



Key Lessons from the Accumulated Urban Security Knowledge Base:

What we've learnt, what we need to know more about and how we apply the research evidence

Ripensare la sicurezza urbana e la prevenzione. Ricerca, politiche e pratiche nell'Europa contemporanea
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Aims

- Present key findings and lessons from the IcARUS *Review* of the international urban security evidence base accumulated over the last 30 years in Europe.
- Consideration will be given to the relationship between the research evidence and current urban security practices.
- Emphasis will be given to the challenges of implementation and questions about the adaptability of interventions to local contexts.

Review Parameters

- Reviews the knowledge base in the academic research literature;
 - Supplemented by interviews with International Research Experts (n=19) and interviews with representatives from the six IcARUS partner cities (n=18).
- Focuses on reviews of interventions - summaries/evaluations of multiple interventions, **not** individual programmes.
- Limited to English language.
- Full details in *Methodology and Data Collection* section of the *Review*.
- The full *Review* is available at: <https://www.icarus-innovation.eu/d2-1-the-changing-face-of-urban-security-research-a-review-of-accumulated-learning/>

Studies Reviewed and Interviews

STUDIES		No. Studies
Preventing juvenile delinquency		62
Preventing radicalisation leading to violent extremism		29
Preventing and reducing trafficking and organised crime		15
Designing and managing safe public spaces		4
INTERVIEWS	Interviews	Participants
Partner cities	12	18
International experts	16	19

Name	Organisation	Position
Heiko Berner	Salzburg University of Applied Sciences	Professor
Patrick Charlier	UNIA	Director
Caroline Davey	Design Against Crime Solution Centre, University of Salford	Professor
Jacques de Maillard	Centre de Recherches Sociologiques sur le droit et les Institutions Pénales (CESDIP)	Professor / Director
Jaap de Waard	Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security, Law Enforcement and Crime Prevention	Director
Paul Ekblom	Design Against Crime Research Centre, University of the Arts, London	Emeritus Professor
Barbara Holtmann	Fixed Africa	Director
Elizabeth Johnston	European Forum for Urban Security (Efus)	Director
Gloria Laycock	University College London	Professor
Nedžad Močević	Salzburg University of Applied Sciences	Researcher
Markus Pausch	Salzburg University of Applied Sciences	Professor
Ken Pease	University of Huddersfield	Emeritus Professor
Rossella Selmini	University of Bologna	Professor
Nick Tilley	University College London	Honorary Professor
Jan van Dijk	University of Tilburg	Emeritus Professor
Sirpa Virta	Tampere University	Professor
Irvin Waller	University of Ottawa	Emeritus Professor
Frank Weerman	Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement (NSCR) and Erasmus University Rotterdam	Professor
Andrew Wootton	Design Against Crime Solution Centre, University of Salford	Director



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Key Lessons in Urban Security



The Urban Security Knowledge Base

- Despite considerable advances over the last 30 years, the urban security knowledge base lags behind other fields of public policy.
- Nonetheless, the knowledge that has been accumulated is **not being implemented** or applied in practice.
- Urban security interventions are:
 - Often poorly informed by research evidence base (where it exists);
 - Rarely specify the theories of change (mechanisms) intended to achieve the desired outcome;
 - Frequently suffer from implementation failure;
 - Rarely involve rigorous evaluation allowing lessons to be learnt.



The Evidence Base: Knowledge, Methods & Data

- The focus on ‘what works’ has provided some rich insights but also reduced the scope of evidence and restricted the methods of data collection.
- It has tended to imply (or been taken to imply) ‘off the shelf’ universal solutions.
- Greater regard needs to be accorded to the relational and process-based mechanisms that foster change.
- Context is often defined as a source of obduracy and interference in the smooth delivery of an intervention.
- Implementation tends to be seen as clearly defined, linear and finite.
- Internal validity over external validity.

