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Společenské zdroje vývoje organizovaného zločinu
Social Origins of the Development of Organised Crime

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Summary

This publication presents the outcomes of the research task "Development of Serious Crime in Relation to Social Impacts and Risks", which was part of the Intermediate Plan of Research Activity of the Institute Of Criminology and Social Prevention for 2012 – 2015. The study follows on the relatively extensive research activity dedicated to the issue of organised crime at the Institute Of Criminology and Social Prevention since the beginning of the 1990s.

The study focused exclusively on organised crime in the Czech Republic, with **two main objectives**. Firstly, to identify the possible social impacts and risks (criminogenic factors) that can be exploited by the world of crime, and secondly to continually monitor the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of organised crime groups in the Czech Republic and try to outline probable future development in the period up to 2020.

The following research **methods** and **techniques** were used in completing the task:

- analysis and comparison of information from documents,
- information from judicial files,
- statistics,
- case studies,
- expert investigation,
- public opinion poll and secondary analysis of similarly oriented research,
- information and statements from the print media (for illustration or more specific expression of information acquired from expert reports).

The findings are presented in this publication in two basic areas. In the **first part**, we wanted to determine what possible (i.e. not clearly demonstrated) social **impacts and risks** (criminogenic factors) exist in the Czech Republic that could be exploited by the world of crime. We considered the area of politics, economics, law, state and local government, social structures and the media. All in connection with developments abroad.

Of the possible risks arising for the Czech Republic from **international developments**, the most significant is the vulnerability of society as a result of globalisation. Organised crime groups operating in the largest possible area may exploit the growing differences between political systems, between wealthy developed countries and poor backward regions, between cities and fringe settlements and social differences between people. Another risk factor is that due to free movement across borders, there is also free movement of illegal goods and services, weapons, money from and for criminal activity, criminal groups and offenders. Information and communication systems can also be misused. The proceeds from criminal activities are being legalised, and the funds hidden in tax havens.

The unstable political situation in certain regions or conflicts in which organised crime can become directly or indirectly involve in some way, or which can be exploited by organised crime groups, also pose a risk. At the turn of 2014 and 2015, radical Islamism became the dominant security threat. Hatred between religions can also be problematic. Yet, an excessively liberal approach may also be a risk. If Europe really wants to counter the current threat of Islamic extremism and terrorism on its territory, it must clearly and strongly state that radical Islam is a global threat to western civilization and that it must defend against it.

An unfavourable economic situation, reduction in living standards, differences in the living standards of individual countries and poverty in third world countries lead to economic migration. Some migrants may then be exploitable in the commission of crime. Subsidies provided by various EU bodies can also be problematic.

Another risk factor is inconsistent legal regulations to combat organised crime, with varying conditions for the classification of groups or activities in organised crime. Legislation on economic crime is not consistent. In the fight against organised crime, police experts have criticised complicated cooperation and exchange of information with police units in certain EU Member States, while criminal justice experts point out the insufficiently wide-ranging possibilities for direct legal contact with foreign countries, the highly formalised approach to international cooperation in criminal matters, and the lengthy, dilatory and almost unwilling approach to the provision of international assistance in criminal matters, sometimes influenced by the position of the respective state on the given issue.

The disadvantages of open borders affect the Czech Republic more significantly than many other countries because of its geographic position. It is not only a transit country, but also a destination country, where various international organised crime groups have settled. In this

context, we noted (March 2015) conflicting views among police on the so-called Schengen Area (most mentioned both pros and cons.) Among the main positives was the possibility of active cooperation with individual states and security forces, interconnected information systems, the ability to use the databases of other Member States, financial aid, better control of people passing through the Schengen Area, customs control at airports, and strict rules for obtaining residency. A negative aspect was that illegal immigrants can more easily enter the Czech Republic due to the abolition of passport and customs border controls. The addition of south-east European countries to Schengen was rated as a risk, with mention of poor cooperation and information between individual countries, the risk of illegal and uncontrolled migration and movement of suspicious persons and an increase of crime in border areas.

