

EUCPN
EUROPEAN CRIME PREVENTION NETWORK

The evaluation of crime prevention

Stijn Aerts PhD

Webinar, 25 Oct. 2022



This webinar

1. Brief reflection on evaluation in crime prevention
2. How to evaluate crime prevention interventions

01

BRIEF REFLECTION ON EVALUATION

01 Crime prevention

*Ethically acceptable and evidence-based activities aimed at **reducing the risk of crime occurring** and its harmful consequences with the ultimate goal of working towards the improvement of the quality of life and safety of individuals, groups and communities*

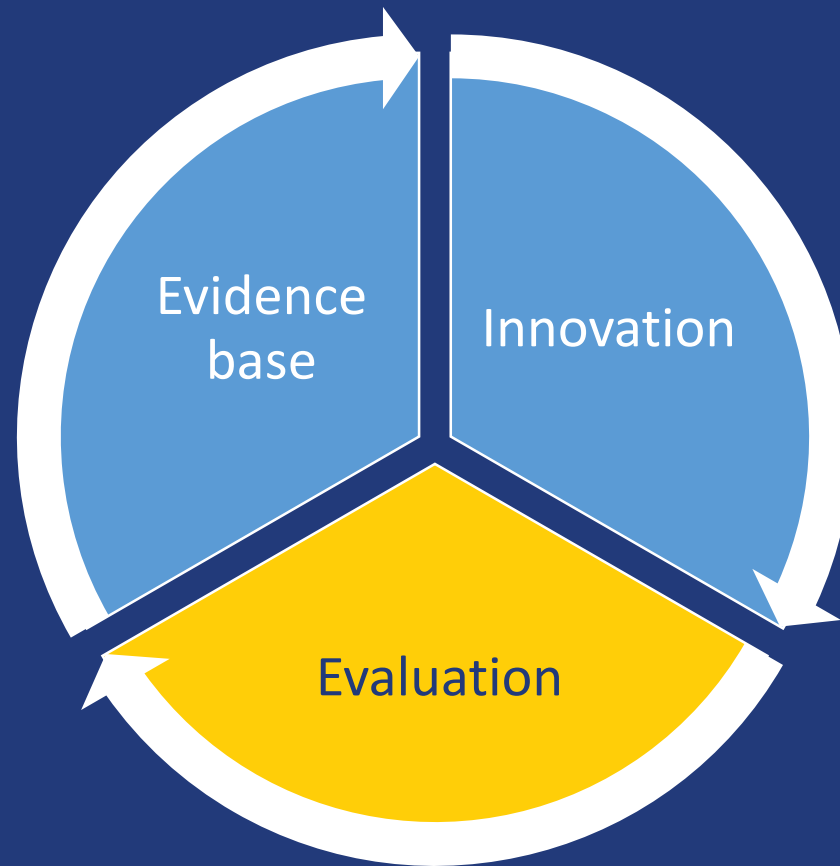
Effectiveness

Why didn't it work?

How does it work?

Will it work in this context?

