

Annual Report 2019

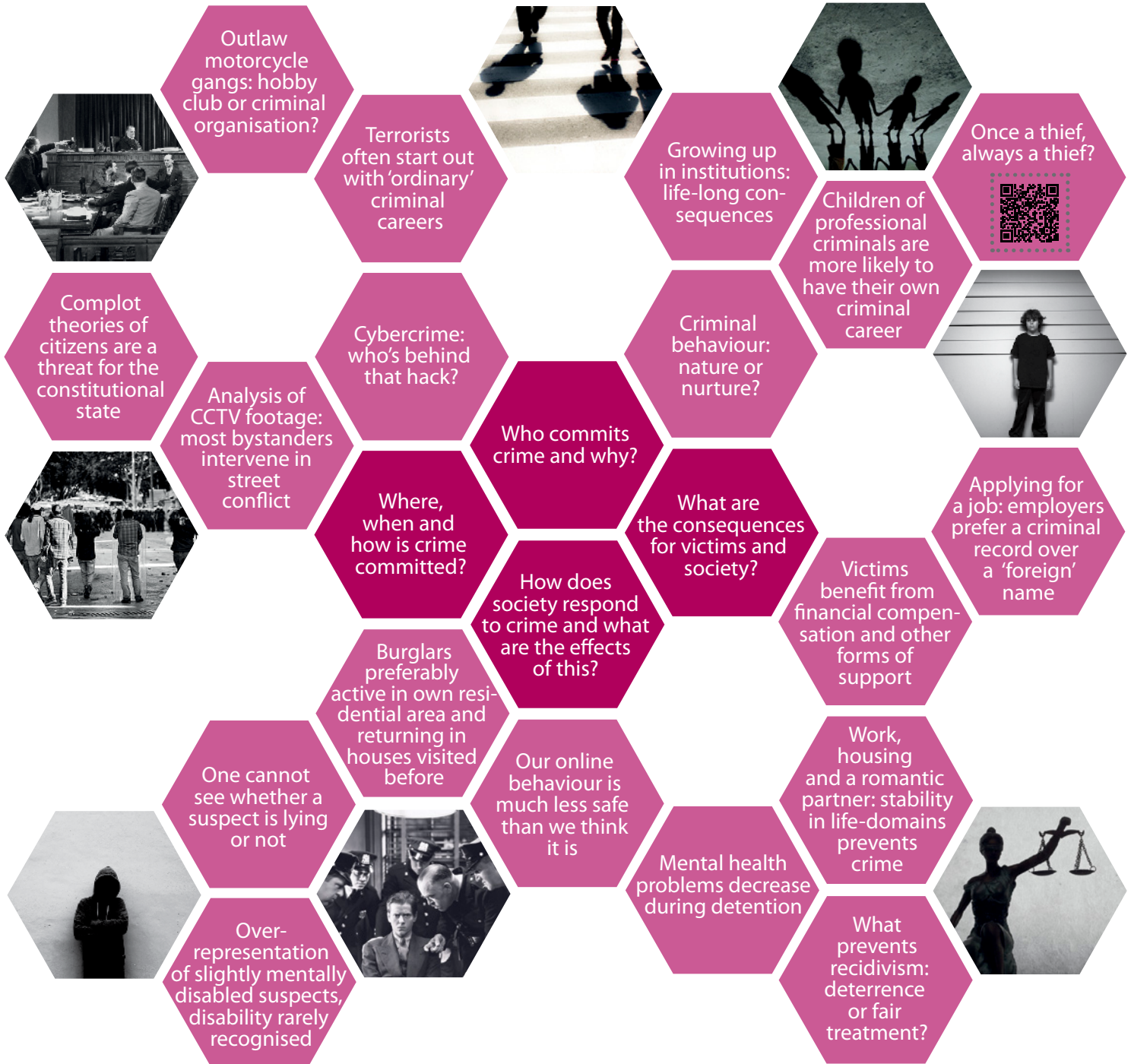
nsCr

Netherlands Institute for the Study
of Crime and Law Enforcement



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Introduction

Our four leading questions

This annual report showcases a number of highlights of NSCR in 2019: research we are proud of, grants we have earned, and exiting developments for the future.

In October, the board of the Institutes Organisation of NWO appointed me as director ad interim of NSCR. We said goodbye – fortunately not completely – to our former director Catrien Bijleveld. She continues to work at NSCR as the interim program leader of our new research pillar: research into victims and victimization. Meanwhile, the recruitment for a definitive successor is in preparation.

This new research pillar was not set up just like that, of course. In response to both the findings of the portfolio committee that advised the boards of NWO and KNAW on the so-called institutes landscape early 2019, and the report of Prof. Mols who also advised the board of NWO, NSCR has developed a new strategy. Our research program is now all about

four leading questions (or pillars as we call them): *Who commits crime and why? Where, when and how is crime committed? What are the consequences for victims and society? How does society respond to crime?* Within this program, our researchers conduct joint research from various disciplines on various themes.

Related to this, we started new initiatives for collaboration with societal partners. This resulted for instance in a joint research programme with the Victim Support Fund (Fonds Slachtofferhulp). Second, we have expressed the intention to enter into a five-year partnership with the Ministry of Justice and Security and the National Police. This partnership will start in 2020.

Finally, in 2019 we have grown considerably and further expansion is expected. I welcome all those new staff members and I thank all our scientific and support staff as well, for helping with keeping this institute such a lively and exciting place.

Peter van der Laan
Director a.i. NSCR



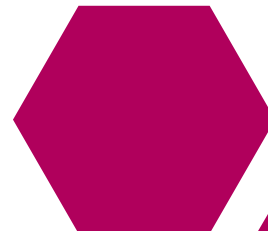
About NSCR

NSCR conducts fundamental scientific research into crime and law enforcement. Our research is substantively innovative, methodologically state-of-the-art and contributes to the solution of major societal issues in the field of security and justice.

NSCR operates at the intersection of theory, practice and policy. We focus on traditional and new manifestations of crime, testing existing theories and developing new research tools.

In order to play a significant role within national and international academic research, we set ourselves the following objectives:

- NSCR aims at fundamental, interdisciplinary research into the interaction between crime and law enforcement, with an emphasis on longitudinal studies.
- NSCR carries out academic research independently and in collaboration with universities and other scientific institutions and publishes about this in academic and professional media.
- In collaboration with other universities and institutions, NSCR is developing a national and international network of academic researchers by organising national and international congresses, seminars, symposia, workshops, and lectures on the latest insights.
- NSCR plays an active national and international role in public opinion forming.
- NSCR trains young researchers.





Short news

Director ad interim

The board of the Institutes Organisation of NWO has appointed Prof. Peter van der Laan as interim director of NSCR. He replaces Prof. Catrien Bijleveld until a definitive successor has been appointed. Bijleveld is now a member of the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR), but she continues to work at NSCR on a part-time basis. Van der Laan has worked at the NSCR since 1999. He combines this with a professorship in Probation and Parole at the Faculty of Law, VU University. He is also a member of the Council for the Administration of Criminal Justice and Protection of Juveniles (RSJ).

Faces of Science @NSCR

NSCR PhD Renushka Madarie was chosen as one of the Faces of Science of the KNAW and NEMO Kennislink. Her research focuses on account hijackers: criminals who use stolen credentials to break into someone else's online account. Read more about Renushka at www.nemokennislink.nl.

First institute manager

For the very first time, NSCR appointed its own institute manager. Angeniet Gillissen is responsible for the management of NSCR. This includes finances, ICT, data management, human resources, the secretariat and communication.

