

# PUBLIC POLICY TO PREVENT ADOLESCENT AND JUVENILE CRIME

## Addressing the issues related to crime in Colombia

EUROSociAL has supported the design and implementation of CONPES for the Public Policy to Prevent Adolescent and Juvenile Crime in Colombia, aiming to reduce juvenile violence and crime levels and to improve community social cohesion.



The prevention and reduction of violence and crime levels has become a priority for Latin American governments. Most of them have introduced significant improvements in the development of juvenile criminal justice systems and alternative measures to the judicialisation of minors and adolescents in conflict with penal law, according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989.

In this regard, the violence and crime cycle phenomenon that involves adolescents and children, both victims and perpetrators, is an issue that is

being addressed as a matter of priority by Colombian authorities. Presently, 9.8% of the crimes in Colombia are committed by children and adolescents. This means that between 60 and 70 under-age people are detained every day throughout the country, and it is one of the highest rates in the Latin American region.

Even though there has been a reduction in the juvenile crime level compared to previous decades, this remains an important obstacle for social welfare and the development of Colombian society.

CITIZEN SECURITY



VIOLENCE PREVENTION

COLOMBIA



### EUROSOCIAL'S SUPPORT

Initiated in 2012, the cooperation between the National Planning Department and EUROSociAL has allowed a technical and methodological support in the creation and subsequent implementation of the National Council for Economic and Social Policy (CONPES) for a Public Policy to Prevent Adolescent and Juvenile Crime.

#### Creation of CONPES to Prevent Juvenile Crime

CONPES addresses the the issues related to juvenile crime from a comprehensive prevention perspective. The creation process has focused on two lines: on the one side, collection of input for the design from Colombian institutions, international cooperation and civil society. On the other side, the creation of an inter-institutional board chaired by the Directorate of Criminal and Penitentiary Policy from the Ministry of Justice and Law and made up by institutions linked to citizen security such as Attorney-General of the Nation, the General Prosecutor, the National

Police and the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (ICBF), among others.

As a result of this model for the creation of public policies, EUROSociAL II supported the conceptual discussion for policy-making.

### Gradual implementation of CONPES

Once approved, the implementation of CONPES has focused on the areas of restorative justice and assessment and management of risk factors for youth and adolescents. In this regard, the first phase of the CONPES implementation has been the addition of internationally acknowledged practices in restorative justice during the different stages of prevention, justice administration and in judiciary processes.

On the other hand, work has been carried out to adapt and include the SAVRY tool to assess and manage the risk of reoffending in young people and adolescents in the Criminal Responsibility of Adolescents System (SRPA).

## COMPREHENSIVE AND INTERSECTORAL FOCUS TO PREVENT CRIME

EUROSociAL reflects the comprehensive approach in the prevention of violence and crime that the Citizen Security area promotes through its Regional Model for Comprehensive Policy for Violence and Crime Prevention, and the main processes it suggests. In the Colombian case, the application of focusing specialist actions in groups which are in a position of social vulnerability such as the juvenile population should be mentioned. The inter-institutional board of CONPES is proof of the effort in coordinating and integrating skills, strategies and budgets from the Colombian security institutions. Furthermore, regional collaboration has been present through the exchange of experiences to prevent juvenile crime and how its study to the Colombian context has been adapted.



## EUROSOCIAL'S SUPPORT ITINERARY

### 2012.

- CONPES concepts and alignments definitions
- ▶ Technical assistance to support the creation of a National Policy to Prevent Juvenile Violence.

### 2013.

- Inputs provision for the creation of CONPES
- ▶ Forum of international good practices for issues to prevent juvenile crime.
- ▶ Study visit for the induction and qualification of the theoretical framework and practical implementation of the assessment methodology for RISCANVI and SAVRY risk factors.

### 2014.

- Presentation, approval and implementation of CONPES
- ▶ Technical assistance in the assessment management of SAVRY risk factors.
- ▶ Introduction of restorative justice.

### 2015.

- Support in the implementation of the Tools for Restorative Practices and Justice Guide.

## FIRST-HAND

▶ Simón Gaviria  
Director of the National Planning Department (DNP)



“CONPES for the Prevention of Adolescent and Juvenile Crime in the country is a public policy document in which 26 State institutions participate, led by the Ministry of Justice. This will allow us to take all the inter-sectorial actions needed to adopt the best practices at an international level in such a way that we can prevent crime and improve our capacity to rehabilitate offenders”.

## EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTIONS: THE SAVRY METHODOLOGY

SAVRY has been an example to exchange experiences, firstly at European level, because the tool was designed and implemented initially in the Netherlands and transferred to the Catalan penal system through the Initiatives for Rehabilitation Centre (CIRE), a public body of the Justice Department of the Autonomous Government of Catalonia and the University of Barcelona (UB). Secondly, and in cooperation with EUROSociAL, the experience was adapted and transferred from the Department of Advanced Studies on Violence of the UB to the National Planning Department of Colombia together with other public institutions such as the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare.

Designed following international standards, the Savry methodology follows an epidemiological approach to prevent violence and youth crime revealing that prevention is the most efficient strategy to eradicate violence and crime. In this regard, the Savry protocol helps to objectively assess the risk of recidivism and violence of minors in conflict with criminal law to coordinate the necessary steps to facilitate their rehabilitation and reduce recidivism. On the other hand, the protocol also states how the staff at different levels and services in the juvenile justice system should work.

## PUBLICATIONS



- ▶ Transfer sources from 7 international practices in youth crime prevention: analysis on the adaptability to the Colombian context

Coordinating Partner



Operating Partners

