

International police co-operation around football matches: Euro 2000 case study*

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Abstract

For the European football championships (Euro 2000) held in Belgium and the Netherlands in 2000, authorities embarked on a strategy that involved maximal use of international police co-operation. To evaluate the effort, feedback from foreign police officers deployed during Euro 2000 was explicitly sought. In each host city a team of observers carried out systematic observations and an international monitoring team independently made their own observations. In this paper Euro 2000 is used as a case study to investigate the nature of the international police cooperation in practice and its contribution to the management of public order.

Keywords: Euro-2000; International police cooperation; public order management; football hooliganism

Introduction

According to Benyon (1992) there are many problems facing police forces of the European Union in establishing effective procedures for cooperation because of the large numbers of different law enforcement agencies, the rivalries and jealousies between and within agencies and the different approaches and perceptions of what policing is and how a policing agency should function. In addition, the existence of diverse cultures and traditions in each country and incompatible police communications and procedures added to quite different legal systems and organisational structures further complicate cooperation. Ingleton (1994) points to the fact that, within the European Union there are many official languages (nine in 1994, twenty-three in 2011) and that most police officers only speak their native tongue. Benyon et al. (1994: 61) distinguish between three levels of police cooperation: macro, meso and micro. According to den Boer (1999), there is a lot of research into formal arrangements,

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structures and differences in legal situations in relation to international police cooperation (the macro and meso levels), but very little research into actual functioning of police cooperation (the micro level) or into effects of police cooperation. Also, there is a rather one-sided focus on crime (especially organised crime) and terrorism, with less attention being paid to police cooperation in the field of public order. Yet, within Europe, specific forms of police cooperation have developed in relation to international football matches for quite a while. In organising international football matches (and especially international tournaments), a strong interdependence exists between different European countries to prevent incidents and deal with so-called "hooliganism". Host countries are dependent on participating countries as well as neighbouring countries and transit countries for information and support. These other countries need to take measures in their own country to gather information and to prepare themselves in time to be able to support host countries. Benyon et al. (1994: 61) name cooperation in the field of football hooliganism as an example of micro level cooperation. However, this micro level cooperation takes place within procedures, measures and resolutions agreed upon at the macro (*European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular at Football Matches*, Council of Europe: 1985) and meso levels (*EU Handbook for international police co-operation and measures to prevent and control violence and disorder around football matches*, first version 1999). International football championships provide a special challenge to public order policing. The European football championships held in 2000 in the Netherlands and Belgium (Euro 2000) were to be the first big football tournament held after the adoption of the EU-handbook. At an early stage, authorities in Belgium and the Netherlands announced their intention to make maximal use of international police co-operation according to the principles of the EU-

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handbook. Whereas other forms of police cooperation at the micro level usually involve exchange of information, exchange of liaison officers or acting on specific requests (den Boer: 1999), cooperation to counter football violence includes direct assistance from foreign police officers and during Euro 2000 a large number of foreign police officers were expected to be active in the two host countries. A European football championship only occurs once every four years and Euro 2000 seemed to provide an excellent and unique opportunity to conduct a case study to answer the following questions:

1. How are agreements on international police cooperation made at the macro and meso-levels implemented in practice at the micro level?¹
2. What is considered good practice by those involved in the cooperation?

The paper is structured as follows: first a description of the methodology used in the study is given, followed by an overview of formal arrangements at the macro level (the 1985 Council of Europe Convention). Next, the experiences that gave rise to the arrangements at the meso-level (the 1999 EU-handbook) are dealt with, as well as the contents of the handbook itself. After that, data related to Euro 2000 itself are presented, divided into data gathered before, during and after the tournament. The discussion focuses on elements of "good practice" and factors hampering international police cooperation in public order management.

Methodology

The case study method (YIN: 1984) has well-known limitations regarding reliability. To improve reliability, our methodology involved careful planning of the data gathering, which was contemporaneous and used multiple and independent sources of evidence. The authors and others involved in the data gathering were not involved in the planning or execution of any operations related to the policing of the tournament. Data gathering started in May, 1999, intensified during the tournament and concluded some months after the

tournament had ended. Data were gathered as part of the wider project Police Expertise Euro 2000 (ADANG & CUVELIER: 2001). Below details of methodology relevant for this paper are given.

