

Summary: Criminality 2001

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The presented collection of ICSP research workers on criminality in 2001 is being published in a 6th edition. Individual articles in this collection and specially those describing criminal development with its individual kinds by charts and diagrams are linked with the previous collections. The aim is also identical: to describe criminality of a certain year from the ministry point of view by using all possible materials (with fewer of them every year) and including statistics of the two basic criminal justice ministries: the Czech Republic Ministry of Interior, or more aptly the Police of the Czech Republic and the Czech Republic Ministry of Justice.

The introductory article of this collection is traditionally written by the leader of the authors' group and is as always devoted to a certain year's general record of the state and structure of crime. In this case it contains the state and structure of crime in 2001, with a comparison of criminality levels in individual territorial areas of the country. Also a profile of prosecuted offenders of crimes in a given year and general information concerning crime victims and suicides registered by the Police of the Czech Republic.

Following article deals with the impact of population density on criminality. At the conclusion it is stated that there is an important relationship between criminality and population density. The next article describes organized crime in the Czech Republic during 1993-2001. The last article, as in the past years, is devoted to the economic crime analysis and its special characteristics in 2001.

Charts and diagrams being an integral part of individual articles, or of a statistical part of the collection by their data, very often follow up similar charts and diagrams presented in previous years collections. However it is not always like that as every year there is data processed from other ICSP research assignments relating to previous criminal statistics or international comparisons.

The first diagram of the collection and the first chart describing criminality in the Czech Republic in 2001 in general, leads us to a conclusion that the last decline in the number of registered crimes goes back to the period before 1992. The evident decrease in the number of Police registered crimes, in comparison with 2000 and 2001 is connected with the decline in almost all other Police monitored statistical data. There is a decrease in the number of individual kinds of registered crimes, in all territorial areas including a decrease in general damage caused by criminal activity. This accounts for the percentage increase in crime detection - almost 3% in general (to about 47 %).

With respect to the modification of criminal legislation valid since January 1, 2002, it is possible to forecast the continuation of a decrease in the criminality level trend in the Czech Republic begun in 2000.

Results of 2001 show that the general decrease in the number of registered crimes of about 33,000 was almost identical, as in 2000 in relation to 1999 (it represented about 35,000 crimes). As in 2000 the greatest decrease was seen in the Prague region - 7,000 of crimes. The greatest decrease and percentage decrease of registered crimes (about 12,000 which represent 10 %) was in Moravia.

The total number of the Czech Republic Police registered crimes in 2001 was 358,577, out of that number 166,827 crimes were cleared - ie the offender was known. It represented more than 46.5% out of all registered crimes. **In 2001 there were 35 registered crimes per thousand inhabitants** (in 2000 it was 38 and in 1999 it was 41 crimes per thousand inhabitants).

127,856 persons were prosecuted and investigated by the Police which represents on the one hand an almost identical number of persons prosecuted as in 1999. On the other hand this represents **13 prosecuted and investigated persons per thousand inhabitants in the Czech Republic.**

In 2001 the greatest decrease of crimes from the criminal structure point of view equalled those of 2000. In **registered property crimes**, so called '**simple thefts**' were 14,000 less in 2001 compared with 2000, and in 2000 was about 5,000 less than in 1999. There also occurred a significant decrease in the number of registered crimes of damage to property, and fraud. **Registered economic crimes decreased** by almost 2,500, particularly fraud, tax evasion, welfare payments etc., embezzlement and trademark violations. However at the same time there was an increase in the number of registered crimes of copyright violation and credit fraud.

Statistics show that economic criminal activities were increasing until 1999 but in the next two years a decrease in the number of registered crimes has taken place. In 2000 registered crime reached 87.7% of the previous year level and in 2001 the number of committed crimes reached the level of 1999 with its 93.7% which represents actual decrease of this criminal activity for 7,645 acts in this period. The percentage of economic crimes against all crimes in 2001 represented 9.83%, in 1999 by 10.06%.

The high financial losses belong to the consequences of the economic criminal activity and are more linked to the occurrence structure than to their numerical state. The financial losses in 2001 caused by these crimes represent about 44.1 billions Czech crowns, representing 79.2% of all losses. The leading position have again belonged to criminal activities qualified as fraud, which caused the financial loss of 24.4 billions of Czech crowns.

Out of the entire number of persons (110,000) prosecuted by the state for committing crimes almost 4 % belong to economic crimes. These numbers have not varied in recent years. In the same proportion are accused persons, for instance in 2001 it represented 2,568 persons involved in economic crimes. Out of the 1,408 accused persons, 51 were repeated offenders and were sentenced in 2001.

Registered violent crimes have slightly decreased (about 300 crimes less), moral crimes have slightly increased (about 100 crimes more).

