

**Police Measures  
in Democratic Societies:  
from coercion to proximity**

29-30 Nov. 2010 Belo Horizonte  
II International Seminar on the Quality of  
Social Defense

## Democracy, domestic security and policing in France

**Towards successful implementation of proximity policing.  
Lessons learned from the French case study.**

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Coginta is an independent non-governmental organization based in Geneva, Switzerland, which specializes in police reforms as a mean to generate peace and development

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# France

- 65 M
- 550 000 km<sup>2</sup>
- 240 000 police
- 0,6 homicide / 100 000

# French police system

- Centralized => politicized at central level
- Specialized
- Dual (police, gendarmerie)
- Under direction of appointed prefects / governors at the local level
- Mayors have no authority on national forces
- No mechanism for consultation of police with civil society

# Proximity policing, COP

- Not limited to what police do on the street,
- Involves scope of police mandate, vision of police work, reengineering of departments,
- Proximity policing not democratic in itself (can be very intrusive)

# Roadmap

- 1-Why proximity policing?
- Changes in paradigm of good gov.
- Something is wrong
- 2-The Reform: French pattern
- 3-Methodology
- 4-Evaluation

# 1 - Changes in general paradigm of democracy & good government

- Democratization & decentralization => Proximity as modernity (versus as a lack of independence of professionals, of client-patron relations, parochialism):
- Partnership and synergy: not crisis in resource, but of cooperation among sectorized bureaucracies
- Public service and the business model a/client oriented, b/efficiency oriented: knowledge of local conditions= + efficient

## 2 – Something is wrong.

- Political perception on long run (20 years): something goes wrong.
  - salience of the issue of minor delinquency, 1977, 1982, 1995, 1997,
  - Riotings events since 1979,
  - Pb imported by mayors into the central political system,
  - Last but not least, an election can be lost because of the crime issue

## 2.1 – The Reform

- As in other countries, notion that policing needs reform
- Implementation: 1997 - 2002

# A solution: proximity policing?

- **Problem identification** period: 1976-1982
  - what is the police mission? Reassurance.
- **“Solutions”** devised of: 1976-1999,
  - 1/ State Police reorganized at local level,
  - 2/ Citizen’s participation to be developed
  - 3/ Contracts (municipalities+state)
- **Implementations** (experiments) and final COP doctrine: 1998-2002.

# Changes in police related ideas

- **No decentralization**, however “**deconcentration**” (central state management at the local level), and “**coproduction**” (CLS)
- **Technical knowledge**: “**îlotage**” (cop on the beat) as priority in police training centers (1980), in IHESI (1989)
- **Experimentations** by locally elected politicians (policy drifts versus policy implementation)

# French pattern of Prox P

- Faced with similar problems (rise in crime, upheaval in cities, ethnic divide), other countries developed Community Oriented Policing (COP).
- However, France rather crafted Proximity Policing (PrP)
- COP or PrP ?

# COP – PrP

## Similarities / Differences (1/3)

- Principles:
- 1/service and accountability to the people
- 2/decentralization
- 3/partnership for problem solving and preventing crime (police cannot solve crime by itself)
- 4/ French Specificity: no community in France

# COP – PrP

## Similarities / Differences (2/3)

- 2 doctrines for implementation:
- 1/ Model of adding a P.R. specialized unit to the P.Dpt (Turkey, Switzerland)
- 2/ Model of “reinventing” the P.Dept. (Chicago, France)

# COP – PrP

## Similarities / Differences (3/3)

- 1/ French style: organized at the central level in Paris,
- **2/ Dual public policy: Proximity policing,** for internal organization reform & **Local security agreements** (contrats locaux de sécurité) for relationship with environment

# Summary of objectives

- A move from police protecting the state to police protecting and reassuring citizens,
- Full reorganization of police missions and structure:
  - new tenets,
  - new balance between state and citizen protection

## 3 - Methodology

- Objectives: More efficient policing in high crime areas, responding to public demand
- Launching pad: Villepinte conference, Sept. 1997 = “Sécurité de proximité”
- Methodology Phases: from prototype municipalities to national reform
- Process: Evaluation => Consolidation of doctrine

# Changes

- Reorganization of police departments:
- a/ Prevention and anticipation  $\neq$  Police reactivity (away from 17 or 911),
- b/ Insistence on judicial policing (OPJ) for minor crimes
- This culture shift  $\Rightarrow$
- Negotiations with police unions
- Immense amount of efforts for police training (all 3 levels) = adherence to new ideas

## 2 faces of prox pol

LSA

- Needs analysis
- Agreement

Prox Pol

- Dept org
- Geogr org

# Understanding & measuring citizens needs

- Receiving **inputs from civil society** on a regular basis
- Consultation by means of surveys
- Crime analysis