A risk factor in the area of **politics** is a lack of clear policies and their related strategies. Problematic areas include the preference of the interests of parties or individual politicians over the public interest, disinterest in consistently addressing the security situation, and an underestimation of the problem of crime. The character of politicians, such as selfishness, superiority, arrogance, supremacy, untouchability, irresponsibility, naïveté, dilettantism, incompetence, inexperience, ignorance can also pose a risk. Recriminations and conflicts, discrediting those who fight crime can be similarly misused. Contacts can also be a considerable risk: ties with lobbyists and "acquaintances" in politics, networks of friends and clans. The risk is corruption and clientelism, non-transparent financing of political parties, a connection between political and economic powers, and the disrespect or abuse of law. A consequence of all these risk factors is the untrustworthiness of politicians, widespread mistrust of the political system, and the passivity of citizens. These circumstances may weaken society's ability to act in solving the problems of criminality and crime could take advantage of this atmosphere, both against politicians and citizens.

The risks associated with the **economy** have a lot of weight, because economic and financial profit is the basic motive for organised crime. The only effective means of combating organised crime is to stop the flow of funds from these crimes, whether in the course of committing these crimes, or before, i.e. in the context of prevention - preventing these funds from being generated.

Risk factors include ties between the private sector and politicians. One such risk factor is the shadow economy. This drains the economic resources of the state or public corporations through the activities of criminal groups, which is covered by legal or pseudo-legal activities.

The problem is the legalisation of the proceeds of crime. In this context, the most frequently mentioned response to how criminal organisations can exploit flaws in the economy, was state and public contracts, or even European Union subsidies. Other risk factors include the insufficiently transparent ownership structure of companies, easy transfer of companies prior to, or already in bankruptcy, support for damaging activities (photovoltaic power, biodiesel, etc.), the premeditated creation of so-called holding companies and the existence of bearer shares. Experts also mentioned the expansion and emergence of virtual currencies. A number of risks are also associated with the tax system. This relates to the tolerance of money being siphoned into tax havens and the deliberate relocation of prosperous companies there. Another problem is the irresponsible management of state assets and collapse of the internal and external control system, as well as insufficient control of public and EU funding.

The ongoing economic recession increases the criminogenic situation, with an increasing incidence of property crime for financial benefit with a violent element. A lack of job opportunities is one of the sources from which organised groups recruit people willing to commit crime. A difficult financial situation forces "straw men" into the arms of organised crime with the vision of easy earnings. Organised crime groups also damage the economy by offering people illegal goods and services. A risk factor is also the inadequate ability of the Czech Police to analyse economic crime.

In the field of **law and justice**, excessive legislation, unsystematic and large numbers of individual amendments and a related lack of transparency and incomprehensibility of legal standards are all risk factors. In the context of the lack of transparency and incomprehensibility of legal standards, the issue of Czech society's poor legal awareness and lack of respect for the law was also mentioned. A risk is also a shortage of court personnel, poor and slow law enforcement, significant formalism of court proceedings, and inadequate material, personnel and organisational support for the operation of the justice system.

Lobbying may also be a risk factor, through which organised crime groups try to influence newly approved legal standards so that they allow the promotion of their own interests as much as possible and, at the same time, minimise the risk of criminal prosecution. Another factor is influencing the activity of judicial authorities, notably through corruption. There is also a risk in the lack or difficult use of certain tools in the fight against organised crime, particularly the lack of the institute of crown witness, as the concept of cooperating defendant (accused) embodied in Czech criminal law seems too restrictive to effectively detect and

combat organised crime in practice. Another limiting factor is current legislation governing wiretapping and recording telecommunication operations. The absence of legislation on proof of the origin of income can also be considered a risk, as too is insufficient international cooperation in the fight against organised crime, particularly the lack of international agreements between certain countries on mutual cooperation and international law.

In the area of **public administration**, the risk is associated with the infiltration of organised crime. There is a danger that civil servants could be used to gather information, establish contacts, secure impunity, recruit colleagues and participate in the commission of crime. Through sophisticated clientelistic networks of contacts at the highest levels, organised crime groups would be able to gain influence in state-owned companies to obtain advantages in awarded public contracts or to legalise the proceeds of crime. Organised crime (particularly of an economic nature) could even be committed by civil servants themselves.