Before the start of the tournament (May 1999 – May 2000), data on preparations for international police co-operation were obtained by observing the three preparatory seminars and conferences organised by the host countries, by analysing documents prepared by the host countries and through unstructured interviews with members of the binational police project. At the last preparatory meeting, participants were asked to fill out a short questionnaire with five questions related to involvement of foreign police in the policing of the tournament (41 out of 48 foreign police officers present completed the questionnaire, a response rate of 85%).

During the tournament (June 10 - July 2, 2000) data were collected in the following ways:

- Standardised exit interviews were held with all foreign police teams as soon as they had finished their activities and focused on the way in which spotter's teams were deployed and their information was used. All foreign spotters' teams but one were interviewed (the team that could not be interviewed provided us with written answers to our questions);
- After each period in a host city, members of spotters' teams were asked to complete a questionnaire that included five questions on international police co-operation (similar to the questions included in the pre-tournament questionnaire). A total of 197 questionnaires were completed by members of 10 different teams. In this way data for all of the eight host cities were obtained;
- an international monitoring team composed of four experienced police officers (from England, France, Germany, Schotland) visited all host cities at least once. Within 24 h after each observation day, the team summarised their observations and completed a questionnaire on international police co-operation (similar to the questions included in the

pre-tournament questionnaire). In each host city, an observation team of at least four observers conducted observations (both in the streets, on the site and in police information centres) on match days, attended briefings and held ad hoc interviews with police officers, stewards and fans. Observation teams were composed of Dutch and Belgian police officers and university students (psychology or biology students). Observers had followed a two-day training in previously developed observation procedures;

- Ad lib observations in the binational information centre and ad hoc interviews with liaison officers in the binational information centre.

No data were gathered on individual backgrounds of foreign police officers acting as liaison officers or forming part of spotter's teams.

After Euro 2000 (July – September 2000), an evaluation meeting was held with officers that had accompanied the foreign police teams and the head of the binational information centre was interviewed. Written evaluations, both local and international, were gathered.

The macro level: European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and Particular at Football Matches

In 1985 the Council of Europe adopted the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and Particular at Football Matches, which is considered as the framework for co-operation in the field. It was adopted in the wake of the tragedy in the Heysel stadium (Brussels, May 1985), when 38 people died following spectator violence. Over the years, several initiatives have been to refine or implement the provisions of the European Convention. For the purpose of this study, especially the recommendations dealing with police cooperation are relevant, such as the nomination of central contact points (Recommendation 3/87), assistance by advisory plain-clothes policemen from visiting

countries (Recommendation 1/88), training seminars in preparation for major events (recommendation 2/88), the role of visiting police in the host country (recommendation 2/91) and standard forms for the exchange of intelligence (recommendation 1/97).

The meso level: Handbook for international police co-operation and measures to prevent and control violence and disorder around football matches

During Euro 1988 held in Germany, Dutch and English plainclothes officers were present for the first time at an international tournament to exchange information with their German colleagues and to assist them directly (ADANG: 1998; CIV: 1988). Over the years this form of police-cooperation was expanded. For the European championships in 1992 in Sweden, so-called "spotter-teams" from other countries were present as well, to provide tactical operational information, to identify fans when necessary and to act as a go-between between Swedish authorities and foreign fans. A Swedish evaluation concluded that, at critical moments, Swedish authorities made no use of information provided by foreign (German and Dutch) police, which contributed to the initiation and escalation of several incidents (TORSTENSSON, 1993: 133-136). The Dutch evaluation (CIV: 1992) identified several other points of attention, ranging from the local policy and tolerance limits not always being clear to the link between the spotters and the local command centre.

During Euro'96 held in England, a total of 43 foreign police officers assisted in the UK policing operation, acting either as 'spotters' assisting the various police forces, or as 'police liaison officers' working in the National coordinating centre in London. According to the evaluation report (ACPO: 1996), all of the police forces in the UK who were directly involved in the championships were unanimous in their praise of the commitment, expertise and contribution which was made to the successful policing of the championships by those foreign police officers who acted as spotters and provided operation assistance. The

evaluation was more critical of the quality and the accuracy of the intelligence provided by the liaison officers of several countries. The Dutch evaluation (HEIJS: 1997) concluded that international cooperation in relation to international football matches had become a matter of course.

