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## DISSEMINATION AND IMPACT OF THE PREVENTIVE MEASURES PERFORMED BY THE POLICE ON THE PUBLIC

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**Abstract.** *The purpose of prevention and its implemented measures is to create a safer environment for society, to reduce the number of criminogenic cases. Preventive measures are very important in the police system, because their proper implementation can have a positive impact on society and strengthen its security. Prevention is aimed at eliminating the causes that lead to the occurrence of a criminal act. The purpose of community prevention is to unite society and law enforcement institutions in the fight against crime, to strengthen cooperation. So the police carry out many and various preventive measures, the effect of which can be seen by looking at today's crime statistics, and they are always looking for new means of dissemination. With proper implementation of preventive measures, their purpose is to reduce the level of crime, increase the sense of security in the country, and create a closer relationship with citizens. In this content, the **purpose** of the article is to discuss the impact of preventive measures implemented by officials on the citizens of the Republic of Lithuania.*

*The concept of preventive measures is very similar in all fields of science, but law enforcement institutions usually fight crime by implementing preventive measures. The purpose of prevention is very specific - to prevent unwanted events from happening and to prevent them from happening. Preventive measures are usually used to eliminate the causes of unwanted events.*

*The emergence of the position of community officers helped to ensure greater public safety and increased confidence in law enforcement institutions. Community policing is essentially a collaboration between the police and the community to identify and solve community problems. It has even been argued that community policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnership and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that cause public safety problems such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.*

*It can be said that preventive measures can have an impact on creating a safer environment. Based on the answers given during the empirical study, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents feel safe where they live. However, it is quite confusing that preventive measures are not known or heard of by a considerable number of respondents. So the question arises, perhaps the officials do not spread enough information about the preventive measures being implemented. Particular attention should be paid to social networks, as the younger generation uses them very widely.*

**Keywords:** *preventive measures, dissemination, impact, society.*

### Introduction

Preventive measures are very important in the police system, because their proper implementation can have a positive impact on society and strengthen its security. The police carry out many and various preventive measures, the effect of which can be seen by looking at today's crime statistics, and they are always looking for new means of dissemination.

Dissemination of preventive measures is important to prevent crime. In this content, the **subject** of this article is the dissemination and impact of the preventive measures.

The **purpose** of the article is to discuss the impact of preventive measures implemented by officials on the citizens of the Republic of Lithuania.

To achieve the purpose of the work, the following **tasks** are set:

1. To disclose the concept and purpose of preventive measures.
2. To disclose the dissemination of preventive measures carried out by officers of the Lithuanian police community.
3. Assess the impact of preventive measures implemented by the police on society.

In order to implement the set goal and tasks, the **methods** of systematic-structural analysis of scientific literature, questionnaire, mathematical analysis and generalization were applied.

### Concept of preventive measures

In Latin, prevention „*praevenire*“ is translated into the word to overtake, which perfectly corresponds to the perception of prevention, because the main function is to overtake what is undesirable. Prevention can be understood in broad and narrow senses. In a broad sense, prevention is a diverse activity, the purpose of which is to have a positive influence on social life based on facts. It covers many areas of life and is generally applicable. Helps maintain a proper law and order system by anticipating threats, eliminating negative causes, reducing crime or its harm. In the narrow sense, prevention is the impact measures that are applied to entities related to activities directed against unacceptable behavior. Prevention is applied to a certain group of people, individually taking into account aspects specific to that situation. And in a broad sense, prevention is understood as a tool used to prevent various activities that usually have a harmful effect. Many and various areas of prevention are distinguished, in which prevention is carried out and preventive measures are applied - the legal system, the field of education, preventive activities carried out by educational and medical institutions, the prevention measures implemented in these areas aim to prevent unwanted events from happening.

According to L. Jovaiša, prevention is „a set of various education methods aimed at preventing events that are against moral and legal norms“ (Jovaiša, 2007). Also, prevention is named as the best investment that every state can make, and it must be done now (Hawkins, 2016). According to V. Justickis, „crime prevention is an activity that aims to eliminate the factors that promote crime and thus prevent crimes“ (Justickis, 2000). According to the author, the implementation of prevention would help reduce the number of crimes. From the legal acts, the definition of corruption prevention is mentioned: „corruption prevention - uncovering and eliminating the causes and conditions of corruption by creating and implementing a system of appropriate measures, as well as the effect on individuals in order to deter them from committing criminal acts of a corrupt nature“ (Lietuvos Respublikos korupcijos prevencijos įstatymas). In the implementation of corruption prevention, the aim is to reveal and eliminate the causes that cause the effects of corruption.

