

Presentation of The Local Safety Measurement System in Policing used 1998 – 2021 in Sweden by Local Governments and Police Districts.

The purpose of this presentation is to provide an overview of an existing approach to the tasks concerning better police efficiency in combatting crime and victimization. Other gains in IRL work in Sweden during the period 1998 – 2021 are that the measurement system measures crime development and order problems on an extremely large scale with about 280 studies and 100,000s of respondents' answers with the same questions and data collection method over 20 years. Probably one of the largest existing surveys in this type of genre in Europe. There are currently data from 1,800 municipal studies available. A completely invaluable source of knowledge. An especially important advantage of the surveys conducted over a 23-year period is that, in principle, the data collection method, response method and questionnaire are unchanged.

One of the chief goals of the criminal justice system is to increase public safety. However, official crime statistics cannot be used to find out whether the work of the police has had a positive effect on community safety. It is also especially important that we learn more about the connection between actual crime levels and the citizens' perceived level of safety since fear of crime and actual levels of crime are not necessarily affected by the same factors.

Measurements of crime trends at the national level have serious limitations, regardless of whether data are obtained through questionnaires or from statistics on reported crime. With a view to developing local operational goals and problem-oriented policing, and to be able to monitor their impact on specific problems, it is necessary to make repeated local-level measurements. Through such measurements, performed in different areas using the same tools, comparisons can be made between areas. In addition, such comparisons may be especially useful in the development of national indicators for measurements of the extent to which the central objectives of criminal policy have been achieved.

How do The Police measure performance in the delivery of Community Policing? How do The Police increase the public's influence in Community Policing? Has any Police Service, any examples of using the public's feedback as a performance indicator for Crime Prevention?

I am going to supplement my hypothesis with concrete on-going police research examples from Sweden last decades.

Let us start with Sir Robert Peel's principles, the legendary so-called founder of modern policing introduced for almost 200 years ago.

“The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, and not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with them.”

In my modern reading of Peel means such a mandatory statement that Police services must methodically measure the volume of crime, disorder, and disturbances to the peace in suitable intervals.

Mapping local exposure to crime and law enforcement problems can be the starting point for crime prevention and safety-creating work. It is then important that the time between

examination results and operational work is noticeably short. It is not enough at all to wait six months with results and planning process. Collaboration with partners is especially important.

The questionnaire used for measuring local safety was drawn up to include five main areas: 1. Disorder problems in residential areas, 2. Crime victimisation, 3. Abstract concern about crime, 4. Concrete fear about crime included refraining from activities, and 5. If the local Police care about identified problems in the residential areas.

1. Disorder problems and anti-social behaviour indicators can measure littering and vandalism in public places, drunkenness in streets, occupying public spaces, fighting in streets, women being accosted, hostile teenage gangs, speeding and ruthless driving.
2. Self-reported crime victimisation will be an important indicator of different crime types. Self-reports will automatically include many of the less serious crimes, and this measuring technique therefore yields a good picture of the total level of crime victimization.
3. Indicators for abstract concerns about crime can include worries about theft/vandalism of properties and assault.
4. The more concrete section can focus on indicators for afraid to go out after dark, afraid of certain people and changes in daily routines.
5. The purpose of the section with questions of action taken by the police is to elicit the citizens' opinions about the efforts of the police to counter public order disturbances, crime and worries in their residential areas.

Quantitative methods are especially useful for identifying structures and trends in the safety surveys. In addition to providing a clear picture of developments since the previous survey, statistical methods also enable the police to disseminate complex information efficiently to operational police units, the media, politicians, and the public.

Local safety surveys have given Community policing/partnership collaboration a good picture of the level of crime victimisation, what the residents see as the greatest problems, how worried they are about being subjected to crime and whether there are concrete unsafely factors in the area. In addition, the surveys contain questions eliciting the public's opinions about the willingness and ability of the police to deal with local problems. The answers to these questions are a great help in the planning of local police work and in the setting of priorities. The safety surveys also give us a better picture of how successful the Police have been in meeting overall goals 'Reducing crime and increasing public safety'. It is also possible to use survey results in the planning of local crime prevention initiatives and in training courses for police officers, the staff of Municipalities and communes, local partnerships, and other local stakeholders. Moreover, they provide a basis for long-term assessments of worries and fear in the society.

Another important reason for performing systematic local surveys is that local politicians, members of the public, journalists and police officers often tend to make quantitative statements in the public debate, e.g. 'People are feeling less and less safe', 'No one dares to use the buses anymore', 'Violent crime is increasing', 'The number of ruthless driving is increasing' or 'The police performance is deteriorating'. It is important that the police assess such statements systematically and critically to be able to counter any statements based on guesswork, maybe

to sway public opinion or influence public policy. The local surveys will normally provide the information required for this task.

The Police normally use classic, standardized statistical methods to assess changes, trends and various types of outcomes. Significance tests are used to determine the degree of positive or negative variance around the average result of a survey for a particular geographical area. This is done for each question in the survey.

Trend determination and regression analysis are used to monitor developments over time. The significance of trends is tested to establish whether the change is due to random chance. In these analyses, 'time' is an independent variable while 'attitude', 'problem', 'feelings' or 'perceptions' is the dependent variable that varies over time. The only answer such an analysis will yield is whether there is a change in the dependent variable over time. **It will not show the causes of the change.** This is something that the police will have to find out using their experience and local knowledge, crime statistics, other sources etc.

The concept of the citizen's perspective and satisfaction in police work, normally expressed on a large scale in the planning documents and work plans, must be put in concrete form and made measurable. In concrete terms, the concepts of the citizen's perspective can be designated practically in four measurable components:

1. Always to systematically investigate and identify problems, disturbances, and the incidence of crime in a geographic area, at least once a year.
2. When crime occurs and is reported, plaintiff satisfaction with the Police investigations should be measured with Customer Satisfaction Index methodology.
3. When the Police Operation Halls is informed of a crime, ongoing disturbances or other problems, caller satisfaction with Police response should be measured with Customer Satisfaction Index methodology.
4. To always systematically investigate and map trust and confidence in the police's local work.

The Presentation will show the major obstacles to be successful, the follow-up system with a particular focus on whether these working methods, collaborative structures and new tools increase Police efficiency, reduce exposure to crime, boost safety and lift public confidence in Sweden during the last 20 years.