

1) Introduction

Aims, context, and topics of YouPrev local interview studies

The main aim of local interview studies was to further elaborate the topics, that were raised by the institutional survey. This was done by interviews with the experts in both areas (urban area of municipality of Ljubljana and rural area of municipality of Kranj), that were dealing with young people and with young people in those areas too.

Proposed themes were juvenile delinquency trends, what will happen with juvenile delinquency rates in the future and methods to prevent juvenile violence.

We have organized a group meeting of professionals, that work in different areas, where we also discussed those topics, so their feedback will be incorporated in this paper also.

Talking about the future

Although all the participants across professions and ages were reluctant to give their estimation of future events, when we started talking and we set a fixed date in the future, they opened up and shared their view of what could have happened by then.

2) Methodology

Interviews

We conducted 18 semi-structured interviews with participants, which were set by the German team to allow comparison between the countries. We had some contacts with participating schools, so we began with social workers/ psychologists in schools. In mid-April 2012 we got an official permit from General police directorate to conduct interviews with members of criminal police, so we contacted six of them, that are covering both areas in question. Through recommendation of school representatives and criminal police inspectors, we contacted representatives of Social work centers, that deal with young people, violence and delinquency and we conducted four interviews with those professionals. Lastly, we invited three representatives of NGO's. Most of them were working in urban areas, even in Kranj region, but all were (because of the size of our country and relative closeness of two cities) in contact with children from rural background.

Group discussion

YouPrev members have reached the consensus to hold two group discussions with young people, as we thought it would be easier for them to speak up when there are peers around. Coincidentally, group of 8 young people in the »rural« area of Kranj consisted only of boys, that were attending technical school there, and group of young people in the »urban« area of Ljubljana consisted of 10 girls and 2 boys from High school for economic studies.

In addition to the interviews with professional, we had a group discussion with all the participating professionals together at Dnevi varstvoslovja conference on the 7th and 8th of June 2012. This opportunity to talk about the problems proved to be very helpful, because professionals shed a light on the subject of juvenile delinquency from different perspectives, that seemed worlds apart, but when put together in one room, the perspectives came together.

Time frame

Interviews: February-April 2012 for school representatives, April 2012 for criminal police inspectors, May 2012 for Social work centers representatives and NGO's representatives.

Group discussions: September to October 2012 for group discussions at high schools, 8th of June 2012 for group discussion with all the professionals.

3) Sample description

Interviews

Sample consisted of five school representatives (social workers, psychologists – numbers 1-5), six criminal police inspectors (numbers 6-11), four representatives of Social work centers (numbers 12-15) and three representatives of NGO's (16-18).

Group discussion participants

We have organized three discussion groups. The first group discussion (GD1) consisted of eight young people, that attended technical high school in Kranj, ages 15-17, all of them male. This group discussion was held in the vicinity of the school, on 21st of September 2012.

The third group discussion (GD2) was attended by 12 participants, coming from High school of economic studies in Ljubljana, 10 participants were girls, 2 participants were boys, all were aged 16-17 years. Both group discussions with young people were focusing on the results of school survey, especially about prevention methods proposed by young people.

The third discussion group (GD1) was conducted during the annual conference »Dnevi varstvoslovja«, on the 8th of June 2012. Present were 16 professionals, that were interviewed (two missing were one school representative and one NGO's representative).

4) Findings

4.1 Perceptions of problems and key features of youth crime

Summary:

- **apathy of young people leading to drugs**
- **young kids are kicked out of the school system and not given opportunities**
- **more violence in the family, more violence of youngsters against the parents**
- **changing laws concerning young people are diminishing their rights.**

4.1.1 Interviews:

Out of 18 interviews that were done, almost all of them (two representatives of NGO's did not mention it) started the discussion with current economic crisis.

Social work centers professionals mentioned the **reduction of rights that young people have**. They have been limited in their right to repeat a grade, their scholarships were cancelled, instead the government is giving the parents slightly higher child benefits (INT13). This considerably diminishes chances of young people educating themselves – »and nobody wants an uneducated employee« (INT13). But these young people without benefits, without education, without prospects have wishes – »and how to get something you want, if not by stealing« (INT13).