Thus, the essence of prevention defined everywhere remains the same - to prevent an unwanted event from occurring. Prevention eliminates the factors that lead to inappropriate behavior. Prevention is more focused on what has not been done yet, on undone actions, which are given special attention. And the purpose of prevention measures is associated with the goals that are achieved by implementing prevention in various ways.

The implementation of crime prevention measures is closely related to the community, its activities and safety, because only by cooperating with the public and maintaining good relations can better results be achieved in the prevention of crime. After all, one of the many purposes of preventive measures is to ensure people's safety, so that they feel safe in their settlements, districts, and the country, so that they trust police officers and the work they do. According to S. Nikart, community prevention can be called a separate type of crime prevention, which is based on the assumption of a significant impact of the community on crime (Nikartas, 2014). The community's help in carrying out preventive activities, in cooperation with the authorities, would have a positive effect in the fight against crime, the living environment would become safer. S. Nikartas also states that

„in both Lithuanian and foreign scientific literature, relatively little attention is paid to the theoretical aspects of the concept of community crime prevention. It can be said that community crime prevention remains rather undefined: it is not always clear what forms of prevention it include“ (Nikartas, 2014). Thus, the problem arises that community-based prevention is not defined, which means that little attention is paid to involving the community in the implementation of prevention. The lack of definition of community prevention also leads to the fact that the activities in which the community participates are not accurately described, it is not clear what role the community plays in the implementation of preventive measures. There is a lack of a concrete, defined system that would indicate the responsibilities and duties of the community in participating and organizing prevention, together with law enforcement authorities.

T. Hope, one of the best-known community crime prevention researchers, defines community crime prevention as „activities or specific actions aimed at changing the social conditions that are believed to support crime in communities“ (Hope, 1995). According to T. Hope, community prevention includes two main goals: the first aimed at the promotion of informal social control, strengthening social relations with society and changing the social structure of the community, and the second goal is focused on the ultimate goal - the aspiration to reduce crime (Hope, 1995). In each different case, the goal depends on the needs or interests of the particular community. Often, community prevention is not limited to reducing crime, it is also focused on such factors as increasing the sense of security in a certain community, reducing antisocial behavior in society, or simply removing the feeling of fear in the community environment.

Despite the fact that there are not many scientific studies, the goals of community prevention in ensuring public safety are presented in the resolution of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania "On the approval of the public safety development program for 2015-2025". This resolution aims to pay more attention to the role of municipalities in the preventive activities of law enforcement institutions. The resolution considers that municipalities should coordinate and organize the prevention of criminal acts and other violations of the law at the municipal level. For this activity, it is recommended to gather state and municipal institutions and their institutions, business and non-governmental organizations operating in the county of that municipality and communities of residential areas located and operating in the territory of a certain municipality. As mentioned in the resolution, greater attention must be paid to the role of non-governmental organizations when organizing the prevention of crimes and other violations of the law with the involvement of municipalities, while on the contrary, the role of the police institution should be only expert and consultative in prevention when municipalities are involved. Further, this resolution mentions a safe living environment, the prerequisite for which is the implementation of preventive measures in municipalities (Dėl Viešojo saugumo plėtros 2015–2025 metų programos patvirtinimo). Thus,

the purpose of such regulations on preventive measures in communities would allow the residents themselves to become more familiar with the implementation of preventive measures and their organization. Thus, the purpose of preventive measures implemented in this way is to involve more members of society in the implementation of preventive activities, to increase the cooperation and trust of police institutions and municipalities, their institutions, non-governmental organizations and community groups.