Just two years later, the World Championships were held in France. The Security report published after the event (Ministère de l'Intérieur: 1999) points to the fact that maintaining the peace during an event of this type cannot do without preparation well beyond territorial limits and preparation within the joint Schengen space. Co-operation of the international police forces should be continued and developed for improved knowledge of risks and adaptation of methods, and to acquire familiarity with crowds from different cultural backgrounds. As was the case with previous championships, international information exchange was of varying quantity and quality. It proved difficult to co-ordinate the operational action of delegations with varying cultures, languages, police organisations, familiarity with the hooligan phenomenon, political systems and therefore with different approaches to public order. Clear differences in the way liaison officers work in different countries were revealed. Spotters dissuaded some supporters from exceeding limits and allowed the identification of more violent supporters who disturbed public order. Although the official evaluation claimed the international cooperation to be a succes (Ministère de l'Intérieur: 1999; DUPONT: 1999), some foreign police teams indicated unofficially that they felt that their advice had not been heeded (personal communication, leader police team).

On June 14, 1999, the European Union adopted a "Handbook for international police co-operation and measures to prevent and control violence and disturbances in connection with international football matches (in which at least one Member State is involved either by participation in the match or by hosting the match)" (EU: 1999), that was explicitly based on experiences gained with previous international police co-operation around football matches

and tournaments, especially during Euro 96 and the 98 World Cup. In the remainder of this paper, this handbook will be referred to as the “EU-handbook”.

The EU-handbook of 1999 covered the following subjects: preparation by police, organisation of police co-operation, information by police. It also contained a chapter on co-operation between police and stewards, a checklist for media policy and communication strategy as well as a chapter on admission and ticketing policy. This study only addresses the chapters directly dealing with police co-operation.

According to the EU handbook, police forces from the supporting countries are responsible for providing an advance risk analysis. Based on the risk analysis, the host country determines which of four areas of police co-operation is to be requested to aid in ensuring the safety of the event. A foreign police team could be responsible for the following duties:

- reconnaissance, spotting or escorting duties (operational police officers supervising risk fans from the start of their journey);
- co-ordinating the work of the operational police officers and channelling information (operations co-ordinator);
- exchanging information between participating countries and the host country (liaison officers).

According to the handbook, the host country should make maximum use of the support that foreign police forces can supply and foreign police support should form part of the host organisation’s tactical plan. The host police organisation should ensure the physical safety and adequate accreditation of supporting foreign police officers and provide them with interpreters (if necessary), accompanying police officers, and communications equipment.

The micro-level: police cooperation in relation to Euro 2000. Preparations for international police cooperation during Euro 2000

To prepare the police organisation of Euro 2000 in general, and the international police co-operation in particular, members of the binational police project started out by looking for information about the organisation of similar events in the past (interview with project leader). However, few detailed reports or written evaluations existed on the policing of previous tournaments. Evaluations that did exist were both uncritical and limited in scope. In preparation of the risk analyses, the Belgian government commissioned a study by the University of Liège to gather data on the behaviour of European football fans and hooligans (COMERON & DE MEULENAER: 1999). After the France 98 World Cup, Belgium and the Netherlands organised two seminars to discuss the experiences from France 98 in greater depth (BRUSSELS, October 1998 and BRUSSELS, January, 1999). International police co-operation was clearly on the agenda during these events.

