

## **BESECURE: BEST PRACTICE ENHANCERS FOR SECURITY IN URBAN REGIONS**

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# BESECURE: Best practice Enhancers for Security in Urban Regions

The goal of the FP7 BESECURE project is to improve urban security policy making by sharing European best practices and providing visualization and assessment tools.

BESECURE is a research and technological development (RTD) project under the topic FP7-SEC-2011.6.2-1 - Best practices for enhancing security policy in urban zones". The BESECURE started on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 and finishes on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

## Abstract

Urban security is a complex multi-dimensional process that results from the interaction of an increasingly diverse collection of stakeholders. Many factors influence urban security, including the physical layout to the social and economic makeup of urban zones. Enhancing urban security is a complicated problem: causes of crime and social tensions are often unclear and hard to isolate. Furthermore, policy and intervention design processes can be messy and prone to biases because of time and resource limitations, high expectations and involvement of many stakeholders. There is also a common challenge to trace the effects of interventions. We are also faced with limited use of available sources of evidence, such as data, established knowledge and proven practices.

Europe has seen many severe instances of urban unrest in recent times but also the rapid expansion of urban environments with new types of communities through for example migration and the economic crisis. These developments underline the need to understand the factors and their interaction which impact on urban security throughout Europe in order to enable enhanced policy development to create safer urban environments and prevent undesirable security scenarios.

## Approach

The BESECURE project works towards a better understanding of urban security through examination of different European urban areas. BESECURE *collects and analyses best*

*practices* in the area of urban security through case studies in eight urban areas within Europe and literature review. By building a *comprehensive set of indicators for urban security*, along with consideration of best practices from different urban areas, important cues about the state of security in urban regions using factors such as social makeup, economic state, crime numbers and the public perception of security become apparent. The eight urban area case studies are: Belfast (UK), London Tower Hamlets (UK), London Lewisham (UK), The Hague (NL), Poznan (PL), Freiburg (DE), Arghilla (IT), Napels (IT).



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### BESECURE objectives:

- Knowledge – develop a knowledge base on the state of the art in urban security enhancement, identify problems and examine best practices.
- Understand – facilitate an understanding of how context factors influence the security of an urban area.
- Develop – develop a suite of tools and methods to aid policy makers.
- Transfer – transfer knowledge on different methods to assist policy makers in enhancing urban security.

Based on this valuable knowledge, BESECURE is creating a resource database that supports local policy makers to assess the impact of their practices and improve their decision-making. One of the core aims of

## 1. Inspirational Platform

The Inspirational Platform contains a wide range of material that is inspiring for policy design or initiatives to address different types of crime and

## 2. The Policy Platform

The Policy Platform guides policy makers through a comprehensive process to identify some of the most promising solutions for the security challenges in their areas (Fig. 3). The steps challenge policy makers to explore what is needed and some different options to reach their objectives. The steps in the policy support process draw from the other BESECURE tools (the Inspirational Platform and Urban Data Platform) to combine data and experiences from the relevant area with information from other cities across Europe. The results of the Policy Platform include a one-page policy of the most important evidence and promising findings to support the decisions (Fig. 4).



Figure 1: Screenshot of BESECURE Platform Interface

BESECURE is to create an accessible and communicable background of knowledge that enables policymakers to assert why their policies will be successful, what their impact will be in the long term and how the effect of the policies can be assessed. BESECURE will not however prescribe policies or automate the policymaking process.

BESECURE uses an iterative concept development and experimentation (CD&E) approach, consisting of several cycles that are used to continuously develop test and refine the knowledge and materials that emerge throughout the project. At the start of a cycle, the results and conclusions of the previous cycle are incorporated into the working material. This leads to gradual refinement. Through continuous empirical evaluation sessions, the results are geared towards practical use and are rooted in the everyday practices of our study areas.

In implementing its objectives, BESECURE develops a versatile support platform that provides information, inspiration and innovation to policymakers, consisting of three integrated platforms that help build strong evidence-bases for policy proposals (Fig. 1).

