

Evaluation 1999-2004

**Netherlands Institute for the study of Crime
and Law Enforcement (NSCR)**

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1 Introduction

1.1 Scope and context of this review

This assessment concerns the research carried out at the Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement (NSCR) since 1999. The evaluation was commissioned and organised by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).

The NSCR had submitted a self-evaluation document covering the period 1999-2004. This was approved by the Governing Board of NWO in January 2005.

This external assessment follows the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2003-2009 for Public Research Organisations (SEP).

The aims of the assessment system are:

- Improvement of the quality of research through an assessment carried out according to international standards of quality and relevance;
- Improvement of research management and leadership;
- Accountability to higher levels of the research organisations and funding agencies, government, and society at large.

The Committee was asked to produce a reasoned judgment on the mission, strategy and performance of the Institute. The SEP calls for an evaluation addressing both the research organisation itself and the research programme(s) it conducts. Each research organisation must submit details of the results achieved in each of its research programmes over the previous six years (including quantitative data about staff input, key publications and a list of publications), a short outline of the mission statement of each programme, and details of any changes expected to occur in its research profile. Site visits form an important part of every evaluation and include interviews with the management of the institute and its programme directors, as well as visits to laboratories and facilities.

1.2 The Evaluation Committee

The Evaluation Committee was appointed in December 2004 by the Governing Board of NWO. Its members are:

Prof. dr. M. Killias, chairman	University of Lausanne (CH)
Prof. dr. H.B.G. Ganzeboom	Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (NL)
Prof. dr. F. Lösel	University of Erlangen-Nürnberg (D)
Prof. mr. P.J.P. Tak	Radboud University (NL)

A short curriculum vitae of each of the members is included in Annex 1.

The Committee was supported by NWO staff (Patricia Vogel, Dick van der Kroef, and Els el Idrissi).

All members of the Committee declared that their assessment had been free of bias, personal preference or personal interest, and that it had been reached without undue influence by the Institute, the programme or other stakeholders.

Any existing professional relationships between Committee members and programmes under review were reported and discussed in the Committee meeting. The Committee concluded that there were no conflicts of interest.

1.3 Data supplied to the Committee

The Evaluation Committee received a detailed self-evaluation document from the NSCR. A number of key publications were listed in an annex and copies of all key publications were available to the Committee.

The documentation included all the information required by the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2003-2009 and the answers to the additional questions put by NWO and the Ministry of Justice.

1.4 Procedures followed by the Committee

The Committee proceeded in accordance with the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2003-2009 (see Annex 3). The assessment was based on the documentation provided by the Institute, the key publications, and the interviews. The interviews took place during the site visit made in February 2005. The programme of the site visit is included in Annex 2.

The self-evaluation document, the selected papers and an explanatory letter were sent to the Committee one month before the site visit.

The chair and secretary of the Committee established a timetable for the site visit. The Committee met on the afternoon preceding the site visit to discuss and plan the interviews with the NSCR's Management Team, theme coordinators, researchers, Governing Board and Scientific Advisory Committee. They also decided which PhD students and postdocs to interview. The Committee agreed procedural matters and aspects of the assessment as described in the following paragraphs.

At a formal dinner in Oegstgeest, the Committee had the opportunity to meet with prof. dr. C.H.C.M. Buys, vice-chair of the Governing Board of NWO.

The interviews with the NSCR Management Team, Governing Board, Scientific Advisory Board, senior research staff, PhD students, postdocs, and support staff took place during the site visit on 24 and 25 February 2005. All the interviews and discussions were conducted by the entire Committee.

After the interviews, the Committee discussed the scores and comments for the Institute and the research programme and determined the final assessment.

At the end of the site visit, a meeting was held with the NSCR director and the chair of the NSCR Governing Board to report the main findings of the Committee.

In May 2005, a draft version of this report was sent to the NSCR director for factual correction and comment. The report was subsequently submitted to the Governing Board of NWO and accepted in June 2005.

1.5 Aspects and assessment scale

The Standard Evaluation Protocol 2003-2009 requires the Evaluation Committee to assess four main aspects of the research, namely:

- Quality (international recognition and innovative potential)
- Productivity (scientific output)
- Relevance (scientific and socio-economic impact)
- Prospects (vitality and feasibility, management and leadership)

The ratings specified in the Protocol are: excellent (5), very good (4), good (3), satisfactory (2), and unsatisfactory (1).