A considerable risk could be the politicisation of public administration. System errors, where individual systems are not connected, lagging communication and sharing information between individual public administration bodies, or the duplication of effort may also be risks. The problem is the devolution of responsibilities among various public administration bodies, collective irresponsibility, too many decision-making powers, and the transfer of a growing number of competences to private entities, without their adequate control. Frequent changes in conditions for the execution of public administration, insufficient control of public and EU funding, insufficient disclosure of contracts entered into by public administration bodies, limited access to certain financial and tax administration data by criminal justice authorities are also a risk. Continual reorganisation also contributes to this destabilisation. A criminogenic factor is also the low professional level of civil servants occupying managerial positions on the basis of other than professional qualifications, i.e. accelerated study, corruption and clientelism, particularly in public procurement. A risk factor may also be, if citizens feel the state does not sufficiently protect their interests or sufficiently protect their property.

In the area of **local government**, a risk factor is excessive politicisation and ties between local politicians and local entrepreneurs. This relates to the influence of interest groups and the creation of public contracts tailored to specific entities. A risk factor is the lack of personal responsibility, low transparency, insufficient control of local government management and the

activities of municipal and regional representatives, particularly in the area of public or European Union funding.

In terms of the **police**, we can distinguish between external and internal risk factors. An external risk may be an attempt by interest groups and political representatives to influence criminal proceedings by exerting pressure from higher authorities. In the economic area, police activities are adversely affected by a lack of funds. The police are allocated less and less resources, so they no longer request expert opinions and reports, without which, however, crime cannot be resolved, which is why so many cases are suspended. In the legal field, police are hampered by the excessive formality of criminal proceedings, but also the complexity of the legal definition of organised crime. There is also a problem in the use of international treaties and agreements and the establishment of new active international treaties. With regard to the possible risks relating to the abuse of police authorities by organised crime groups, this could involve obtaining information from Czech Police databases and files.

An internal risk factor is the lack of a concept for the long term, where the instability of the system gives rise to police uncertainty. A reduction in police salaries and other material benefits leads to an exodus of experts, reducing the professional level, and leads to the lower quality of many newly recruited officers, as quality professionals are not interested in working for the police. A reduction in police salaries and other material benefits may also lead to a higher risk of corruption. Repeated, inexpert reorganisation by political order, done hastily and without knowledge or determination of the impact on the Czech Police and their operation could contribute to the destabilisation of the Czech Police. A risk is also inefficient cooperation between police departments in the Czech Republic, and poor international cooperation. There are problems with the establishment of international teams.

Police officers often complain about limited powers. Repressive forces would be helped in fighting criminal organisations by obtaining maximum information, contacts, informants and collaborators with financial and expert capabilities. A risk factor is the lack of professional education. There is a lack of qualified police officers investigating economic crime, yet there is a need for specialisation by those involved in the detection, verification and investigation of corruption offences. Insufficient education, little experience and a lack of interest in work relates to an inability to decide and fear of making decisions. A risk factor is crime committed by police officers. In some cases, this also involves the direct involvement of police in

criminal structures (e.g. Tofl's gang, Berdych's gang). A risk is also a leak of information from investigative files during the investigation.

A risk factor in the **life of the population** may be a deterioration of living standards, the deteriorating economic, financial and social situation in certain groups, various differentiation in social structure - by gender, age, income, wealth, racial and ethnic differentiation. People believe that wealthy people with good connections, who belong to major influential groups, are not punished for their crimes. There is no sense of effective protection by the state. Dissatisfaction can lead to mistrust in the state apparatus, a gradual loss of respect for state power and gradual anarchy in the economy and society as a whole, with an unwillingness to contribute to a change in the approach to crime and criminals. There may even be a certain form of cooperation with organised crime groups.

Another criminogenic factor may be the consumer lifestyle and efforts to obtain resources to maintain this lifestyle. A risk factor is also moral decline, a lack of ingrained ethical principles, and a lack of decency and modesty. A criminogenic factor may also be the fact that many people abused the system. A typical way in which people abuse the social system is corruption. A risk factor is the tolerance of crime. The problem is that the citizen's freedom is preferred over general security. The population is abused by organised crime by creating demand for illegal goods and services.

The **media** may represent an effective means for organised crime to influence public opinion in their favour. They try to penetrate this sector not only for profit, but also to increase demand for illegal goods and services. In certain parts of the media there may be a suspicion of efforts to manipulate consumers in favour of certain influential groups: certain politicians, lobbyists and godfathers. A significant risk factor could arise in a situation where certain media is controlled by a group of people financially secured and financially dependent on politicians, as this could be exploited to obtain information and influence decision-making processes.