Both members of the Dutch and Belgian national and local police projects visited France 98 as well as a number of matches in other countries in which teams tried to qualify for Euro 2000. This allowed them to make international contacts and to get acquainted with the behaviour of foreign fans. Despite the fact that as a result of European football competitions, fans regularly travel to other countries, a considerable amount of energy had to be spent to establish contacts and to open up networks. According to the head of the police projects, contacts with countries that had their own problems with football fans were characterised by developing good working arrangements, whereas contacts with other countries were characterised by raising their awareness and motivating them to provide assistance. At a governmental level, the Belgian and Dutch Interior ministers paid visits to their foreign colleagues in the months preceding Euro 2000 and made formal agreements (“joint statements”) to co-operate on the basis of the EU handbook (see MOJET: 2006). On

several occasions prior to these visits, the Interior Ministers informed their EU colleagues about the preparations for Euro 2000 (e.g. through a letter in March, 1999). The declared starting point of contacts in the preparatory phase was to focus on the common interest to tackle the whole event using a consistent and all-inclusive approach. Activities were aimed at raising awareness, not only of the functional and territorial responsibilities of all actors, but also of mutual complementarity and interdependence.

In accordance with the EU-handbook, the host countries asked for two types of support: liaison officers to be present in the central (binational) police information centre, and spotters' teams to follow fans of their country. Deployment of the spotters' teams was to be co-ordinated from the central police information centre. The binational police project prepared profiles of both foreign and domestic police officers involved in the international cooperation effort: liaison officer, spotter, operational coordinator, delegation leader, as well as accompanying officers, cicerones and guides (BAELEMANS et al.: 1999).

Three seminars were organised in preparation of the international police co-operation (The Hague, October 25-26 1999; 2nd International seminar Euro 2000, February 10-11, the Hague, International conference Euro 2000, May 9-10, Rotterdam). The EU-handbook and international police co-operation were discussed. A profile of the required foreign police officers was given, as well as an overview of the intended information structure and facilities to be made available. Participants provided a first risk analysis of fans of their country and promised to supply relevant information, to send liaison officers to the police co-ordination centres and to make a police team available. Participants drew attention to the fact that whereas intelligence gathering is important, using it is vital. The second seminar, with the draw complete and the first competition schedule in place, focused on the leaders of police delegations. Topics on the conference agenda included the effects of the draw and risk analysis, the composition of foreign police teams and the necessary follow up arrangements

(next conference, contact points). The objective of the third seminar was to reach final agreement in detail and to foster contacts between the many police professionals involved. For that purpose, police officers that would be present during Euro 2000 were invited specifically. In dialogue with the participants an actualised risk analysis was attempted and details about foreign police teams were discussed. At the conference, an information package for governments of countries qualified for Euro 2000 was distributed. After the conference, delegation leaders of foreign teams made working visits to the host cities, where they met with commanding police officers. They were accompanied by the Belgian and Dutch police officers that were to accompany them during Euro 2000 (and who had also been present at the conference). Liaison officers made a three-day visit to the binational police information centre in Driebergen where they were given training with the new computer-based information exchange system.

At the different seminars, essentially the same subjects were on the agenda. This repetitiveness was considered necessary for several reasons (interview with seminar organisers). At the first seminars, not all relevant countries were represented. Participants changed from one seminar to another and were not always familiar with arrangements from the EU-handbook. As the event drew nearer, participants were more often those who would be actually involved in the foreign police teams. And of course, as the event drew nearer, it was possible and necessary to enter into more detail. For countries that did not have fan problems themselves, Euro 2000 only became a reality from the moment their national team had qualified, as the attendance at the seminars indicates (see table I, at the first seminar some countries who would not qualify were also represented). At the last seminar, participants from South Korea and Japan (organisers of World Championship 2002) and Morocco (at that time candidate for the organisation of the 2006 World Cup) were also present.

Table I: Participants at preparatory seminars (exclusive of the two host countries, 14 countries took part in Euro 2000).

	October 1998	October 99	February 2000	May 2000
Countries represented (excl hosts)	7	11	14	14
Participants (excl hosts)	16	20	27	44
Participants (host countries)	45	30	51	83