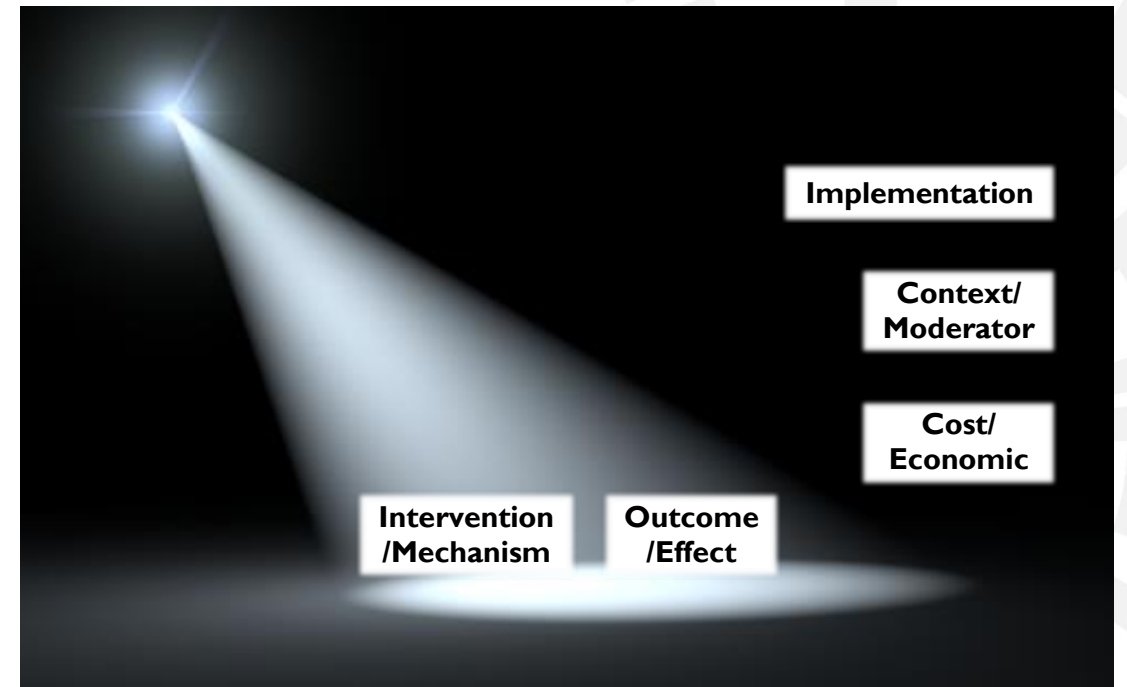


Figure 1: The Partial Knowledge Base

'One of the difficulties with how evaluations are reported - in particular, how experimental evaluations are reported - and part of the language of evaluation has been to use the term "what works". "What works" is a terrible phrase because it's an unspecified universal. It's "what works... everywhere and at all time". And I rail against the use of that kind of language because built into the phrase "what works" is the unspoken "always and under all conditions". I don't believe there are many, if any, [interventions] where that holds. So, if I could wave my magic wand, I would always have discrete evaluations saying "this worked". Findings of evaluations are always in the past tense. They are always: "this worked here, in this population".'

Nick Tilley, University College London, Interview

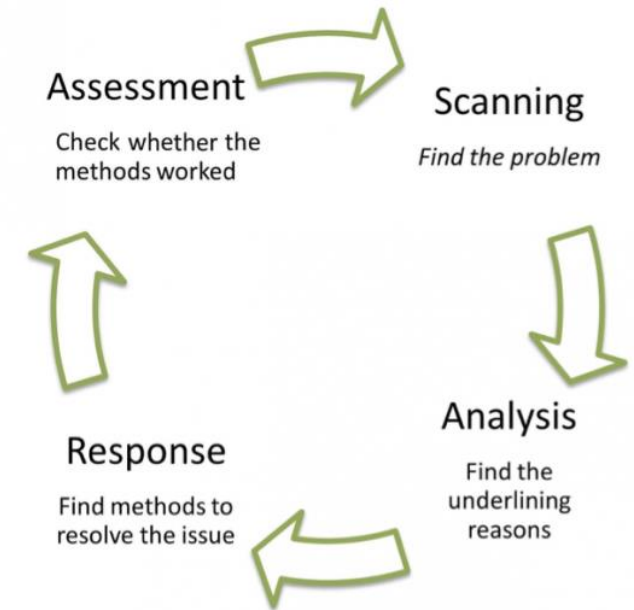


The Evidence Base: Evaluation

- Evaluation is important for accountability, to strengthen institutional development and to inform accumulated learning.
- Evaluation needs to be built into interventions in ways that inform understanding of what works, where, for whom and under what conditions.
- In measuring urban security outcomes, police recorded crime data alone are insufficient. Different types of data need to be gathered from and shared between institutions.
- The challenges of interoperability, connected datasets and the ethical issues that attend to linking data.
- However, evaluation can be a hard sell when it doesn't answer the kinds of questions that practitioners and policy-makers need.

