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The Development of Organised Crime on the Territory of the Czech Republic

ISBN 978-80-7338-105-9

Summary

Systematic research into organised crime, which represents one of the greatest security risks in the modern world, and has also been active from the start of the 1990s on the territory of the Czech Republic, began in 1993. Apart from the Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention, a study – focused mainly on organised crime abroad – was also carried out by the Institute of Internal Relations Prague and, after the year 2000, by the International Institute of Political Science of Masaryk University in Brno. Findings concerning the cases under investigation were gathered at the Police Academy of the Czech Republic.

When researching organised crime, we at the Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention focused on a relatively wide range of topics: from theoretical definitions and specific methodological approaches, to the formation of likely structural models for criminal groups and the analysis of their illegal and ancillary activities. We regularly assess the effectiveness of specific legal mechanisms that have been stipulated and applied in the fight against organised crime. At the end of the 1990s, we analysed the issues surrounding organised crime in a wider social context. We sought, in the societal environment, criminogenic factors that could allow organised criminal groups to realise their activities and find accomplices or clients for illegal goods and services. While attempting a prognosis for selected types of criminality, we stipulated problem-related and developmental facts that could be applied within the next few years in the fight against organised crime. Between 2004-07 we researched organised crime in conjunction with economic crimes, corruption and terrorism as serious forms of criminal activity. We focussed chiefly on the threat posed to society by organised crime and on measures that can be used by society against organised crime. At the same time we drew up likely scenarios for the development of criminality. These scenarios were based on problem analyses and represented hypothetical models of situations that could occur if these problems were either resolved successfully or remained unresolved.

The part-work *The Development of Organised Crime on the Territory of the Czech Republic* – composed between 2008 and 2010 – formed part of the main work *Study and Analysis of Serious Forms of Criminal Activity*, the aim of which was to recapitulate current developmental trends from the beginning of the 1990s concerning the nature of organised criminal groups and the incidence of illegal activities and to predict the main quantitative and qualitative changes and to identify the possible future development of indicators followed.

As far as the application of research methods and techniques is concerned, research into organised crime is limited in that it is not possible to use methods and techniques that would bring the researcher into direct contact with the environment under study. We attempted to utilise observations from specialist publications and sources, analysed official documents of international organisations – chiefly the UN, European Council and EU – and documents of the Government of the Czech Republic, and individual governmental departments. A major limitation in this approach is the fact that, in the case of organised crime, statistics are not a significant source of information. The mere dozens of concrete, closed cases represent only the small fraction of organised crime that has been uncovered. The greater part of our knowledge of organised crime is taken from expert estimates taken from the questioning of experienced employees of those departments of the Police Force of the Czech Republic that specialise in organised crime. We are aware that the results of expert investigations cannot be presented as an illustration of the true state of affairs, but only as the opinion of a precisely defined group of experts. The observations gained have been supplemented by two omnibus investigations of public opinion, realised in the years 2008 and 2010.

As far as the long-term trend is concerned, it should be noted that, prior to the year 1989, organised crime was not present on the territory of the former Czechoslovakia to a significant extent or in a more developed form. 1990 saw the beginning of the free movement of goods, investment and capital as well as the conditions for travel. There was a reform of banking and financial institutions, and this economic transformation was linked to extensive transfers of property. Together with this there was an increase in movement of illegal goods, capital, services and persons. In the case of the Czech Republic, the options for the abuse of open borders were increased by the country's advantageous geographic position, and the Czech Republic became a major transit country. There was an increase in the numbers of people illegally present on the territory of the Czech Republic and various international groups settled here. Aside from international groups, many citizens of the Czech Republic started to become involved in organised crime after 1990.

Basic quantitative data concerning the structure of criminal groups active on the territory of the Czech Republic includes data on the numbers of groups and their members, numbers of persons prosecuted, accused and convicted for criminal association, data on who becomes involved in criminal activity or the support thereof and why, on the level of development, on the extent of participation of permanent members and external associates, on the participation of women or persons younger than 15 years. In view of the supranational nature of organised crime, one of the most important parts of this research is the extent and nature of participation by foreigners. Quantitative, expert estimates are also available of the most widespread activities of criminal groups in a given year, which were less widespread, which were embryonic, which were newly-discovered and which were gradually losing significance. The activities of individual nationalities were also monitored.