Inaugural lecture

Marijke Malsch, researcher at NSCR and professor Empirical Legal Studies at the Open University (OU), gave her inaugural lecture on Friday 11 October: *The law is too important to be left to lawyers*. During her inaugural lecture, Malsch addressed the question whether lawyers sufficiently look across the borders of their own discipline. Are they trained in other disciplines? Do they make use of what empirical research has to offer them?

PhD awarded

During a (hostile) divorce, sometimes allegations are made of sexual child abuse. Anne Smit (VU University and NSCR) conducted empirical research into these allegations and subsequent family law cases involving children. She shows that such an accusation can have far-reaching consequences. The civil court, meanwhile, faces a dilemma.

PhD awarded

The doctoral research of Maud van Bavel (VU University and NSCR) *Formal and informal guardianship* focusses on whether the relationship with the police affects the decision of informal guardians to monitor or intervene when crime occurs in their neighbourhood. She has explored this relationship through the use of field experiments, vignette studies and surveys.



Collaborations & Agreements

Collaborations with research institutions

NSCR collaborates both nationally and internationally with a large number of scientific research institutions. Various NSCR researchers are associated with a university or university of applied sciences, as a professor or lecturer. In addition, professors and researchers from scientific research institutions around the world regularly work as a [fellow](#) at NSCR.

NSCR participates in the Amsterdam Law and Behavior Institute ([A-LAB](#)), an interfaculty collaboration of the VU University Amsterdam. We also cooperate with Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR), Open University (OU), University of Amsterdam (UvA), Leiden University (UL), Maastricht University (UM), Tilburg University (UT), Utrecht University (UU) and the Hague University of Applied Sciences (HH).

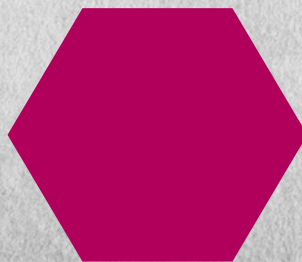
Framework agreements with societal partners

Since December 2019, NSCR has a framework agreement with the Victim Support Fund ([Fonds Slachtofferhulp](#)). This agreement makes it possible to conduct high-quality scientific research

while at the same time making a socially relevant and practically useful contribution to the care of victims. The research is conducted by NSCR.

Another large framework agreement with the National Police is in preparation. This way we can conduct long-term and extensive research programs in new or undeveloped areas. NSCR thus contributes – visible and measurable – to the improvement of the Dutch research and knowledge position in the field of crime and law enforcement.

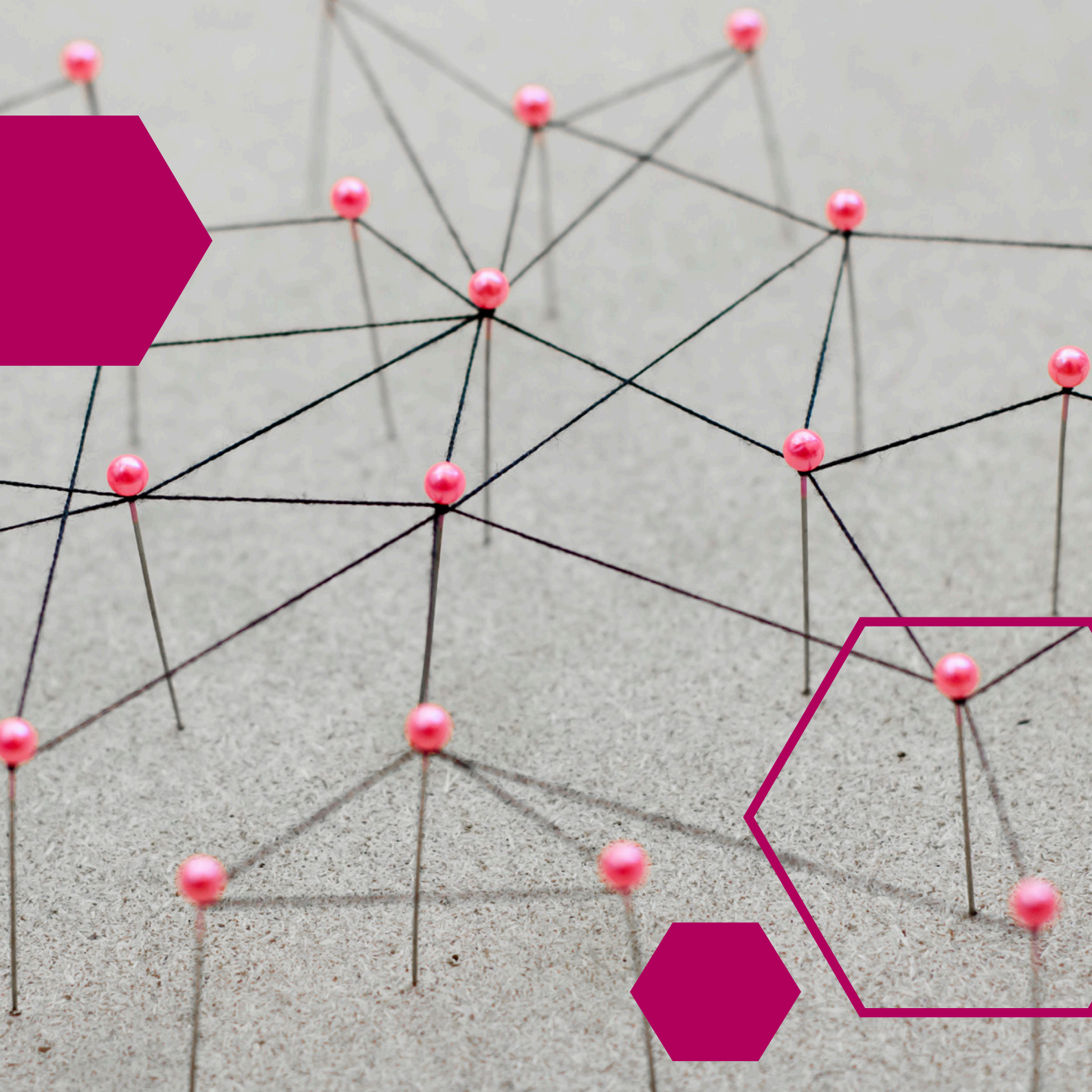
- **Ineke Sybesma, director of the Victim Support Fund:** ‘Scientific research is always at the basis of improving the position of victims. We have found a solid research partner in NSCR and therefore expect a lot from this collaboration. Our goal is to develop knowledge that leads to improvements for victims and innovations that benefit the professionals who work for victims.’
- **Peter van der Laan, director a.i. NSCR:** ‘Victim research is a new pillar in our research program. Rightly so, if you see how prominent the role of victims and victim care has become in issues related to crime and law enforcement. That is why we are very happy to cooperate with the Victim Support Fund.’



Practitioners in Residence

NSCR promotes structural exchange with policy, practice, and the media since 2015 through its Practitioners in Residence programme. Each year, a number of stakeholders from various segments of society are invited to visit NSCR, individually or as a group, over several visits. During these visits, Practitioners in Residence meet with research staff, may take part in work meetings, and generally get acquainted with the NSCR on the job. Afterwards, the Practitioners in Residence reflect on their visits and exchanges, and give feedback on the NSCR research programme during a closing session at the end of the year.