Thus, the purpose of prevention and its implemented measures is to create a safer environment for society, to reduce the number of criminogenic cases. Prevention is aimed at eliminating the causes that lead to the occurrence of a criminal act. The purpose of community prevention is to unite society and law enforcement institutions in the fight against crime, to strengthen cooperation. Community prevention is aimed at greater involvement of municipal institutions, community groups, and non-governmental organizations in the organization and implementation of preventive activities. With proper implementation of preventive measures, their purpose is to reduce the level of crime, increase the sense of security in the country, and create a closer relationship with citizens.

### **Dissemination of preventive measures implemented by community officials**

The emergence of the position of community officers helped to ensure greater public safety and increased confidence in law enforcement institutions. According to B. Palšis, the need for community officers was first understood by the police system itself, which was caused by insufficient attention to prevention, creating a safe environment (Palšis, 2014). Prior to the advent of community-based prevention, police focused heavily on the consequences of crime, which had little effect on crime reduction. Community policing is essentially a collaboration between the police and the community to identify and solve community problems. It has even been argued that community policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnership and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that cause public safety problems such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.

One of the most important preventive tasks of community officials is to try to involve as large a part of society as possible in the implementation of preventive activities, thereby ensuring the creation of a safer environment. Prevention activities that help to involve the public: creating safe neighborhood groups, offering to become young police supporters and police supporters. These implemented preventive measures help to increase public interest in preventive activities carried out by community officials.

In order for a larger part of communities to know about preventive measures, they must be published, publicized, in other words, the dissemination of preventive measures must take place. Before disseminating information, it is very important to determine the audience it will be intended for and to select the means of dissemination accordingly, which are currently many and varied: both traditional and new - online and social networks. Information dissemination tools usually aim to inform, remind, and convince the target audience about important security issues. The police currently use more modern means of disseminating information - Facebook and Instagram. In them, officers publish information related to prevention and their activities, hold contests, publish information about organized events, and upload photos of ongoing activities. You can also find the official police website on the internet. It also publishes current news, provides a summary of events in the country, uploads photos of various police events, provides preventive and representative videos of the police agency. The mass media and news portals could also be assigned to the sources of

information dissemination in the online space. Various online media portals also publish information created by police agencies about new fraud methods, preventive raids being carried out, criminal acts committed and many other topics related to the activities of law enforcement agencies.

The second group of means of disseminating information is when information is disseminated through printed products. Police agencies print brochures and leaflets with important information. Most of the time, brochures and leaflets contain information about cases of fraud, theft, and violent crimes. Leaflets and brochures contain information on how to act in the face of a criminal act, and who to turn to for help. Information can also be disseminated through stickers produced by the police. Bribery awareness sticker that says "I don't take bribes" to prevent corruption. There are also stickers that are placed on items marked by the police. This sticker informs that the item is flagged by the police.

The third group of information dissemination focuses on the communication of police officers with the public and children, during lectures and events. Police officers, organizing meetings in communities with local residents, read reports, inform about criminal acts and their prevention. When organizing events or participating in them, information stands with important and relevant information are set up next to police preventive tents.

The fourth information dissemination group related to raids and inspections. Police officers organize friendly raids where people can come and check their driving history and during these raids drivers are warned of potential road hazards such as wild animals that may enter the roadway and cause an emergency. During the raids, the officers inform the public about the KET requirements in force at a certain time, and inform that it is necessary to comply with all safety requirements when participating in traffic.