Social work center coordinators, as police inspectors and school representatives all underlined that the **number of young people that are using drugs** is rapidly escalating: »before, they were using it to be cool or to be like other teenagers, now they are using it more and more as a way to get away from the pressures of everyday life« (INT15). In their line of work they see that the young people nowadays like to take medical pills and drink alcohol with it; »it's the cheapest way to get really high, and these children, which are referred to me, really do not have any money. Maybe 2,3 out of 100, that are referred to me every year, come from well situated family« (INT13). »It's not like you could do something about it. The generations have changed drastically. With youngsters today, you cannot explain what is wrong in smoking marihuana – they see it as everyday happening outside school and more you try to prevent it and find new ways to punish them, the more they are slipping out of your hands.« (INT4). »Young people are not capable to go through all the stages of growing up as their parents did, since the stages are very far apart and sometime only one mistake can cost you your life plan. This is why they prefer to take laid back attitude to everything, to take drugs – to escape from the pressure we as a society are putting them through« (INT18).

Interviewees across professions do not see any rapid **decrease in age of young delinquents**; »Age is slowly going down, but it will have to stop somewhere. I mostly get people that are 14, 15 years old. Some of them are somewhat a veteran in delinquent acts. But sometimes they are really really young. This always worries me. But to say that the average age is decreasing – no, we could not say it.« (INT15).

Also, the **focus of work is constantly shifting** in social work and police force: »It changes with the ruling elite, it changes with media attention. Everybody is focused on one thing, on one delinquent act, and after one serious case of some other type of delinquent act, or few less serious cases that occur in a short period of time, the focus is shifted there. Prosecution of some types of delinquent behavior still largely depends on the politics« (INT12). »It all became worse in the middle of the 1990s, when the police bosses started to promote efficiency by congratulating those police officers that had many cases. The difference between those, who were working in traffic and those of us, who were called with violations of public law and order were suddenly erased. It was all in numbers. And people noticed that we are trying to reach a quota, and they were furious. You cannot be expected to do proper job, to take care of juvenile delinquents, to give them attention they need, if you are preoccupied with other things« (INT7).

About the **nature of delinquent acts**: Representatives of NGO's: »delinquent acts today are more complicated by nature and we are less and less capable (as a society) to answer any of those acts with appropriate measures. Specific social classes are always criminalized, but what really constitutes crime here, in Slovenia, never gets in court.« (INT16). »We see an increase of acts that have disproportionate amount of violence. Suddenly, a robbery is not a robbery anymore, and many times offenders use violence, sometimes they even kill a person. This can especially be seen with junkies. They will do whatever to get to what they want« (INT9). »There are new forms of antisocial behaviour. Violence through the social media, through the electronic devices. We are not prepared for the changes that are happening. Some forms of antisocial behavior we just sweep under the rug, rather to face with them« (INT17).

School representatives: »The frequency of delinquent acts is not rapidly declining or going up. We are informing young people about what is wrong and what should be reported. This heightened sensitivity also influences the outcome and the number of acts reported« (INT1). »We conduct surveys every year about our students' feeling of safety in school. And the number are getting better and better. But we are noticing that there are some pupils with psychosomatic disorders, that stem from the family problems. School cannot do anything about it. We try to keep the majority of

problems between us, involved in each case, and we try not to report everything to the police« (INT2).

All of the school representatives agree that there is **no divide between urban and rural environment** in Slovenia – »Every village is less than 20 minutes away from (at least a smaller) city. And on the other hand, there is no real city center in Slovenia.« (INT4). »There is also a bittersweet realisation, that youngsters have only few spots to socialize here (in Kranj). If you know these spots – and you only have to go there on Friday night to see what kind of youngsters are hanging there – it is easier to find your child and on the other hand explain to him/ her, that that company is not good« (INT3).