In 2019, NSCR welcomed five Practitioners in Residence: Ineke Sybesma (Victim Support Fund - Fonds Slachtofferhulp), Herman Bolhaar (National Reporter on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children - Nationaal Rapporteur Mensenhandel en Seksueel Geweld tegen Kinderen), Henri Lenferink (Mayor Leiden – Burgermeester Leiden), Joost van Rossum (National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism - Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismedbestrijding en Veiligheid) en Mohsine Semlali (Institute for Employee Insurance - UWV).



NSCR Research program

Our research program is based on four leading questions: *Who commits crime and why?*
Where, when and how is crime committed? What are the consequences for victims and society?
How does society respond to crime?

Our researchers conduct joint research from various disciplines on various themes. For example, the criminal careers of terrorists and cyber criminals, the choice of locations where burglars and poachers commit their crimes, the consequences of e-justice (#MeToo), conflicts in public spaces and the bystander effect, the effectiveness of

probation supervision, and the transfer of criminal behaviour within families. Frequently, our research is not about just one leading question, but several questions are combined. For example in research into (re)victimization in criminal or civil proceedings or in research whether prison sentences actually increase the risk of recidivism.

Who commits crime and why?

NSCR has a long-standing tradition in the study of perpetrators' criminal careers. At what point in life do offenders start offending, and when and how escalate their criminal careers? We focus on the explanation of patterns: what factors influence starting, escalating and desisting from crime?

Being born in a criminal family substantially elevates children's risk to become offenders themselves. But by no means all children who grow up in a criminal family become criminals. How is that possible? Certain life events prevent or adjust a (threatening) criminal career: finding a job, a home or a romantic partner. Besides, we focus on the criminal careers of those who commit 'new' crimes, such as cybercrime or terrorism.

Where, when and how is crime committed?

One of the key questions of NSCR research focuses on where, when and how crimes are committed. Why does crime concentrate in certain locations rather than in others? Is it because offenders happen to know these locations, as they are close to their home, job or (previous) school? Data from crime scenes and activity patterns of perpetrators and victims provide insight into the underlying choice behaviour of perpetrators.

We investigate the way in which crimes are committed and in which situational context: are bystanders and law enforcement officers present and do they have an (active) role? Carefully studying and analysing CCTV footage is a game changer for the study of crime. Researchers see real-time how situations unfold and can thus study and unravel the behaviour of perpetrators, victims and bystanders.

How does society respond to crime?

After a crime has been committed, a variety of things may happen: the victim may report the crime to the police (or not), the crime may be linked to a suspect (or not), a suspect may be found guilty (or not), and convicted offenders may end up being incarcerated (or not). NSCR studies all these aspects of the aftermath of crime and our societal response to crime and punishment.

We investigate the impact of sanctions on the lives of perpetrators and the risk of recidivism. To study sanctions we use a variety of methods and datasets. We investigate police practice through interviews and observations, and we follow convicted persons through the legal system. In addition, we conduct research in correctional institutions for juvenile offenders.

What are the consequences for victims and society?

The NSCR investigates which risk factors are associated with victimization. How can victimization be prevented and how can victims be assisted and supported? Among other things, we pay special attention to the victims of cyber crime and international crimes.

We look at the effectiveness of interventions and procedures, to the extent to which victims get what they deserve, to the societal responses to victimization and to new forms of vigilantism such as #MeToo. In addition, we study the consequences of victimization: the short-term and long-term effects on the well-being and health of victims, labour market participation, and the intergenerational transfer of crime and victimhood. The NSCR cooperates with the Victim Support Fund ([Fonds Slachtofferhulp](#)).





***'We continually see
bystanders who take
action and intervene'***

Bystander effect in street disputes disquestioned

During escalating disputes and fights on the street, bystanders nearly always intervene to help calm things down, reveals research from NSCR. Together with colleagues from Denmark and the United Kingdom, Marie Rosenkrantz Lindegaard studied street disputes recorded by security cameras in Amsterdam, Cape Town and the British city of Lancaster.

For fifty years, psychologists have assumed a bystander effect: in an emergency situation the crowd looks, but nobody intervenes. The higher the number of bystanders, the more anonymous we feel and the smaller the chance that somebody intervenes. 'But that is not at all what we found', says cultural anthropologist Marie Rosenkrantz Lindegaard, who led a large international study into the subject. 'On the contrary, we continually see bystanders who take action and intervene. This is a highly radical discovery and a completely different outcome than theory predicts.'

The greater the number of bystanders, the higher the chance of intervention

Lindegaard and her team studied a total of 219 disputes recorded by security cameras. In almost every single case, bystanders intervened to calm the situation. They separated fighting people, stood in between troublemakers or tried to make the troublemakers walk away. And the more bystanders, the higher the chance of intervention – especially in large groups there is always somebody who intervenes. Only in the case of arguments between couples and a single instance where a thief was

beaten up did bystanders fail to intervene or intervened too late. 'Apparently, people experience arguments between couples as a personal matter that does not require intervention', says Lindegaard. Also, in the case of fights between women, bystanders do not take action as quickly. 'Perhaps we see them as less dangerous.' The outcomes of the research certainly have consequences for what happens in practice: 'If the perspective shifts from the absence of help to its almost universal presence, then we can move away from the question *why doesn't anybody help?* and instead consider a new research question: *what makes an intervention successful?*'

The study appears to show that intervention in street disputes is a universal phenomenon

This study is the first large-scale test of the bystander effect in real-life. Up until now, this effect was mainly studied in the lab by asking study subjects how they would respond in a particular situation. Another striking aspect of this study is that the observations come from three different countries including the violent country of South Africa where intervening in a street dispute is not without risk. 'That appears to indicate that this is a universal phenomenon', says this Lindegaard. 'I hesitate to refer to it as altruism, but apparently we are prepared to take a risk to safeguard the moral order.' Nevertheless, peacemakers do draw a line according to a follow-up study that Lindegaard is working on: in the case of armed robberies, bystanders intervene far less.



Publication details and further reading

Philpot, R., Liebst, L.S., Levine, M., Bernasco, W., & Lindegaard, M.R. (2019). Would I be Helped? Cross-National CCTV Footage Shows That Intervention Is the Norm in Public Conflicts. *PsyArXiv*.

This article is an edited version of an interview with Marie Rosenkrantz Lindegaard and Peter Ejbye-Ernst in the Dutch newspaper de Volkskrant.

Vidi for First Aid Guide for bystanders

In 2019 Marie Rosenkrantz Lindegaard has been awarded with a Vidi grant. She will use this to deepen her research into the behaviour of bystanders in conflict situations. Lindegaard and her research group focus on questions such as *What do bystanders do when they witness potentially violent conflict situations? How can we explain differences between bystander behaviour? How does this behaviour affect the risk of conflicts escalating?* She seeks answers to these questions by accurately analyzing footage of potentially violent street conflicts. The images come from security cameras.

One of the aims of the study is to support people who become bystanders to riots and robberies: what can they do best to prevent the situation from escalating and causing damage or injury to someone? This results in the so-called First Aid Guide for bystanders. In addition, the results of the research generate hypotheses about conflict behaviour in real life, which can then be tested within experimental lab research.



***'Victims feel
like nowhere is
safe for them'***

Cybercrime has serious consequences for its victims

The victims of cybercrime can feel that nowhere will ever be safe and that they could always be confronted with the perpetrator once again. They also have a need for redress. This emerged from research into the consequences of online crime and the needs of its victims. The research was carried out by the NSCR and commissioned by the WODC.