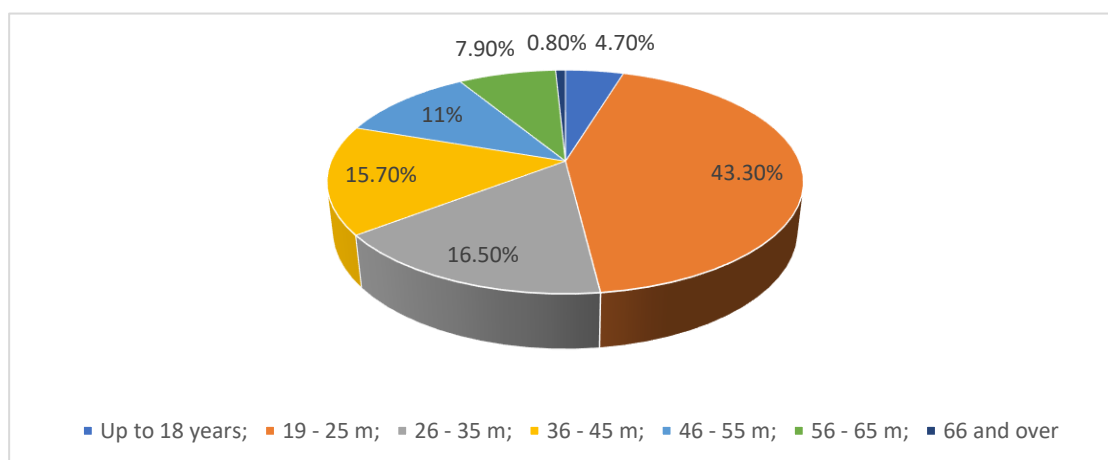
Thus, the dissemination of preventive measures is carried out by various means and methods in order to reach the largest possible part of society or users of social networks. The information disseminated by the police became more accessible when it began to be distributed on the Internet and social networks. The more members of society will be involved in the implementation, organization, and assurance of preventive activities, the less space will be left for crime, and there will be an opportunity to further expand safe environment settlements where it is good and safe to live.

### **Impact of preventive measures on society**

When implementing preventive measures, it is expected that they will work effectively, and it is expected to determine the impact of preventive measures on society. Taking this into account, the purpose of the conducted research is to determine whether the public feels the impact of the preventive measures implemented by the police.

The research method used to achieve the research goal is questionnaire survey. An exploratory survey was carried out. The 18-question questionnaire was distributed online, and 127 respondents answered. Of them, 76.4 percent - women and 23.6 % - men. The apparent predominance of women may imply that women pay more attention to safety and are more active in expressing their opinions on matters of concern to them. Also, this survey is distinguished by the relatively young age of the respondents, almost half of them are 19-25 years old. The two age groups are similarly distributed: respondents belonging to the 26-35-year-old group and respondents belonging to the 36-45-year-old group account for 16-17 % each. Since this group already has more life experience, the total number of their answers in the survey is not small. This group is likely to be more and more frequently exposed to

preventive measures by the police. The lowest - 4.7 % - the group of respondents consists of persons aged 66 and elder.



**Diagram 1. Age of respondents**

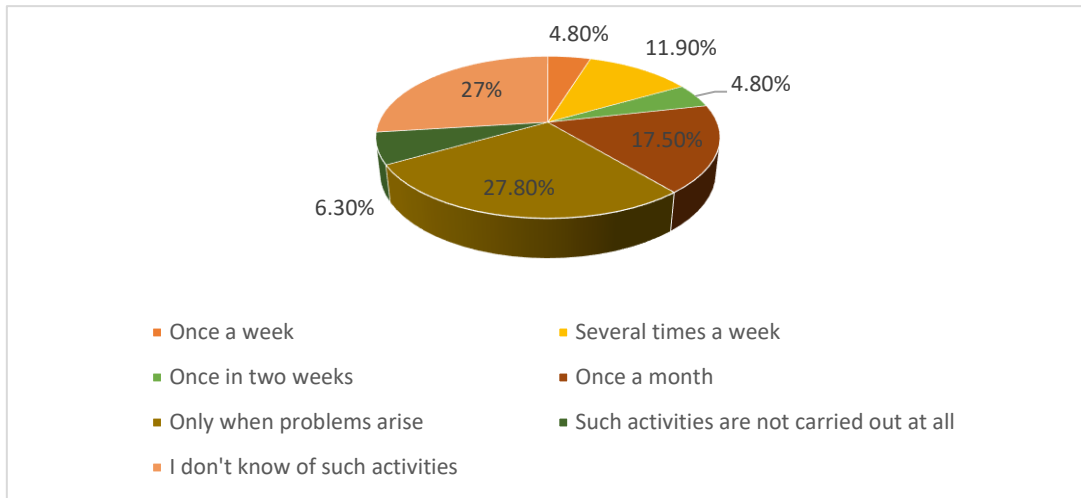
Many respondents (82.7 %), when asked if they feel safe in their place of residence, answered that they do. However, a large number of respondents - as many as 16.50 % - stated that they feel safe only partially in their living environment, and 0.80 % feel unsafe. In order to find out the reasons for the insecurity, you are asked to specify the reasons for this. The cited reasons are: lack of trust, too little patrolling by officers, antisocial people hanging around. There are also frequent answers about unlit streets, it is not safe for individuals when criminal acts are increasing in the country. Another reason is a lack of trust in other people, which causes a feeling of insecurity. The lack of preventive measures was also mentioned.