A risk factor may also be the sensationalism, superficiality and lack of expertise of the media. The media is not interested in providing objective and accurate information, but rather feeding viewers or readers exciting, sensational or shocking news. Some risk may also be posed by the way the media reports on crime, which may act as a guide, providing inadvertent guidance through the disclosure of details of the crimes committed. A situation in which potential offenders exploit the ongoing activities of other offenders cannot be ruled out. Other risk

factors can also be considered depictions of violence without sufficient detachment and the presentation of inappropriate lifestyle models. Although the Czech media devotes considerable attention to the issue of organised crime, especially in the case of clientelistic ties to politics, it is only sporadic, as journalists do not follow problems persistently. A considerable risk is information leakage. Premature disclosure of certain information hampers the work of criminal justice authorities in criminal proceedings. Influencing public opinion on the activities of criminal justice authorities may also be problematic. A risk may arise on the relativisation of judicial decisions, highlighting negatives and failures, questioning the work of police, public prosecutors, judges, and the presentation of cases without knowledge of the law.

Currently preferred **values in society** must also be taken into account in relation to the emergence, operation and development of organised crime in the Czech Republic. It is difficult to clearly distinguish value preferences in groups of individuals eliciting deviant behaviour patterns in the framework of value orientations. Values are not always as straightforward, however, we can suggest certain criminal contexts on this basis.

The criminal context of values - money, financial profit – probably also corresponds to the fact that all definitions of organised crime give this as the dominant or target value. It turns out, however, that rather than the size of one's account, it is one's demeanour, lifestyle, advocated views and especially the manner of acquiring one's wealth that are decisive. Originally, the financial and later economic crisis was often referred to as a crisis of confidence, a product of the deficit in values and lack of accountability. This relates to the replacement of utility values by exchange values, which manifest in tense egoism and promoting personal interests at all costs, i.e. including involvement in criminal activity. Power, or respectively influence, is a determining value, as it is essential for the effective realisation of organised crime. Values that can almost universally be considered negative, or risk values (lack of morals, increased aggression, and criminal delinquency), i.e. that support the participation of individuals in criminal activities, do not figure at the forefront of interest in the opinion of experts.

As part of our research, we confronted how the development of organised crime and related risks are perceived by **public opinion** through secondary analysis and our own representative survey. The public repeatedly ranks organised crime among the most pressing problems and sees it as a significant risk to society. People primarily associate organised crime with the

business sector, high politics and the activity of the police. People consider the main factors that may affect the incidence of organised crime, as factors in the area of law and its enforcement, i.e. shortcomings in legislation, the organisation and activities of the police and courts. This is followed by economic factors (the country's poor economic situation, the economic problems of the population), political factors (shortcomings of politicians and political parties and deficiencies in public administration) and cultural and social factors (the boom in modern technologies, people's indifference on public matters, people's distrust of public institutions, the decline in interpersonal relationships, people's carelessness in relation to the risks of organised crime, people's ignorance of the risks, shortcomings in the work of the media). In addition, two other potential risk factors were spontaneously highlighted - corruption, especially in the political sphere, and open borders and the associated influx of foreigners into the Czech Republic.

The dominant illegal activities of organised crime groups are seen by the public as the production, trafficking and distribution of drugs, as well as economic and financial crime (i.e. money laundering, tax and credit fraud), corruption, property and violent crime. (Compared with the expert view, it can be said the illegal activities of organised crime placed in leading positions by both the general public and experts essentially agree – the only difference being that experts believe economic and financial crime is currently dominant, while the public associates organised crime groups with drug-related crime.)

The public believes that foreigners are mainly involved in the commission of organised crime. (In contrast, experts have long been inclined to a very slight preponderance of the foreign element.) When naming specific nationalities that the public thinks are currently most involved in organised crime groups in the Czech Republic, people most often named Ukrainians, followed by Russians and Vietnamese. (Experts list the same nationalities in the first three places, but in different order compared to the general public – they regard the Vietnamese as the most strongly represented group of foreign nationals, followed by Russians and Ukrainians.)

People consider stricter punishment as the most effective means to protect society against organised crime, but also consistent confiscation of illegal profits and preventive measures against corruption in the public sector. In open answers, respondents consistently mentioned measures directed against foreigners as potential perpetrators of organised crime.