Online crimes include offences such as hacking into a database containing personal details or using a distributed denial of service (DDoS) attack to paralyse a bank's website. 'Conventional' offences can also be committed online, however. Examples of this would be online fraud, stalking, making threats, and distributing images of child sexual abuse. Online offences differ from 'conventional' offences in the scale and duration of their consequences, and through their relationship with offline criminality.

Victims fear the consequences long after the offence

Images can be posted online, for example, during sexting, threatening or stalking. Such images can be

widely disseminated at an enormous rate, becoming visible to a practically unlimited group of people. This spread can also continue indefinitely. Nude images and other materials can move around online and then suddenly, and unpredictably, turn up again. Victims can be terrified that this will happen long after the original offence, even if the perpetrator has been successfully convicted.

When offences such as stalking, threats and intimidation are carried out online, their consequences are aggravated. Sometimes these offences are first committed in the physical world, the perpetrator then continuing them through the internet. This gives victims the idea that nowhere is safe for them.

Financial damage and feelings of shame

The financial losses incurred by the victims of cybercrime can be anything from a few hundred euros to over two hundred thousand euros. The psychological damage caused by these losses can be considerable, especially in cases in which the perpetrator first began a romantic relation with the victim online and then went on to blackmail them. Besides the financial consequences, the victim can experience feelings of shame and guilt, as well as grief over the loss of what they had taken to be a genuine love relationship.

Another possible side effect is large-scale *victim blaming* in which the social environment and even complete strangers can harass, insult, or blame the victim. The victim may then feel that their only option is to withdraw from online society altogether. These negative consequences are exacerbated if it turns out that the police are not actively trying to find the perpetrator, or if officers at the police station make disparaging or critical remarks.

Victims and experts are concerned about police facilities and capacity

According to both victims and experts, the police are inadequately equipped to fight online crime. They claim that police officers do not receive adequate training and consider this type of criminality is too complex and widespread to tackle. They are also concerned about inadequate police capacity. Victims have cited cases of frustration arising from the fact that they were not even given the opportunity to make an official report.

Identifying victims' needs

Victims of online fraud have a need for redress: the NSCR study showed that they want to see the perpetrator punished and they want financial compensation. They have a need for clear information on what can be expected from the police and the courts. And they have a need for remediation; for instance, having images removed from the internet as quickly as possible.



Publication details and further reading (in Dutch)

Leukfeldt, R., Notté, R. & Malsch, M. (2019). Slachtofferschap van online criminaliteit. Een onderzoek naar behoeften, gevolgen en verantwoordelijkheden na slachtofferschap van cybercrime en gedigitaliseerde criminaliteit.

Book: The Human Factor of Cybercrime

Cybercrimes are often viewed as technical offences that require technical solutions, such as antivirus programs or automated intrusion detection tools. However, these crimes are committed by individuals or networks of people which prey upon human victims and are detected and prosecuted by criminal justice personnel. As a result, human decision-making plays a substantial role in the course of an offence, the justice response, and policymakers' attempts to legislate against these crimes. *The Human Factor of Cybercrime*, by NSCR researcher Rutger Leukfeldt focuses on offenders, victims, and parties involved in tackling cybercrime. The distinct nature of cybercrime has consequences for the entire spectrum of crime and raises myriad questions about the nature of offending and victimization. For example, are cybercriminals the same as traditional offenders, or are there new offender types with distinct characteristics and motives? What foreground and situational characteristics influence the decision-making process of offenders? Which personal and situational characteristics provide an increased or decreased risk of cybercrime victimization? This book brings together leading criminologists from around the world to consider these questions and examine all facets of victimization, offending, offender networks, and policy responses.



Publication details and further reading

Leukfeldt, R. & Holt, T. (2019) *The Human Factor of Cybercrime*. Routledge.



***'Sellers with
a better rating
history were
found to ask
higher prices'***

Reputation influences collaboration within cryptomarket for drugs

In the article *Order without Law: Reputation Promotes Cooperation in a Cryptomarket for Illegal Drugs*, NSCR researcher Lukas Norbutas investigates how buyers and sellers of (illegal) drugs on cryptomarkets trust each other and collaborate based on their reputation. The article won the ESR Prize for the Best Article of the Year in late 2018.

Cryptomarkets are online ‘marketplaces’ that are only accessible using encryption software, which hides the identity and location of users. This coding technology makes it difficult for law enforcers to tackle these marketplaces. The markets can be found in the Dark Web, the part of the Internet not indexed by search engines.

Trust problem due to the anonymity of the cryptomarket

The anonymity enables buyers and sellers to conduct illicit trade and considerably reduces the chances of their identity being revealed. On the other hand, this

anonymity gives rise to a trust problem: a seller can make off with the buyer’s money or sell goods of a (far) lower quality than promised.

Does a good reputation also provide sufficient trust in the case of illicit trade?

On the face of it, this trust problem is nothing new: sellers on the legal market are confronted with similar risks. Previous research suggests that this problem is sharply reduced by reviews and rating systems: the possibility to publicly share sellers’ good and bad performances. These research results are mostly based on small experiments and on

data from online markets that are embedded in a functioning legal system. It is not clear whether such a ‘good reputation’ also provides sufficient trust in an environment without a legal safety net and in complete anonymity. In brief, an environment that can attract more opportunists and makes fraud easier.

Positive rating ensures higher prices and a faster sale

Using a dataset of transactions on the first cryptomarket for illegal drugs – Silk Road – the researchers analysed the effect of buyers’

assessments for completed transactions on the success of sellers. Sellers with a better rating history were found to ask higher prices and to sell their products faster than sellers with a poor or no assessment history. These results reveal how reputation creates an incentive for collaboration on a large-scale, even between anonymous traders with doubtful intentions and where there is no legal enforcement. The research therefore casts doubt on the need for an institutional and societal embedding of parties as a condition for the development of a social order within a trading market.



Publication details and further reading

Przepiorka, W., Norbutas, L. & Corten, R. (2017). Order without Law: Reputation Promotes Cooperation in a Cryptomarket for Illegal Drugs. NSCR/Utrecht University.

NSCR Staff

(in fte) 2019 average

	Employed by NWO-I (tenured)	Employed by NWO-I (temporary)	Employed by VU	External	Total
Director	0,96				0,96
Research staff	12,94	0,49			13,43
Fellows			1,00		1,00
PhD's		4,89	4,00		8,89
Junior researchers		3,33			3,33
Support staff	2,27	1,99		1,19	5,45
Total	16,17	10,7	5,00	1,19	33,06

In the context of cooperation with universities and other institutions, a number of employees is attached to the NSCR on the basis of secondment or hospitality agreements etc. and working at the institute for one or more days a week.

A photograph showing a man in a dark leather jacket sitting at a table, covering his face with his hands in a gesture of distress or exhaustion. A woman with short blonde hair, wearing a white shirt and glasses, is seated across from him, looking towards him. The scene is dimly lit, with a strong blue and purple color cast. A large, semi-transparent pink hexagon is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text.

***'Investigative
interview
practices still
do not always
follow the rules'***

Pressure during investigative interview increases risk of wrong sentencing

Worldwide, many cases are known of the wrong person being sentenced and acquitted later. Such a wrong sentencing is often due to investigative interview techniques in which pressure is exerted on the subject. NSCR researcher Marijke Malsch is one of the authors of *Interviews of suspects of crime: law and practice in European countries*, in which the investigative interview regulations and practices in eight European countries are discussed. This reveals that the investigative interview techniques do not always proceed according to the rules.