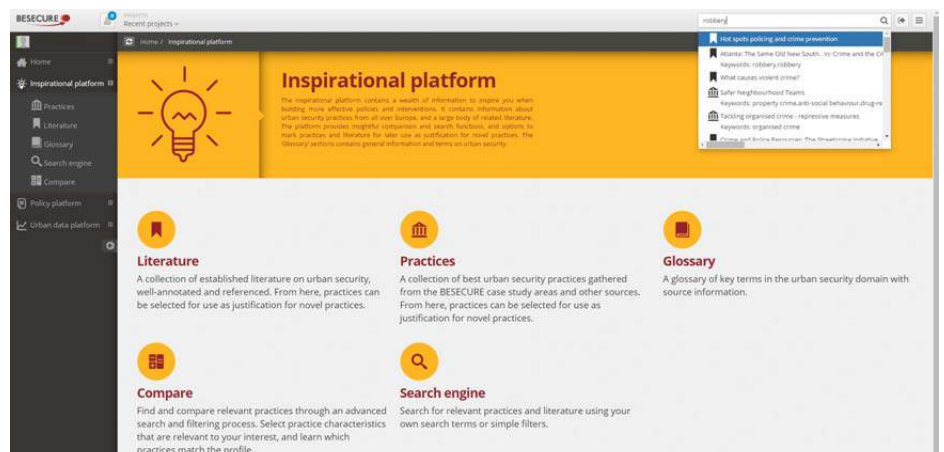


Figure 2: Screenshot of the Inspirational Platform

instability in the city (Fig. 2). It encourages policy makers to look at the bigger picture and explore how a wide range of contextual factors, from the quality of city streets, to the provision of education, or the level of investment in an area, interact to influence for example crime and anti-social behaviour. The platform helps frame ideas and direct policy makers to real life approaches that have worked to reduce crime and instability in similar situations from other European best practices. The Inspirational Platform also assists policy makers to get in touch with experts involved in the design and implementation of urban security enhancement approaches.

## 3. Urban Data Platform

Urban data is a powerful asset in the development of urban security interventions. However, policy makers normally use just a fraction of the data that is available and typically do not take full advantage of the information that data can provide. The aim of the Urban Data Platform is to provide easy-to-use and understandable visualization to generate specific area profiles. These are visualised in geographic information system (GIS) maps, graphics and tables to enable accessible and relevant interpretation (Fig. 5). GIS is a powerful analytical tool for informing on the choice of sites for interventions and a reporting mechanism for effective and efficient communication with decision makers and relevant stakeholders.

