Internet glossary

Within Europe, terms related to crime prevention are often used inconsistently or are defined in different ways. This is increasingly becoming a problem the more that the individual European states and the individual European participants in crime prevention are networked together.

If we are to realize a European-wide exchange of information about evaluation and quality in crime prevention and be able to compare projects, it is absolutely necessary to use a unified set of (terminological) differentiation and description possibilities. Clear, congruent definitions that are accepted throughout Europe should be available to describe consistently what is meant with which term. If the different European countries attach different meanings and definitions to the same terms and thus prevent their standardization, it should be possible to follow which definition is valid in which cultural, national or linguistic context.

A further measure of the Beccaria project was therefore to create a glossary that defines crime prevention terminology. This glossary was initially going to published on the Internet in two languages, German and English and continuously updated and extended in regard to terminology as well as language. In addition to the ability to easily extend the glossary, the Internet also offers the advantage of always being able to inexpensively publish the latest update – printing costs, such as in the case of usual printed dictionaries, are completely eliminated.

Objective
The glossary
- contains an alphabetical list of the most important specialized terminology for European crime prevention
- enables the user to find an adequate translation as well as an explanation of a particular term
- is a practically-oriented resource
- is to contribute to overcoming language barriers and understanding other legal, social and cultural systems (cooperating in linguistic harmony)
- will initially be published on the Internet in a bilingual form (German-English)
- is meant to give a comparative overview of the different prevention terms and their definition(s)
- shows how the overall context looks like in the other countries

A preliminary compilation of the glossary can be found on the Beccaria webpage and initially only covers a basic set of definitions (basic terms). It can be continually extended, improved and amended – with the perspective of becoming wide-ranging online dictionary in all European languages. Target group and potential users of the Beccaria Internet Glossary are all European decision-makers and participants in crime prevention.

With an online presentation of the glossary it is possible to search for a prevention term in two ways:
- Click on the first letter of the required term in the alphabetical letter bar
- Enter the required word in the search box and click "Search".

The glossary could for example be evaluated by counting or querying the visitors to the homepage.

The first phase of creating a glossary with up to 20 basic terms in German and English will be completed by Nov. 2005 as part of the Beccaria project. The construction of a wide-ranging multilingual glossary will furthermore require more intensive work and time.

Implementation

First, a basic set of terms (basic terms) and their definition had to be selected. Because it is not possible to immediately present a wide-ranging glossary using the available resources, 18 basic terms were selected, forming the starting point for developing the glossary. These basic terms should be central terms that are often used in crime prevention. The results from the quantitative survey helped to select the terms: The selections and frequencies obtained from the answers to the question "Please name five terms that you spontaneously associate with crime prevention". In addition, appraisals and conversations with experts (theoreticians and experts in crime prevention) were used to obtain the German basic terms.

The finally chosen 18 German basic terms were defined comprehensively and in a scientifically correct manner, while keeping the definitions understandable and short. The definition and meaning of the words were based on the German language as spoken in Germany. The definitions were subsequently translated into English. The transcription of a term could then be compared with the meanings of the term in other language areas: Does the term Prävention (translated as "prevention") have a different meaning in the English/Danish/Czech or other language areas than in German?

In addition, a collection of further possible terms will be collated for a glossary. This collection will contain wide-ranging terms that could be important and helpful in relation to crime prevention and in view of the aspired practical orientation. They too will subsequently be translated into English and other languages.

Outlook

It would be practical and useful to have a glossary one day that is multilingual and also capable of not only providing different names for central prevention terms, but also their definitions and meanings in the individual countries (or cultural, social, legal systems). It would then be possible to present special terminology that is only found in a single language in all the other language areas.

In simple form and related to the country-specific definitions, it would lead to a matrix like this:

GLOSSARY	D	E	F	DK	...
D	Gewalt (German definition in German language)	violence (German def. translated into Engl.)	violence (German def. translated into French)	...	
E	Gewalt (Engl. def. translated into German)	violence (Engl. def. in Engl. language)	violence (Engl. def. translated into French)	...	
F	Gewalt (French def. translated into German)	violence (French def. translated into English)	violence (French def. in French language)	...	
DK	...	...	...	Term and def. in Danish	

...					

It is therefore not sufficient to simply translate the German definition of an important prevention term (such as "Gewalt" above) into other European languages such as English, French, etc. One country's definition of a particular term has to be comparable to the definitions in other countries. In relation to the example matrix, it is certainly possible that the term "Gewalt" can also have nonverbal, psychological or other connotations attached to it in Germany, while this is not the case in England and France. These differences only become clear when the definitions specific to each country are translated into all the other languages in the glossary.

A glossary with central crime prevention terminology is therefore only sensible when it is able to embrace different meanings and connotations. This in turn means that a glossary cannot possibly be compiled in a satisfactory way in the Beccaria project through cooperation among all the partner countries. On the one hand, there are (still) not enough partner countries and on the other, this task cannot be performed "along the way", but requires a great amount of investigative work and coordination. Due to the importance and extent of this task, it is urgently necessary to continue the compilation and implementation of a glossary as part of a separate project. The perspective of the Beccaria project in relation to the compilation of a glossary is therefore to create a new project (perhaps at AGIS), using the "basis" already created on the subject, that has the single objective of creating a "European Glossary". It seems that the original idea, which just involved publishing a matrix similar to the above one on the Internet and the general call to contribute to the extension of such a multilingual glossary, would not be satisfactory. This could lead to unintentional or intentional errors, or it would be necessary to use a watchdog to laboriously monitor the input of data.

The perspective of a multilingual glossary was nevertheless presented to the Beccaria partner countries at the first meeting at the end of October 2004. The overall view was that the compilation of a comprehensive glossary is such a large and complex task that it requires its own project.

The partners emphasized though that a glossary for central crime prevention terms is very sensible, but not the only way to solve the problem of communication about prevention on a multinational or European level. An alternative way is for example the use of country reports that describe the system and relevant structures and data about prevention and are updated every 1-2 years. Furthermore, there are probably other possible approaches.

To keep tackling the problem of communication within the Beccaria project as well, the decision was made during the partner meeting to present and discuss possible solutions at the Beccaria conference in January 2005. This event would be the platform to create and discuss new problem-solving strategies.

The Beccaria project is also planning to develop a framework for the Internet, which will be made available before the end of the project term and enable all European countries to introduce any country-specific aspects related to crime prevention in a controlled manner. The partner countries of the Beccaria project are requested to develop strategies to achieve international cooperation with the aim of obtaining a sensible and qualitatively valuable

solution. Connecting such an international solution to the EUCPN in the form of a comprehensive "European Crime Prevention Network" would not only be plausible but also desirable.

In the course of these considerations, it was possible to obtain a cooperation agreement with the French Ministry of Justice at the end of November. This includes an AGIS application for the compilation of a "Glossary with key concepts for the area of crime prevention". The French Ministry of Justice is planning to include the EUCPN in this scheme. In this way, the project could (pending on approval) make use of the Beccaria Internet pages and its glossary matrix as a platform for further development as part of a cooperation.