Miscarriages of justice, such as the Schiedam Park murder case, occur in the Netherlands too. This case led to further research and recommendations to structure the investigative interview differently, and to report it better. In England and Wales, famous cases of miscarriages of justice are the Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six and the Maguire Seven. Following these cases, the investigative interview practice was adjusted. In the United States, the Innocence Project investigated various sentences, which ultimately led to a large number of acquittals.

Investigative interview practice possibly more coercive than rules prescribe

Interviews of suspects of crime: law and practice in European countries, a chapter from *The Oxford Handbook of Criminal Process*, describes the existing investigative interview regulations, and the actual practice in Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands. The authors conclude that, although improvements have been implemented in the wake of miscarriages of justice, investigative interview practices still

do not always follow the rules. The investigative interview techniques used reveal that more pressure and deception takes place than the rules prescribe.

Recommendation to record investigative interviews to watch them later

Several countries state that they work according to the rules of investigative interviewing. Under these rules, the suspect may freely tell his or her story without pressure being exerted to confess. Nevertheless, in these countries, investigative interview techniques are still used in which

pressure is exerted on the suspect, for which false evidence is used or in which the interviewer clearly asks questions based on the assumption of guilt. As a result of this, the risk of a false confession increases. This is particularly the case for the group of vulnerable suspects, such as people with a moderate mental disability. The authors therefore recommend that all hearings are recorded so that it becomes possible to review the interview proceedings afterwards. This can be vitally important for determining the truth if there is a case of severe doubt about the investigative interview techniques used or the correctness of a confession.



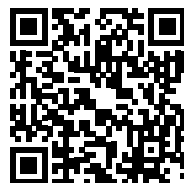
Publication details and further reading

Malsch, M. & De Boer, M. (2019). Interviews of suspects of crime: law and practice in European countries. In D.K. Brown, J.I. Turner & B. Weisser (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of Criminal Process*.

**Theme
Criminal
Events**



NSCR Video



**Theme
Cybercrime**



**Theme
Empirical
Legal Studies**



***'Offenders tended
to perpetrate
crimes in and around
locations they had
visited before'***

Adolescent offenders' current whereabouts predict locations of their future crimes

Where adolescents currently spend their time is highly predictive of where they will commit crimes in the near and distant future, according to a study published in the open-access journal PLOS ONE by Wim Bernasco from the NSCR and VU University Amsterdam.

Recent advances in the analysis of human mobility have confirmed that human spatial behavior follows remarkably regular and predictable daily and weekly cycles, that can be explained by two simple mechanisms. The first mechanism is preferential return, the propensity to return to locations frequently visited before. The second mechanism is spatial exploration, the tendency to visit new locations nearby familiar ones. The reported study investigated whether preferential return and spatial exploration also apply to criminal conduct, and can explain and predict the locations of future crimes.

Whereabouts of adolescents are concentrated and highly predictable

A sample of 843 adolescents in The Hague, the Netherlands, reported their hourly whereabouts during four days. In line with findings from other sources and populations, their locations were concentrated and predictable. They spent about 75 percent of their time in their two most visited locations (typically home and school), their action radius was limited to 3.2 km, and the predictability of their whereabouts was 96 percent.

During the subsequent four years, 70 of the participants were apprehended by the police for committing one or more crimes. Together they committed 165 crimes. The mobility patterns (measured at the start of these four years) of the offenders were generally similar to those of the non-offenders.

Likelihood of crime raises with visiting frequency and declines with distance

As predicted from the mechanisms of preferential return and spatial exploration, offenders tended to perpetrate crimes in and around locations

they had visited before, including locations where they previously offended. The likelihood of crime raises with visiting frequency and decreases with distance from previously visited locations.

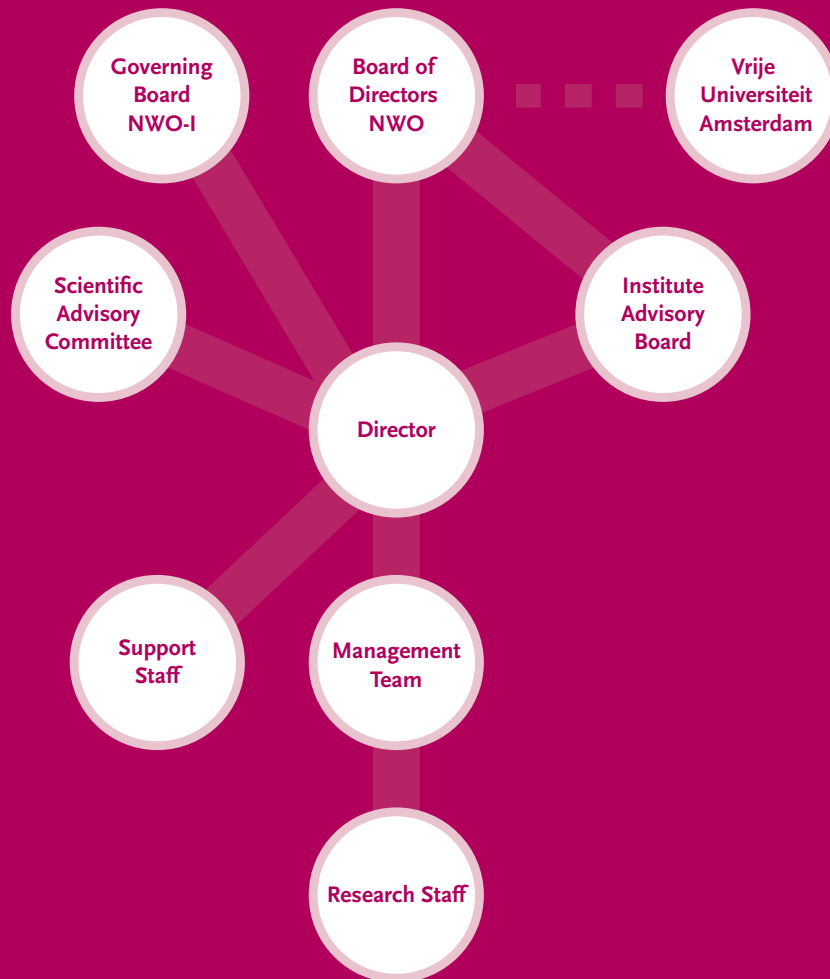
The findings show that the high predictability of human mobility applies to offending and to offenders as well, and help us understand and forecast where they will commit future crimes. They may be applied in criminal investigations, as they can help police prioritize suspects based on the locations of the offences they committed.