01 Evaluation



01 Evaluation culture in EU

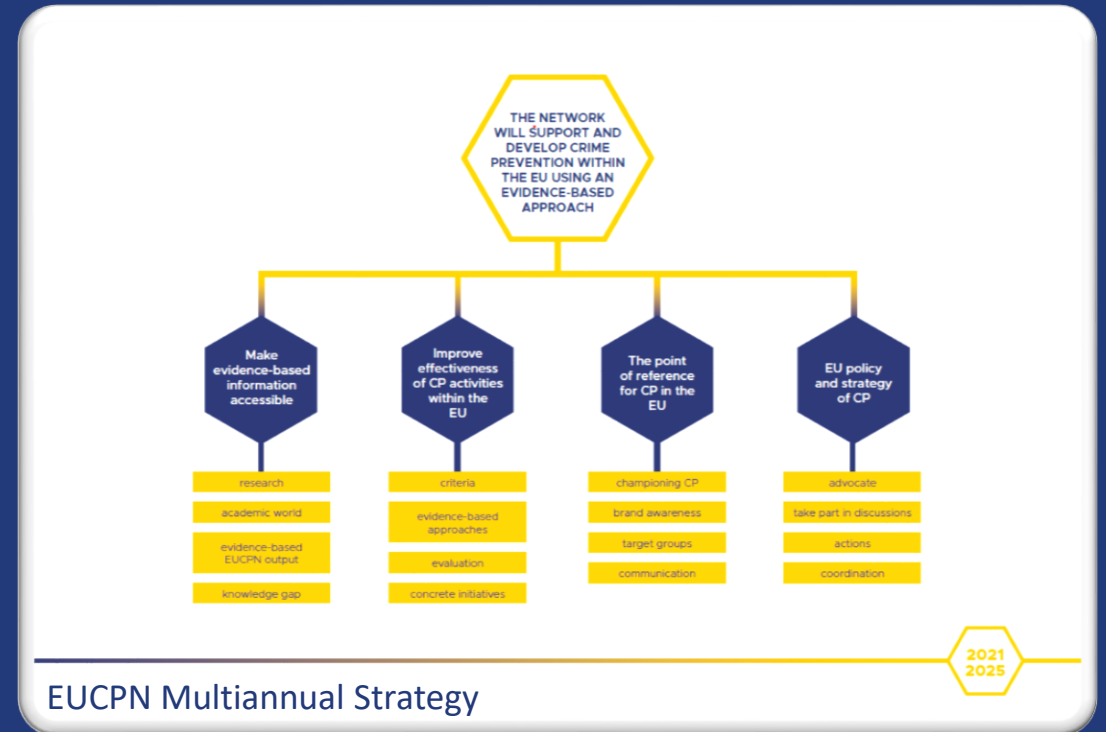
- Positive attitudes
- Rarely put into practice
- Lack of funding (or evaluation-dependent funding)
- Lack of in-house expertise

T. Silva and M. Lind, Experiences of the Member States Performing Evaluations in Projects and Activities Aimed at Crime Prevention, Research report, Östersund: Mid Sweden University, 2020



01 Changing context

- Prevention science
- General move towards evidence-based policy
- Cost-efficiency of effective prevention (evidence-based prevention)

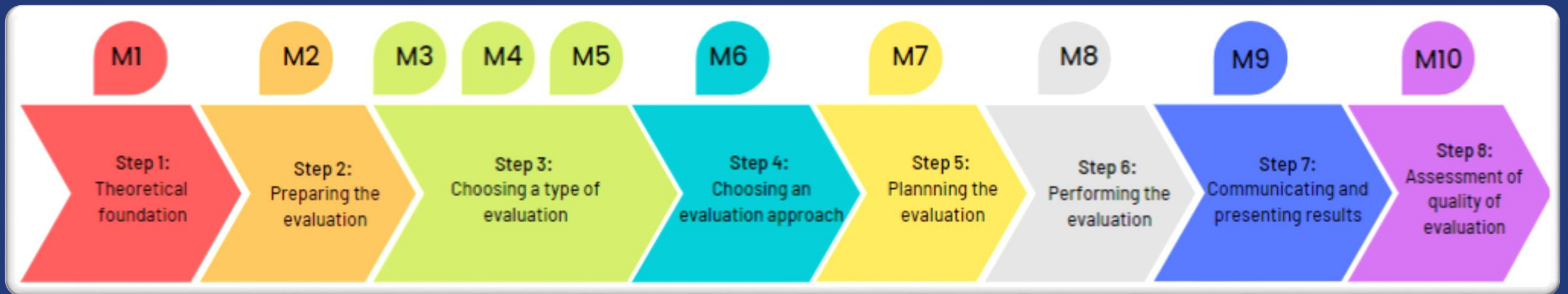


01 EUCPN Evaluation training

For prevention practitioners and decisionmakers (incl. law enforcement)

1.5 day training

10 modules



02

HOW TO EVALUATE

02 Three essential steps

1. Select appropriate type of evaluation
2. Follow appropriate methodology
3. Disseminate results & act upon them

02 Types of evaluation

Module 4: Process evaluation

Do you want to know whether an prevention project is well designed?

- What are the specific interventions?
- Is it likely that the interventions will lead to the intended result?
- ...

Yes

Module 3: Plan evaluation

No

Do you want to know how the implementation of the project is going?

- Are the interventions executed according to the plan?
- Is the target group being reached?
- How do those involved experience the interventions?
- How do key actors work together to achieve the commonly defined goal?
- ...

Yes

No

Do you want to know the effect of the project?

