

Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

UNODC has the mission of making the world safer from crime, drugs, and terrorism. To be effective and sustainable, responses to these threats must include strategies covering the following areas:

- **Crime Prevention**, especially Urban crime prevention; Armed violence prevention; Prevention of recidivism
- **Criminal Justice Reform**: Police reform, Prosecution service, Judiciary (the courts), Access to legal defence and legal aid, Prison reform and alternatives to imprisonment, and Restorative justice
- **Justice for children; Support and assistance to victims; Gender in the criminal justice system**

Crime prevention and criminal justice strategies must take a human rights approach and be based on the rules of law, together with the [UN standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice](#).

UNODC and the promotion and protection of Human Rights

The [Charter of the United Nations](#) includes an obligation to promote universal respect and observance for human rights. [Resolution 51/12 of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs](#) reaffirmed the importance of countering the world drug problem in a multilateral setting with full respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and requested UNODC work closely with the United Nations human rights agencies in this endeavour. In his subsequent Note to the governing bodies of UNODC entitled [Drug control, crime prevention and criminal justice: A human rights perspective](#), the UNODC Executive Director indicated a way forward to further mainstreaming of human rights in the work of the Office. Building on this foundation, the Paper entitled [UNODC's perspective on promotion and protection of human rights](#) is intended to articulate UNODC's perspective on promotion and protection of human rights as part of the work of the Office.



Within UNODC, overall responsibility related to crime prevention and criminal justice reform lies within the **Justice Section** in the Division of Operations, at headquarter-level. The Justice Section performs both

normative work and operational work, to assist countries in the areas of crime prevention and criminal justice. The normative work of the Justice Section relates to the revision of existing standards and norms, the development of new standards and norms, and the monitoring of their use and application. The operational work of the Justice Section includes activities such as providing technical assistance to Member States and developing tools to assist Member States in implementing the UN standards and norms. The Justice Section brochure is available for download in: [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#), [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#), and [Russian](#).

At field level, UNODC has been developing regional/country programmes, covering all thematic areas included in its mandate, with strong criminal justice components, based on needs and objectives identified in each region/country. For more information on UNODC's work on crime prevention and criminal justice at field level, please consult each field level entity's webpage on their crime prevention and criminal justice pillar, through UNODC's [field offices portal](#).

UN Standards and Norms in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

The work of UNODC in crime prevention and criminal justice reform is guided by the UN standards and norms on crime prevention and criminal justice. The UN standards and norms are sets of non-binding rules, principles, and guidelines relating to different aspects of criminal justice. Most of the UN standards and norms are resolutions adopted by the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council.

The Compendium UN standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice are available for download in: [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#), [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#), and [Russian](#).

Recent reports of the Secretary-General on use and application of UN standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice are also available for download: [2011](#), [2012](#), [2013](#).

Thematic Programme and projects on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

The thematic programme provides for the strategic framework for UNODC's work, especially that of the Justice Section, on crime prevention and criminal justice reform. It presents UNODC's mandate to assist countries in developing new instruments, strategies, policies and programmes for crime prevention and criminal justice reform and presents the tools and services that UNODC can provide to States and non-State actors.

The Thematic Programme is implemented through a portfolio of UNODC projects around the world, most of which are part of UNODC regional and country programmes. It is also implemented through UNODC's global project on crime prevention and criminal justice.

- [Thematic Programme on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice 2012-2015](#)
- [UNODC major achievements on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice 2010-2011](#)
- [Global Projects on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice 2012-2015 and its 2012 evaluation](#)

The global project aims at strengthening States' capacity to improve crime prevention and criminal justice systems in line with UN standards and norms and other relevant international instruments through (1) assessments, advice and programme support to State policies and strategies; (2) tools development and training, also to support State policies and strategies; (3) standards and norms development or update. The project is implemented with a strong focus on partnerships with other UN agencies and international

Statistics and Surveys

Apart from normative and operational work, UNODC also conducts research in the areas of crime prevention and criminal justice. For further information, please follow the links below:

- **The UNDP/UNODC Global Study on Legal Aid 2015** [English\(pdf\)](#), [English\(doc\)](#), [Spanish \(doc\)](#), [Russian \(doc\)](#), [Arabic\(doc\)](#), [Chinese \(doc\)](#), [French \(doc\)](#). Kindly note that these documents were not translated by UN official translation services.
- [Crime statistics](#)
- [Crime victimization surveys \(CVS\)](#)
- [United Nations Surveys on Crime Trends and the Operations of Criminal Justice Systems](#)
- [Ninth Survey on Capital Punishment and on the implementation of the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, covering the period 2009-2013 - Questionnaires in English\(pdf\), English\(doc\), French\(pdf\), French\(doc\), Spanish\(pdf\), Spanish\(doc\), Russian\(pdf\), Russian\(doc\), Chinese\(pdf\), Chinese\(doc\), Arabic\(pdf\), Arabic\(doc\)](#)

World crime trend reports for [2009](#) and [2010](#) are also available for download.

Click [here](#) for the Secretariat's note on world crime trends and emerging issues and responses in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice for 2011.

[UNODC's contribution to addressing the global prison crisis, presentation by the Justice Section, 20 January 2014.](#)