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## **Kriminalita v roce 2002**

### **Crime in 2002**

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#### **Summary**

The collection „Crime in 2002“ is the seventh part of the ICSP series dealing with the state of crime in a given year. As usual it includes the studies of ICSP research workers dealing with the last year's Czech Republic crime in general as well as with the selected criminological topics. The basic source of all materials and statistics data of this collection is available from the Czech Republic Police, Czech Republic Ministry of Interior and the Czech Republic Ministry of Justice.

The introductory article of this collection written by the leader of the research team is, as always, presenting a commentary of the statistical data published by the Czech Republic Police Presidium. There are charts published at the end of the study and several diagrams illustrating facts belonging to individual articles (most of the charts and diagrams are inserted in individual articles). The data devoted to crime in 2002 follow the data of previous years' collections.

The article of ing. Baloun deals with the statistical quantification of criminological factors (the first part is on the influence of poverty and unemployment, the second part deals with the influence of population density).

Dr. Cejp deals as usual with organized crime problems, their state and development.

Ing. Kadeřábková in her contribution on economic crime deals with the present appearance of economic crime and its differences connected with the previous development and also with selected cases of prosecuted economic criminal activities.

Dr. Martinková whose research topic is 'victims of crime' deals with the impact of property and violent crime in particular on our population. In particular that which is manifested by an increase in number of suffering victims.

Enclosures presented at the end of the study and their outward image create an idea of continuing statistical data development in time. Mechanical interpretation of radical changes influencing the comparison of individual years data could lead to distorted conclusions without any accompanying comments. For this reason I make an appeal for a careful handling of numerical data and warn against using the statistics without an informed commentary.

The state of crime in 2002 according to the Czech Republic Police statistics was influenced by two facts contained in Criminal Law, §89 paragraph 11 of Criminal Law<sup>1</sup>. By this provision a concept of **damage level** has been newly formulated. Firstly, the damage level which is the most important criterion for differing crimes from corresponding offences,

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<sup>1</sup> implemented by the Criminal Law and Criminal Code amendment no. 265/2001 Collection of Law

and secondly the decision to use circumstances conditioning crime rate level. Since the amendment became effective (January 1, 2002) the level of individual damages was expressed by firm amounts of money in the Law itself. The damage level has been fixed at 5 000 Czech crowns (till the end of 2001 it was 2 000 Czech crowns). This amendment has played a significant role in the field of property and economic crime since the beginning of 2002.

Apart from this amendment there had been another change whose impact on registered crime statistics was hardly noticeable. In the beginning of 2002 the Police of the Czech Republic changed the way of reporting crime. They started to report criminal case transactions including those cases with no criminal law qualification definition<sup>2</sup>.

The Criminal law amendment only partly fulfilled expectations. It means that a share of property crime in the crime structure of 2002 in comparison with 2001 has decreased (for 3%). Overall crime has increased. The decrease of property crime has been compensated by the increase in number of other crimes. It was not a significant increase but only about 14 000 crimes. Out of it about 4 000 represented an increase in number of registered economic crimes and 10 000 represented an increase in number of crimes classified by police as remaining crime including graffiti crimes, obstructing an officer, crimes connected with transportation and culpable negligence crime.

**As for the national total crime view, it is possible to consider the year 2002 as unimpressive.** In 2002 Police registered **372 341 crimes** in total, which represented an insignificant increase in comparison with 2001. Out of all registered crimes was **151 492 solved** cases, which was 15 335 crimes less in comparison with the previous year. Including subsequently solved crimes, Police dealt with 154 437 crimes where the offender had been known or detected. **In the whole of the Czech Republic there was 36 Police registered crimes, per 1000 inhabitants, in Prague it was 86 crimes per 1000.** That number corresponds with Prague's share of the crime rate, which represents 28%. The solving of crimes in Prague has decreased. **Overall three quarters of crimes committed in Prague remained unsolved** which means that a majority of crimes committed during the year in the Prague region has been successful for the offenders. As for property crimes only 13% of registered cases were solved.

Out of the total number of 123 964 registered offenders there **were 15 392 women, which represents 12,4 % and 6 238 foreigners, which represents 5% out of all known offenders.** In comparison with 2001 the number of known women offenders and foreign offenders remained static.

### **Conclusion:**

**According to the numerical data concerning registered crimes and the number of detected or known offenders, the year 2002 was a year of crime stagnation.** If indeed that is the case, then future years figures will reveal it. Only the next decade will show whether the direction of depenalisation of criminal offenders, endless changes of crime legislation and data collection, processing and displaying will bring other results than the opacity of data concerning the state and structure of committed crime. The question remains whether the

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<sup>2</sup> compare the Pocket Yearbook of Crime in the CR 2002, Police Presidium, Department of Systemic Management and Informatics, 2003, p. 4

results of such administrative measures will lead to a higher security of the population in the streets or just in official commentaries published in the mass media.

Translation: Marta Holeková