A considerable decrease of the loss caused by criminal activity from 63.5 billions of Czech crowns in 2000 to **55.7 billions of Czech crowns** in 2001 has been accompanied by the increase of police registered values from 249 millions of Czech crowns registered in 2000 to more than 2 billions of Czech crowns in 2001.

The comparison of **individually detailed crimes in 2001** against 2000 are as follows:

- 1) **a decrease in the number of murders** by 45 crimes and their detection has increased from 82% to 86%,
- 2) **a decrease in the number of robberies** by 327 crimes and their detection has increased from 39% to 42%,
- 3) **a decrease in the number of assaults on policemen** by 92 crimes,
- 4) **a decrease in the number of registered burglaries to shops** by about 800 crimes, to **restaurants** by about 700 crimes, to **flats** by about 700 and to **cottages** by about 2,000 crimes,
- 5) **a decrease in the number of registered thefts of two-wheeled and dual-track motor vehicles** by about 2,000 crimes,
- 6) **a decrease in the number of thefts from cars and thefts of automobile parts of motor vehicles** by more than 10,000 crimes,
- 7) **a decrease in the number of registered thefts of bicycles** by 4,000 crimes,
- 8) a slight decrease in the number of drug offences, illegal arming, resisting an officer's arrest and culpable negligence,
- 9) the number of registered crimes of wilful bodily injury, violation of domiciliary freedom, procuring and hooliganism has remained the same.

Special attention has annually been given to evaluating **organized crime**. Statistical data concerning organized crime has been attainable only in limited numbers. Therefore the Institute of Criminology and Social Prevention (specially the article of dr. Cejp) processes data from different sources concerning organized crime groups and their activities. Thanks to repeated investigations dating back to 1993 most data originating from expert sources describe only registered (known) organized crime and are not able to describe a real situation.

The number of the Police **prosecuted and investigated persons in the Czech Republic in 2001 was also lower than in 2000** for about 2,500 persons. There were registered 170,000 of their so called **detected crimes**. The number of suspected offenders prosecuted and investigated in 2001 was **127,856**. **Out of this number there were 15,715 women** representing **12.3%** and **6,166 forgers** representing **4.8% out of all known offenders**.

Among known offenders were 9,032 children and 9,273 juveniles representing 14.3% out of all known offenders. In 2001 the **share of habitual offenders** among known offenders exceeded above **30%**: namely almost 32% out of known offenders were persons already prosecuted for the wilful criminal activity. They represented 40,736 habitual offenders in general.

Many years ago we forecasted an increase in the number of prosecuted **women** and a decrease in the number of foreigners' among offenders. In 2001 about 12% among known female

offenders represented girls under 18 years of age - actually 1,812 juvenile girls. The main area of female criminality of all age categories has been property crime, pick pocketing, thefts in flats and other buildings, property frauds and economic crimes. Out of 230 persons prosecuted for a murder or an attempted murder in 2001, almost 14% were women. 14 female murderers were prosecuted. All of them were adults.

There has also been a considerable number of foreigners (40) prosecuted for a murder representing more than 17% of the total number of persons prosecuted in 2001 for a complete murder or an attempted murder. One third of all foreign offenders has been prosecuted for a property crime. Other crimes include obstructing officers and drug offences. Foreigners have also been prosecuted for robberies, rapes, economic crimes. The largest group among prosecuted foreigners is traditionally represented by Slovaks followed by Ukrainians, Vietnamese, Poles and Romanians.

Conclusion:

Even though the present statistics concerning criminality undoubtedly confirm a trend of criminal decline in the Czech Republic, I am illustrating it by comparing statistical data in the commentary text from 2000. I personally do not identify with this optimistic commentary. I shall not testify and defend reasons leading to this point of view, I have been doing it for years in previous commentaries (since 1994) and in a professional press, unfortunately without a positive response.

I expect to have greater problems because of my efforts to comment on changes connected with so called great amendment to the Criminal Code. From a criminological point of view this amendment causes fundamental changes which will influence criminal statistics of the Police of the Czech Republic in future years.

For example the amendment of § 89 article 11 of Criminal Code. By this provision an amount of loss concept was newly defined, this loss had been the most important criterion for distinction of crimes from corresponding violations and for deciding to use circumstances to decide higher penal rates. Since the amendment came into effect (1.1.2002) the value of individual losses has been expressed by the fixed financial amounts in the Criminal law. The financial loss, not a low one, has been fixed by the amount of at least 5,000 Czech crowns (2,000 until now). From this point of view the amendment has a fundamental significance in the area of property sanctions and some other economic crimes. Because property crimes share is the highest of all registered crimes it means that changes in numbers of these crimes influence substantially the entire Police registered criminality.

The possibility of comparing development trends in the Czech Republic criminal statistics in longer time zones in a relatively easy way is finishing. It is possible to say that the year 2002 will be a year of 'zero' for the further criminality development estimations based on statistical data comparing.

Translation: Marta Holeková