- Did the interventions achieve their purpose?
- Which interventions work best?
- How can the interventions be improved?
- ...

Yes

Module 5: Outcome evaluation

02 Types of evaluation

Start of implementation

Before

During

After

Plan evaluation

Process evaluation

Outcome evaluation

*Why would the
intervention work?*

*How does the
intervention work?*

*Did the intervention
work?*

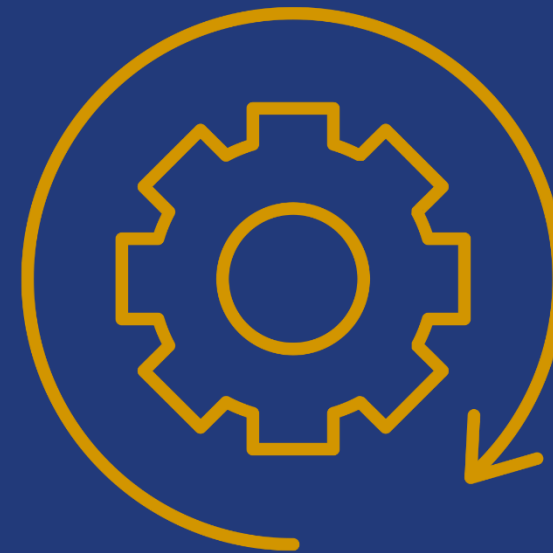
02 Plan evaluation



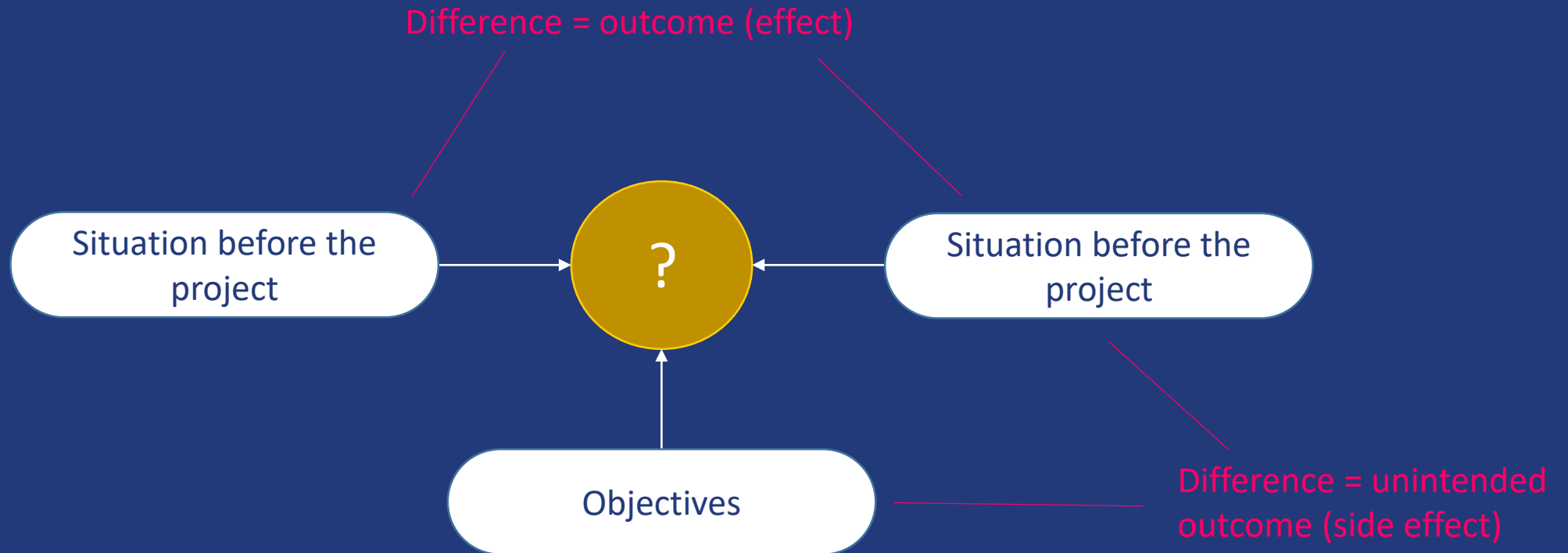
- Needs assessment
- Programme theory: logical explanation for how and why the project will lead to the intended outcomes
- Logic model: representation of the relationship between the project's key activities and the intended outcomes
- Key stakeholders