Excellent

Work that is at the forefront internationally, and which most likely will have an important and substantial impact in the field. Institute is considered an international leader.

Very good

Work that is internationally competitive and is expected to make a significant contribution. Institute is considered an international player, national leader.

Good

Work that is competitive at the national level and will probably make a valuable contribution in the international field. Institute is considered internationally visible and a national player.

Satisfactory

Work that is solid but not exciting, will add to our understanding and is in principle worthy of support. It is considered of less priority than work in the higher categories. Institute is nationally visible.

Unsatisfactory

Work that is neither solid nor exciting, flawed in the scientific and or technical approach, repetitions of other work, etc. Work not worthy of pursuing.

2 Institutional framework of the NSCR

2.1 Mission

The Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement (NSCR) was established in 1992 on the initiative of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) and the Netherlands Ministry of Justice. NWO is the NSCR's parent organisation. The Institute has a Governing Board representing its three funding bodies: NWO, the Ministry of Justice, and Leiden University. The Governing Board also includes members of the Dutch academic community. In addition, the NSCR has a multidisciplinary Scientific Advisory Board and three other broadly based consultative committees. The Institute is hosted by Leiden University and located in one of university's buildings at the Leiden Bio Center.

The primary goal of the NSCR is to conduct fundamental and multidisciplinary research, and thereby to acquire scientific knowledge and disseminate it via academic and non-academic media. The areas in which the NSCR conducts its research are: (1) mobility and the distribution of crime, (2) the citizen and the criminal justice system, and (3) life course, crime and interventions.

In addition, the NSCR has taken on the following tasks:

To develop a national and international network of scientific researchers on crime and law enforcement, in cooperation with other universities and research institutes, by organising national and international conferences, seminars, symposia, workshops and lectures.

Day-to-day management is the responsibility of the director, who is also Professor of Criminology at Leiden University. The director is accountable to the board of NSCR for the management of the Institute. He is assisted by three theme coordinators. The director and the coordinators together form the Management Team. The function of theme coordinator rotates every two to three years between the senior members of the group.

2.2 Research

The first two years after the current director joined the NSCR in 1999 were used to set up the research programme. The research staff was almost totally replaced. The new staff translated the programme step-by-step into actual projects, directed by regular discussions within the theme groups. The further development of the research programme is an ongoing process.

The NSCR's research programme combines descriptive and explanatory questions and normative issues. A deliberate decision has been taken to take a variety of theoretical approaches and to work from various disciplinary backgrounds. The choice of an explanatory theory is determined by the nature of the research questions, the state of theoretical development and the study's potential contribution to empirical and theoretical knowledge. The object of study, crime and law enforcement, provides the direction. Research is multidisciplinary, because no single discipline is capable of providing answers to all questions. The main disciplines represented within the NSCR are criminology, sociology, social, legal and developmental psychology, remedial and other educational science, criminal law and public administration.

This wide range of disciplines is matched by the variety in the qualitative and quantitative methodologies employed. These include analysis of existing large longitudinal databases, systematic observations in the field, case file analysis, interviews, and experiments on a variety of scales involving practitioners in the criminal justice system as subjects.

Theme I: Mobility and the distribution of crime

Descriptive and explanatory types of research are conducted on this theme to investigate the spatial patterns of crimes, offenders, and victims and to see how these patterns change over time.

Theme II: The citizen and the criminal justice system

Research projects on this theme focus on particular aspects of the central research question: Which legal, social and psychological processes in the interaction between citizens and the criminal justice system determine the system's legitimacy? Research is multidisciplinary. The theoretical background lies to a large extent in theories of justice (including procedural justice), defiance theory, narrative theory and reintegrative shaming.

Theme III: Life course, crime and interventions

Criminal careers are the central focus of the third theme. Research is being conducted with a view to mapping out careers for different types of people and perpetrators of different types of crime, covering as much of the life course as possible. Special attention is being paid to the role played by judicial and other interventions.

