



Institut pro kriminologii
a sociální prevenci

Miroslav Scheinost a kol.

Analýza trendů kriminality v České republice v roce 2022

Summary

The Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention has been preparing and publishing an analysis of crime trends in the Czech Republic every year for many years. This analysis presents in a concentrated form a set of data on the development of crime from available statistical databases in the Czech Republic and includes comments on these data, supplemented by a look at longer development series with an attempt to characterise possible factors influencing these trends. It also uses annual documents of the Supreme State Prosecutor's Office and the Government of the Czech Republic, data published by the Czech Statistical Office and findings from relevant research by other organisations and institutions. It also provides insight into selected areas of crime that appear in the analysis either regularly or at certain intervals. The analysis for 2022 therefore contains not only statistical data but also selected results of IKSP research activities.

For the first time, the analysis contains an **initial chapter** that **briefly illustrates the development of the society** over the past five years in terms of the main economic indicators as published by the Czech Statistical Office and some other state authorities. The aim is to highlight the basic characteristics of economic and social development, which form the broader framework for the development of crime and, consequently, criminal policy.

This view is complemented by reference to how the Czech public perceives and assesses its economic situation, including potential threats and expectations.

The development of the last five years has been significantly marked by the pandemic of the covid-19 disease. In parallel with its own health consequences, the adopted massive restrictive measures have reduced crime, but have not significantly changed its structure. Some of its components, such as the drug trade, have shown a remarkable capacity for adaptation. There has been an accelerated shift of crime into virtual space.

After the pandemic was over, crime, or the recorded portion of crime, began to return to pre-covid levels. However, some of the consequences of the pandemic remain, such as the worsened economic situation, changes in the labour market, and a more severe impact on children, youth, and at-risk, vulnerable, and marginalised populations. These may cumulate with other problems (rising costs of living, energy, deepening social differentiation in society). There has been an enormous increase in inflation, with inflation rising from an average annual rate of 2.1 in 2018 to 15.1 in 2022. The steep rise in energy prices has had an impact on the rise in the prices of almost all other products and services and consequently the cost of living. Among the extraordinary influences that manifested themselves in the past reporting period, the war conflict in Ukraine must also be mentioned. A very significant consequence was the enormous influx of refugees from Ukraine in numbers that were quite beyond the scale of migration processes of previous years. Managing this influx again posed great demands on the state and its mechanisms, as well as on civil society.

Although the immediate links between these events are not obvious at first glance, except for measures related to pandemic suppression, it is possible to speak of certain criminogenic incentives, real or potential. The public perceives these problems. Accor-

ding to public opinion, 52% of respondents will find it difficult to come out with income in 2022, which undoubtedly already affects more than just low-income groups. This may stimulate an unfavourable situation, at least in terms of the increase in dissatisfaction, the state of social consciousness and its effects on people's behaviour. However, there is still a relatively high level of positive expectations or optimism, which may act as a brake on possible anti-social reactions to perceived problems and difficulties.

The second chapter traditionally maps the data on **recorded crime in the Czech Republic**, mainly based on statistics from the Police of the Czech Republic. It deals with the assessment of the structure and intensity of crime and geographical indicators, including the crime index. It also provides information on the composition of known offenders by gender and age, monitors the proportion of recidivists and presents data on suicides.

In the Czech Republic, after a decline in the “covid years” of 2019 and 2020, the annual increase in registered crime was recorded in 2022.

However, it is important to reflect the fact that this increase may have been influenced by factors other than the waning of the pandemic and the lifting of the associated measures. The figures for 2020 and the period before and after are not comparable because of the change in the level of damage and benefit from crime, affecting mainly property and economic crime. The continuity and trend formation is also affected by the quite extensive change in the police tactical and statistical classification from 2021 onwards. There is also always the undoubted latency of crime to be considered.

The “pre-covide” minimum in the number of registered crimes was reached in 2018 – 192 405 offences. In 2021, 153,233 the number of crimes registered by the Czech Police, reached the lowest level of registered crime in the history of the independent state. The year 2022 recorded an increase of almost 19% with 181,991 offences, expressed in absolute numbers it was +28,758 offences. The increase was seen in all major types of crime. The clearance rate fell by 2.5%, to below 45%.

The structure of crime remains unchanged, with crimes against property predominating, accounting for more than half (55%), followed by other crime with 15%, which, according to the statistical division of the Czech Police, includes mainly crimes of obstruction of official decisions and deportation (over 13,500 offences in 2022), drug offences (4,000 in 2022), disorderly conduct and endangering a child's care. The third largest share, 13%, is occupied by the remaining crimes (which include, for example, threat under the influence of addictive substances – in 2022 about 8,800 acts; desertion – over 6 thousand acts; or traffic accidents). This type of crime has the highest clearance rate, almost 77%.

Economic crime showed a nine per cent increase in 2022 after a significant decline in the covid years. The total damage amounted to about CZK 9 billion, with the biggest “contribution” coming from the crimes of tax evasion (CZK 2.46 billion) and fraud (CZK 2.41 billion). Economic crime accounted for about 46% of the damage from all crime (but the share of damage caused by economic crime was significantly higher in 2021 – 69%).