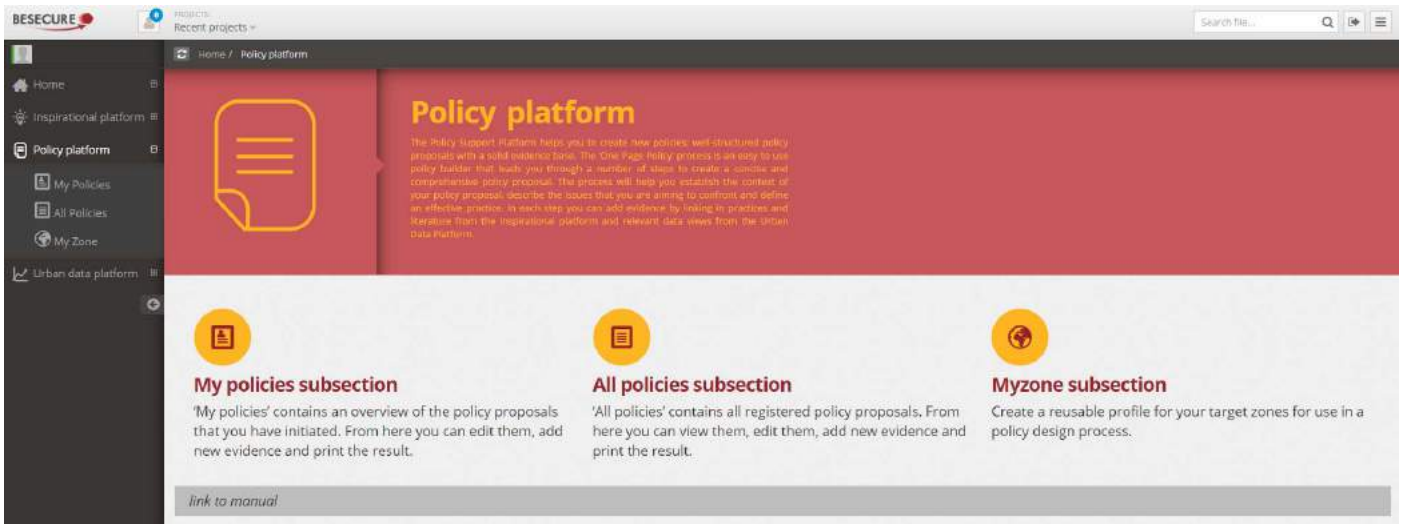


Figure 3: Screenshot of Policy Platform

ONE PAGE POLICY

## A more pleasant nightlife atmosphere in Amersfoort (2015)

CONTEXT	ISSUE	INTENT
<p><b>AREA</b>            Country: Netherlands            City: Amersfoort            Administration unit: Neighbourhood: City Center (Stadshart)            Critical location: Lieve Vrouwenplein, de Hof            Geographical location:  <b>AREA DESCRIPTORS</b>            Age &gt;65: high            Income: high            Employment rate: high  <b>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>            Description of the area: The nightlife in Amersfoort is concentrated around two main squares: 'Lieve Vrouwenplein' and 'de Hof'. These squares are the main locations for both regular nightlife (bars, restaurants, etc) and occasional cultural open air festivals. The area is surrounded by residential areas and shopping areas. The squares are predominantly accessible on foot and bike. There are little to no parking spaces in the vicinity of the squares and cars are not permitted except for designated vehicles e.g. (taxis, police vehicles and authorised suppliers). The squares draw significant numbers of visitors both during the day and at night, specifically during the weekend.</p> <p style="background-color: #f1c40f; padding: 2px;"><b>OBJECTIVE</b></p> <p>Create a more service- then enforcement-oriented approach to nuisance-prevention            Description: A more positive approach to nuisance, contributes to overall pleasant atmospheren. Enforcement and harsh measures only make the situation worse.            Practice objective type: <b>Administrative efficiency</b></p> <p>Achieve a whole-of-community approach to</p>	<p><b>Issue type:</b> Nuisance, Nuisance_Alcohol related nuisance, Nuisance_Drug related nuisance, Vandalism, Violence_Fight, Littering, Loitering  <b>Issue category:</b> Anti-social behaviour, Public disorder            Issue description: There have been many reports of nuisance and vandalism in the city squares. This has been a long term problem in this area, and has an affect on the attractiveness of Amersfoort as a pleasant host for nightlife and entertainment. Additionally, adjacent residential areas are also affected as translated in safety reports and property values. Until now, attempts to improve the situation primarily centered around more police presence and surveillance measures, but this has not resulted in a significant improvement, and, even added to the negative public perception of the squares.</p> <p><b>Victim type:</b> Local businesses, Residents , Visitors            Victim description: The recurring nuisances on and around the two squares affect residents, visitors and local businesses.            Preparator type: <b>Nightlife crowd</b>            Preparator description: The issues are mainly caused by people visiting the nightlife venues in the vicinity of the squares. The majority of the crowd enjoys the nightlife in a pleasant way. A small part of this crowd however causes the issues.</p> <p><b>When type:</b> Weekend , Summer            When description: Most issues are reported at weekend nights. During the summer, the problems extend into daytime because the terraces are drawing crowd at earlier times.</p>	<p><b>INTENT</b>            Create a more friendly nightlife atmosphere in Amersfoort            Description: This policy intends to foster a more visitor- and resident friendly nightlife experience.            Practice intent type: <b>Reduce anti-social behaviour</b></p> <p><b>LIST OF EVIDENCE:</b>            Practice - Anti-social behaviour complaint procedure            Literature - A multilevel analysis of neighbourhood contextual effects on serious juvenile offending</p> <p style="background-color: #f1c40f; padding: 2px;"><b>EXPECTED RESULT</b></p> <p>Improved nightlife experience            Description: Survey-based assessment.            Practice method type: <b>Research</b></p> <p>Decrease of nuisance reports            Description: Check for the possibility better solution of reporting.            Practice method type: <b>Intelligence, Data collection</b></p> <p>Increased number of visitors</p> <p style="background-color: #f1c40f; padding: 2px;"><b>IMPLEMENTATIONS</b></p> <p>Monitor and evaluate effectiveness of the A-Team            Description: Perform performance assessment on a regular basis.</p> <p>Define selection strategy for the A-Team            Description: There are various option to compse an A-Team. It could consist of a number of specialised and dedicated professionals, or consist of a shift-based team of local stakeholders (e.g. residents, representatives of local businesses, police officers, and so on). One could even propose to include notorious troublemakers by means of community</p>

Figure 4: Example of One Page Policy

The BESECURE team works closely together with stakeholders (city councils, citizen groups, and social organisations, domain experts) to identify relevant and practical practices, indicators and measures that convey information about the state of security in an urban area and that can be used by other policymaker stakeholders to improve their decision making. By structuring this body of knowledge and making it accessible to further practitioners, BESECURE essentially provides an evidence-base for policymakers.

BESECURE is at present focussed on the urban security issues of general crime and instability its integrated platform approach could however be extended towards critical infra-structure.