# Implementation: police dpt

- Sectorization of municipalities, building new small police stations
- New police missions for rank and file police officers (combination of patrolling and investigation)
- Police more visible (deterrent)
- Reorganizations of shifts (to know, to be known),

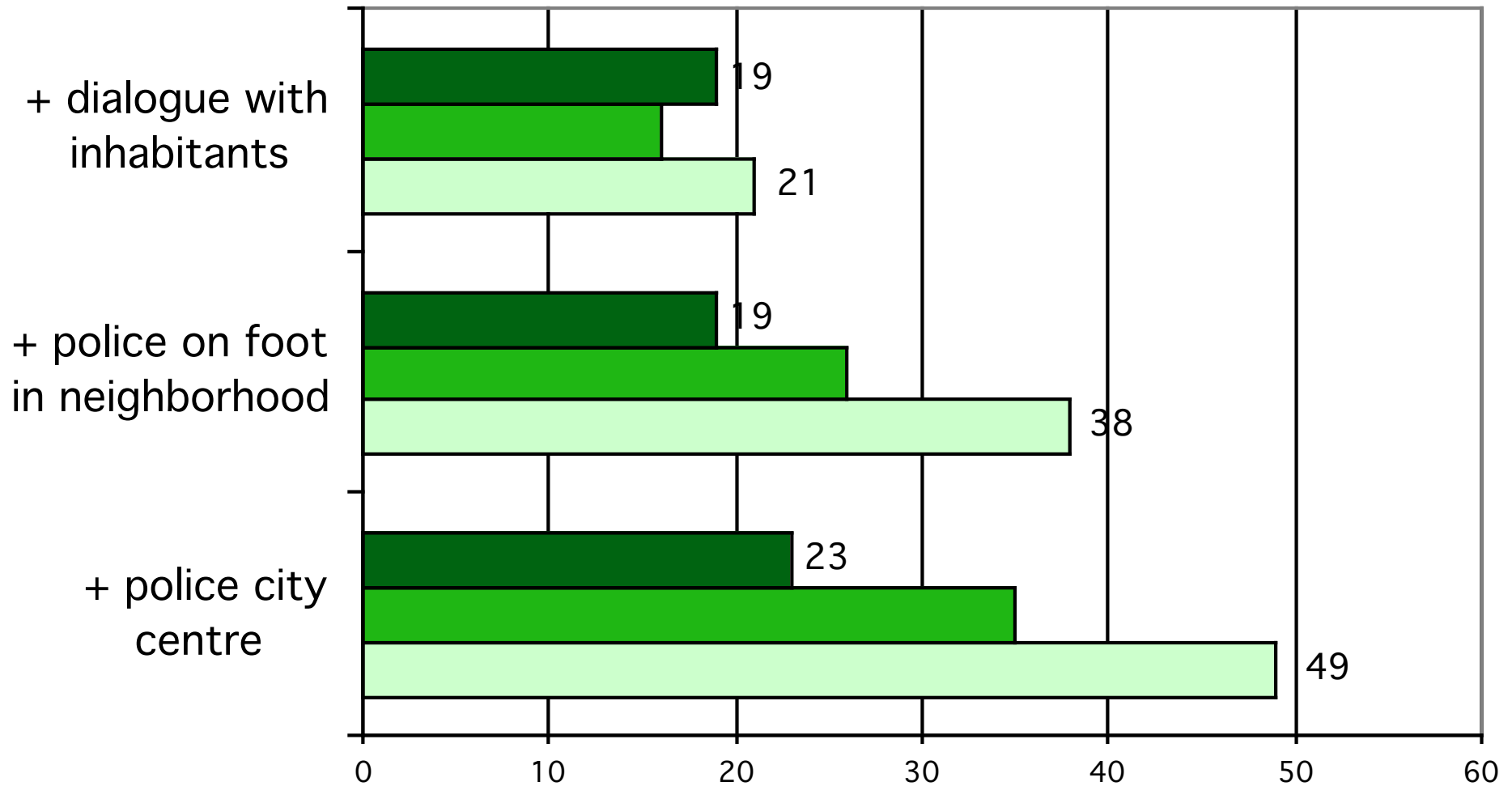
# 4 - Evaluation of Proximity Policing

- One of the most evaluated program by the internal services
- A look at crime trends (political debate)
- A look at the people's opinions at phases: prototypes or phase 1 (5 areas), 2<sup>nd</sup> phase (4 areas) compared against no implementation (4 areas)