A significant sense of security can also be determined by the fact that a large number of respondents (91.30 %) indicated trust in the police. So if the public trusts police officers, it also trusts their activities. And those who indicated that they did not trust the police were asked to name the reasons. The most common reason given is a bad personal experience with the police. The reasons for corruption and negative events presented in the media are also mentioned. Some respondents associate police work with politics, according to them, police officers are reluctant to work for a person and listen to authorities.

A sense of community is also important for a sense of security, so belonging to a community has an impact on that. In a community where individuals trust each other, communicate, experience, information, etc. are shared more. Of the persons who participated in the survey, the majority of respondents - 80.2 % - replied that he considers himself a member of the community. And 19.8 % respondents do not identify themselves with any community.

After finding out about the sense of security and what people trust, whether they consider themselves part of the community, they were asked whether, to their knowledge, preventive measures are implemented where they live. 63.5 % answered the question. respondents answered that, to their knowledge, preventive measures are implemented in the living environment. Even 36.5 % of the respondents stated that no preventive measures are implemented in their environment, which could mean that individuals may have never encountered the implemented prevention or are not able to distinguish it.

During the empirical study, the aim was to find out how often preventive measures are carried out in the respondents' living environment.



**Diagram 2. Frequency of implementation of preventive measures**

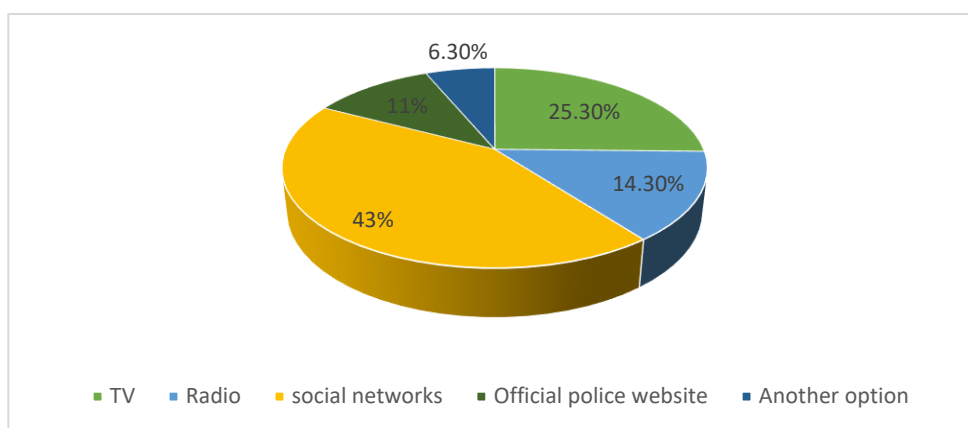
The largest share of respondents, 27.8 % indicated that preventive measures are implemented only when a specific problem arises. A similar share of respondents, 27 % do not even know such activities as prevention and its measures. It can be assumed that the respondents of this part do not have adequate access to information about the preventive measures being implemented, or the individuals have never encountered them. Part of the respondents 17.5 % indicates that such activities are carried out once a month.

The next question asked to the respondent is aimed at finding out what preventive measures they are aware of, which are carried out by law enforcement authorities. About (19.7 %) of the respondents stated that the best known preventive measure is raids. Also (10.2 %) of the respondents consider a safe neighborhood as a preventive measure. A significant number of respondents (15.8 %) include police patrols as preventive measures. Even about (15 %) of the respondents are aware of the educational preventive activities carried out by police officers.

Among the preventive measures known to the respondents, they primarily single out various police raids (19.7 %), police patrolling (18 %), education, meetings with residents, students, events (10 %), fewer respondents mention driver sobriety testing raids, speed control (5 %), safe neighborhood (4 %).