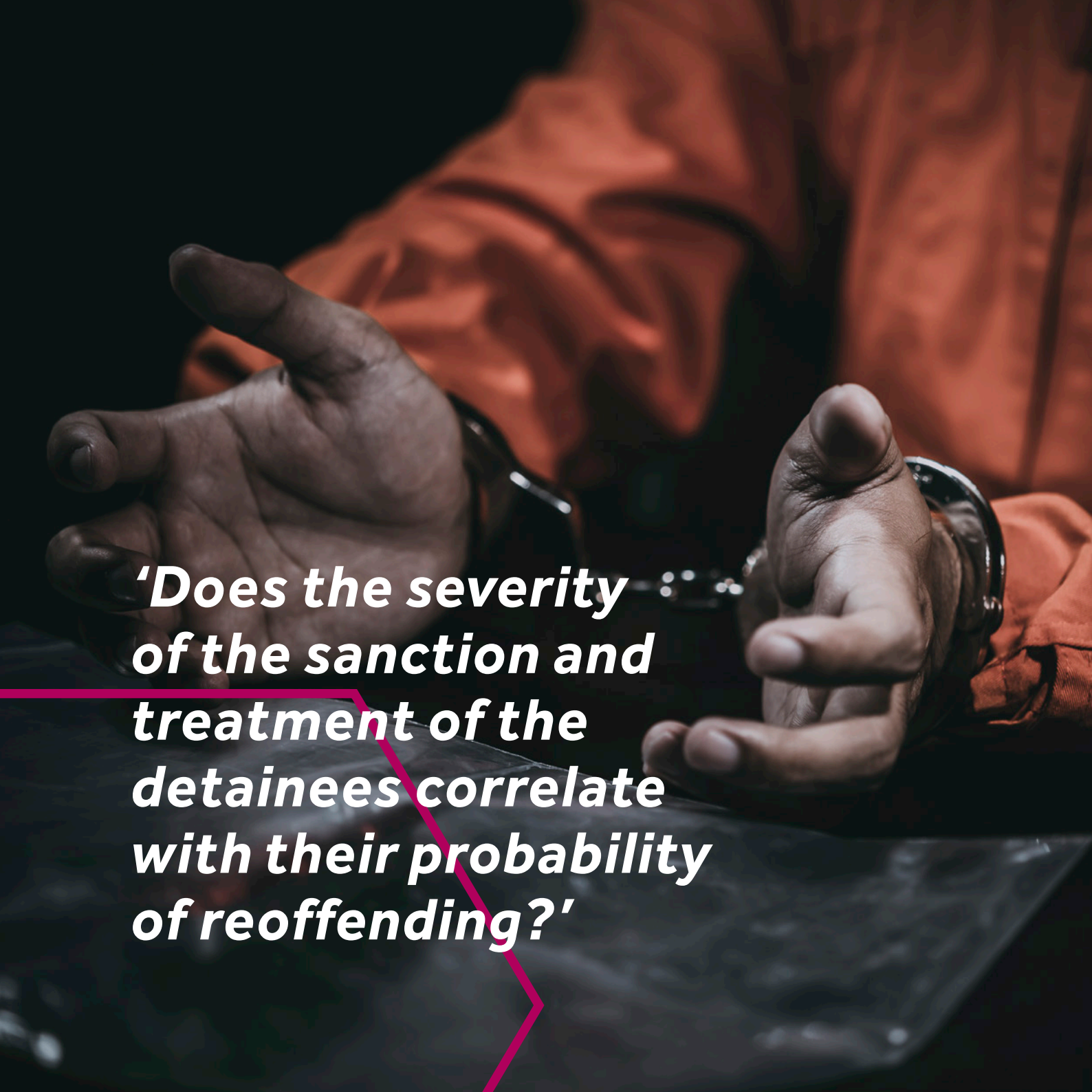


Publication details

Bernasco, W. (2019). Adolescent offenders' current whereabouts predict locations of their future crimes. *PLOS ONE*.

Formal structure



A close-up photograph of a person's hands in handcuffs. The person is wearing an orange jumpsuit, which is visible in the background. The hands are positioned in front of the person, with the fingers slightly curled. The handcuffs are metal and are attached to the wrists. The background is dark and out of focus.

***'Does the severity
of the sanction and
treatment of the
detainees correlate
with their probability
of reoffending?'***

Deterrence versus procedural justice

Successfully reducing reoffending

NSCR researcher Anja Dirkzwager, together with Peter van der Laan and Paul Nieuwbeerta, has received a grant in the NWO Open Competition for the project *Deterrence versus procedural justice. Successfully reducing reoffending*. The research is a collaboration with Leiden University and contributes to NSCR research into the objectives, realisation and effects of criminal sanctions that limit the freedom of an offender.

An important aim of imposing sanctions is preventing people who have already committed crimes from breaking the law again. However, worldwide, the figures for reoffending are high. Usually, the criminal law system assumes that criminals will reoffend less if they perceive sanctions as (more) severe and if they feel they have been treated (more) fairly and respectfully. These assumptions are based on two well-known criminological theories: the deterrence theory and the procedural justice theory. The correctness of these assumptions has not been investigated yet. The project “Deterrence versus procedural justice.

Successfully reducing reoffending” investigates these ideas among detainees.

Consequences of perceived severity of sanctions and perceived perceptions of treatment

The overarching aim of the research is to assess to what extent the deterrence and procedural justice theories hold for detainees. Does the severity of the sanction and treatment of the detainees correlate with their probability of reoffending? Is one of these two factors more important for reducing reoffending than the other? Is a respectful treatment by the

judge just as important as a respectful treatment by the prison staff? These are some of the questions the research focuses on. In the research, both the determinants and consequences of the perceived severity of the sanction and the way in which the treatment is perceived will be investigated.

Detainees followed from the start of their detention until six months after their release

In the project, quantitative, qualitative and observational research are combined. Use will be made of previously collected data from the large-scale longitudinal [Prison Project](#). In addition, two PhDs will set up and realise a new longitudinal data collection in which they will follow a number of detainees from the start of their detention until six months after their release. The PhDs will repeatedly interview these persons and observe their contacts with various actors from the legal system, such as the public prosecutor, judge and prison staff.



Prison Project

The Prison Project is a large-scale longitudinal research project examining the effects of imprisonment on the further life course of offenders and their families. Respondents who participated in this study were followed for four years, and questioned repeatedly regarding their lives before, during and after imprisonment. In this way, elaborate information was gathered on multiple life domains (e.g. criminal behaviour, employment, housing situation, social networks, health, wellbeing of family members). In addition, officially registered data - e.g. on their criminal behaviour, participation in behavioural interventions, and disciplinary infractions during their time in prison - were collected.

The Prison Project is a joint project of the NSCR, the University of Leiden and Utrecht University. Principal investigators: Dr Anja Dirkzwager and Prof. Paul Nieuwbeerta.
www.prisonproject.nl

***'The toga helps
to empower
victims during
court sessions'***



The value of victim advocacy in practice

To what extent do the lawyers representing the victims of serious crimes contribute towards the exercise of victims' rights in practice? *Victim advocacy: the role of advocacy in supporting the victims of serious violent crimes and sexual offences* is an empirical research study carried out by NSCR and VU University Amsterdam on this question, commissioned by the Ministry of Justice's Research and Documentation Centre (WODC).

In the Netherlands, victims of crime have long held so-called 'victims' rights'. EU guidelines setting minimum standards for these rights, and for the support and protection of the victims of criminal offences, were also laid down in 2017. The Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security, which has invested in the funding and training of victim advocacy in cases of serious violent crime and sexual offences, wished to know the degree to which this victim advocacy contributed towards the exercise of these rights in actual practice.

An important role in the exercise of victims' rights

The NSCR and VU University researched into five victims' rights: (1) the right to obtain general and

case-related information, (2) the right to inspect the dossier, (3) the right to add documents to the dossier, (4) the right to submit a claim for damages, and (5) the right to speak. To determine the role of the victim advocate in exercising these rights, the researchers held questionnaires amongst victim advocates and held interviews with the police, with Victim Support Netherlands (Slachtofferhulp Nederland), the Netherlands Public Prosecution Service (Openbaar Ministerie), legal practitioners, and victims' lawyers. The research showed that victim advocacy played an important role, particularly with regard to inspecting the dossier and adding documents to the dossier. They also played a positive role in the recovery of damages, especially in cases involving complex personal injury.

