Increased spending on police resources reduces certain types of crime, especially when linked to the introduction of new police practices. Crime reduction is also helped by policies that improve the education and labour market position of the unskilled, including the introduction of the national minimum wage and increases in the school leaving age.

These are some of the research findings from a series of studies by the Centre for Economic Performance (CEP) at the London School of Economics. They shed light on the UK’s ‘riddle of peacefulness’, indicated by figures released today that show a substantial fall in rates of murder and violent crime.

CEP research shows that:

- Increases in police numbers, combined with new policing strategies such as the Street Crime Initiative, have reduced robberies.

- Targeting prolific offenders is an effective tool for reducing crime.

- Early release on electronic monitoring helps reduce recidivism rates of ex-prisoners.

- Government policies aimed at improving education and ‘making work pay’ have indirect effects on crime reduction.

- The introduction of the national minimum wage in 1999 appears to have reduced crime by improving the relative pay of the worst off workers.

- Increases in the school leaving age in England and Wales (in 1947 and 1972) have had important long-term crime reduction effects.

- Improving young people’s education opportunities works in two ways: first, by increasing people’s potential future income; and second, by reducing crime participation while individuals stay involved in the education system.

- There is no clear evidence that the large increase in locking people up has reduced crime, especially in terms of its long-term impact on offending behaviours.

ENDS

Further information:


(3) Video for: ‘Panic on the Streets of London’. Download [video](#).