A very important aspect, that was highlighted in some interviews, but was really put forward in our group meeting with professionals, was the **feeling of hopelessness**, that some of participants felt or saw other coworkers experiencing when trying to do the right thing, when faced with violence of pupils. One representative of high schools commented that he was threatened by parents of the pupils (very important people in the community), because he was trying to report this pupil for a very serious act of violence upon his schoolmate. He decided it was not worth reporting to the police, because the parents had so much influence, they would stop the case there. »All in all, you must choose your battles« (GD3) was his motto, which caused a very intensive debate about it. Police representatives explained, that only if the police is called immediately, they can prepare the case correctly, so it cannot be »swept under the rug« (GD3). Social care center representatives responded harshly: »If we would rethink about many cases, when we take a child from one parent and that parent threatens us, we wouldn't have a case solved. This is what you do. These are the risks of our professions. You owe it to other pupils to see you react to outbursts of violence. If you don't react, you will lose the authority you have« (GD3).

All participants agreed that some regions in Slovenia lack the information about what to do in cases like this, that a material, that would help them decide upon what to do in a certain case (material, that would give a guidelines about the severity of different acts and in which cases school must inform the police, in which Social care centers etc.). »We (a primary school in Kranj) have meetings every month with the whole team of teachers. There we explicitly ask them, if there was a case in their class that they feel was grave enough to report or if there is a case that they want to talk about with us. We talk about if and everybody can pitch in and tell their experiences. Often, we ask the local police representative to come and clarify some things for us« (GD3).

Another subject, that was mentioned by participants in interviews and group discussion was the late response to the crimes committed. A representative of NGO's, who is a very respectable psychologists that had a community of young delinquents for twenty year said: »The problem with punishing

young people is, that you have to do it immediately. Not a month, three months, even years later. That will not sink to their head as a reprecursion of their acts, but just as another push away from the society, another wrongful treatment, another injustice« (GD3). Representative of Social care center in Ljubljana agreed: »I have the statistics about the cases we have, and I can tell you – the average age when they put to trial is 16 years. But it takes another two years approximately for the trial to end and the sentence to be given. They really do not know anymore, what they did back there and they usually have done few crimes in the period in between. So when a long sentence hits them, they are surprised – suddenly, there is the consequence of what they did, sometimes even three times bigger because of the other acts, committed inbetween« (GD3).

4.1.2 Group discussion with young people

Both groups of young people agreed, that there is a growing number of crimes, that are committed only because people do not have money to buy commodities. »Not a week goes by without something being stolen to one of my schoolmates. You get used of it, you become careful, but still, nothing is sacred, everything can be re-used or sold« (GD2). »I know many youngsters that have been in court because of something they did. It's like they do not care anymore, they will do whatever brings them pleasure, and don't think about tomorrow.« (GD1).

They notice the age of offenders decreasing, but this could be partially attributed to their bias (my generation is better than the next, we didn't do such offences). Both groups mentioned an increase of young people selling drugs: »When I started high school, I never noticed drug dealers, especially this young. Now – perhaps because I know what they are – I see them everywhere.« (GD2).

About their alcohol and drug abuse: »It's like that at every party I go to. You get offered a drink, a smoke...you do not decline it. Well, I don't know anyone who declined« (GD1). »If there is a week I don't have anything really difficult in school or when I'm home alone, I enjoy a little. Smoke weed more, drink more. I tried some other stuff too. But it's too expensive for me« (GD2).

4.2 State of youth crime prevention

4.2.1 Interviews:

There is still a chaotic state of affairs concerning prevention programs, majority of professionals agree. »I still do not know what preventive measures are offered where in Slovenia, but at least I can call a person and I will find out. Problem of all these programs is that there is no updated list of all the programs that are available« (INT14). »We are offering centers for youngsters in each quarter in Ljubljana called Mladi zmaji. They are working very well. Besides that, every social work center has its own activities, own measures to help prevent delinquent behaviour, violence, abuse of alcohol. Young people have also the option to get the adult help with their studying« (INT13). »We have had many preventive programmes in the police force. The problem was, it mostly depended on good will of individuals to create them and then go to schools with them. Even today we have some very good programmes that are still lying in the drawers instead of being used in practice. The problem is, with the workload being as it is, nobody has the time to bring them to life« (INT8). »There is no method of separating the bad (methods) from good ones. They all coexist and are used. Some prevention programmes are really half-baked, but they get they finances and they are put to practice« (INT14).