During the seminar held in May 2000, 41 out of 44 foreign police officers present completed a short questionnaire (a response rate of 93%). About one-third of them had been present at the conferences held in October 1999 or February 2000 (or both) and almost all (88%) indicated that they were familiar with the contents of the EU-handbook, which they thought adequate. They indicated that it would be useful to update the handbook after Euro 2000 and that the measures contained in the handbook would be useful in co-operating with non-EU countries as well. Some participants indicated that it would be useful to pay more attention in the handbook to the rights and duties of foreign police officers and to their protection. The participants identified several factors that could potentially stand in the way of successful international co-operation. Lack of information, misunderstandings as a result of cultural or linguistic differences and operational inflexibility were named as potential pitfalls. Some participants feared that in practice some liaison-officers would not always have the knowledge expected of them. According to their answers on the questionnaire, the foreign participants to the third seminar indicated that they considered themselves to be well informed about police preparations for Euro 2000 (see Table II) and about their own role during Euro 2000. They felt that conditions for successful international co-operation were met, that this co-operation would make an important contribution to a safe Euro 2000 and that Belgian and Dutch police would make maximal use of their expertise. Asked if they felt that many important things still needed to be done, their answers indicated that this was not the case.

International police cooperation during Euro 2000

During the tournament one central (binational) police information centre was established where international liaison officers had their base and from where international police teams were coordinated. All participating countries had at least one liaison officer in the binational information centre. In addition, all participating countries but one had a team of police officers present (minimum 3 officers, maximum 17), headed by a delegation leader. Three countries had an interpreter with them, one a spokesperson. In all, 107 police officers were involved in the foreign police teams. In addition, the Netherlands and Belgium had their own spotters' teams. The foreign police teams were each accompanied by one Belgian and one Dutch police officer and (depending on the number of spotters in the team), one or more cicerones as driver and additional accompaniment. Spotter's teams were deployed in cities where the teams of their country played a match or in any other city where their assistance was requested. In each city in which they were active, one or more local guides assisted the spotters' teams.

The main elements of the international police cooperation were the following:

1. Exchange of information (through the liaison officers) on the numbers, destinations, behaviour and perceived threat to public order of individuals and groups of fans. A lot of the exchange of information and the analyses of risks dealt with the number and types of fans (category A, B or C)² travelling and the possible intentions of known troublemakers.
2. Cooperation between agencies involved in border control. The arrival of fans at the Dutch and Belgian borders was closely monitored and on several occasions fans were stopped from entering the host countries. Several hundreds German and Turkish fans were stopped in this way.
3. Direct operational assistance by plainclothes police spotter teams to local police forces.

This assistance took several forms

- providing intelligence on the presence or absence of known troublemakers, their methods of operation and their suspected and actual intentions to engage in violence and disorder. On the basis of this intelligence police resources could be allocated to a specific location;
 - providing other information relevant to assessment of risks: assessments of fan mood and information on content, meaning or cultural background of fan behaviour. On the basis of this information, a course of action considered suitable to the circumstances could be advised;
 - directly interacting and communicating with fans to gather information from them (e.g. about arrangements for travel and accommodation, know about their concerns), to pass information to them (e.g. about tolerance limits) or to influence them (e.g. by asking them to go to another location). Several instances could be observed where interventions of a spotter team prevented potential incidents from escalating (e.g. when, in a tense situation, spotters talked fans into leaving a pub where they might have become a target for rival fans). Of course, these types of interventions could only occur when spotters made themselves known to fans;
 - identifying suspects to assist judicial enquiries.
4. The international police cooperation effort for Euro 2000 also included measures taken to prevent known troublemakers from buying tickets (by providing their names). More unconventionally, measures taken in two countries to prevent known troublemakers from travelling to the host countries, were also made explicitly within the framework of the international police cooperation. In total around 500 individuals subject to Football Banning Orders were either prevented from leaving the United Kingdom or denied entry to Belgium and the Netherlands (DREW: 2002). In Germany, known hooligans were obliged to report at the police headquarters in their hometown when a match of the

German team started. In certain cases, the police paid home visits to known hooligans to tell them that police would follow them if they left Germany. A new law made it a crime for a person who had restrictions on his passport to leave the country.

After Euro 2000: Views of foreign police teams on the international police cooperation during Euro 2000

Interviews with spotters' teams indicated that there was general agreement among the foreign police officers that the level of international police co-operation was unprecedented. The preparatory visits to the host cities (and for liaison officers to the binational information centre) three weeks prior to the start of the tournament, where delegation leaders met with commanding police officers and with accompanying officers, were considered to confer a big advantage. Hospitality, accompaniment, logistical arrangements and equipment provided were without exception evaluated positively. The composition of the foreign teams was considered adequate.

