

Summary

Beccaria-Center: Professional Training in Crime Prevention

Up to now, crime prevention has hardly played a role in the training for the fields of practice related to it. There is a lack of basic and further training opportunities in Germany as well as in Europe. Based on the assumption that the demand for qualified crime prevention specialists and executives will continue to increase, there is a lot of catching up to do in terms of the structure of a specialized further training across all the fields of work.

It was the **goal** of the “Beccaria-Center: Basic and Further Training in Crime Prevention” to close this gap. The project was implemented by the Council for Crime Prevention of Lower Saxony / Lower Saxony Ministry of Justice, with the collaboration of eight EU-partner organisations (Belgium, Denmark, England, Estonia, France, Italy, Slovenia, and the Czech Republic). One of the key tasks of the Beccaria-Center was the conception of a scientific, demand and profession oriented qualifying offer. This offer was to include the creation of a training programme and the development of an in-service advanced Master’s programme. Both of them are to contribute to the enhancement of professional competences and to the improvement of professional practice. For this purpose, it was necessary to develop an interdisciplinary modular curriculum with teaching contents that have a local as well as a European orientation.

Various **measures** were carried out in order to develop this further training offer and its curricula, which included taking stock of all existing Master’s programmes in Germany, throughout Europe and internationally. The following result was reached: throughout Europe there are no programmes covering various fields of study and topics imparting comprehensive qualifications for the field of crime prevention and having an inter- and multidisciplinary orientation. With the objective of identifying the need and the (potential) demand for such a further training and of obtaining ideas and suggestions for its design with respect to contents and methods several empirical surveys were conducted. The **result** of this needs analysis was that on the one hand, such a further training offer must impart specialist knowledge; on the other hand, it must pay particular attention to ensuring the applicability and practical relevance of this knowledge, without neglecting the scientific context.

On the basis of the stock-taking and needs analysis, modules for a “Qualifying Programme Crime Prevention” and a “Master’s Programme Crime Prevention” were developed. In 2006, the EU-partners stated their views in writing. In April 2007, there was an EU-partner meeting in Hanover. The meeting placed particular emphasis on the status reports on the issue of basic and further training in crime prevention in the respective countries. The EU-partner organisations were kept involved and participated during the entire project term because this was the only way to ensure the prerequisites for interdisciplinary training concepts standardized throughout Europe and the (later) implementation of a European Master’s programme were met.

In five work sessions four external experts (from science and practice) provided competent assistance during the development and implementation process of the “Qualifying Programme Crime Prevention“. They wrote a progress report and a final report. These evaluators were involved with the **objective** of assuring and reviewing the quality of the ongoing project work.

With the same **objective** of assuring and reviewing the quality of the “Master’s Programme Crime Prevention“, the Zentrale Evaluations- und Akkreditierungsagentur (ZEvA) (Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency) was involved. In co-operation with two experts they had appointed, their particular task was to act as consultants with respect to the study and examination regulations, the development of the curriculum and the module catalogue, including the objectives of the qualification.

The key **results** of the measures outlined above are firstly the “Beccaria Qualifying Programme Crime Prevention” and secondly the conception and documentation of the “Master’s programme Crime Prevention”, including the examination regulations and the educational and admission requirements.

The “**Beccaria Qualifying Programme Crime Prevention**” comprises four key modules: 1. Criminology, 2. Crime Prevention, 3. Project Management and 4. Practical Project Work. The complete contents of the modules are available. At regular intervals, these modules will be offered to impart application-oriented knowledge in attendance courses, self-study phases, auditing phases, and project development work to about 20 participants working in fields related to crime prevention. This particularly includes basic knowledge of criminology, crime prevention, legal principles, research methods, project management and networking. 28 lessons per module are planned for the attendance courses, spread out over two weekends (Friday/Saturday). Upon successful completion of the four modules, the degree “Crime Prevention Specialist” is awarded.

The “**Master’s Programme Crime Prevention**” is an in-service, advanced and application-oriented programme. Since it qualifies for executive and managerial functions, it is addressed to persons aspiring to executive positions in fields related to crime prevention. The educational and admission requirements include a degree in Social Work, Education, Psychology, Sociology, Social Sciences, Law, Medicine, Police or Administrative Sciences and at least two years of work experience in a related field. In four semesters, the students complete four modules: 1. Criminology and Criminological Research Methods, 2. Crime Prevention, 3. Basic Legal Conditions of Prevention, 4. Organisational and Managerial Foundations of Prevention. The contents of the modules have been described. The participants acquire criminological and crime-prevention knowledge, management competences and interdisciplinary as well as multidisciplinary skills. The standard period of study is two years at 60 credit points (ECTS). A total of 600 hours is planned for the attendance phases. A maximum of 25 persons can participate in the Master’s programme. After successful completion of the final examination, they are awarded the internationally recognized title “Master of Arts (M.A.)”. Currently, a university in Lower Saxony is reviewing whether it is possible to introduce the Master’s programme and to start the accreditation procedure.