There are, according to qualified estimates, around 75 groups active on the territory of the Czech Republic, with a total of about **2000 members**. From the point of view of **level of organisation**, around a third of groups were, according to experts, fully developed in the years 1995-99. This figure stood at around 40 % in 2000, and since 2003 around half of groups were fully developed, in 2007 more than half of groups were recorded as being fully developed, and in 2009 over half of groups were again recorded as having a fully-developed structure. According to expert estimates, **external associates** formed more than half of members of all criminal groups between 1993 and 2008. A somewhat lower proportion was recorded in 2009. Experts have estimated that external associates made up 41 % and permanent members 59 % of the total. Externals carry out a wide range of services for criminal groups, arranging material facilities or basic services. In recent years it has been common for them to carry out dummy operations, run front companies, are the dummy users of items used for criminal activities, sign invoices and submit tax declarations. External associates may also be used as front men to carry out illegal financial operations. A frequent activity of external associates is to seek out locations for attack by their accomplices. External associates are taking an ever greater role in the securing of contacts with official bodies, with a focus on employees of state administration, local government, the courts, police force and employees of various institutions and companies. Mostly they attempt to influence these employees, through corruption and bribery, to act in the interests of criminal groups.

Women are also present in organised crime groups on the territory of the Czech Republic, to an estimated **proportion** of 11-16 % in the period from 2000-09. The lowest figure, 11 %, was recorded in 2009. Women are most frequently active in the trafficking of women,

procurement and the trafficking of humans for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The second area in which women are active in organised crime is the arrangement of facilities and the management of criminal groups. This includes financial operations, accounting, logistics, transport, the concealment of goods, weapons, finance, the handling of stolen goods, transfer of financial resources, legalisation and the fraudulent registration of stolen vehicles. Women utilise their contacts for the acquisition and provision of confidential information. The third area in which women are specifically active is illegal migration. Women also fulfil a specific role in the trade in narcotic and psychotropic substances, where they are most frequently employed as dealers or in the recruitment of couriers. Women are involved in money laundering, tax, banking, interest, insurance and customs fraud, corruption, credit-card fraud and the setting-up of front companies. Property is often signed into their name.

Where the **nationality** of the perpetrators of organised crime is concerned, foreigners slightly predominate over Czechs. Concretely, experts estimated in 2009 that 55 % of participants in organised crime groups are foreigners and 45 % are Czechs. Aside from this we can make the distinction, based on nationality, that around half of groups are of mixed nationality, nearly 1/3 are purely international and around 1/4 are purely Czech in make-up. Within the mixed groups, groups led by foreigners, with Czech fulfilling a subsidiary role, are slightly more common. According to **individual nationality**, Ukrainians and Russians are represented most heavily in organised crime on the territory of the Czech Republic. After the year 2000, these also included Vietnamese and Albanians, the proportion of whom continues to rise. The representation of Chinese has dropped somewhat since 1998. The middle is taken up by Romanians (whose representation is rising) and Bulgarians (falling). The year 2008 saw a rise in the proportion of Chechens, Nigerians and Dagestanis. The middle-ranked group also includes Poles and Croatians. After the year 2000 there was a strong representation of Slovaks, but in 2008 there was no more significant record of them. On the other hand, in 2009, Slovaks came to head the middle-ranked group of Bulgarians, Romanians and Chechens. The third group then includes representatives of fifteen nationalities: Palestinians, Israelis, Serbs, Moldovans, the newly-recorded Hungarians, Armenians, Arabs, Macedonians, Turks, Mongols, Georgians and also Italians, Dutch, Germans, Lithuanians, and in recent years Latvians, Estonians and Iraqis.