Process Models of Problem-Solving

- Problem-solving approaches provide a robust framework to specify the nature of given problems.
- They allow the integration of context and implementation as well as consideration of the ways in which they interact with interventions (mechanisms) and inform their outcomes
 - by engaging end-users and beneficiaries as implementation agents and sources of knowledge about context.
- The implementation of problem-oriented approaches have tended to focus on the resources and capacities of existing organisations – notably the police.



Focus Areas



Focus Areas

- Preventing Juvenile Delinquency
- Preventing Radicalisation Leading to Violent Extremism
- Preventing and Reducing Trafficking and Organised Crime
- Designing and Managing Safe Public Spaces



In summary...



Design, Innovation and Technology

- Incorporation of preventive elements into the initial design of new products and services more effective than retrofitting solutions.
- Consideration of aesthetics, accessibility, sustainability and social inclusion.
- Commitment to collaborations between designers, manufacturers, architects, planners, designers, and end-users.
- Use of online space as a platform for positive interventions.



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Effective Partnerships

- The siloed nature of services demands harnessing diverse actors through pooled resources, skills and capabilities in multi-agency partnerships.
- Effective multi-stakeholder partnerships require:
 - Shared ownership;
 - Clearly defined expectation of each partner;
 - Acknowledgement of asymmetries of power differentials;
 - Trust and information sharing;
 - Meaningful engagement with end-users and beneficiaries.
- Partners need to develop and foster shared values, understanding each other's priorities, values, positions and limitations.

Context

- Context matters...
 - Nothing works everywhere, a lot of things work somewhere;
 - Place *and* time dependent;
 - *A problem* might appear to be the same, but the underlying nature of it may be very different, necessitating an alternative approach.
- Context reflects a set of characteristics and circumstances that consist of active and unique features within which implementation is embedded.
- Context is not a backdrop for implementation but interacts, influences, modifies and facilitates or constrains the intervention within a particular setting.
- The '4 Is' of individuals, interpersonal relationships, institutional settings and infrastructure.



Implementation

- Implementation failure is the frequent cause of ineffective interventions but is poorly conceived or understood.
- Implementation is actively planned or deliberately initiated effort with the intention to bring a given intervention into policy and practice within a particular setting.
- Action that mobilises structural capacity (rules + resources) and cognitive potential (readiness + commitment) in the service of collective action.
- Implementation strategies and implementation agents are part of the 'doability' of an intervention (Tilley).
 - Hence, administrative structures, political leadership, institutional commitment and buy in from stakeholders are pivotal to success.

Contrasts between the research knowledge base and current practices



Situating the IcARUS *Review of Research* (2.1) and *Inventory of Practices* (2.2)

- Different time horizons given the research evaluation lag.
- Most practices are not rigorously evaluated.
- Many innovative practices are not mainstreamed or sustained.
- Important connections and divergences between research and practice.



Synergies

- Focus on enhancing resilience, fostering social cohesion and community engagement.
- The importance of **implementation** - effective urban security policies and practices rely on sustainable multi-stakeholder partnerships.
 - But often mistrust/lack of understanding between partners;
 - Problems of data sharing.
- The importance of **context** – the transferability / adaptability of tools, practices and research knowledge to particular contexts.
 - Need to understand the changing nature of problems.
- Need for more **evaluation** and **evidence**: lack of evaluation-based tools.