Toga helps to empower victims during court sessions

Besides exercising victims' rights, victim advocates have other beneficial functions. The toga helps to empower victims during court sessions: victims feel acknowledged because they are being accompanied by someone with legal expertise who can put up a fight against the perpetrator and their lawyer. Victim advocates also guarantee partisan support for the victim, irrespective of the positions being taken by the police or the Public Prosecution Service. Victim advocates themselves indicated that for victims' rights to be protected as well as possible, more generous remuneration and earlier referral to victim advocacy were needed.

Criminal courts still unfamiliar with the extent of victims' rights

The research also showed that despite the fact that courts are clearly taking increasing account of the victim of a crime, many are still unfamiliar with the legal extent of victims' rights and unaccustomed to the presence of a victim advocate. The result is sometimes a search for the best way to explain and apply the legislation; for instance, at the moment a dossier is inspected. Disagreements can arise on issues of full or partial inspection, inspection during or only after the completion of research, and inspection by victims themselves or only by their lawyer. Several of those interviewed in the study were of the opinion that current victims' rights would need to 'settle into place' before new, recently proposed victims' rights could be introduced.



Publication details and further reading (in Dutch)


Elbers, N.A., Meijer, S., Becx, I.M., Schijns, A.J.J.G., Akkermans, A.J. (2018).

Slachtofferadvocatuur. De rol van de advocatuur in de bijstand van slachtoffers van ernstige gewelds- en zedenmisdrijven. Amsterdam, NSCR/VU.

NSCR Sources of Income in 2017, 2018 and 2019

Income 2017-2019 in k€	2017	2018	2019
NWO	2.184	1.973	2.245
VU Amsterdam, cash & in-kind contributions	468	573	547
Direct funding	2.652	2.546	2.792
NWO	443	403	417
Other subsidy providers	194	164	156
Research grants	637	567	573
Contract research	262	444	253
Other	190	217	127
Total	3.741	3.774	3.745

Expenditure 2017-2019 in k€	2017	2018	2019
Personnel costs	2.997	3.128	2.924
Other costs	661	639	630
Total	3.658	3.767	3.554

A blurred photograph of a busy city street. In the foreground, a zebra crossing with white stripes is visible. Several pedestrians are walking across the street, their figures slightly out of focus. The background shows tall buildings and a bright sun in a clear blue sky, creating a lens flare effect. A magenta-colored geometric shape, resembling a stylized 'X' or a frame, is overlaid on the lower right portion of the image, partially enclosing the text.

***'They were
unable to answer
their existential
questions and
partly ended
up with jihadist
preachers'***

Jihadist radicalization in problematic youth groups

It is rare for young people in problematic youth groups to radicalise and travel to Syria. Moreover, youth groups do not do this all together. For young people who do travel, there is a fatal mix of circumstances: arrears, drastic events and the presence of recruiters in the area. This is evident from research by the NSCR, VU University and the National Police.

The investigation was prompted by a unique case study in Delft, where several young people from a problematic youth group traveled to Syria in early 2013. For the first time, researchers have reconstructed what exactly happened and how radicalization arose within this youth group. A problematic family background, a lack of perspective in a deprived neighborhood, drastic events that led to meaningful questions, the presence of a jihadist network in the immediate vicinity, and the newly emerged civil war in Syria could explain why several people left in a short time.

Youth group does not radicalise as a whole, but group does strengthen the process

Police information was used to investigate this case and interviews were held with eleven key persons from the immediate vicinity of the youth group. In addition, on the basis of police data and additional interviews, an inventory was made of the extent to which jihadist radicalization has also occurred in other problematic youth groups in the Netherlands and whether there is a relationship between the two phenomena. Most problematic youth groups in

the Netherlands showed no radicalization. In four youth groups that did experience radicalization, the conditions were comparable to those in Delft. The research shows that status within the group is very important for these young people. For some, this was also achieved through knowledge of and involvement in radical Islam. In addition, the research shows that youth groups do not radicalise as a whole, but in smaller groups. The group does strengthen the process: through the group, individual young people get in touch with the larger jihadist network in the region.

Meaningful questions led to a jihadist network in the region

Two events seem to have been a trigger in the run-up to radicalization in Delft. The young people in the group experienced a failed robbery by some of the group members, in which one of the robbers died and this caused a lot of questions about meaning. The death of the father of two group members also played a role in creating susceptibility to jihadist ideas. After these events, a number of group members actively

sought information about the Islam. Several people were present in the vicinity of the group in Delft, who may have played a role in making contact with an existing jihadist network in the region. Women and sisters have also played a role through the sister network. In addition, the young people at one point went to several radical mosques in the area. Other youth groups where radicalization took place also showed that people from outside played a role.

Advice: keep in touch with young people in problematic groups

An important recommendation from the study is that it is precisely for young people in problematic youth groups that support must be provided when major events occur, and the life questions that arise as a result. The young people in Delft were unable to answer their existential questions and partly ended up with jihadist preachers. The events in Delft also show that it remains important for government, police and youth work to keep in touch with problem youth on the street, to know what is going on and not to rely too much on a repressive approach.



Publication details and further reading (in Dutch)

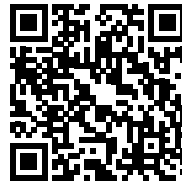
Neve, R., Eris, S., Weerman, F., Van Prooijen, J.W., Lujic, V. & Versteegt, I. (2019). Eindrapport Radicalisering in problematische jeugdgroepen.

This research is a collaboration of the NSCR, VU University and the Analysis and Investigation team of the National Unit of the National Police. The research was funded by the National Coordinator for Terrorism and Security (NCTV), part of the Ministry of Justice and Security.

**Theme
Extremism/
Terrorism**



NSCR Video



**Theme
Intergenerational
Transmission**



**Theme
Life-course**

A photograph of a wet cobblestone street. The wet surface reflects the surrounding environment, including buildings and trees. A person is walking in the distance on the right side of the frame. A large, stylized pink graphic element, resembling a jagged arrow or a stylized 'Z', is overlaid on the left side of the image, pointing towards the text.

***'Many former residents
feel ignored and are
angry and frustrated'***

Insufficiently protected

Violence in youth care

Many children who were in youth care between 1945 and now have experienced or witnessed physical, sexual or psychological violence there. Supervisory authorities have not intervened sufficiently. This is the conclusion of the De Winter Committee in the investigation report *Inadequate protection. Violence in Dutch youth care from 1945 to the present*. The NSCR has carried out the sector study Violence in closed (judicial) youth institutions on behalf of the committee.

The sector study focused on three questions: What has happened in the closed (judicial) youth institutions since 1945? How did the violence take place? And how was the violence experienced by ex-pupils and what consequences did this have for their later life? Researchers Van der Laan, Eichelsheim, Dirkse, Bruggeman and Asscher conducted archival research, interviewed ex-pupils, analysed pupillary files, studied media reports and charted supervision and inspection. They have also listed developments and legislation since 1945. This resulted in a summary report and nine source studies.

Physical, psychological and sexual violence against young people

The researchers note that violence has often been committed in closed (judicial) youth institutions. It concerns physical, psychological and sexual violence,

by employees against young people, but also between young people and by young people against employees.

The violence is very diverse:

- Humiliation and intimidation: young people have to undress in front of employees, and were shaved, visited or isolated.
- Brutal action: young people are pulled by the ears and hair by employees, are given a cold shower, are beaten with a belt, stick etc., resulting in injury.
- Sexual abuse: young people face violence, sexual assault or rape.
- Verbal violence: threats, name calling, bullying.
- Keeping ignorant: young people are not or not informed in time about out-of-home placement, location and duration.

