

European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research

vol. 9, no. 3, 2001

Contours of a European Criminology

Editorial

Almost 10 years ago the *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research* was launched. Its aims and scope were directed at creating a European platform for criminologists. More specifically the editors opted for an orientation on policy matters. Research-reports, theoretical essays and deliberations on criminal justice policy were published on specific topics which were of great interest for policymakers. It seems that this editorial policy contributed to an emerging European criminological consciousness. This specific issue is published on the occasion of the first conference of the European Society of Criminology.

The issue aims to give a broad view on what could be called 'European criminology'. For a few subjects we have asked some specialists (also some Americans) to inform us about the state-of-the-art: organised crime, juveniles, police co-operation and restorative justice. We have also made an inventory of criminological 'activity' in Europe (institutes, research programmes etcetera). Then we invited criminologists to give their opinion on the relevance of a European criminology (and a society for that matter). As an introduction to this we invited Ineke Haen Marshall, who is an expert on both the European and the American criminal justice system, to compare these and weigh up the importance of their differences for criminology.

Ineke Haen Marshall compares the United States to Europe and discusses the differences. Comparing Europe *versus* the US is in many ways like comparing apples and oranges, yet we do it all the time. Such comparison builds on a long well-established tradition, emphasising American 'exceptionalism'. She points to differences in the 'criminological enterprise' - a very 'American' term by its explicit reference to the market-principle involved, and distinguishes the American way of 'doing science', 'doing justice', and 'doing crime'. She concludes that internationalisation of crime and crime control makes it inevitable that the future of the criminological enterprise will centre more and more around questions that transcend national boundaries. The need for a transnational or global criminology is no longer to be denied. Such worldwide criminology can only prosper through the joint efforts of criminologists from all the continents and regions of the world.

Monica den Boer stipulates that since the beginning of the 1990s, the term 'organised crime' has been high on the agenda of nearly all Member States of the European Union. However, the common interest hides a considerable differentiation. The 15 Member States not only have diverse regulations with respect to the definition of criminal law and the extent of the punishability of organised crime, they also use different prosecution priorities, models of analysis and organisational structures. Based on a European *tour d' horizon*, it may be concluded that little to no reforms within national investigative and prosecution authorities may be directly traced back to the regulatory impulses of the EU. It can be stated that the increasing acknowledgement of the problem of organised crime, including the new challenges that this poses to the collection of information and criminal investigative methods, has contributed to reforms or reorganisations.

In a relatively slow moving arena such as a juvenile justice system, seven years might seem a short time for any 'updating' of an article, as *Malcolm W. Klein* does, yet a number of changes have in fact taken place and any comparison between Europe and the US might benefit from looking at both stabilities and changes. Based on an earlier article in this journal he provides some comparisons between the European and the US situation. He also discusses two facets of juvenile justice research that he believes deserve the reader's attention. These facets are the place of the juvenile justice system in affecting crime rates, and the issue of including local communities as a variable in delinquency research.

Willy Bruggeman establishes that almost all the European countries are member countries of Interpol, the World Customs Organisation and the United Nations. Some of them are Benelux and Schengen countries, and 15 are EU Member States. With this in mind, Europe can be considered, in policing terms, as being made up of a series of concentric and overlapping circles. The 'map' shows overlapping institutional sources, territorial remits, functional specialisations and strategic emphasis. From the perspective of the 1990s, European police co-operation is an opaque and complex patchwork of institutions (official or otherwise), agreements and structures, which aim to promote different forms of co-operation. The author sketches the map, and goes into recent developments in European police co-operation, judicial co-operation and concludes with the main strategic and political developments.

Jolien Willemsens reports on the European Forum for Victim-Offender Mediation and Restorative Justice. One of the first activities of the Forum was to organise a European conference (Leuven, 1999). The general aim of the Forum is to help establish and develop victim-offender mediation and other restorative justice practices throughout Europe. It's activities now include: promotion of international exchange of information and mutual help; promotion of the development of effective restorative justice policies, services and legislation; exploration and development of the theoretical basis of restorative justice; stimulating research; and assistance in the development of principles, ethics, training and good practice.

As a matter of fact, not very much is known about 'European criminology'. *Adriënne Baars-Schuylt* therefore focuses on the state of criminology in the European countries. The article is based on various sources, including previous research and a questionnaire, as well as an Internet search. Attention is paid to various forms of European co-operation projects, the research and training facilities for criminology in the European countries, the national societies for criminology and the periodicals published in the field of criminology. The state of European criminology is more difficult to distinguish, and more like a patchwork quilt, with national orientations and language divisions. But on the whole one might say that there are possibilities for growth, both for communications (for which the Internet is a valuable medium, if updated regularly) and for European co-operation. The [appendix](#) to this article shows a list of criminological institutions in Europe, with - as far as known - the internet addresses of these institutions.

Is there a Need for European Criminology? The Editors of the *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research* have wished to stimulate a debate on this subject. Is there such a thing and if so what does it look like? This question is commented upon by a diversity of criminologists, Rosemary Barbaret, Josine Junger-Tas, Martin Killias, H-J. Schneider, Alenka Sélih, Bas van Stokkom, Henrik Tham and Lode Walgrave. It seems that there are many arguments to support a positive answer.