Members from spotters' teams generally considered themselves to be well informed about local police preparations in the cities they visited and about their own role there, they felt that conditions for successful international co-operation were met and that local police often made use of their expertise (see table II). However, the average scores were somewhat lower compared to the general assessment previous to the tournament (at the last seminar). This difference can be ascribed to the different way in which participating cities made use of spotters' teams: as Table II makes clear, there were considerable differences between different cities. In theory, the spotters' teams were included in local tactical plans, but in practice this was not always the case. The international monitoring team came to the same conclusion and observed several occasions when police did not react to intelligence supplied by spotters (GEORGE et al.: 2000).

Table II: Views of foreign police teams on international police co-operation. Average scores on a scale of 1 (do not agree) to 5 (agree completely). Before Euro 2000: questionnaire responses by foreign participants to last pre-event conference. After Euro 2000: questionnaire responses by members of foreign police teams Range: Range of "after Euro 2000" average scores of the different host cities

	Before Euro 2000 (N = 41)	After Euro 2000 (N = 119)	Range
well informed about police preparations?	4,4	3,9	3,0 - 4,5
well informed about role?	4,3	4,1	3,0 - 4,7
conditions for cooperation met?	4,2	3,9	3,3 - 4,8
maximum use of expertise?	4,6	3,9	2,7 - 4,6

Looking more closely at the differences between host cities as indicated by the spotters in the exit-interviews allows to identify several elements considered “good practice” by the foreign police teams. Generally, taking the foreign teams seriously and showing respect was one of the most important aspects, which became visible in several ways. It was considered good practice by the spotters’ teams when, in communicating with them, a language was used that they could understand. When this proved impossible, assistance of a good interpreter who translated all information was essential. Two-way communication, which included timely and adequate information of foreign teams of relevant events, benefited the co-operation. Adequate briefings and a systematic and structured debriefing afterwards were considered important. For the one team that had its own spokesman, contact between him and the local police spokesman was also considered good practice. The assistance of well-prepared and knowledgeable local guides is essential to an effective functioning of the teams. It is important that the guides know their role, know about the local organisation and preparations, have some knowledge of football hooliganism, are able to provide security to the foreign team and have the proper equipment. Not surprisingly, it is considered good practice if the information of the foreign team is actually utilised and the local police have the flexibility to adapt to this information (rather than rigidly sticking to the same procedures, regardless of the information provided). Other aspects that facilitated the work of the spotters’ teams were good functioning fan embassies at the right locations (not just in the city centre,

but also at parkings etc.), clear local command and information structures, without unnecessary intermediate links that hindered the flow of information, an absence of a disruption of activities of the foreign team (e.g. by frequent phone calls, by giving priority to secondary tasks, by an emphasis on hospitality) and contacts with other spotters' teams at briefings and in hotels.

After Euro 2000: Views of local police on the functioning of the spotters' teams during Euro 2000

Based on interviews held, there was general agreement among host cities and at the binational information centre that the spotters' teams contributed positively to the policing of Euro 2000. Their observations, analyses, advice and sometimes active involvement with fans were of importance for the successful maintenance of public order. They identified a large number of potential hooligans, and on occasions when there was no risk their presence allowed them to continuously update the risk assessment to the local police. The teams could be deployed in a highly flexible way when and where they were needed: when fans of a country were present in places other than the place of a match, spotters would simply go these places. They had a lot of expertise and were able to provide a lot of valuable information which could be put to good use in the management of public order. However, two areas were identified where the use of spotters was not entirely successful. On some occasions, foreign spotters were of limited use when information was needed on the behaviour of migrants: fans originating from participating countries, but living in one of the host countries. Also, differences between the spotters' teams from different countries existed. Not surprisingly, given the different level of football related violence in different countries, not all spotters were as experienced and as knowledgeable about the behaviour of fans or about the arrangements contained in the EU handbook. As the international monitoring team also

