free to pass this questionnaire on to anyone you think may be able to help with this research.

The information you supply will be used by our researchers and included in a report on fear of crime for the European Commission. All contributions will be anonymous.

Background information

(Personal data will only be used for research purposes)

Name:

Company/organisation:

Position:

Country:

Email:

Telephone:

Your knowledge of fear of crime

Do you have access to any national statistics on fear of crime in your country?

Yes   No

Do you know of any initiatives, personal, police or nationwide, to reduce fear of crime?

Yes   No

If yes, please provide details:

Are you aware of any examples of measuring, or attempting to measure, fear of crime?

Yes   No

If yes, please provide details:

Do you think fear of crime has increased, declined or remained consistent in your country over the last 10 years?

Have you any figures to back this up?

Yes   No

    If yes, can you tell us what kind of figures:

Is there any research to indicate that certain members of your society may suffer more from fear of crime?

Yes   No

    If yes, please provide details:

Do you know of any examples of Best Practice on fear of crime reduction?

Yes   No

If yes, please provide details:

Is there any additional information you would like to add that you think may be useful for this research?

Are you happy for one of our staff to contact you for further details if necessary?

Yes   No

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire and assist us with our research. If you have any comments or queries please do not hesitate to contact us at fear@ecprc.net

Questionnaires can be returned by:

Post: print out, fill in and send to:

Sharon Monahan, fax: +44 (0)1923 664910, post: BRE, Bucknalls Lane, Garston, Watford, WD25 9XX, UK

Email: save into Word and then email to fear@ecprc.net

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