Social work centers: »More and more money is poured into NGO's, and this is not good in case of juvenile delinquency. We (Social work centers) are losing very important ways to help youngsters on account of money being transferred to NGO's. These young people need more approaches than one. We have to offer them one, two or even three different ways to help them. These NGO's are counting on young peoples' readiness to participate. We all know how volatile this readiness is with young people. This is why it's good to have centers, organizations with public authority in these matters, since we are obliged by law to help each and every one of them« (INT12).

»I cannot stress enough how glad we as a school are if we get a proposition for cooperation with anybody – we would like to have as many presentations, workshops etc. with young people. This all could be done during school hours, we are flexible. But the problem is, noone comes, noone suggests cooperating with us. In the end, it is our teachers that are faced with a task of giving their students a heart-to-heart talk and hope that it would change anything« (INT1).

4.2.2 Group discussions with young people:

»I don't remember when we last had any preventive discussions at our school. Yes, in first year, something about smoking...(chuckles)...they tried to convince us to sign a petition. We were smoking by then. It all seemed so pathetic« (GD1).

»I am sick and tired of adults – and moreover boring teachers – telling me what to do and how. You know what – if you want to change my opinion about taking drugs or drinking alcohol, bring somebody that went through hell because of it. Don't show me pictures and give me boring presentations. I need someone that is more like me to present me things« (GD1).

»There was a great programme far, far back. They were at the parties and they gave you information about how to have fun without alcohol and how to avoid the pressure of peers. But even back then, as a child, I soon got bored of their blabbering. I cannot imagine how the older participants felt« (GD2).

»Nobody can do anything – if I decided that I will throw my life away, there is nothing you can do. Those of us who had strict upbringing are almost safe – you wouldn't dare to do something wrong. Yes, family is the best prevention method« (GD1).

»It's weird to see someone lecturing you on alcohol abuse and smoking, and then seeing the same person drinking and smoking. There should be more role models, people in media, publicly known, that would be against smoking and drinking. Some naive young girls would follow their leads, I'm certain« (GD1).

4.3 Main activities/ approaches

4.3.1 Interviews

The majority of respondents thought that we should tackle young peoples' free time – that the problems start there. More than half of them expressed the need for more daily centers, where they could meet and spend supervised time while socializing, getting additional help with studying, getting new knowledge, skills. All social workers stressed the importance of volunteering in Slovenia – project Big brother, where they team older adolescents/ young adults with young people that need help studying or otherwise.

In school the most important programmes that already exist were those tackling smoking, alcohol abuse, drug abuse (many participants and young people mentioned neodvisen.si), peaceful conflict resolution. One school representative felt that we should do more about self image of the young people.

»It's not that we're not eager to try new things. We are. But on the other hand we know what works so we dedicate the time to those activities and try to include as many youngsters as possible in our everyday work. We need young people with problems to be able to talk to others, to have a place where they can feel at home, that somebody is there when needed. That is what it's all about« (INT 14).

All participants were hesitant when asked about the family; family is a sacred place in Slovenian society, where public isn't allowed. They were all ready to help if parents would come to ask for help but would feel uneasy if they would force families to participate in any programmes. »I cooperated with schools to give some additional information to parents. We agreed that I would have last half an hour during parent-teacher meetings and I would explain how to recognize early if something is going on with youngsters. The day came, I arrived, and when the parents heard that I was giving a lecture afterwards, there was a real public outcry – we don't need it, don't you know how busy we are, stop wasting our precious time...Those, who were interested, were already participating in some classes I prepared« (INT14).