indicates (George et al.: 2000), some of the spotters did not appear to have the necessary and desirable qualifications (in the sense of appropriate experience and skills) to perform their task. Some were not police officers or had no practical experience in dealing with football fans. Not every team was able to provide the same “products”, such as: assessment of the atmosphere, interpretation of fan behaviour, checking accuracy of information, supervising fans or interacting with fans. There was general agreement that some teams seemed to have had little added value, either because they had limited knowledge of and experience with football-fans or because from the fact that many of their fans attending Euro 2000 lived outside of their country of origin and were not known to the foreign police teams. According to the project leader, the host countries realised (and accepted) that there would be differences between the contribution of spotters’ teams from different countries, but preferred to invite spotters from all participating countries, on the one hand because they felt that even a limited contribution could make a difference and on the other hand because participation is the only way to build experience.

Discussion

As this case study indicates, for Euro 2000, extensive preparations set the scene for an international co-operation that was considered by all involved as unprecedented and successful. During the tournament, liaison officers in the central information centre played an important role in the exchange of information. However, the international police cooperation entailed much more than an exchange of information, exchange of liaison officers and cooperation at the borders. In two countries (i.e. United Kingdom and Germany) measures were taken to help prevent known troublemakers from buying tickets or leaving the country. These measures were taken explicitly as part of the international cooperation effort. And of course, a large number of foreign officers in the form of spotters' teams were deployed within

the host countries. Their deployment was considered to make a large contribution to the policing of the tournament. Although it is impossible to quantify the impact of the spotters' teams on the prevention of incidents of public disorder, all parties involved agreed that they made an important contribution. Incidents of the type occurring during France '98 did not take place during Euro 2000. Our observers witnessed several instances where spotters prevented (escalation of) incidents. It is telling that our systematic observational research revealed that fewest incidents occurred in those cities that in practice adopted a low profile approach based on intelligence and that actually made use of information provided by spotters' teams (ADANG & CUVELIER: 2001). This difference was also noticed by our international monitoring team (GEORGE et al.: 2000) and by fans themselves (LONG et al.: 2000). As suggestive as this is, it is not possible to make definite statements about the contribution of international police cooperation to the prevention of disorder, also because comparable data for other tournaments do not exist (and arrest figures are not a good indication of the level of disorder).

However, if, as this case study seems to indicate, the use of spotters is 'good practice' and an example of 'what works', it is worthwhile to consider why that might be the case. A common view is that because spotters can identify troublemakers, local police is better able to deploy police resources where they are needed and deter troublemakers or take repressive measures when incidents occur. Also, where spotters can identify suspects even if they are not arrested immediately, they can be brought to justice. This also acts as a deterrent. The assumption underlying this view is that football related violence is criminal behaviour and should be treated as such: it is caused by individuals predisposed to violence (often referred to as "hooligans", e.g. Dunning et al.: 1988), who draw others into confrontations as a result of pathological crowd psychological processes such as deindividuation (e.g. EVANS & ROWE: 2002: 37 - 53).

However, there is growing evidence that football related violence is not just the product of the activities of so-called "hooligans" (e.g. STOTT & REICHER 1998: 353 - 377; STOTT & ADANG 2004: 318-319)³. In fact, incidents are often the result of an interaction between different groups of fans or groups of fans and the police (ADANG: 1991, 1998; STOTT et al 2001: 359-384). During international events, intergroup interactions are influenced by differences in perspective, culture, language, etc. It is more difficult to gather essential information, to build rapport and to avoid misunderstandings when dealing with individuals and groups from other countries. Spotters who know "their" fans and interact with them are often able to identify the tell-tale signs preceding incidents, they can help avoid misunderstandings. Several spotters' teams have learnt this lesson and actively communicate with fans to influence them and help prevent the occurrence of situations in which violence becomes more likely (ADANG: 1998, relates an incident during Euro 1988 where Dutch spotters intervened directly and managed to divert Dutch fans away from a looming confrontation with English fans in Düsseldorf, Germany). A covert deployment of intelligence and evidence gathering spotters cannot achieve this. Spotters interacting and communicating with fans are needed for this. It might even be advantageous to also deploy spotters in a clearly recognisable way, perhaps in uniform (just as it is already normal for Dutch police officers to patrol, unarmed, in German cities together with their German colleagues when, in the weeks before Christmas, a lot of Dutch tourists visit local Christmas markets and for German officers to patrol beaches along the Dutch coast together with their Dutch colleagues, when there are a lot of German tourists there in the holiday season). This type of a more "community oriented" international police cooperation seems to fit better in a context where the overwhelming majority of participants are peaceful and a successful police strategy aims to prevent individuals within this majority from becoming involved in incidents (see also REICHER et al. 2004: 558-572 and REICHER et al. 2007:).