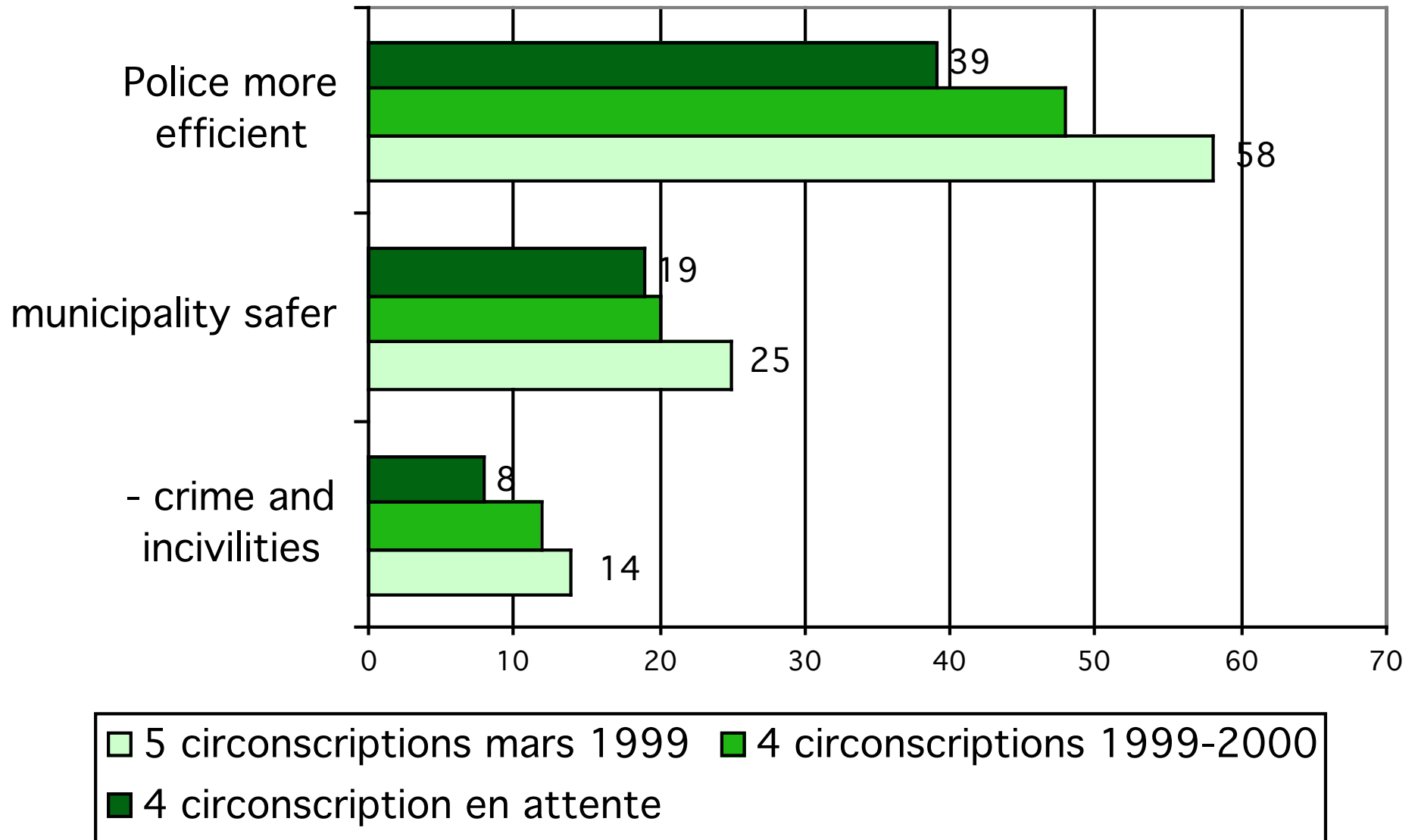
# Objectives and perception of pop

- Objectives: More efficient policing in high crime areas, responding to public demand
- => More visibility,
- => Less fear of crime,
- => Trust building (the beat or “sector” is geographical building block (“beat integrity”), public meetings

# Elements for Evaluation



□ 5 areas March 1999 ■ 4 areas 1999-2000 ■ 4 areas not implemented



# **COP: success or failure?**

- 2002, Left-wing coalition loses election,
- 2002, COP abandoned by MoInterior

# So, did it fail?

- No political leadership (conflicts between ministers of Justice and Interior),
- Fights among Central Bureaus of the National Police (head quarters in Paris),=> contradictory instruction sent to chiefs of police,
- Some Police Trade Unions (superior layers of management) not interested or opposed, COP = soft police
- Implementation style (top down from Paris)

# Conclusion: obstacles

- Lack of political consensus or stability
- Time scope: takes a while before a clear outline emerges, for results to show up,
- Huge magnitude of training (new tasks => new skills, ex. public meetings)
- “Soft police” by trade unions
- Difficult balance to find (response teams, investigation / beat)
- Budget

Thank you