Since 1993, an experimental estimate has been made every year of the **most widespread forms of activities** in organised crime on the territory of the Czech Republic. The most widespread include, on a permanent basis, vehicle theft, the organisation of prostitution, and,

since 1994, the production, smuggling and distribution of drugs. The frequency of these activities has been sometimes approached – for a greater or lesser period – by another activity out of the forty or so others. Thus in the period from 1993-98 art theft was amongst the most widespread activities, and in the years 1996-97, 2002 and 2005 tax, credit, insurance and exchange fraud, and occasionally highly varying levels of corruption have appeared close behind the most widespread activities. Illegal migration was amongst the most widespread activities of criminal groups in the years 1998-2004; this figure started to fall from the year 2005. Money laundering and the forging of documents, money and coins were represented amongst the most widespread activities in 2006, with IT-based criminality also showing a major increase. Since 2005 there has been a significant incidence of the illegal production and smuggling of alcohol and cigarettes. 2009 saw a further increase in activities connected with financial crime. Activities such as the legalisation of revenues from criminal activities, corruption, tax, credit, insurance and exchange fraud, bank fraud, founding of fraudulent and front companies and credit-card fraud have started to compete with the traditional most widespread activities, such as vehicle theft and the production, smuggling and distribution of drugs. The misuse of computers for criminal activity also became fairly widespread. There was a relative decrease in the hitherto very widespread organisation of prostitution, including trafficking in women, the decrease in the theft of artworks continues, there is a slow decrease in illegal migration, a sharp drop in extortion and ‘protection’ rackets. The incidence of murder bordered on 50 %, meaning that murder was given as widespread by less than half of experts. Criminal activity against information and communications technology, international trade in arms and explosives were below the 50 % mark in 2009. The illegal import and export of dangerous waste was insignificant and trade in human organs was negligible.

Some changes indicate that organised criminal groups exchange forms of activity that are a source of high revenues at a certain time for forms of activity that are more attractive from that point of view. For example, the theft of artworks was – probably in connection to the fairly well-developed network in place before 1989 – one of the most widespread activities, together with vehicle theft, of criminal groups in the first half of the 1990s. Similarly, there was a reduction in illegal migration after 2005, and the incidence of violent crime in connection with organised criminal groups on the territory of the Czech Republic, either in relation to each other or to society at large, is not particularly high either. Organised groups are evidently able to find easier routes to high revenues, via contacts, corruption, negotiation and – apart from the settling of accounts within groups – evidently do not need to resort to

crude violence at all. On the contrary, we have, in recent years, recorded a sharp rise in the illegal production and smuggling of alcohol and criminality connected to IT systems.

Apart from following the ranking of organised criminal activities as a whole, we have also, since 2000 ascertained **which activities** are carried out by **individual ethnic groups**.

Vietnamese groups focus on the production, transport and smuggling of drugs, forging of documents and counterfeiting of CDs, electronic, textiles, cosmetics, illegal production of alcohol and cigarettes, illegal migration, tax fraud, money laundering, human trafficking for the purpose of forced labour and customs fraud. The organisation of prostitution and procurement, violent crime, collection of ransom money, founding of front companies and real-estate fraud are also occasionally registered. **Ukrainian** groups are typically engaged in extortion and ransom collection, prostitution, procurement and the trafficking of women and violent crime, including murder and robbery. They have also, in recent years, engaged in vehicle theft and the trafficking of humans for the purpose of forced labour, arms dealing and real-estate fraud. Similarly to Ukrainian groups, **Russian** groups focus on extortion and the ransom collection, murder and other violent crime and prostitution, and are involved in arms trading and human trafficking. In contrast to the Ukrainians, they are also active in more sophisticated financial crime: money laundering, corruption, front companies and financial fraud. Drugs, debt collection, vehicle theft, robbery, robbery with violence, fraudulent companies and real-estate fraud are also sometimes recorded. **Albanian** groups are active chiefly in the smuggling and distribution of drugs, and also in international arms dealing and violent crime, including murder. **Chinese** groups have concentrated on illegal migration for many years. The same activities are represented as with Vietnamese groups, albeit to a lesser extent: tax fraud, money laundering, customs fraud, counterfeiting of CDs/videos and trademarks and the smuggling of goods and cigarettes. To a certain extent they also participate in the trafficking of humans for the purpose of forced labour, drug smuggling and extortion. Drug-related activity was recorded for Chinese groups in **2009**.