Prior to Euro 2000, the activities within the Council of Europe and the police cooperation working group of the European Union meant that several arrangements existed and some practices considered "good" had already been identified (ADANG: 1999 and Asser Institute: 2004, give an overview) based on experiences made during previous tournaments. It seems that these agreements made at the macro and meso-level were in large part in fact reproduced at the micro-level and that many of the obstacles that usually hamper international police cooperation were overcome in this case. This is felt to be due in large part to the fact that the international police cooperation built on previous practical experiences developed over the years, took explicit account of previously identified learning points (although the paucity of written evaluations meant that a lot of energy had to be used to get at these learning points) and was prepared extensively at both the level of practitioners and policymakers. However, the cooperation was by no means perfect. Before the tournament, exchange of information proved to be easiest with those countries that had permanent football information points. Information needed for risk analyses was not readily available: a separate study had to be commissioned to gather the information. This was remarkable, as international matches between club teams and between national teams take place throughout Europe on an almost continuous basis. During the tournament, an important factor influencing the effectiveness of the spotter's teams was their involvement at the local level. It is important to note that, although the international police cooperation for an event as Euro 2000 is organised at a national (and in this case binational) level, the spotters actually do their work at a local level. In spite of all good intentions, at the local level important differences occurred in the ways in which foreign police were actually incorporated into tactical plans and in which use was actually made of their expertise and information. To summarize, the main factors hampering micro-level police co-operation during Euro 2000 (apart from language differences) seemed

to be a lack of continuity on a European level, lack of involvement of some countries and inflexible, more repressive police strategies at the local level.⁴

Although it is difficult to generalize from a case study, it is likely that the same factors will be at work around other international football matches. However, for a high-impact event such as a big tournament, international police co-operation will probably be more of a priority than for “regular” matches. For the Euro 2004 football championships held in Portugal, international police cooperation followed that implemented during Euro 2000, and in Germany, the provisions of the Handbook were taken into account in the preparations for the 2006 World Cup as well (Bundesministerium des Inneren: 2006). In 2004, the Portuguese national police PSP also adopted a "community-oriented" low-profile strategy with considerable success (ADANG & STOTT 2004: 46-47; STOTT, ADANG et al. 2007: 75-100, 2008: 111-138), whereas German authorities were less successful with a mixed approach (SCHREIBER & ADANG, 2010). It would be interesting to explore whether "good practices" in relation to international police cooperation around football matches are relevant around other types of events with an international character (such as certain political demonstrations) as well.

Notes

¹ The paper does not deal with aspects specifically related to the cooperation between the two host nations, Belgium and the Netherlands

² Category A: Peaceful, bona fide supporters; Category B: Possible risk of disorder, especially alcohol related violence; Category C: Violent supporters or organisers of violence

³ This was also true of the incidents that occurred during Euro 2000 (ADANG & CUVELIER: 2001). As an example, during Euro 2000 a total of 965 England followers were arrested. Only

one of those arrested was subject to a Football Banning Order and only 35 were known to the National Criminal Intelligence Service as prominent football hooligans (DREW: 2002).

⁴ Following Euro 2000, the following measures have been taken:

- the EU handbook has been adapted, taking account of the findings of the research described in this paper (DERIDDER: 2002; VANHECKE: 2002; DERIDDER & QUATAERT: 2002);
- national football information points have been established in all EU countries;
- on the initiative of the Dutch national football information point CIV, every year in September an international meeting is held to exchange information at the beginning of a new European cup season;
- building on the evaluation model developed for Euro 2000 and the example of the international monitoring team, a pilot was held with peer review evaluation teams composed of international commanders at the behest of the EU Police cooperation working party (ADANG & BROWN: 2009)

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