02 Process evaluation

- Assess programme fidelity
- How does it work in practice? What are the hurdles?
- Process evaluation questions:
 - Is everything executed according to plan?
 - Is the target group being reached?
 - ...
- Process indicators:
 - Participation/retention rate
 - Costs
 - ...
- Monitoring



02 Outcome evaluation



02 Outcome evaluation

Universal prevention indicators

- Recorded crime
- Reported offending
- Victimisation
- Community fear/perception of crime

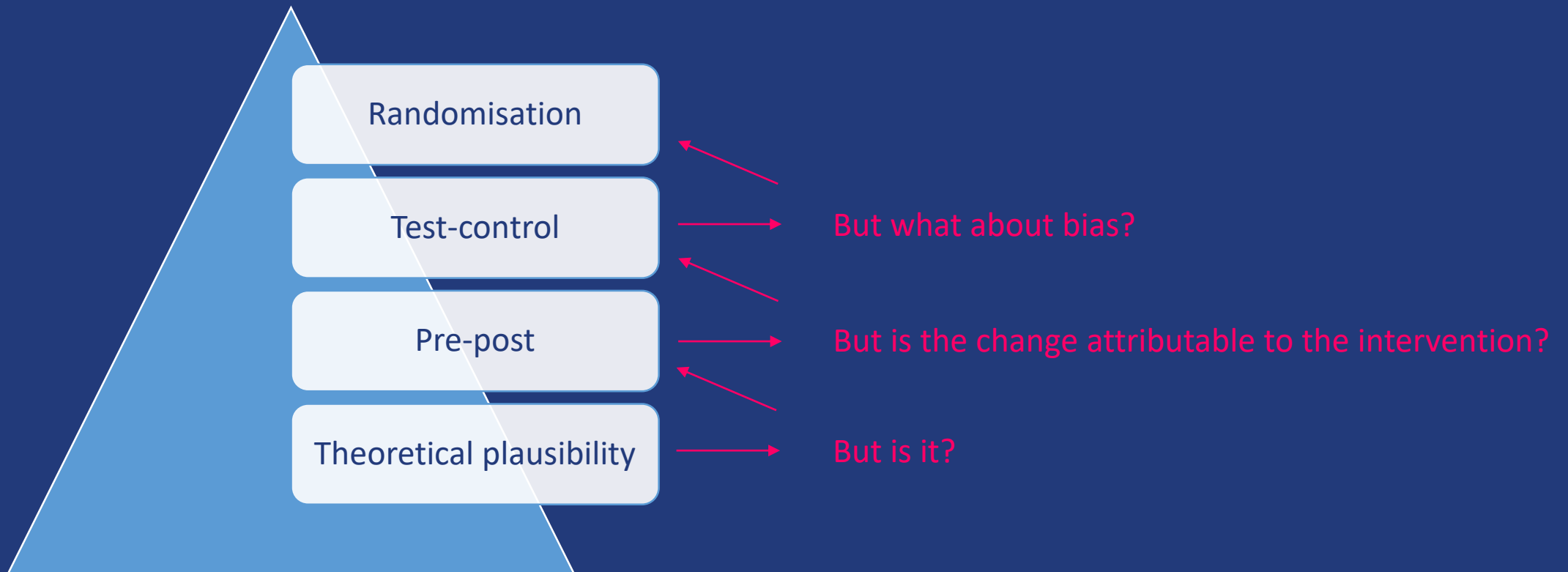
Selective prevention indicators

- Recorded crime within risk group
- Self-reported offending within risk group
- Victimisation within risk group
- Fear or perception of crime

Indicated prevention indicators

- Reported re-offending
- Reconviction rate

02 Evaluation methodologies



02 Communicating evaluation results

- Contribute to adjustment and improvement
- Efficient allocation of available resources
- Guide executive, political, and administrative decisions:
 - (de-)implementation
 - Funding, budgeting
- Build evidence base



02 Two recommendations for practitioners



1. Plan ahead
 - Data collection
 - Stakeholders, staffing
 - Budget
2. Share the burden
 - Engage professionals
 - Collaborative projects
 - External evaluation is more appropriate when
 - there is sufficient budget
 - evaluation results will determine project continuation
 - evaluation is complex

www.eucpn.org
@eucpn