Romanians are chiefly involved in theft. Apart from this, Romanians are also involved in prostitution, vehicle theft, illegal migration and the trafficking of humans for the purpose of forced labour. In 2009 there was a high incidence amongst Romanians of credit-card fraud and the forging of payment means. Typical activities for **Bulgarian** groups include involvement in prostitution and the trafficking of women and vehicle theft. Drug dealing and, in recent years, the trafficking of humans for the purpose of forced labour have also been

recorded. There was high incidence of the following amongst Bulgarians in 2009: forging of money, cheques, documents and the forging and theft of credit cards. Up until 2009, **Slovaks** were only sporadically recorded as being involved in organised crime on the territory of the Czech Republic. Due to Slovakia's geographical proximity, activities were focussed mainly on illegal migration. There was a rather high incidence of violent crime, and isolated cases of: arms dealing, theft, extortion, robbery, drugs, prostitution and property- and IT-related crime. The share of Slovaks in organised crime overall showed a marked rise in 2009. We recorded: drugs, financial fraud, real-estate fraud, organisation of prostitution, burglary, credit fraud, forging of documents and property-related crime. The following was recorded for **Czechs**: extortion and collection of ransom, contract killings and other forms of violent crime and arms dealing. **Nigerians** concentrated primarily on drugs. There were also instances of illegal migration, founding of front companies, financial fraud, IT-related crime and violent crime, as well as the new incidence of prostitution. **Dagestanis** focussed mainly on extortion and 'protection' rackets and violent crime, including contract killings. There was also incidence of illegal migration, human trafficking, arms dealing, illegal debt collection, prostitution and procurement. After the year, 2000, **Poles** were engaged chiefly in drug dealing. Apart from this they were also involved in vehicle theft, but to a far lesser extent than in the mid-1990s. Involvement in organised dealing in alcohol, the illegal production and smuggling of cigarettes, goods smuggling, forging of documents and money and customs and tax fraud were also recorded for this group. Instances were discovered in **2009** of **Palestinians** being involved in real-estate fraud (1), credit fraud (1) and the forging of documents (1).

Most recorded cases involving groups from **Serbia** after 2000 involved drugs-related crime. Apart from this there were also instances of violent crime, including murder, arms dealing, prostitution, extortion, founding of front companies, the forging of money and protected trademarks and stamps, smuggling of cigarettes and credit-card fraud. **Israelis** have hitherto focussed on gambling and fraud (bank, tax, credit, exchange), money laundering and corruption. Cases were recorded in 2009 of real-estate fraud, credit fraud and the forging of documents. **Moldovans** were recorded as being involved in extortion, vehicle theft, forgery, drugs, prostitution, robbery and murder. **Armenians** were recorded as being involved in extortion and debt collection, tax fraud and violent crime, arms dealing, murder, robbery, illegal migration, prostitution, smuggling of alcohol/cigarettes, trafficking of human beings for the purpose of forced labour and gambling. **Arabs, Macedonians, Turks, Georgians and the Dutch** were chiefly involved in drug-related crime. **Mongols** were involved, in 2008, in: illegal migration, corruption, the trafficking of humans for the purpose of forced

labour, violent crime, and in 2009 in illegal migration and fraud. **Germans** were involved, after 2005, in art theft, organisation of prostitution, illegal export of dangerous waste, arms dealing, drugs and human trafficking. **Italians** were involved in financial crime, money laundering, drugs, arms dealing, smuggling of gold and leather and illegal trade in movable items of cultural value. The following was recorded for **Lithuanians**: robbery/burglary, debt collection and money forging. Illegal migration, money laundering and the handling of stolen goods were recorded for **Iraqis** in 2009.

