

Diblíková, S. et al.: Analysis of Trends in Criminality in the Czech Republic in 2017

Summary

The Institute of Criminology and Social Prevention prepares an analytical overview of trends in registered crime each year under the research topic *Monitoring and analysis of development trends in criminality, related socio-pathological phenomena and criminogenic factors that need to be addressed in criminal policy*, which is part of the Mid-Term Plan of ICSP Research Activities 2016-2019. Preparation of the "**Analysis of Trends in Criminality in the Czech Republic**" yearbook is based on police, judicial and prison statistics, where the subject of research is the state of crime in the year preceding the publication, a year-on-year comparison and comparison to a longer (approx. ten-year) time series. The aim of the publication is to, inter alia, interpret expert data on the development of criminal activity in the Czech Republic, both in that particular year and in the context of longer-term development. The study offers an assessment of the state, structure and intensity of crime, including territorial changes, and changes in the state and composition of known offenders. The study presents selected indicators of criminal activity, with integral appendices capturing ongoing trends in crime in general and the development of individual types of crime, in some cases dating from the beginnings of computer processed statistical data.

The structure of the yearbook respects the direction established last year, when it was first presented in an innovative form, more fully illustrating trends in crime. Although the section based on statistics provided by the Probation and Mediation Service is missing this year (albeit the data is available on the PMS website and a special analysis is planned for the yearbook again in the future), the publication offers a cross-section of the criminal justice system with data from police statistics, through public prosecution and the courts, to data on the prison population and victims of crime. This includes material on chapters devoted to certain categories of offenders – i.e. juveniles and children under 15, foreign nationals and perpetrators of organised crime.

Once again, there were limitations regarding the availability of data. For example, although the Ministry of Justice renewed the issue of statistical yearbooks on crime, these are only available for 2015 and 2016. The yearbook mapping 2017 is likely to be published at the same time as the yearbook for 2018, i.e. in 2019. It follows that the data required for 2017 is only available on request, or it is possible to compile overviews or special reports in the CSLAV system (Central Statistical Sheets and Reporting) as of a specific date.

Another limitation arose due to the transitional period following the change of the method of collecting data at the level of the Police of the Czech Republic, where, for example, the transformation of the record system of the victims of crime meant that no data is currently available in this area. One benefit of this, however, is that, although victims - individuals will be newly monitored, monitoring the original so-called objects of attack will probably also be preserved. Chapter I offers at least a table with an overview of the victims of crime from Ministry of Justice sources, albeit its indicative value is greatly limited by the manner in which statistical sheets are filled out, where it is only one of the optional checkmarks.

The change in the criminal statistical records system of the Czech Police was also affected by the continuity of the time series, especially the number of prosecuted and investigated persons. Since 2016, offenders have been charged with all criminal activity, not just the most serious act. This data is therefore incomparable to numbers up to and including 2015, however, the downward trend continues regardless of this fact. Another change concerns the calculation of the age of prosecuted offenders. The offender's age is no longer calculated "manually" by the recorder, but by machine. Before 2016, the age was calculated as the difference between the date criminal prosecution commenced and the date of birth; the date prosecution commenced is now replaced by the date the offence was committed. The age of the prosecuted offender was thus determined more accurately, but also with a slight shift to lower age categories. The number of people prosecuted by age is therefore incomparable to previous periods.

The **state of registered crime** in the Czech Republic in 2017 and changes compared to the previous year and over the last decade are traditionally described in the first chapter by commented data from police statistics. It assesses the state of crime and changes in the structure and intensity of crime and geographical indicators, including the crime index. It also provides information on the composition of known offenders, broken down by gender, age,

and the proportion of recidivists. Some information on suicides is also mentioned. Appendices published at the end provide supplementary statistical data.

The next section examines the **development of criminal and sanction policy** in 2007 - 2017 in the Czech Republic. Again, it presents trends in prosecuted, charged and convicted offenders, developments in the application of summary pre-trial proceedings and the use of diversions. The use of diversions with restorative elements is compared to other diversions, such as agreements on guilt and punishment and criminal orders. In addition, it provides an overview of the structure of sanctions, with an increased focus on unconditional imprisonment, including developments in the number of prisoners, where these figures are still very high in a European context. It also covers trends in criminal and sanction policies applied to legal entities. To maintain continuity, the source of data is overviews by public prosecutor's offices and the courts from the Ministry of Justice CSLAV system, supplemented by more detailed information in the form of charts and tables in the appendices.

The following section looks at a specific category of offenders in **juveniles and children under the age of 15** (i.e. persons under the age of 18) - and the crimes committed by this group. It continues to interpret trends in juvenile criminality (especially property, violent and moral crimes) and maps developments and differences in juvenile punishment. A significant part of this interpretation includes an analysis of trends in sanction policy applied to persons under the age of 18.

The fourth chapter examines **criminal activity by foreigners** in the Czech Republic, following up on the same topic in last year's publication. It brings up-to-date information on the number of foreign nationals residing in the Czech Republic long-term and their composition by nationality, supplemented by information on the number of foreign nationals coming to the Czech Republic for short-term stays or for the purpose of transit. Data on detected illegal migration is also provided. A continuing trend in the development of criminality by foreign nationals, as documented the previous year, was found. The slight increase in the share of foreign nationals in the number of prosecuted offenders can be largely attributed to the decrease in the total number of known and prosecuted offenders, which continued in 2017 due to the decrease in registered crime in the Czech Republic.

Data presented in the reinstated chapter on **organised crime** came from XXV. Expert Survey on the Basic Characteristics of Organised Criminal Groups in the Czech Republic,

which took place in 2018. This type of research has been conducted each year since 1993, surveying experts in the form of officers from specialised units of the Police of the Czech Republic and since 2012, employees of the General Customs Directorate and Customs Directorate of Prague. 41 experts were interviewed in 2018. Experts commented on the level of organisation of criminal groups, the participation and involvement of outsiders, women and foreign nationals. They indicated the main activities overall and the activities of individual foreign groups. By tracking this data on a regular basis, long-term trends over twenty-five years can be monitored.

The last part of the publication presents the selected results of **research on victims** carried out by the Institute of Criminology and Social Prevention in 2017. The main focus was on the primary objective of the research, namely to determine the degree of victimisation by monitored crimes, including information on the detailed circumstances of victimisation, such as the personality of the offender or the time and place of the incident. Selected data is compared with previous research. In addition, the chapter deals with the topic of reporting offences to the police, where additional information on victim satisfaction with the work of the police, apprehension of the offender, or compensation for the damage caused was also investigated.

The yearbook is available in electronic form on the ICSP website at www.kriminologie.cz.

Translated by: Presto