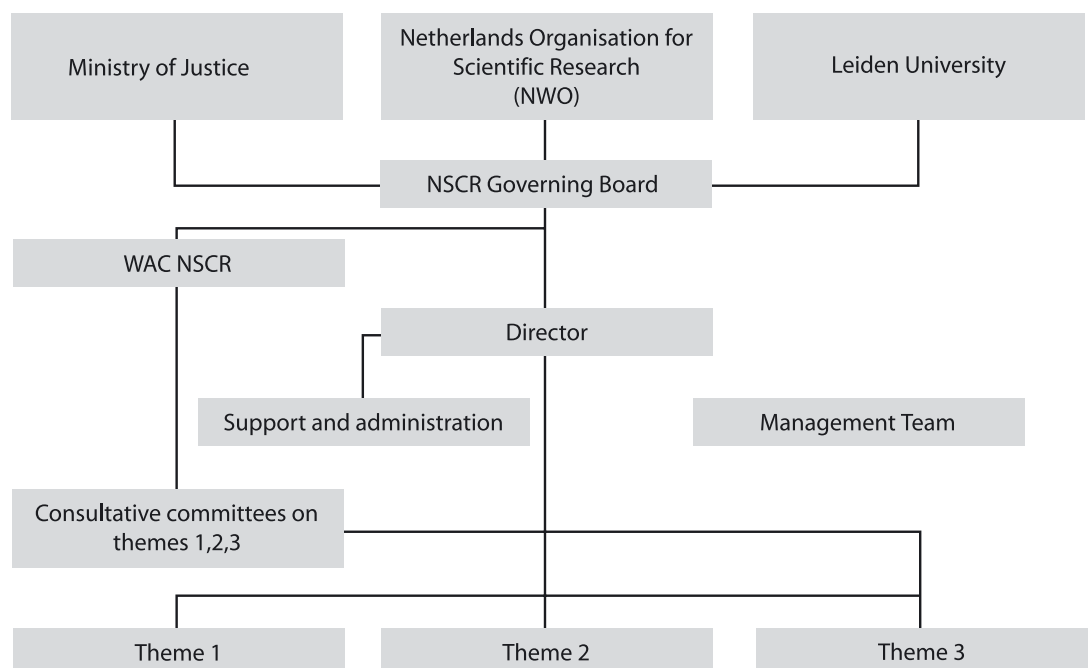
Other tasks of the NSCR

The NSCR undertakes a number of other tasks besides research. These include contributing to the development of the Dutch and international academic community and the training of young researchers.

The Institute is participating in the Research School Safety & Security in Society (OMV), which is recognised by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).

2.3 Organisational structure

The NSCR has no organisational units or departments. Members of research staff contribute to one or more themes within the research programme. Each theme has a theme coordinator and the coordinators and director together constitute the Management Team of the Institute.



2.4 Financial matters

The current budget (2004) is M€ 1.9 (in which the concrete contribution of Leiden University is converted into euros), of which 34% comes from the Ministry of Justice, 27% from NWO, 25% from Leiden University (in the form of 6 PhD positions, 1.6 FTE at senior lecturer level, and the premises), and 14% from the Institute's own income generated from contract research (exclusive funding of special projects in Open Competition of NWO).

2.5 Staff

Research Staff	2004
Senior/tenured	8.8
Postdoc/ non-tenured	2.6
Junior /non-tenured	0.8
PhD/ non-tenured	11.0
FTE research	23.2
Support Staff	5
Total FTEs	28.2

3 Assessment of the NSCR research programme

The NSCR research programme

In its self-evaluation, the NSCR gives a detailed description of its research themes and priorities. There are three themes:

- 1 Mobility and the distribution of crime;
- 2 The citizen and the criminal justice system;
- 3 Life course, crime and interventions.

The Committee has assessed both the research activities overall, and the programme structure and associated focus on particular subjects.

Assessment of the research programme

For the assessment of the research programme, the Committee considered the:

- Leadership, strategy and policy of/for the research programme
- Quality of the research staff, human and other resources, funding policies and facilities
- Quality and quantity of publications and publication strategies
- Academic reputation of the group/programme
- Relevance of the programme from an academic perspective and from a broader social perspective
- Assessment of the future prospects for the group/programme

Programme assessment	
Quality	very good (4)
Productivity	very good (4)
Relevance	very good (4)
Vitality	excellent (5)

Quality and Productivity

The average number of academic publications in top journals was rather low over the 6-year period under evaluation. However, there has recently been a shift towards increased publishing in top international journals, and the Committee recommends the continuation of this policy. In future, NSCR's output should include a much higher proportion of peer-reviewed journal articles. More thoughts on the publication strategy are expressed in the Conclusions and recommendations.