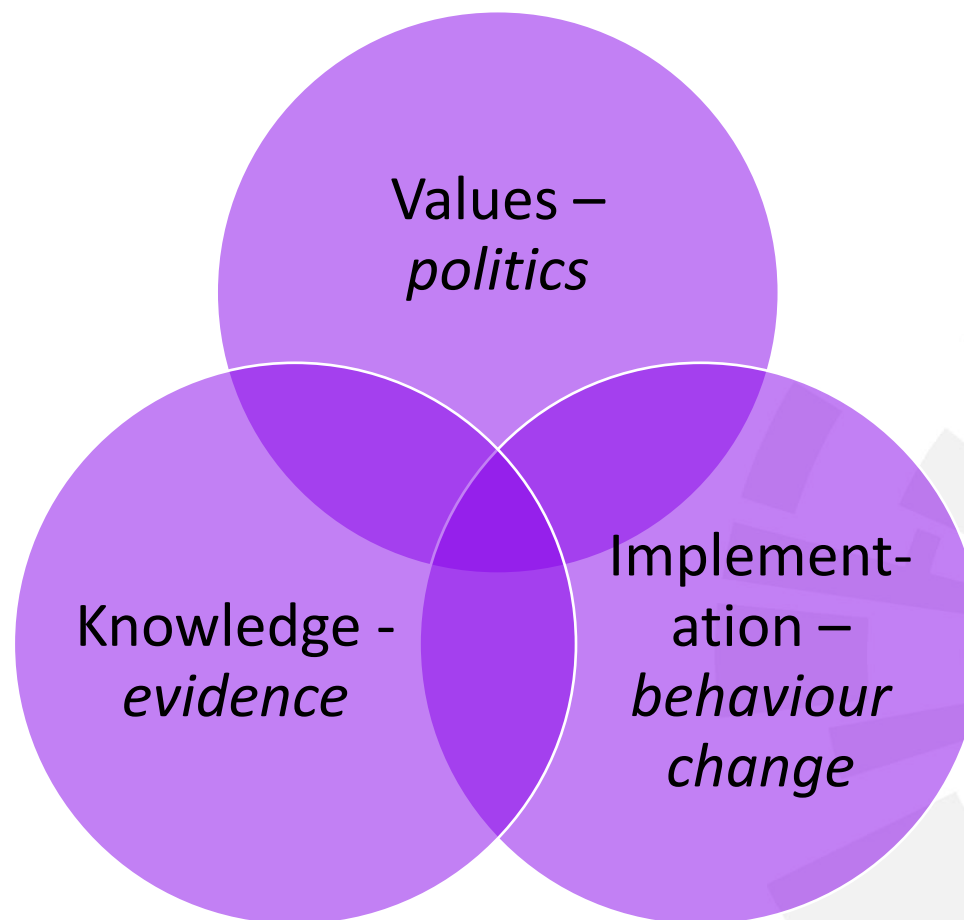
Divergences

- Raises questions about **innovation** and its limitations:
 - Can foster novelty and experimentation at the margins and leave mainstream practices untouched/unchanged.
 - Can be short-sighted – ‘silver bullets’ that align with political priorities and short-term funding.
 - Can lead to the ‘reinvention of wheels’ - given poor institutional memory and learning from research evidence.
 - Can foster context determinacy – ‘it must be invented here’!
- The importance of combining different types of knowledge:
 - ‘knowing-that’ + ‘knowing-how’.