4.4 Target groups

4.4.1 Interviews

Respondents were asked about targeting a specific group with preventive actions. School representatives reported having lectures with all of the kids in the specific age group, usually with younger pupils. »When we have activities, done by other, they say which age group this is meant for, so there is no problem. When we are preparing the materials for our students, we talk to other schools, we consult within the team at our school – but we also try to get to younger students« (INT4). »We got some results of rates of drinking alcohol and smoking in the surveys of past years. This gives us a rough idea, where we should invest more time and energy« (INT3). »Our (high) school doesn't get any request for cooperation from the people, that are making the preventive activities, so most of the time, we are on our own. We know that alcohol is a problem, we know that smoking and especially smoking marihuana is a problem, so we try to put it in the itininerary that professors, that have classes with them, spend some time talking to them about the negative consequences. But we see that it is not working in practice. We would need more than lectures« (INT5).

Representatives of Social work centers come into contact with another type of population – the youth, that are referred to them is commonly problematic, shows some signs of illegal activity. Their scope therefore is: »Problematic (individuals), those that have already come to our attention. They have done something, but wasn't reported to the police« (INT13). »I wouldn't agree that we do not work with youth, that comes from foster homes or that is homeless. It's true that there isn't a great number of them, but this gives us an advantage that we can talk to them individually. We are keeping a close eye on them« (INT15).

In group discussion, participants across the professions expressed the need to target more preventive measures at pupils of the first few years of the primary school. They do not see the need to have the measures divided by gender or target a specific gender with some of the activities.

What was really stressed and told many times again is that the preventive measures in Slovenia are not distributed evenly between the cities and the area around them. »I can honestly say that when talking to headmasters in faraway communities I am appalled by how forgotten they are. Some were never even contacted by some activities that should be nation-wide. They rely on themselves to provide at least some activities« (INT2).

4.5 Types of addressed problem behaviour

4.5.1 Interviews

School representatives said that the topics of preventive measures can be partly attributed to the current situation: »Some year, they talk about dating violence more, the other about peaceful conflict resolution. There are still some preventive activities that do not shift focus, but in general, there are programmes that run for a year or two and are targeting what we would call a popular topic, something that was detected by the media and blown out of proportion, but has nothing or very little to do with our work« (INT2). »In our school we can see a gradual shift from just substance abuse to the topics, that really influence the atmosphere in school; violence in general, how to resolve problems, how to communicate with others etc.« (INT4). When preparing their own material, representatives stressed damaging property (vandalism), harassment and harassment over the internet and aggression are the main topics.

Since drinking alcohol in public is culturally acceptable in Slovenia and is becoming more and more problematic¹ (especially connected to the vandalism), they try to tackle that problem in their activities, but they admit that these activities cannot go beyond talking.

Representatives of Social work centers explained that they try to involve youth, that comes to them, to different youth centres and they try to fill their spare time with activities: »We aren't targeting a specific problem behaviour, we try to incorporate them all and we act according to their behaviour« (INT15).

Some attention was given to the violence in relationships; representatives of high schools stressed that activity as important, one representative of NGO's was also stressing this issue, but more importantly, young people themselves expressed the need to talk about it: »I had a friend, she was really badly treated by her boyfriend. And I never wanted to address this issue, I thought, why bother. But after the presentation we had, after I saw where this violence can lead to, I talked to her and explained that it is wrong. She got rid of him« (GD2). »A friend of mine (a boy) once came to me all covered in bruises. I talked to him and tried to convince him to tell me, who did it. He wouldn't say. Then one day we were drinking, and he was already pretty drunk, when I asked him again and he said that it was his girlfriend. I didn't know what to say, but I remember what was said at the meeting we had - I listened to him, I didn't judge or laugh at him. I saw how important it was for him that he told someone about it« (GD1).

¹ A lot of respondents in our school survey said that their last contact with the police was because underage drinking or disturbance of the public law and order (which occurred in the night, while they were out drinking).