From the **qualitative point of view** it is possible to put group changes that have come about since the 1990s into three categories. The first group concerns changes in internal structure. Organised crime stabilised, expanded and institutionalised itself. The organisation of crime became more elaborate, more efficient and more wide-ranging. Organised crime also enjoys better technical facilities, with more use being made of the Internet. There was a major increase in the wealth of groups. Individual groups divided the market in illegal goods and services. Organised crime is much more dangerous than in the 1990s, as those directing it can hide in greater anonymity and criminal activities are not managed directly. Offenders use ever more refined means to ensure they are not uncovered. The second group concerns changes to the means by which crime is committed. In this respect, the activities of organised criminal groups show less instances of violence and more economic crime, fraud and corruption. The active radius is expanding and incorporates more fields. New phenomena include, for example, the illegal production and smuggling of alcohol and cigarettes, forgery of CD data carriers and IT-related crime. There is also a threat from the illegal import and export of harmful waste, trafficking of humans for the purpose of forced labour and the embezzlement of European Union money. The third change is related to the expansion of organised crime into societal structures, where organised crime currently has sufficient contacts, is established and has a base. It is increasingly infiltrating state administrative structures and developing more activities in the economic field. Contacts are being forged in the police force and other security forces. The profits from illegal activities are being legalised in legal businesses. The fact that those who commit these offences (which frequently go undiscovered) are already in high-ranking posts in business, have connections in the police force, authorities, media etc. not only hinders the exposure of crime, but means that organised criminals can, thanks to their contacts, publicly discredit the organs trying to uncover these crimes and convict offenders and their contact. Organised crime has influence in the media.

Apart from activities carried out for the purpose of achieving maximum profit, organised crime groups also carry out a number of **activities of a security nature**. We investigated three ancillary activities in more detail: bribery and corruption, use of contacts and threats or, sometimes, violence. Organised crime uses considerable means, supplemented by criminal activity, to infiltrate politics, economics, the legal system, state administration and the media, in an effort to control the actions of these institutions, acquire confidential information, influence the creation of regulations, influence public opinion and gain lucrative orders in the legal economy. If required, court actions can be frustrated, witnesses influenced, victims accused and offenders aided in their escape.

Based on their **personal contacts** with politicians, representatives of public authorities, the judiciary, police, communications media and in commercial circles, the representatives of criminal groups can acquire information or protection, while providing reciprocal services. The perpetrators of criminal acts thus gain a certain feeling of superiority.

The criminal world chiefly uses **corruption** to gain necessary information, create networks of contacts and ensure that they escape punishment. Organised crime uses corruption to compromise official institutions, thereby reducing the authority of government, the judiciary, police, ministries, local authorities and the media. If the business sphere is destabilised by corruption, untaxed money originating in criminal activity becomes the main factor in decision-making. Organised crime uses corruption as the first step of pressure to seriously threaten civil servants or public officials. Through our omnibus representative investigation of 2008, we discovered that only a third of people attributed the initiative to public officials, almost half to both sides and almost a fifth attributed the activity to members of the public.

One of the key features identifying organised crime is the **use of violence**. Violence is frequently used within criminal groups, where it serves towards maintaining order and discipline. Where possible, current organised criminal groups try to either totally avoid, or restrict to the lowest possible level, violence between competing groups. Problems are resolved much more efficiently via corruption and relevant contacts. Violence can sometimes be used against those who could be an immediate threat to organised criminal groups, chiefly the police and judicial bodies. Violence can be used against public officials chiefly in instances where the public official is resisting corrupting pressures or efforts to forge confidential contacts. The threat of violence can also create the appropriate atmosphere during public tenders. Criminal groups do not target violence towards the public at large.

Organised criminal groups are a **threat** to the whole world, **harm** the private and public sectors and can be, to a certain extent, an immediate threat to the public safety. In order to eliminate this threat, it is necessary to analyse criminogenic elements and seek effective measures against them. In an **international** context, organised crime abuses chiefly the differences between developed countries and poorer, backward regions for human trafficking and goods smuggling: drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, electronics, faked designer clothing, works of art, weapons, stolen vehicles, dangerous waste and sexual services. The situation is also advantageous due to the ever-more porous boundaries between countries and continents in a globalised world.