Despite these results, according to the respondents, solving community problems would be facilitated by more frequent communication between officers with the public (38.2 %), more frequent patrolling (24.4 %) or greater traffic control (17 %). A slightly smaller number of respondents singled out greater legal education (11.4 %), while greater enforcement of public order, increased attention to minors, effective development of a safe neighborhood, inspection of places specified by residents, and greater promotion of police support activities were indicated by just 3 % each.

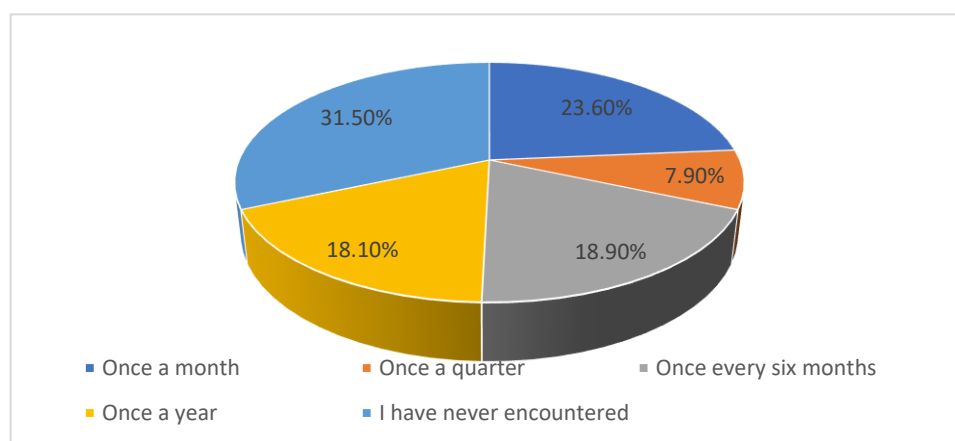
During the conducted empirical research, almost half of the respondents (49.6 %) answered that they did not feel any impact. This answer could have been determined by the previously mentioned information that a significant number of respondents do not know what preventive measures are at all. Another part (50.4 %) of the respondents answered that the preventive activities carried out by the police have an impact on them personally.



**Diagram 3. Information dissemination sources**

Almost half of the respondents (43 %) learn about preventive measures from social networks. Such a response could have been determined by the more active administration of police accounts in social networks. Also, a considerable number of respondents (14.3 %) indicated that they hear about preventive measures by listening to the radio, they hear about preventive measures. In this regard, it was also possible to choose another source of information through which information on preventive measures can be obtained. Neighbors' messages, newspapers, friends, email, the Waze app were also mentioned.

The last question for the respondents is intended to find out whether the respondents often encounter preventive measures carried out by police officers.



**Diagram 4. Frequency of respondents' exposure to preventive measures**

The largest share of respondents, 31.5 % have not encountered preventive measures. Part of the respondents, 23.6 % answered that he encounters preventive measures once a month. The other two groups of respondents answered similarly - about 18-19 % respondents indicated that one group encounters such preventive measures once a year, another group of interviewees encounters them once every six months.

In conclusion, it can be said that preventive measures can have an impact on creating a safer environment. Based on the answers given during the empirical study, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents feel safe where they live. However, it is quite confusing that preventive measures are not known or heard of by a considerable number of



respondents. So the question arises, perhaps the officials do not spread enough information about the preventive measures being implemented. Particular attention should be paid to social networks, as the younger generation uses them very widely.

## Conclusions

The concept of preventive measures is very similar in all fields of science, but law enforcement institutions usually fight crime by implementing preventive measures. The purpose of prevention is very specific - to prevent unwanted events from happening and to prevent them from happening. Preventive measures are usually used to eliminate the causes of unwanted events.

Community officers carry out general prevention, which is defined in the calendar of general prevention activities that must be implemented by Lithuanian police community officers. Situational prevention is also carried out by community officials by planning preventive activities themselves and taking into account the criminogenic situation of a specific area and the safety of the environment. Community officials are officials who cooperate closely with the community and carry out joint activities in partnership.

During the empirical research, using the survey method, it was found that only half of the respondents personally feel the effect of about 50% of the preventive measures. Indicators of sense of security were discussed in this study. Most of the respondents who took part in the study feel safe in their living environment, trust the police, and often encounter preventive measures implemented by the police. Based on the data obtained during the research, it was established that the majority of respondents receive information about preventive measures through social networks.

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