4.6 Interagency cooperation, funding, etc.

4.6.1 Interviewees' opinions

Social care centers: working with other institutions is now better than ever before. More energy, more work time dedicated to »contact police officers in the area and sort things out« (INT15). But it still depends on one person – if you are more dedicated to your work, you will do a lot more than somebody who is »just a pencil-pusher« (INT15). »Sometimes it happens that police officers from Ljubljana call me (this social worker is from Kranj, 40 km from Ljubljana) and tell me that one of my youngsters has done something bad there. This helps me so much – I know what I'm up against. I hate it when I'm noticed only when the matter goes before the judge. Nothing can be done then, it's out of my hands. This is why I'm furious when local police representatives don't call me« (INT14). But police and social workers are working together: »You can see that there is a change for better, when there are police representatives present always when we are discussing any law in social work area.« (INT12).»All in all, after 30 years of working in this field, I can honestly say that things were never this good as far as interagency cooperation is concerned.« (INT14)

All of the respondents said that the funding is not sufficient: »we are more and more burdened with day-to-day things that are needed from us. We have less time to dedicate it to prevention activities« (INT14). »Some NGO's have really great programmes and we are really happy that there is somebody besides us that could help the child. But their funding is depending on a whim, on what media say that are most prevalent crimes, what sensationalist news let their readers to believe is happening here. After something bad happens, money starts pouring in for prevention activities almost overnight. But in a same way this money may not be there tomorrow. This situation is hard even for us, let alone NGO's« (INT13). »Sometimes an opportunity comes along, some money too, but we are very cautious to accept the new ideas and put them into practice, since we know that a project need at least three years to establish itself and show some progress, and we have a funding for it now. Next year is always a mystery« (INT17). »I got asked many times, when talking to other similar organizations in Europe – why aren't you trying this and that etc. but I had to tell them in the past that the budget is tight. Nowadays, I don't receive any questions from them – I gather that the crisis has influenced their work too« (INT18).

Another prevalent problem, that has arised before in this report and has to be mentioned is inadequate supervision of the programmes; »When I talk to the principal of our school and he asks me what would I recommend I don't know what to say. There is no method of knowing what works

and what doesn't except talking to pupils about it. But older they get, less they are inclined to say that something was good or that it worked. They express the gratitude of one hour off, as they see it, and cannot express what was good or bad about it – only in comparison to other presentations they've heard. I can ask other schools, but they face the same problem as I do – there are no evaluations made on young people about the projects. It's difficult to defend something that you don't know anything about« (INT3).

4.7 Perceptions of effects and efficiency of prevention activities in the areas

Interviews:

It's difficult to assess the effects of preventive activities, was an overall answer of our interviewees; there is a definite need for better monitoring and assessment of the programmes, that are offered now, and this may lead to misinterpretations. »It is difficult to say if something is working or not. We are not measuring the opinions of young people when they enter a programme and after it ends. Even that would give us an exact information about programmes working or not, but it would give us an estimation« (INT9). »A lot of our work is done without any feedback. We cannot say if we really made a difference or not, and this is demoralizing« (INT10).

During the group discussion, with a representative of youth community present, a debate into fruitful measures of prevention was immediately drawn to the effect of a community. All participants agreed that the effect of »quiet suburban neighbourhoods« can partly be attributed to the closer bonds between people. »As a parent, it's easier to find out that something is happening with your child if there are others that can tell you something about it. My neighbour lives across a public park in a vicinity of my home and she call me if she sees anything unusual – children skipping school, smoking, drinking. I feel more at ease knowing that others in my neighbourhood care about it« (GD3). »In former Yugoslavia, there was a feeling that we were all collectively responsible for our youth. So you had the moral obligation to intervene, even though it wasn't your child, even if you were only a neighbour. Today we are all working almost against each others. Parents don't accept any advice, even if it's meant in a good will« (GD3).