In the context of the **internal security** of the Czech Republic, organised crime endeavours to influence prominent persons who could be of benefit; to influence strategic decision-making, acquire important information and, as far as possible, to escape punishment. One criminogenic factor is the frequently low professionalism of employees. A further error is the poor definition of rules and regulations, which would protect not only the system as a whole, but also public officials, by delineating the limits of their actions and responsibilities. One risk factor is also the overcentralised system and inconsistent checks. The **economic system** is harmed by organised crime creating a market for illegal services and goods. Those who have successfully ‘laundered’ money gained through illegal activities can gain a competitive advantage in economic competition with legal businesses. The founding of front companies frequently also serves towards tax evasion. The interconnection of politics and the economy legalises suspicious companies and deals. The introduction of criminal practices into the economic system leads to the creation of an unstable and untrustworthy environment that can nullify attempts to conduct business legally or discourage foreign investors. Organised crime attempts to infiltrate the **judicial system** chiefly in the pursuit of risk elimination, attempting to influence it already at the legislative stage in order to set laws so that risk is either not created, or is minimal. In the interests of risk reduction, it attempts to frustrate trials, influence witnesses or facilitate the escape of wanted or convicted persons. It suits organised criminal groups that the prosecution process is drawn-out and overcomplicated, and in some cases, the decision of the court is not respected. The confiscation process for the proceeds of criminal activity is also inefficient, and legal regulations do not aid the elimination of corruption. Inadequate witness protection means that it is difficult to prove organised criminal activity in particular. Trust in justice and the capacity of the law is on the wane. Organised crime distorts the **social structure**. The bosses of criminal groups endeavour to either themselves belong to the elite that makes the rules, or to have good contacts with this elite. The perpetrators of

organised criminal activity have a certain feeling of superiority, relying on the fact that, due to their position on the social ladder and the support they receive from influential persons, they are untouchable. The fact that organised crime offers narcotic and psychotropic substances, smuggled goods, cigarettes, textiles, electronics, stolen goods, erotic services, loans and so on introduces **pathological elements** into their lives. Organised crime attempts to influence **communication media**. Criminal groups try to influence public opinion in the interests of things that are advantageous to them, trying to covertly promote drugs and prostitution and support opinions questioning the efforts of legislators, state representatives, the police and judges. The media can unconsciously glorify wrongdoing and emphasise lifestyles bordering on the unethical or illegal.

Limiting factors, monitored over the long-term, were updated in our specialist study of 2010. This study came to the conclusion that overall societal instability, economic destabilisation and widespread migration will be in play **between 2010-15**. The internal problems of the Czech Republic will be, to a significant extent, related to world problems. A negative effect will be felt chiefly from the economic crisis. In the event of acceptance of the Euro, an enormous rise in the amount of forged money can be expected. It can be expected that an ever greater flow of undesirable foreigners, perpetrating criminal acts, will enter the Czech Republic. The financial crisis will result in insufficient funds for the police and judiciary to carry out their work. We can foresee the infiltration of state administration, corruption, lobbying, attempts to influence public tenders and European funds, the influencing of legislative processes, pressure on bodies engaged in prosecution and connection to politics. This will result in a loss of trust in the state and its institutions. Such a situation can result in the increased influence of extreme right- or left-wing opinions. Overall regression and demoralisation in the Czech Republic can also come into play in the next five years. A generation brought up in an environment of unbridled privatisation will be, in relation to the building of careers, easily manipulable by the forces of organised crime.

A starting-point for **effective counter-measures** is a concept for the fight against organised crime. The concept should be based on analysis and a clear vision of the desired target state and should contain proposals for strategic steps, stipulate participants and divide their tasks, stipulate mechanisms to protect the system and its workers and set rules for procedures in the event of attempts to disrupt the system. It is important to raise the level of political culture. Criminal activity against the economic system must be prosecuted. Barriers must be constructed against the use in the legal economy of finances originating in criminal activity.