The number of completed PhD theses is rather low because most projects have started since 2000. Some theses are to be defended in the near future. In order to reduce the time devoted to the preparation of PhD theses, the Committee recommends that the duration of PhD student positions should be cut. Experience abroad suggests that the actual duration of PhD by and large corresponds to the duration of the temporary limitations to their position. For this reason and in order to increase the positions available the committee feels that it might be realistic and feasible that the NSCR could shorten their PhD-positions to 3 years and still allow high quality work. This would allow more students to benefit from support and might increase the number of doctorates without increasing costs.

In relation to the aim of obtaining more publications in peer-reviewed journals, there should also be a greater shift from traditional theses to cumulative theses based on journal articles already published or accepted for publication.

Vitality

Several senior researchers have been offered attractive teaching positions by Dutch universities. This underlines the vitality both of the Institute and of its research agenda, which clearly reflects the priorities of the Dutch academic community. The recent increase in the number of publications in top international journals is a clear indication that the Institute is on the right path.

4 Assessment of the Institute

Overall assessment of the Institute with respect to various aspects

Evaluation of the Institute with respect to	score	
1 Leadership	excellent	(5)
2 Mission and goals	excellent	(5)
3 Strategy and policy	very good	(4)
4 Adequacy of the resources	very good	(4)
5 Funding policies	good	(3)
6 Facilities	excellent	(5)
7 Academic reputation of the Institute	excellent	(5)
8 Societal relevance of the Institute	very good	(4)
9 Balance of the strengths and weaknesses of the Institute	very good	(4)
10 Overall assessment of the Institute	very good in transition to excellent	(4) (5)

Leadership

The quality of leadership is judged to be excellent, while the atmosphere at the institute is very good. The director has succeeded in establishing excellent relations with Dutch universities, has attracted top researchers to the NSCR and has established a convincing research agenda around three major themes. The Committee appreciated the fact that various senior researchers have not confined their work exclusively to their own theme, but have worked on projects and publications in the other fields. However, there was some concern that responsibility for developing the overall research agenda of the NSCR rests too much on the director. The Management Team should give him greater support in redirecting research priorities and more assistance with administrative tasks.

The Committee also feels that the organisation chart features too many consultative bodies. Some simplification may be desirable.

Mission and goals

The institute is fulfilling its ongoing mission and achieving its goals.

Strategy and policy

International leadership can be relatively easily obtained if the area of a center is defined very narrowly. However the Committee considers that the NSCR should maintain a rather broad range of activities given its unique position in the Netherlands as the major Dutch research institute in its field and in order to meet the needs of Dutch society to be advised and get knowledge on a broader scale. Therefore the NSCR will need to compromise between these two conflicting goals. In the Committee judgment the NSCR has remarkably well succeeded in maintaining a good balance between the two goals.

The NSCR has now reached the top in the Netherlands and has become a major player on the international stage. It has reached, or is about to reach, a top international position on certain issues on which it has concentrated major research efforts, such as geographical criminology, psychology of judicial decision-making, and longitudinal research. However, given the limited resources and structural constraints (i.e. the need to address a multitude of issues relating to crime and justice in Dutch society), it would be unrealistic to expect the NSCR to become a world leader in all its domains.

Adequacy of resources

Current funding seems adequate and should be maintained at its current level. Concerns have been expressed about the gradual decline, due to inflation, of the contribution by the Ministry of Justice. Given that policy-relevant research of the type promoted mainly through the Ministry's Research and Documentation Centre (WODC) needs to be backed by long-term ("fundamental") research, the Committee feels that the Ministry of Justice cannot ignore the contribution made by the NSCR to its own research and policy agenda, even if research at the NSCR will necessarily remain independent of short-term policy considerations. Since the Committee is strongly of the opinion that the NSCR research agenda should be expanded rather than reduced over the coming years, the issue of finding additional sources for funding will become a high priority, both for the Institute and for its main supporting agencies.