### The Partners

TNO (The Netherlands), UU (United Kingdom), EMI (Germany), ALU (Germany), ITTI (Poland), SLCT (United Kingdom), FAC (Ireland), JVM (United Kingdom), CCLD (United Kingdom), CNR (Italy), UMRC (Italy), EXP (The Netherlands), VJI (The Netherlands),

### More information

If you would like to know more about BESECURE please visit our website at <http://www.besecure-project.eu/> or our Facebook and Twitter accounts @besecure\_fp7

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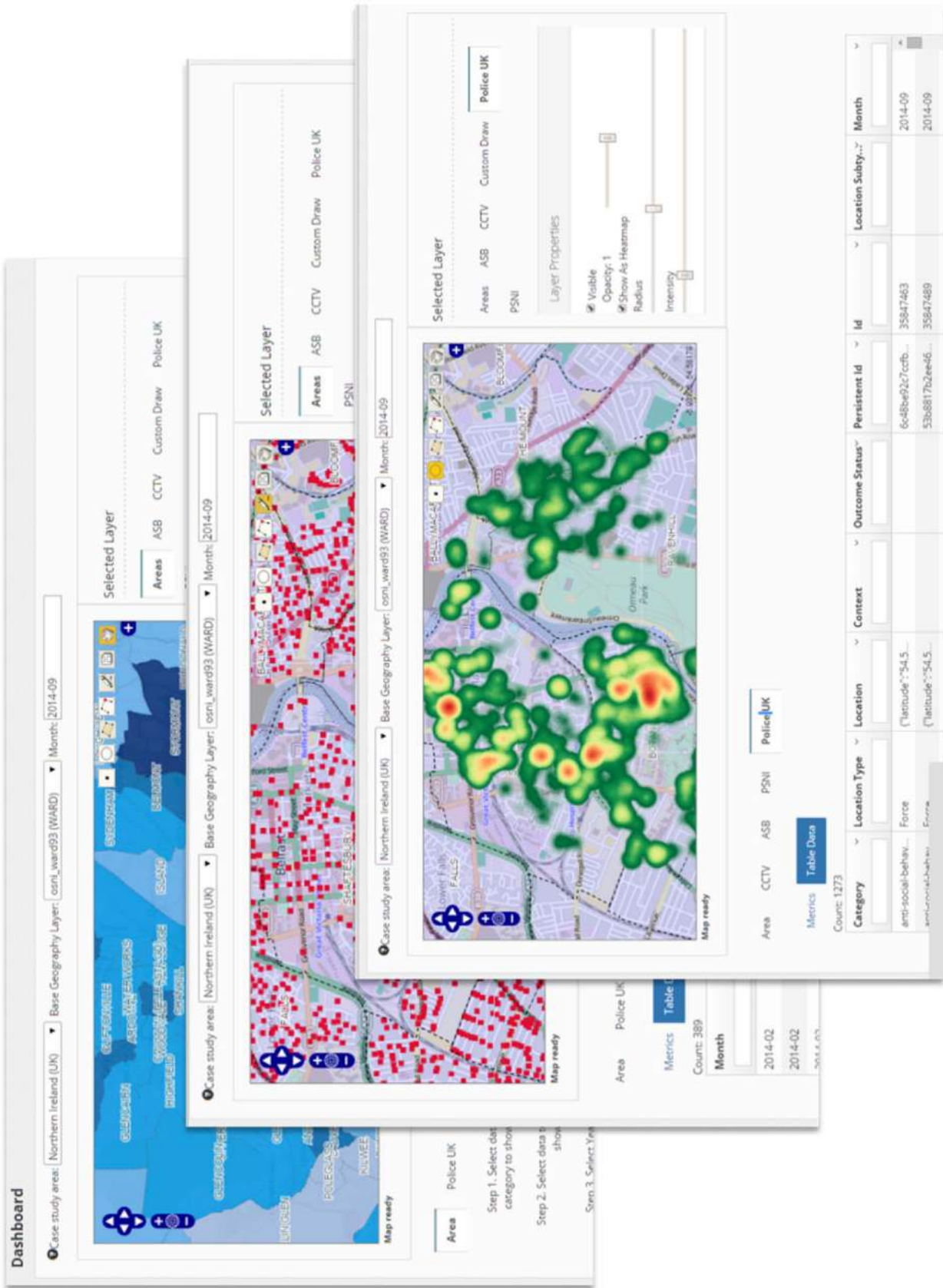


Figure 5: Screenshot of Urban Data Platform with GIS