The chief measure that can effectively guard against the presence of organised crime in state administration is the quality of employees. It is important that general levels of qualification for positions are raised, as well as specific knowledge and practical experience regarding the control of serious forms of criminal activity. It is a mark of professionalism that basic procedures are clearly defined, management structures are clearly and hierarchically organised, the system of authorisations is fixed and that relations to other institutions and the public are clearly delineated. As far as the police force is concerned, it is necessary to stabilise the police at their optimum numbers, increase specialist knowledge, ensure sufficient funding, ensure optimum numbers and improve the equipment of special forces. It would be desirable to set up a DNA database. The Police Force of the Czech Republic must gradually transform itself into a modern, qualified and efficient system with perfectly functioning technology, information systems, analytical activity and communication between bodies active in the fight against organised crime and the criminal police at all levels. The uncovering and documentation of organised crime must be founded on a long-term process of the concentration and evaluation of information with the goal of exposing a whole group up to its highest organisational unit. In the legal field, use must be made of the institution of the crown witness and there must be an obligation to prove the origin of financial resources and property. It would be less complicated and more effective to employ undercover agents. The funding system for political parties should be better monitored and consistently checked. Related laws for the financial sector should be updated. More effective control should be exerted on property-based relationships through changes to legislation. It is necessary to introduce legislative controls on corruption, stricter legislative control of conflicts of interest, greater penalties for organised extortion and murder, hinder the transfer of property acquired through criminal activity to family members and to establish the institution of the crown witness. There should be greater penalties for public officials who knowingly cooperate with organised crime. The public must be informed of the danger posed by organised crime to society as a whole. In the interest of the fight against organised crime, the mass media should be utilised to inform the public of the danger posed by organised crime and also to act effectively against it.

During our study, carried out from 2008-10, we gathered the **opinions of experts and the public on the infiltration of organised crime into some spheres of public life**. According to the experts, the economy and state administration are under the greatest threat, and then politics, and to a lesser extent the police and judiciary, and least of all local government and the media. According to the public it is the police, politics and the economy that are most

under threat, state administration and the judiciary to a lesser extent, and least of all local government and the media.

We submitted a questionnaire to the general public to determine **the extent to which people understand cooperation** between politicians, civil servants or other officials as a failing originating in self-interest or naivety (2/3 of those asked chose this option) or as a matter than can threaten them or destroy their career (1/3 chose this option).

When researching organised crime, we constantly try to **foresee possible future developments**. This was a complex prognosis only in exceptional cases; nonetheless the probes we conducted in 2010 had already been carried out twice over the previous 17 years of research, allowing us to compare the prediction of the time with later, actual development.

In 2010, 70 % of experts expected a rise, 27 % stability and 3 % a fall in organised crime **up to the year 2015**. Amongst the **reasons given for a rise**, experts frequently pointed to external societal factors. Generally a rise was anticipated in organised crime connected with an overall breakdown in Western society, a growth in extremism, the overall bad state of the economy and social situation in the world, the economic crisis, growth in unemployment, immigration and the expansion of the EU. Experts stated in 2010 that the world and European economic situation will also be reflected within the next few years in the Czech Republic, so it can be expected that this can have some influence on the rise of organised crime. Experts frequently pointed to the growth in unemployment and illegal migration. Some factors are related to the nature of organised criminal groups and their internal structure. Organised crime structures already in place are being perfected, external associates within criminal structures shall increasingly infiltrate companies and organisations, and there will be a growth in technical awareness, knowledge, specialist knowledge, technical and financial facilities and deviousness.

The international situation also plays a significant role for those who expect the situation to remain **stable** up to 2015. It could be said that it is chiefly pressure from international organisations for solutions to the issues of organised crime and corruption that has halted further growth. Stability can also be expected due to the improvement in information systems leading to the faster transfer of information between judicial bodies and the improvement of police cooperation. Some factors that should play a stabilising role in the next few years are related to the nature and internal structure of criminal groups. A certain stabilisation has taken

place, this being territorial, as well as in terms of division of activities. Organised crime is perfecting itself, thereby becoming latent.

In 2010 we asked the experts what **changes** they anticipate – as far as the nature of organised crime on the territory of the Czech Republic is concerned – **up to the years 2015**. A third of them expressed the view that there would be no changes, while two-thirds expected the following changes. It is anticipated that the action radius of organised groups shall expand to encompass further criminal activities. Organised criminal groups will, more than ever before, utilise information technology. There will chiefly be a sharp rise in IT-related crime and crime committed with the aid of computer technology. The greater focus on the IT sphere and the Internet could gradually lead to threats to information systems and communication technologies. There will be further growth in the abuse of credit cards and document forgery. There will be a growth in crime in the economic sphere, which brings high revenues. Organised crime will invest more in the legal economy. Wide-ranging, fraudulent bank transactions and the embezzlement of state and European Union grants can be expected. It can be assumed that organised crime groups will speculate on the entry of the Czech Republic to the Euro. There will be, in relation to increased migration and cross-border crime, a perfection of currency and document forgeries. There will also be an increase in bank robberies. Also anticipated are sophisticated scams in the area of tax-related crime, chains of companies trading in worthless goods, at the end of which is dummy export and increased prices increased through VAT; frauds with the non-deduction of duty on fuels, spirits and cigarettes. It is anticipated that there will be a rise in real-estate fraud. Crimes that were more economic in nature will shift into the sphere of organised crime.