Funding policies

The NSCR attracts a relatively small proportion of its budget from other funding agencies. The Committee feels that the relevance of NSCR research to various potential funding agencies should make it possible to increase the proportion of external funds it receives, including research money from the private sector (insurance companies, etc.). Further thoughts are expressed in the Conclusions and recommendations.

Facilities

Facilities are excellent. The same is true of the support staff. Given the size of the Institute, it may be desirable to look for some synergies in future, perhaps through some form of cooperation with related institutions. Opportunities of this kind might emerge out of a developing involvement of the NSCR in the academic training of researchers. Some further ideas are presented in the Conclusions and recommendations.

Academic reputation of the Institute

Given the constraints described in section 3, the Committee feels that the NSCR's national and international reputation is as good as can be expected under current conditions.

Social relevance of the Institute

The study of crime is without doubt of great relevance to society. It is very important to have a criminology research programme, particularly in a country which has a relatively high crime rate and attaches high political priority to related issues. However, the spin-off for society could be made more visible through a more efficient dissemination policy, as outlined in the Conclusions and recommendations.

Balance of the strength and weaknesses of the Institute

On balance, considering its mission in a relatively small European country (see section 3), the NSCR has performed very well. Weaknesses have been identified with respect to the number of publications in peer-reviewed international journals, success in attracting external funds, e.g. through competitive programmes, and the Institute's contribution to the national debate on crime-related issues.

Overall assessment of the Institute

The Committee has taken into account the short period in which the Institute has been in operation under the regime introduced by the current director, who has developed a new research programme and built up an almost entirely new research team since his appointment in 1999. Because of the quality of its performance over that period and the potential of the research staff and the Institute as a whole, the Committee feels that the Institute is already very good and believes that it is likely to become Europe's leading centre for research in its field.

5 Answers to the questions addressed to the Committee by NWO and by the Ministry of Justice

Questions put by NWO

1 What is and what could be the position of the Institute in the near future, compared to leading institutes in the world that operate within the same field?

The Institute has improved greatly since the last evaluation. It has become the national leader in criminological research in the Netherlands. With regard to the main research themes chosen, it is on track to become the leading institute in Europe and one of the leaders worldwide. In assessing any similar institute within the European context, the structural constraints, as outlined in section 4 (see "Strategy and Policy"), should obviously be kept in mind.

2 Should NWO continue to support the mission of the institute and for what reasons?

The Committee strongly recommends that NWO should continue supporting the Institute. The main justification for funding the NSCR lies in remaining its position as a national leader and in its potential to become a leading institute outside the Netherlands. Obvious requirements for achieving that status in the next period would be the collection and dissemination of unique datasets, the achievement of core positions in national and, more particularly, international research networks, and the editing and production of international criminological journals.

3 Does NWO have more effective alternatives for supporting the same type of research and/or facility?

The obvious alternative would be to support criminological research within scattered and small-scale Dutch university departments. However, its concentration in a single major centre offers synergy effects that are likely to be lost in the case of fragmented research. Interdisciplinarity is hard to achieve within the closed faculty structures in which university departments operate. The NSCR has been highly successful in overcoming such divisions and achieving an impressive degree of cooperation between researchers from a range of backgrounds in relation to various research themes within the Institute. For this reason, the Committee sees no alternative that might be recommended.

4 What is your view on the analyses (made by the management of the Institute) of the consequences if these institutional activities were to be discontinued?

Such a decision would destroy intellectual capital and would be disastrous for the future development of a Dutch knowledge infrastructure in the criminology field. Indirectly, it would most negatively affect Dutch research in this field. In the longer run, this could also mean that Dutch policies would no longer be knowledge-based. This is particularly true in a country where criminological research has never really got off the ground in university departments. Indeed, Dutch university research in the field of criminology has largely focused on issues of organised crime, and not really covered most other relevant areas in any depth.

As underlined by the NSCR in its self-evaluation, its research initiatives have been particularly innovative, for example in the fields of geographical criminology and in its approach to longitudinal research. The Committee particularly appreciates the fact that, rather than starting new data collections which would of necessity absorb huge resources over decades, the NSCR has sought to use existing data and has decided to gather retrospective data on successive generations of offspring of juveniles placed in institutions in the early 20th century.