Participants agreed that the future of preventive work is community youth centers. Representatives of Social work centers emphasized that work in their youth community centers has given a lot of positive feedback from young people, from their parents and the teachers.

A lot was said about the involvement of parents into prevention activities: »If I could reach the parents of those that are especially at risk and explain to them, what should they be more attentive to – what changes in behaviour, there would be a lot less work for me, I'm certain. But it hard to get to them sometimes. They see the problems with their child as something that must be kept in secret and this is why they come to me for an advice – if they even come – when it's almost too late« (GD3).

Another important influence on delinquency as mentioned in discussion was young peoples' attitude towards the authority: »I have always included local police officers in my work at school. There were regular meetings, perhaps once per year a short talk« (GD3). Others also mentioned that regular

meetings with local officers helped to introduce the police to the child as an organization that helps, not just punish people.

When talking about what doesn't work, all respondents expressed the need for work with individuals: »I do not understand the constant wish of others about making some programme general, that can be applied to a classroom of children. That could work like magic. Nothing like that exist. Best work by my opinion is done one-on-one. You learn things about a child, you get his responses, you see if it's working or not« (INT14).

Another thing, that doesn't work and was expressed across the professions is being too strict and punish first transgression harshly. »It's not that I'm permissive. I just don't believe that bringing young people in court will solve anything. Give them something to work, and give them punishment now, so he will know exactly what he did wrong« (INT15).

Also not working are correctional facilities: »We must work overtime to include all the young people into the educational system, not to pull them out« (INT4). »We saw in many cases when going to a correctional facility a young pupil came back even worse, with a sense of vengeance and hatred towards everybody« (INT12).

Group discussion:

Young respondents were asked, which prevention methods that were written down as a suggestion in school survey would they recommend. The respondents in both discussion groups were making a clear distinction between approaches for prevention of alcohol and drug abuse and violence prevention (the distinction was not that clear in youth survey). All in all, it could be said that they were against kicking the pupils out of school: »I remember one pupil, he was going in a parallel class with me, back then, when I was attending another school. We both totally flunked first year, and I came to this school. I really started to work, I didn't want to repete class again, and look at me now. The other guy must be on some drug or something – I see him now or then, and he looks weird« (GD1). »You kick one out of school, you should kick the rest of us. We are all responsible for some stuff, the only difference is that we weren't caught« (GD1). The opinion was really divided on the question of keeping the pupils or expelling them. Female responents were more inclined towards expelling: »They must learn a lesson« (GD2), while boys were more against it.

When talking about surveillance in the halls and cameras put in the vicinity of school they also weren't unanimous: »Cameras don't mean a thing. We have a security officer, and we have some

cameras, but is he ever inside his office to see things happening and prevent them? Never. I don't say he isn't working, it's just that when you need him, he is never around« (GD1). »I would feel better if I knew that somebody is taping the park outside the school. There were some incidents and a colleague of mine really got hurt. This way you can show it to others, who started the fight« (GD1). »I think that putting a camera in the girls toilets would be nice. There are some girls that go to smoke there, because they don't want to be seen outside. They guard the doors so it's no use telling teachers« (GD2). »I don't know, I think a person can do much more than any camera. A surveillance officer can break up a fight, he can search a person that is suspicious...I would feel safer with one« (GD2).

Another proposition was searching the lockers in school and strip-search of people that were suspicious; youngsters were against it. »I don't have anything like that in my locker, but I would be furious if somebody went through it. There are some private things inside« (GD2); »Strip search? Are you normal? I wouldn't go to school then. Nobody has a right to search me if there isn't any cause for the search. Do the spit tests instead- test them for substances in saliva« (GD1). »It's not necessary to check all the lockers. A majority of pupils know, who has what and where. Ask them« (GD1).

The last idea was including the police into school with lectures and asking a local policeman to stand in front of school every week for a little while, which was greeted with disbelief. »Nonsense, if dealers would go away, they would come back soon. I don't know what the point of it would be. And if a policemen would go to schools, they should go really early, in first grades. My classmates would laugh at him« (GD1).