In the **second** main part, we followed **developments in the qualitative and quantitative characteristics** of organised crime groups in the Czech Republic.

According to **police statistics**, the number of detected crimes with the participation of an organised criminal group (Section 361 of the new Penal Code/ Section 163a of the Penal Code) varies in one year from three (in 2008) up to 29 detected crimes (in 2014). The number of investigated, prosecuted persons ranges from 1 person (in 2012) up to 149 people (in 2004). According to crime statistics processed by the **Ministry of Justice**, 169 people were prosecuted for the offence of participating in an organised crime group (Section 361 of the new Penal Code/ Section 163a of the Penal Code) in 2011-2014, of whom 157 were indicted. It can thus be deduced from court statistics that a total of 88 people were convicted in the last five years (2010-2014). Yet almost a third of the sentences imposed for convicted offenders in 2010 - 2014 were suspended prison sentences.

We obtain information on **developments in the structure and forms of organised crime** through regular expert studies that have taken place annually since 1993.

Organised criminal activity may be realised in either a group with a lower **degree of organisation** or in a fully developed group with a three-tier control structure. In 2015, we recorded 44% of groups with a fully developed structure, 56% of groups with incompletely developed structure.

To a large degree, **external collaborators** (accessories) are also involved in many activities by organised crime groups. According to expert estimates, it was found that in 2015 organised crime groups were composed of just over half of regular members and just under half of external collaborators. External collaborators mostly engaged in transport, accommodation, human smuggling, car rental or lease of apartments, storing items from criminal activities, arranging forged papers and documents, sending mail, procuring weapons, the receipt and further distribution of stolen goods, customs clearance, taking care of documents, contracts, invoices, tax returns, working as interpreters, legalising the stay of foreigners, legalising the proceeds of crime, securing courier, distributor and intermediary services, and securing customers and consumers. External collaborators are involved in the creation of fictitious companies, the formal establishment of bank accounts, withdrawal of funds from accounts, filing fictitious tax returns, processing fictitious accounting, providing transportation and fictitious documents for the carriage of goods, figuring as so-called "straw men" to whom

accounts are registered, transferring vehicles, real estate and property into their name. External collaborators act as observers and watchdogs, tipsters, provide information and consulting, basic knowledge on the issue of interest, establish and mediate contacts, communicate with the authorities, deal with Czech citizens, help penetrate the environment, lobby, broker services, influence project evaluators, secure access to important people in economic, political and VIP circles, supply intermediaries to commit crimes, and seek new people willing to engage in criminal activity. Among the more demanding activities of external collaborators is legal consultancy by experts in the Czech legal environment, advocacy services, tax consulting, accounting, consulting on computer systems and forensic expert reports.

There are also **women** in organised crime groups in the Czech Republic. An estimation of the gradually increasing proportion of women was 20% in an expert report in 2015. Women are most often involved in providing organisational support and the management of criminal groups: they purchase the necessary goods and items for crime, arrange car rental, collect funds from banks and financial forwarding companies, deposit and transfer money, distribute products, provide tips, conduct administration, accounting, business supervision, car rental, accommodation for offenders from abroad, file tax returns, make cash withdrawals from accounts, recruit so-called straw men, transport such persons to places where fraud occurs; procure false documents, the issue of documents and their confirmation, proof of accommodation, employment, and deal with banks. Women also acted as figureheads and in the role of "straw men". Within specific activities, they also provided legal services, legal consultation and advocacy services.

Another area in which women were involved was economic and financial crime: credit, insurance, exchange, bank, subsidy and tax fraud, issuing fictitious invoices, tax returns, evasion of taxes, fees and other mandatory payments, corruption, legalisation of the proceeds of crime, establishing fraudulent and fictitious companies, establishing off-shore companies, the abuse of EU funds, payment card fraud, and real estate fraud. Women also figured as the managing directors of fictitious companies.

Other areas included prostitution and human trafficking for sexual exploitation, in some cases, forced labour, trafficking in narcotic and psychotropic substances, and establishing contacts. The least common area was the organisation of illegal migration.