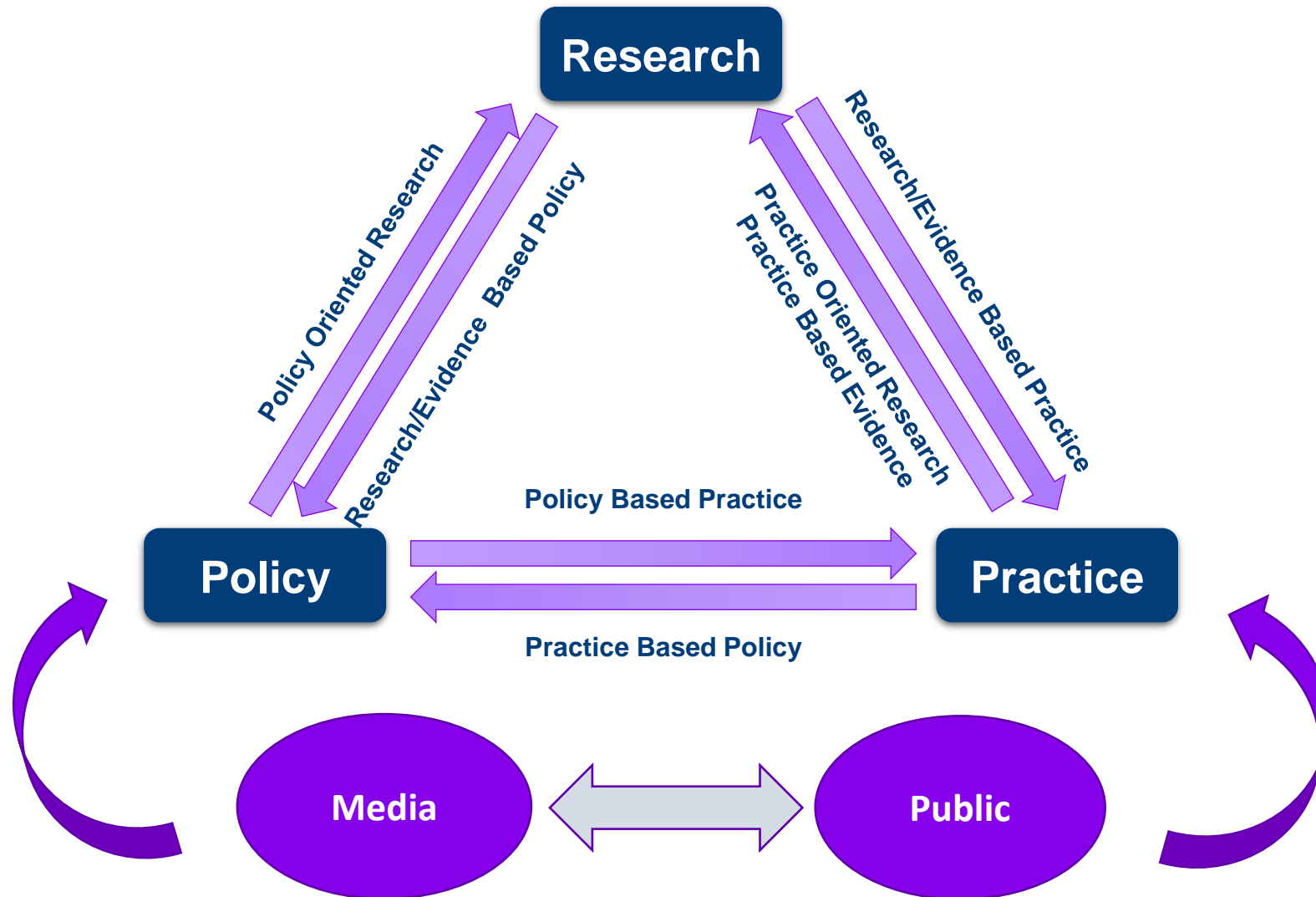
Types of knowledge

‘Science alone is not enough’ to ensure the utilisation of evidence.

‘Evidence’ is only one
(often contested)
element in this complex
mix (Nutley *et al.* 2007)



Relations between Research, Policy and Practice



In Conclusion

- There is a need for urban security researchers, policy-makers and practitioners to better understand the limitations and constraints of each others motivations, values and priorities in co-producing effective interventions.
- Realising change demands building inter-professional relationships of trust and mutual respect, permeable disciplinary boundaries, absence of rigid hierarchies of knowledge and a normative concern with action.
- There is scope for more collaborations that engage researchers, practitioners and policy-makers in the process of mutual learning, programme co-design, implementation and evaluation.



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Thank you

Full Review - *The Changing Face of Urban Security Research: A Review of Accumulated Learning,*

Executive Summary, Factsheets and online search tool all available at:

<https://www.icarus-innovation.eu/tools-insights/public-reports/>



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INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO URBAN SECURITY

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Fachhochschule Salzburg (FHS) Salzburg University of Applied Sciences



Plus Ethics



Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR)



Laboratory of Urban Criminology / Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences (Panteion)



University of Salford



University of Leeds



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