4.8 Future challenges and opportunities for prevention

All for participants agreed that something should be done on the level of the society: »With values so low nowadays and with youngsters seeing so much of problems in everyday life, they are less inclined to do something. They are pessimistic about their future. They are scared what will happen« (INT5). »It's hard to talk about the problem of violence in school when some pupils don't have even enough money for a meal. They see their parents working overtime for nothing. All of them are searching for a shortcut, for a better way of living without working hard« (INT14). »Group discussions with them about what is important in life and how to achieve it, that hard work pays off, that education does count etc.« (INT2).

Some expressed the necessity of talking less about the crisis and more about the opportunities: »I see that youngsters just shut down when talking about the current situation in Slovenia. They are sick and tired of listening to how everything is bad and the economy is at the breaking point. We, the adults are sick of listening to that« (INT10).

Few said that we need to be concerned about the new forms of delinquency and violence: »There should be a class for the teachers and police officers about the trends and telling signs of violence and drug abuse. »For instance, at one school the principal called me for an intervention with a 12-year old pupil that showed some signs of smoking marihuana. When I arrived, the principal said that she is not sure about it, because some of the signs are missing, such as red eyes. I told her that perhaps he is using a liquid that helps to narrow the blood vessels in eyes. She was surprised and told me that she never heard about it« (INT8).

4.9 Recommended approaches/ strategies for prevention and control of youth crime

First and foremost, interviewees expressed the need to keep young people in school, attending schools. Keeping them occupied. For that, more help should be given to the schools to alleviate the problem they may have in classes with disruptive children (INT2,4, 12,15). More workshops and seminars for the teachers in this matter. Less workload for the teachers. They should be able to dedicate some time to talk to the children. More emphasis on the free time the young people they have; what are they doing, are there adults. Giving them new possibilities to spend time under supervision in youth centers, teaching them new skills.

Another important thing was to establish a communication with parents, that would allow them to convey some information about how to recognize different forms of unacceptable behaviour and how to react. This should be established early in the child's life.

Professionals mentioned connecting the programmes, the centers, the professionals that work with young people, not just formally, but also informally. More opportunities for them to talk about their work and to find some creative solutions for the problems they may encounter.

The need to establish a way to monitor and evaluate current programmes was also mentioned. Making an updated list of what is available in Slovenia and disseminate it around.

One of the proposed methods of prevention work in the future is to write down proper procedures – what to do in different situations, a guideline to the severity of crimes and misdemeanors that youngsters might do and whom to call and where to turn.

Participants expressed the need to educate the parents about what to do in cases of family violence.

Young people expressed the need for more security first; although they were not unanimous about what would provide security (cameras, policemen outside, security officers, checking the lockers, checking the suspicious people...). They miss talking to »people like them« about drugs and violence and generally expressed a very strong feeling of distrust towards teachers trying to lecture them on the topics.

5) Summary and conclusions

Participants in the interviews did not express a very negative view about the future; they think that the number of delinquent acts will stay the same, some even think that the acts will be less aggressive, more connected to new technologies. The majority however thought that the severity of the acts committed will be higher.

One very common comment (from the social workers) was that in the future, young people will not be able to rely on the state to help them financially (this was linked to the cutting of the scholarships and not allowing for a pupil to repeat the class for the second time).

Participants anticipate also a rise in drug abuse and new drugs appearing. This was said in 14 out of 18 interviews and was highlighted also in the group discussion. Police inspectors anticipate more serious delinquent act because of the drug abuse.

In general, they do not expect more violence in schools in the future, but they anticipate that the number of cases will rise because of the heightened awareness to this problem. Also, some participants expressed that in the future we will talk more about the violence of children towards the parents (grandparents).

In the future, all of them said that the communication with other organizations will get better and that (hopefully) the meetings with different professionals will become a common practice.

Most of the representatives of Social work centres and schools thought that repressive methods and programmes will be less used and instead the emphasis will be on inclusion of youngsters with problems to the society.