Foreigners are involved in slightly over half of organised crime in the Czech Republic. Based on individual foreign nationalities, the four most predominant nationalities involved in organised crime in the Czech Republic after 2010 are the Vietnamese, Albanians, Ukrainians and Russians. The second largest group includes Bulgarians, Romanians and Slovaks, followed in the third group by the Chinese, Poles, Serbians, Turks and Nigerians; the fourth group are Macedonians, Algerians, Croatians, Georgians, Armenians, Hungarians and Chechens. Less frequently represented are the Syrians, Tunisians, slightly less Lithuanians and Latvians, and then sporadically the French, Italians, Dagestanis, Moldovans, Kazakhstanis, Belarusians, Uzbeks, Spaniards, Thais, Germans, Montenegrins, Slovenians and Austrians. In 2010 – 2013, in addition to the above mentioned nationalities – there were occasional Dutch, Iraqis, Indians, Israelis, Brits, Libyans, Egyptians, Greeks, Colombians, Kurds, Moroccans and Uzbeks.

A factor worth mentioning is the relatively large range of nationalities present in the Czech Republic. After 2010, experts reported between 25-30 states, and no fewer than 37 in 2014. Another factor is that perpetrators almost never include citizens of developed European countries. Sometimes Italians, Germans and Dutch appeared at the very bottom of the list. In 2013, we saw a rise in the number of Germans, with some Dutch, then newly Spaniards and Brits. In 2014, French and Austrians were also reported.

Organised crime groups run a variety of **illegal activities** in order to maximise profits or security. In the 1990s, the most widespread activities were car theft, prostitution, and the production, trafficking and distribution of drugs. Up to 1998, the most widespread activity was the theft of art objects; in 1996 and 1997, 2002 and 2005 it was tax, credit, insurance and exchange fraud. In 1998 - 2004 illegal migration appeared among the most widespread activities of organised crime groups, but in 2005 its share began to decline. In 2006, money laundering and forgery of documents, cash and coins became widespread, and there was a significant rise in cybercrime. The illegal production and smuggling of alcohol and cigarettes has also increased significantly since 2005. In 2009, there was another increase in activities associated with financial crime. Among the most common activities were the legalisation of proceeds of crime (money laundering), corruption, tax, credit, insurance and exchange fraud, bank fraud, and the establishment of fraudulent and fictitious companies. In 2011, there was a significant rise in the misuse of EU funds and abuse of PCs for crime. Traditional activities such as the production and trafficking of drugs and car theft declined to some degree.

In **2014**, the trend of increasing activities associated with financial crime continued, and a further increase in the illegal production and smuggling of alcohol and cigarettes was noted. The misuse of European Union funds continued to be among the most widespread crimes, while the production, trafficking and distribution of drugs returned to first place, and prostitution to tenth place.

In expert reports since 1999, we regularly examine in **what activities individual foreign groups** are engaged in the Czech Republic. The Vietnamese have mainly focused on drugs, customs and tax fraud, trademark violations, the production and smuggling of cigarettes and alcohol and illegal migration; the Russians on extortion, money laundering, violent crime, tax fraud, and prostitution; the Ukrainians focus on extortion, violent crimes and exploitation for forced labour; the Albanians on drugs and violent crime; the Chinese on tax fraud, trademark violations, customs fraud, forgery of documents and duty stamps; the Romanians and Bulgarians on theft, payment card fraud, the Nigerians on drugs, illegal migration and prostitution, the Slovaks on tax fraud, establishing fictitious companies and arms trafficking, and the Poles on tax fraud, car theft and smuggling alcohol and cigarettes.

Of the other nationalities, the Serbs, Turks, Croatians, Algerians, Tunisians, Macedonians and Dutch focused on drugs; the Armenians, Georgians, Moldovans, Lithuanians, Uzbeks on violence; the Chechens on violence and arms trafficking; the Syrians on illegal migration (as early as 2014), arms trafficking, forgery of documents and human trafficking; the Latvians on burglary; the Belarusians on extortion and human trafficking; the Spaniards on property crime, and the French and Italians on tax fraud.

Research also included an expert projection of the **likely development** of organised crime. The first area covered the extent of the incidence of organised crime. In quantitative terms, 57% of experts expected a rise up to 2020, 43% stability. No one expected a decline.

