

Characteristics of crime in Slovenia

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The extent of crime is established through public opinion polls, victimological studies, assessment of dark figure of crime and crime indexes based on police statistics. In spite of unrecorded crime, police crime statistics are the most appropriate method for long-term analysis and crime prediction, because they are the most complete and comparable data on the number of criminal offences within a certain period of time and in a certain geographic area. However, for crime prediction it is not necessary to include all crimes handled by the police in a certain period of time, but only the most indicative forms of crime with a relatively small area of dark figure, such as homicides, robberies, thefts of motor vehicles and similar.

Analysis of long-term trends of recorded criminal offences indicates that the structure and extent of crime are subject to rapid change in Slovenia, characterised by a sharp increase in property crimes, especially in large urban areas. Factors which most contribute to specific forms of crime are, in addition to migrations, increasing linkage, organization and professionalism of criminal offenders and the rise of the number of prohibited drug users. Experts estimate that the growth of international and organized crime, as well as crimes for economic gain will continue in the future. Slovene crime has become increasingly comparable with crime in developed European countries, while the clearance rate has gradually fallen to the level recorded in these countries.

In 2004, the police had the highest number of criminal offences recorded so far. In comparison to the previous year, this growth of crime was mainly due to the more frequent recording of minor property crimes, which is probably the result of people's greater awareness and the possibility of making damage claims on the one hand, and a consequence of the deterioration of the security situation on the other, demonstrated by a higher number of reported crimes, characterised by a relatively small dark figure. Among different forms of crime, a substantial increase was noted in the number of thefts, robberies and crimes against human rights and fundamental liberties. The police have dealt with less, but more serious economic offences, which caused significantly more damage than a year before. The number of computer crimes has also increased, as have abuse of prohibited drugs and counterfeiting currency.

Key words: crime, measurement of crime rate, crime statistics, criminal offences, suspects, the police, crime investigation activities, Slovenia

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