



Explaining, Preventing, and  
Intervening in organized  
Crime involvement

## Effectively reducing youths' involvement in organized crime

A consortium of researchers, policymakers, and practitioners is jointly involved in the EPIC-project (Explaining, Preventing, and Intervening in Organized Crime Involvement), supported by the Dutch Research Agenda. The goal of the project is to better understand and effectively reduce youths' involvement in organized crime.

### First fase (2023)

The first phase of the project involved two systematic literature reviews and an inquiry was carried out to gather existing practical knowledge. The results on fase 1 can be found on:

- » [nscr.nl/epic](https://nscr.nl/epic)
- » *Rapport Tacit Knowledge in Dutch:* [nscr.nl/epic-rapport-tacit-knowledge](https://nscr.nl/epic-rapport-tacit-knowledge)

### Second fase (2024 - 2028)

In the second phase of this project, empirical research is being conducted within five different work packages to describe and explain the involvement of young people in organized crime, as well as to examine what works (and what doesn't) in preventing or reducing their involvement.

- » *See which (preventive) interventions are being examined in the EPIC-project in Dutch:* [nscr.nl/epic-preventieve-interventies](https://nscr.nl/epic-preventieve-interventies)
- » *See the present overview on fase 2:* [nscr.nl/epic](https://nscr.nl/epic)

### A question about the EPIC-project?

Or interested in the newsletter?

- » [mail to epic@nscr.nl](mailto:mail_to_epic@nscr.nl) or
- » [go to www.nscr.nl/epic](https://www.nscr.nl/epic)

# SECOND FASE OF EPIC - WORK PACKAGES: WHO IS RESEARCHING WHAT AT PRESENT?

First fase (2023)

Second fase (2024 - present)

End EPIC (2028)

## EPIC-CONFERENCE

Conference in 2028  
with results of the work  
packages



### FENOMENAL FOCUSED RESEARCH

#### Julie Erber

Together with: Arjan Blokland, Marjolijn Das and Brenda Bos

» *Curious?* [jerber@nscr.nl](mailto:jerber@nscr.nl)



#### WP4: Youth's exposure to and involvement in organized crime

**Question:** to what extent does exposure to organized crime within an individual's network relate to organized crime involvement among youths?

**Method:** by means of a unique network dataset developed by Statistics Netherlands, we investigate the influence of the proportion of criminal network members on youth's organized crime involvement.

*One of the questions that we would like to answer is: is the influence of exposure to crime on criminal involvement stronger for organized crime than for general crimes?*



#### Nathalie Denie

Together with: Edward Kleemans, Robby Roks and Sjoukje van Deuren

» *Interested?* [n.denie@vu.nl](mailto:n.denie@vu.nl)

#### WP5: The online and offline pathways through which youths become involved in organized crime

**Question:** how do youth become involved in organized crime? And in what ways and to what extent do social media play a role in this process?

**Method:** interviews with both professionals – such as youth workers and police officers – and youth who are directly or indirectly involved in organized crime in two Dutch cities.

*Example: do young people ever come across criminal 'advertisements' on social media? And what happens next if they respond to them?*

### Steering committee of EPIC

- Arjan Blokland, projectleader (WP4)
- Sjoukje van Deuren (WP5, WP8 and WP9)
- Fleur Souverein (WP6, WP7 en WP9)
- Edward Kleemans (WP5)
- Eva Mulder (WP6 and WP9)
- Annemiek Harder (WP7)
- Jessica Asscher (WP8)
- Veroni Eichelsheim (WP8 and WP9)



Eva Mulder



Veroni Eichelsheim



Sjoukje van Deuren



Fleur Souverein



Janna Kool

### WP9: Dissemination, valorization and implementation -> from science to practice and policy

In order to learn and develop together, we organize annual EPIC learning sessions for policymakers and practitioners, and bi-annual EPIC design sessions for members of the consortium. We publish periodic newsletters and will use infographics, podcasts, scientific publications, and our website as outlets.

### ACTION RESEARCH



#### Alexandra de Meijere

Together with: Eva Mulder, Lieke van Domburgh, Lucres Nauta-Jansen and Fleur Souverein

» *Question?* [a.l.v.demeijere@amsterdamumc.nl](mailto:a.l.v.demeijere@amsterdamumc.nl)

#### WP6: the evaluation and further development of interventions focused on youths' organized crime involvement

**Question:** what is the goal of the intervention, by which means are these goals met, and what are possibilities for improvement?

**Method:** action research: an iterative process of participation in interventions by the researcher, observation, reflection and implementation of improvements in practice.

*Example: the research focuses on the interventions: 'IPA in the Neighbourhood' and 'Credible Messengers'. The researchers observe the youth workers while playing football with the youth: How do these supervisors work with the youth?*

### EFFECTIVITY RESEARCH

#### Wenda Sleijpen

Together with: Annemiek Harder, Fleur Souverein, Sanne Pronk en Renske van der Gaag

*Want to know more?* [sleijpen@essb.eur.nl](mailto:sleijpen@essb.eur.nl)



#### WP7: The effectiveness of prevention programs targeting entry into organized crime

**Question:** do preventive interventions work? And if so, how? What are the working mechanisms? And boundary conditions?

**Method:** research on the effects and working mechanisms of three interventions: 'Educatief Centrum' (EC), trauma treatment for mothers and 'Grenzenstellend Jongerenwerk' in which quantitative methods (questionnaires) are combined with qualitative methods (interviews, focus groups and observations).

*Examples from the questionnaire: what do you think are the biggest changes you have experienced since joining EC? What have you found most valuable or helpful about the EC? And why?*



#### Marit van de Mheen

Together with: Jessica Asscher, Veroni Eichelsheim and Sjoukje van Deuren

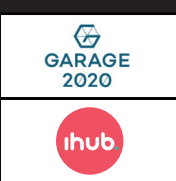
» *A question?* [m.i.vandemheen@uu.nl](mailto:m.i.vandemheen@uu.nl)

#### WP8: What works for youth in desisting and resisting from organized crime?

**Question:** to what extent are Kapot Sterk, Buit in de Klas and Prospect4Cash effective? Does it work, for whom, and under which circumstances?

**Method:** quantitative survey research using pre-, post-, and follow-up measurements. Two programs are being evaluated through a Randomized Controlled Trial to ensure that the observed changes can be attributed to the intervention.

*'Buit in de Klas' questionnaire: what would be reasons for you to say YES if somebody would ask you to do something that is not allowed (and promising you a reward)?*



[www.nscr.nl/EPIC](https://www.nscr.nl/EPIC)