5 How is the NSCR developing in an international context?

Over the last 5 years the NSCR has made rapid progress in the international arena. It is increasingly well-represented in top international journals and at international meetings. The Institute has also developed solid cooperative relationships with other leading institutes and researchers around the world. There are concrete plans for the consolidation and development of these networks.

6 How important are the NSCR's activities and portfolio of projects to the Dutch research community?

As far as Dutch university research is concerned, the NSCR's position is unique – basically the NSCR is the only player in this field. There are at least two non-university research agencies in the Netherlands producing research that rivals the NSCR's: the Research and Documentation Centre of the Ministry of Justice (WODC) and the Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP). However, both are geared toward applied and policy-related areas of research and there is a clear division of labour with the NSCR. The Committee recommends that the three agencies should liaise closely on their research agendas and on the dissemination of research results to policy-makers.

Questions put by the Ministry of Justice to the NSCR

1 The NSCR is the biggest centre for fundamental research in the field of crime and law enforcement in the Netherlands. What evidence exists to show that the Institute is making a significant contribution to the development of 'the' research agenda?

The NSCR has published 3 articles in Criminology and several papers in other leading journals (British Journal of Criminology, European Journal of Criminology, etc.). More articles in peer-reviewed journals and several PhD theses are in the tube.

2 How will the NSCR develop its (future) research programme in the light of the advisory report, 'Knowledge of Crime', produced by the Dutch Advisory Council for Science and Technology Policy (AWT)? This report argues for a multidisciplinary approach to the issue of crime.

This question is difficult to answer, because the Committee does not know how the government will respond to the AWT's advice. Multidisciplinary research is already being undertaken by the NSCR. The resources of the Institute have been used to the best possible effect in adopting a multidisciplinary approach to research topics. The work currently being done at the Institute features genuine cooperation between people from different disciplines.

3 How does the NSCR transfer knowledge, particularly in terms of producing knowledge to support judicial policy, and what are the Institute's future plans in this respect?

In the future, it would be helpful both to publish in top international journals and to produce Dutch publications especially designed for policy-makers.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

The NSCR has improved since it was assessed by the previous Evaluation Committee. It has performed well in collecting relevant data and in research which no other centre in the Netherlands is undertaking. Internationally, it is a rising star.

A slight concern felt by the Committee that staff turnover might be too slow, has been dissipated by the evidence of the frequent interest shown by Dutch universities in hiring senior NSCR staff to fill their full- or part-time teaching vacancies. The Committee feels that this interest constitutes the best possible proof of the prestige enjoyed by NSCR research in the Dutch academic community.

Recommendations

1 Publications policy

The NSCR must distinguish more clearly between articles in top academic journals and publications targeting a wider public. In the case of research with policy implications, the NSCR should communicate results more directly to policy-makers, possibly in cooperation with the Research and Documentation Centre of the Ministry of Justice (WODC) or other appropriate agencies. However, such papers should be written in a style more directly addressing the relevant audience. This could perhaps be done in cooperation with WODC, which may be in closer touch with the needs of policy-makers. So far, the NSCR has had a limited impact on the public debate about criminological themes in the Netherlands and abroad. By differentiating more clearly between academic papers which are suitable for publication in high-quality journals and contributions to policy-making which need to be placed in more "user-friendly" publications, it may be possible to achieve a greater impact on the field without interfering with the institute's academic mission. Of course, concerns about policy relevance should not impose limits or priorities on the NSCR's academic research agenda.

2 Training

The NSCR should play a role in country-wide graduate education. Taking its achievements in terms of research technique into account, it may be feasible to develop a criminal justice research school around the Institute (perhaps at MA level and possibly in cooperation with the University of Leiden). During the interviews that the Committee conducted with PhD students, it emerged that there was some dissatisfaction with the current teaching programme of the Research School Safety and Security in Society (OMV). In particular, needs seem to vary according to the disciplinary background of students (e.g. in law, criminology, sociology or psychology) and the stage they have reached with their theses. The current situation might be improved if staff involved in teaching such students were themselves more actively engaged in research.