- Loss of identity: young people have to hand in clothing and jewellery.
- Contact with family is limited or completely absent.
- Isolation or separation happens often and for a long time.
- Carrying out heavy and (sometimes) pointless work, also in free time.
- Mutual violence: bullying, fighting, abuse and sexual abuse.

What has happened in the closed (judicial) youth institutions since 1945?

In the first period after the war (1945 - 1965), strict and austere regimes with long and frequent isolation, long sentences, labour exploitation and a hard (physical) approach were characteristic of the youth institutions. In the period after that (1965 - 1990), long-term and frequent isolation was also common, but at the same time, the discussion about the (un)desirability of this started. Threats and intimidation by employees continued unabated. Institutions are also in the news because of sexual abuse. In the most recent period (1990 - now), the obligation to report and register with the inspectorate provides more insight into the violence. However, violence is still very common.

How did the violence take place?

Violence in closed (judicial) youth institutions is linked to a series of (risk) factors, some of which cannot be seen in isolation from the young people who are placed there, for example with serious behavioural problems and problematic family

situations. Many young people have a long history of assistance and have already been removed from home several times. Other risk factors are related to the institution, such as the strong hierarchy, inequality of power and the living environment. The living environment was and is - in a different way - repressive in nature, whereby the use of violence has been legitimized. In addition, there were and are often personnel changes, partly because of the difficult working conditions. The training of employees was initially insufficient, it also took a while before treatments and methods were developed. Supervision of the institutions was limited in earlier periods, as were the laws and regulations. This has improved in recent decades, partly by strengthening the legal position of young people.

How have pupils experienced the violence and how has it marked their course of life?

Experiencing or witnessing violence in a youth institution is very drastic. The impact on the rest of life is great. Many ex-pupils have to deal with chronic physical and mental health problems, relationship problems (divorce, no contact with family and own children), addiction problems, behavioural problems and difficulties with income and daytime activities. This explains the feelings of resentment, suspicion and powerlessness towards society and authorities. The fact that supervisors must have seen the abuse but did not intervene, has bothered many former residents throughout their lives. They feel ignored and are angry and frustrated.

Further prevention of violence requires reducing the repressive character

Over the years, the manifestations of violence in closed (judicial) youth institutions have changed, but have become no less drastic and invasive. The impact on the further life is as great as ever. Provisions have been modernized, but unequal power relations and restrictions on autonomy still exist. This offers scope for psychological and physical violence. The problems of young people and families also remain complex and serious, and are not very different from previous decades.

Violence has diminished in some ways through, among other things, better supervision, more openness within institutions, strengthening the legal position of young people, instructions for violence and the judiciary of the Council for the Application of Criminal Law and Youth Protection (RSJ). The professionalism of employees has increased due to better training, new treatment methods and the arrival of behavioural experts. The further prevention of violence requires refinement of the regulations, more intensive supervision, continuous (further) training of employees and, above all, reduction of the repressive nature of the institutions.



Publication details and further reading (in Dutch)

Dirkse, M., Bruggeman, M., Eichelsheim, V., Van der Laan, P. & Asscher, J. (2019). Commissie Onderzoek naar Geweld in de Jeugdzorg (2019). Onvoldoende beschermd. Geweld in de Nederlandse jeugdzorg van 1945 tot heden.

Deel 1: eindrapport

Deel 2: sector- en themastudies

Deel 3: bronstudies

A photograph of three men in an office environment. One man, wearing a white shirt and tie, is leaning over a desk, holding a small, clear, rectangular object. Another man, with a beard and wearing a dark jacket, is looking at the object. A third man, with short hair, is also looking at the object. The background shows a window with horizontal blinds. The lighting is dim, with a desk lamp providing light. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image, enclosed in a pink hexagonal shape.

'The LVB client has learned nothing, resistance has increased as well as the risk of recidivism'

How to recognize a mild intellectual disability earlier in the criminal justice system?

The NSCR and the University of Amsterdam (UvA) developed the practical training *LVBbeeld*; *from discussion to recognition*, to allow professionals earlier in the criminal justice chain to recognize a mild intellectual disability among clients. In this way, adequate guidance and treatment can be deployed as quickly as possible.

A mild intellectual disability (LVB) is often not recognized in the criminal justice system in time or even not at all. However, research shows that the percentage of clients with a LVB in forensic care is high. Characteristics of a LVB are limitations in intellectual functioning (IQ <85) and social functioning. Existing information is not sufficient to recognize a LVB in time (Teeuwen & Malsch, 2017). There is a lot of knowledge, but the professional does not seem able to translate this into practice. The client with a LVB can also easily mislead professionals. The limitation is not visible physically and the LVB client is often master in concealing his or her limitations.

Interventions geared to average IQ too high

Underestimation of LVB problems entails serious risks in the criminal proceedings and the forensic process. Interventions such as community service, which are geared to an average IQ, are too ambitious. The LVB client cannot handle the assignments and timing, does not arrive on time or does not show up at all, and there is a good chance that someone will drop out. The result is a report or recidivism and often an increased sentence (Kaal, 2013; Teeuwen, 2012). The client then does not understand why he or she is punished 'again'. This sense of injustice increases mistrust of professionals

and interventions. The result: the LVB client has learned nothing, resistance and suspicion have increased as well as the risk of recidivism (Kaal, Overvest & Broertjes, 2014; Teeuwen, 2012).

Training for integration and application of knowledge in practice

In collaboration with PPC Vught (penitentiary psychiatric center), NIFP (Netherlands Institute for Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology), Trajectum (LVB support), the Council for Child Protection and Probation Netherlands, the NSCR and the UvA developed the training LVBeeld; from discussion to recognition. The training is intended for professionals in forensic care (investigators, probation officers and NIFP reporters) who have early contact with suspects and convicts with a LVB. The interactive training is aimed at teaching skills and the integration and application of knowledge in practice.

Whether there is an LVB or not requires more than one argument

During the training, participants learn to recognize LVB signals - including soft signs such as verbal and / or physical aggression - and increase their knowledge of what it means to have an LVB. The training material consists of a combination of videos of LVB and non-LVB young people, exercise and knowledge transfer. In the visual material (LVB) young people with an actor treat themes from their perception. The films form the basis for discussion and understanding the meaning of a characteristic. For example, a young person who keeps repeating his point of view may be seen as someone with a strong opinion, others see a limitation: the repetition represents a lack of resolving power. Whether there is a (characteristic of a) LVB or not requires more than one argument. Weighing, valuing and combining arguments is something that professionals learn in the discussion with colleagues.



Publication details and further reading (in Dutch)

Collot d'Escury-Koenigs, A., Boering, A., Teeuwen, M. (2019) LVBeeld; van discussie naar herkenning Een training met beelden van Licht Verstandelijk Beperkte (LVB)- en niet-LVB-jongeren voor professionals werkzaam in het forensische domein.

Output

Peer-reviewed publications	89
Non peer-reviewed publications	4
<i>Of which Open Access</i>	39
PhD theses	2
Books	5
Publications aimed at professionals	22
Book chapters	22



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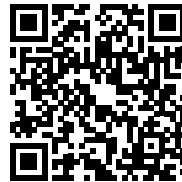
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**Theme
Sanctions**



**Theme
Spatial and
Temporal Crime
Patterns**



**Theme
Wildlife
Crime**

NSCR
Video





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