One characteristic feature will be the further growth in the wealth, power and influence of organised crime groups and effort to establish themselves in legitimate business. The growth in wealth will be accompanied by a growth in conspiracy, securing, activity and thoroughness of criminal groups, who will use ever-more sophisticated and refined methods. The use of internet-based communication will be a given, with qualified associates being gained for cooperation.

There will be a continuing trend towards internationalisation. In an international context, we can expect the greater movement of goods, capital and people, with less chance of monitoring them; the inflow of people from China and Africa, expansion of Asian communities and their infiltration of the economy and a dramatic growth in criminal activity by citizens of Romania

and Bulgaria. There will be an increase in tension between groups originating in Asia. The chief perpetrators of organised criminal activity will not be located on the territory of the Czech Republic – criminal activities will be directed from outside the country.

It is anticipated that there will be greater interconnection between organised crime and state, and sometimes local, administration and greater influencing of legislation and the executive, all of this in connection with the corruption of members of the relevant state bodies. The activities of crime organisations will also spread to the sphere of community politics, and chiefly in the granting of large public tenders; these will be manipulated chiefly through corrupt acts and patronage. There will also be efforts to influence and sponsor political parties; to influence court processes, the state prosecution service and the police force; to influence the choice of those filling state administrative posts, the abuse of protection, and corruption. Organised criminal groups will also pursue the stifling of specialist police units.

Some experts do not anticipate growth, but **stagnation**. On the one hand, it is possible that criminal activities will be transferred to more developed countries of the European Union and a further reason for the stagnation in the growth of influence of organised crime could be the generational change in society: people with a higher level of education, be they citizens of representatives of state bodies, will be capable of acting more effectively against organised crime.

Expert estimates also concerned forecasts of the incidence of the **most widespread organised criminal activities**. Experts estimated in 2010 that the most widespread activities of organised crime in **2015** will be corruption, the production, smuggling and distribution of drugs, human trafficking, IT-related crime, money laundering, vehicle theft and tax fraud. These should be followed by theft, credit-card fraud, extortion and ransom collection, economic crime, arms dealing and, in only thirteenth place, the organisation of prostitution.

The long-term development and current state of basic indicators of organised crime have been regularly monitored since the start of the 1990s. These concentrate on the structure of organised criminal groups, on their illegal and ancillary activities, and also follow criminogenic factors, threats and countermeasures. In studying the structure of groups, we monitor the number of groups and offenders, the proportion of developed groups, involvement of external associates and participation of women and foreigners. In studying activities we monitor the spread of almost thirty illegal activities and six to eight ancillary activities. This list is supplemented by new, nascent forms of criminal activity, and we have

excluded those that have lost in significance. We also monitor in detail the form of activities of ca. 25 foreign groups. Within the field of international relations we monitor the influence of criminogenic factors in the genesis and activities of organised crime, on the participation of perpetrators within it and on the use of its goods and services by the general populace, and internal factors in the fields of politics, the economy, the legal system, state and local administration, social structure and culture, including the media. This is accompanied by the analysis of possible threats, and we research options for effective defence against them. We have also been attempting prognoses since the end of the 1990s. This concept of long-term research thus forms a kind of basic framework that can be built on through specifically focussed research work. The basic schema must, however, be permanently supplemented by new, up-to-date data; in this regard, the continuity of this type of data is essential. In the next few years we wish to, depending on resources, expand the range of research methods and techniques and, in those areas where we will continue with export reports, we wish to create new circles of experts in all social areas monitored.

Translate by: Marvel s.r.o.