3 Management

The Committee feels that a more balanced age structure among NSCR researchers would be desirable. Senior researchers and PhD candidates are currently the largest groups, while post-docs and junior researchers are under-represented.

The researchers should be more responsible for the Institute as a whole and should be more involved in discussion of the NSCR's mission and future. The Committee felt that too much responsibility both for thinking about the general mission of the NSCR and for the day-to-day organisation of the Institute currently rests on the shoulders of the director. Although this was efficient during the period of restructuring, in the long run it will be necessary to relieve him of some of these tasks. In particular, senior researchers should be involved in steering and developing the Institute.

4 Research programme

The focus of the current research programme was well chosen for the work done over the last few years. In the longer run, however, the focus may need to be expanded and modified to take account of more recent crime problems and issues. Therefore, the Committee urges the NSCR to investigate the best ways of integrating new research topics or new approaches into the existing research programme. For instance, theme 1 (Mobility and the distribution of crime) could be expanded to include the homicide database and enriched by the addition of migration and minority issues; theme 2 (The citizen and the criminal justice system) is less well developed and could be extended to include randomised controlled experiments in the field of criminal justice, as well as the broad topics of punishment, prisons, and alternative sanctions; theme 3 (Life course, crime and interventions) should have more experimental prevention and intervention studies as the strongest test of basic hypotheses on the origins of crime, for instance by combining existing cohort surveys with theory-based randomised controlled trials evaluating various interventions in schools. In addition, given the strong public health orientation of most current research on drug issues in the Netherlands, it might be helpful to include research on the connection between drugs and crime.

The Committee recommends that increased attention should be paid to research on situational aspects of crime and crime prevention. This approach will link NSCR research activities more closely with public concerns in the Netherlands and help to develop powerful explanations of criminal behaviour, particularly in connection with longitudinal projects. Such a perspective could greatly benefit from an extension of Leiden criminology research programmes to include forensic sciences.

The NSCR should intensify its research on methods of correction, sentencing policies and incarceration rates (i.e. on fields where the situation has considerably deteriorated in the Netherlands over the last 10 years). So far, the NSCR has not been particularly active in these domains, although the presence on its staff of a leading international expert on these issues might make it easy for the Institute to train younger researchers willing to make significant contributions in this important area.

5 Data collection and archiving

In connection with data collection, more attention should be paid to archiving and databases and making them available to other researchers.

One of the primary justifications for the existence of the NSCR is its role as a collector of unique primary data in the field of criminology. This is important and, indeed, one of the competitive advantages of the Institute. The Committee strongly recommends the NSCR to continue primary data collection and to make it a research priority. However, the Committee has some concerns about the manner in which data are processed and preserved at the NSCR, and would like to offer the following recommendations in this regard:

- a Data should be collected not only for the use of a single unique project and its associated researchers, but as a strategic investment with an eye to use by other researchers and other projects (perhaps in the distant future). It should be preserved in such a way that this is possible.
- b Data should be fully documented both during and immediately after collection. Immediately thereafter (i.e. before the end of the research project), it should be archived for future use. Data archiving should not be done at the Institute, but via the professional Steinmetz Archive, which is specifically equipped for the task. The Committee has the impression that NSCR researchers regard the archiving of data as synonymous with its free dissemination. However, even (and, indeed, particularly) if access to and use of data is to be restricted, the task of developing and implementing appropriate arrangements for this should be placed in the hands of a professional archive, not those of individual researchers.

- c The NSCR should formulate a dissemination policy for each of its datasets on the explicit principle that knowledge will only grow through the optimum use of data. Concerns about confidentiality are legitimate, but should not prevent further use of data. If NSCR researchers can maintain confidentiality, other researchers can too, provided appropriate safeguards are put in place.

6 Internationalisation

More links with research elsewhere in Europe would be desirable. Such links might, for example, be forged with institutes in Germany (Hanover, Tübingen and Erlangen/Nuremberg), Sweden (University of Stockholm), Finland (HEUNI), Switzerland (Lausanne) and Italy (Genoa and ISTAT in Rome). They could take the form of temporary exchanges of PhD students.