Those who expected the incidence of organised crime in the Czech Republic to rise over the next five years in **2015**, indicated the reasons as the political and economic situation in the world and related influx of refugees, the liberal policy towards immigration, open borders, poor security of the EU's external borders, the entry of other countries into the EU and the enlargement of the Schengen Area. They also mentioned that due to its geographical location and the possibility of huge profits from illegal activities, organised crime was flourishing in the Czech Republic. Respondents also mentioned the unstable political and economic situation in individual regions, the uncertainty on banking markets, a lack of finances in

society, debt, the general view of corruption and its high incidence, and the intersection of organised crime with the economy and legalisation of illegal capital in the economic field. They pointed out the limited options of repressive forces, that legislation has not adequately responded to new trends in organised crime, poor law enforcement, poor legal awareness and a disregard for the law. The work of the police is degraded by political clientelism, which attempts to negatively interfere in the operation of the police. A limiting factor is also poor police facilities and underfunding.

According to experts, the situation will deteriorate because organised crime is constantly evolving, improving professionalization, conspiracy, specialisation, the use of new, more sophisticated technologies, and has considerable financial possibilities. Organised crime still pays, giving rise to huge profits. The development of so-called virtual currency allows hidden cash transactions, the development of cybercrime, and offers absolute anonymity. There is a strong effort to obtain power and ownership structures. Organised groups operate in several states, which complicates the exposure of their whole structure.

Those who expected the incidence of organised crime in the Czech Republic to remain the same over the next five years in **2015**, mainly stated that external factors from the political, legal and economic environment would not change radically, and there is a relatively stable economic and political situation. Organised crime is already so developed that further growth is unnecessary. Spheres of influence are divided and there is virtually no competition. Territorial division between individual organised groups is practically complete, as well as spheres of influence in individual types of crime. Experts noted that measures taken by security forces and steps by the government for the implementation of statutory regulatory safeguards had also led to stability.

In 2015, none of the addressed experts (N = 48) expected the incidence of organised crime in the Czech Republic to **fall** over the next five years.

The second compared question concerned the degree of expansion of the activities of organised groups. (The first survey in 1993 was directed at 2000. In 2000, we asked which activities would be most prevalent in 2005, and in 2010 which would be most widespread in 2015. We could then progressively confront estimates with established findings.)

In **2015**, experts were asked to comment on the **degree of development of activities in 2020**. In 2020, organised crime associated with the production, trafficking and distribution of drugs

should maintain a significant position, along with tax offences, money laundering, corruption, fraud, credit, bank and exchange fraud. Experts expect a rise in cybercrime. An increase in human trafficking, illegal migration and arms trafficking is also expected. Experts expect a further decline in car theft, prostitution, customs fraud, smuggling of alcohol and cigarettes, abuse of payment cards, and the establishment of fraudulent companies. Newly emerging activities will include fraud associated with public procurement, clientelism, terrorism and extremism (understood by some experts in connection with organised crime), and some increase in forced labour is also expected. Extortion, debt collection and violent crime may not be significant in relation to organised crime in the coming years.

In addition to quantitative indicators, we also examined views on possible **qualitative changes**. In the next five years, i.e. **by 2020**, experts expect high security and more sophisticated conspiracy in crime, an improvement in the quality of preparation of organised crime, more sophisticated concealment of criminal proceeds, and increased sophistication in disguising the origin of goods and services bought and sold. Organised groups will be characterised by the acquisition and subsequent use of better quality material equipment, the use of new technologies, particularly in the area of internet and telephone communications, a high level of education and the application of modern technologies. Experts expect more economic crime, especially tax and bank fraud via the internet. There will also be an increase in corruption in connection with the allocation of public contracts, the legalisation of the proceeds of crime and trade in military material.

There will be active penetration into public administration, state and local governments, and the greater involvement of highly qualified professionals and educated people as regular members of organised crime groups is expected. Some experts also expect greater ruthlessness in committed crimes, and an increase in brutality and cruelty towards victims.

The development of organised crime in the regions was determined indirectly through the outcomes of research on political radicalism and research on preventative work in the regions. Although neither of these studies focused on the area of organised crime, we examined whether or not it spontaneously appeared in any responses. Locations with a possible increase in the occurrence of extremism were found. The influence of organised crime manifested in human trafficking, drug crimes and car theft. Corruption and bribery are a special area. However, most criminal threats, do not most likely relate to organised crime.

Translated by: Presto