7 Funding

The proportion of external funding (currently 14%) is rather modest. The Committee is aware that the NSCR has made effort in applying for additional funding in competition. However, the Committee feels that the share of external sponsors should be increased in the next years. The Committee notes that the Institute has not applied for funds under the AGIS programme (EU, FP6), nor, to its knowledge, approached the private sector (insurance companies etc.). Although the Committee feels unable to make firm recommendations as to what agencies could or should contribute financially to the NSCR's research budget, it feels that the desired coverage of a larger range of themes will inevitably, as outlined above, create a requirement for additional funds. The Committee urges NWO and the Ministry of Justice to discuss with the NSCR Management Team how additional themes can be addressed within the existing potential for funding in the Netherlands.

Annex 1 Curricula vitae of Committee members

Martin Killias, PhD (Law), MA (Sociology), Professor of Criminology and Criminal Law at the University of Lausanne and Lecturer in Criminology at the University of Zurich (Switzerland). He is also a judge in the criminal division of the Federal Supreme Court of Switzerland. Dr Killias has published widely in the field of comparative criminology. He was co-author of the first international crime victimisation survey, has been affiliated with the first international self report delinquency study and chairs the Council of Europe Experts' Group editing the European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics.

Harry Ganzeboom, PhD, Professor of Sociology and Social Research Methods at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (The Netherlands). He is a member of the American Sociological Association and of the Research Committee on Social Stratification and Mobility of the International Sociological Association. From 1994 to 1998 he was president of the Netherlands Sociological Association. His main research interests are comparative research, social stratification, culture consumption, lifestyle differentiation and comparative analysis. He has published numerous articles, book chapters and books on all of these subjects.

Friedrich Lösel, Dr. dr. H.C., Professor of Psychology and director of the Institute of Psychology at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg (Germany). He is also president of the German Society of Criminology, chairman of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Criminological Research Centre of Lower Saxony and a fellow of the Academy of Experimental Criminology. Dr. Lösel served in numerous scientific committees and editorial boards, received various international awards, and was president of the European Association of Psychology and Law. His current research addresses juvenile delinquency, violence in schools, personality disorders, offender treatment, developmental prevention, and program evaluation. He published 15 books and ca. 250 journal articles and chapters.

Peter Tak, PhD (Comparative Criminal Law), Professor of Law at the Radboud University of Nijmegen (The Netherlands). He is also permanent advisor to the Dutch Ministry of Justice, member of the International Association of Penal Law and an elected member of the International Penal and Penitentiary Foundation. Dr Tak is a specialist in the field of criminal law. He has written more than 25 books on the Dutch and international criminal justice systems and published articles in various fields, including Dutch euthanasia legislation, comparative criminal law, and European and criminal law.

Annex 2 Programme of site visit

Programme of the NSCR site visit, 23-25 February 2005

23 February (Wednesday), day of arrival

Location: Hotel (De Beukenhof, Oegstgeest)

17.30 - 19.30	Closed session (synchronising planning and approach)
20.00 - 22.00	Welcome dinner, Prof.dr. Charles Buys (Governing Board of NWO)

24 February (Thursday)

8.00	Transport to NSCR (Leiden)
8.30 - 9.15	Director: Prof.dr. G.J.N. Bruinsma
9.15 - 10.00	Management Team (director and theme coordinators: Prof. H. Elffers, Dr. M. Malsch, Prof. C. Bijleveld)
10.00 - 13.00	Senior research staff
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch (closed session)
14.00 - 16.15	Postdocs and PhD students
16.15 - 17.00	Scientific Advisory Committee: Prof.mr.dr. Y. Buruma (chair), Prof.dr. W. Koops
17.00 - 18.30	Closed session
18.30	Transport to hotel
20.00	Dinner

25 February (Friday)

8.30	Transport to NSCR
9.00 - 9.30	Support staff
9.30 - 10.30	Open programme/meetings with senior research staff or PhD students/postdocs
10.30 - 11.30	Governing Board: Prof. mr. T.A. de Roos (chair), Prof. dr. H.P.J.M. Dekkers, Prof. dr. J.P.S. Fiselier
11.30 - 12.00	Open programme/tour
12.00 - 13.00	Lunch (with director)
13.00 - 16.30	Closed session
16.30 - 17.15	Plenary with director and chair of the NSCR Governing Board