There were 150 murders in 2022, a significant increase of 43%, but the numbers are at the same level as in 2015, 2017 or 2019.

The geographic distribution of crime has remained essentially unchanged over the years, with the capital city of Prague consistently having the highest proportion of the entire country, at about half a point above 22%. The Moravian-Silesian region follows with about 12%, as in previous years, and the Central Bohemian region with almost 11%. Prague also has the highest value in the so-called crime index – 30 crimes per 1,000 inhabitants.

The increase in the number of recorded crimes corresponds with the increase in the number of persons prosecuted and investigated. In 2022, there were 75,474, an 8% annual increase. Of the total number of persons prosecuted or investigated in 2022, men accounted for 83.6% and women 16%. Legal persons have been prosecuted by the Police of the Czech Republic since 2012, and in 2022, according to police statistics, 314 legal persons were investigated and prosecuted, again a decrease and the second lowest number since 2016.

The age structure of persons prosecuted and investigated remains essentially unchanged over the years, with adult offenders completely dominating (91%), with the highest proportion of persons aged 30–44. Seniors over 60 years of age account for four per cent of offenders. Persons under 18 years of age consistently account for 5% of all persons prosecuted and investigated.

In 2022, there will be a 9% increase in the number of recorded suicides to 1,575, roughly the level of 2015.

In the **third chapter** on the **development of criminal policy**, we find that after a significant decline in the number of people in the criminal justice system in 2020 and 2021, which was related to the measures applied in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic and in 2021 also to the decriminalisation of property crime, the situation in terms of the number of prosecuted and accused persons has relatively stabilised. In 2022, their numbers have increased, which corresponds to the increase in recorded crime, but they do not reach the level in 2019. This is also true per 100,000 inhabitants of the respective age. A slight increase relative to the previous year was also recorded for convicted persons, but here, on the contrary, there is a slight decrease per 100,000 inhabitants. It can be assumed that the impact of decriminalisation of property crimes is still being felt here, as the threshold for damage as a characteristic of many offences has been raised. In the case of prosecuted, accused and convicted legal persons, there was a slight decrease compared to the previous year.

Compared to the period before the Covid pandemic, there is also a marked decline in the use of diversions with restorative elements, particularly in court proceedings. In terms of the structure of sanctions imposed by courts as the main sanction on individuals, no significant changes can be observed in 2022. There has been a slight increase in the proportion of fines and unconditional prison sentences, while the proportion of suspended forms of imprisonment has decreased. At the same time, there is still no evidence here that the

wider use of financial sentences has translated into a reduction in the use of unconditional sentences, for which both the numbers and the share in the structure of sanctions imposed by the courts as the main sanction have increased again in 2022.

The index of incarcerated persons per 100,000 population is slightly lower in 2022 than in the previous year. However, the absolute numbers of incarcerated persons are increasing again, for persons in custody, in the execution of the sentence and in security detention.

Relative stabilisation is also noted in the **fourth chapter** on **youth**. Although the number of juvenile prosecutions in 2023 is slightly higher than in the previous year, it still does not deviate much from the downward trend of juvenile prosecutions. Of the total number of persons prosecuted under the age of 18, about half are juveniles, with females being somewhat less represented than males (females are most often prosecuted between the ages of 12 and 14). Statistics show that the number of prosecutions of young people increased in 2022, evenly across the categories of property, violent and vice crime. The number of prosecuted offences has thus essentially returned to the level of the previous year, 2020; in comparison, there has been a decrease in the number of property offences and an increase in violent and moral offences.

Regarding the development of prosecuted, accused and convicted juveniles, it was found that the absolute numbers of prosecuted and accused persons in 2022 remained practically unchanged compared to the previous year, the number of prosecuted persons increased slightly, while the number of accused persons decreased. In contrast, there was a significant decrease in the case of convicted juveniles. Per 100,000 inhabitants of the respective age, there was a decrease in all categories. The impact of decriminalisation of minor property crime is likely to persist in 2022.

The juvenile sanctioning policy also did not show any significant changes compared to the previous year. The proportion of diversions with restorative elements in pre-trial proceedings, which are applied significantly more frequently than in the general sanction policy, remains relatively stable in 2022. Also, the structure of sanctions applied to juvenile by courts as the main sanction has hardly changed. Suspended sentencing is the most frequently used punitive measure. Community service and suspended sentences with supervision have been used less frequently.

The fifth chapter deals with **victims of crime**. It points out that we learn little about the victims from the statistics of the Police of the Czech Republic. In police statistics, victims are recorded only within the so-called objects of assault. The object of assault cannot be confused with the victim of a crime. The object of the assault is the specific object against which the unlawful attack is directed (e.g., a car, a house, a person). The natural person who has been harmed by the criminal activity therefore represents only one of the alternative objects of assault and is recorded only in selected offences. In addition, data on objects of assault are not included in the Statistical Crime Reports published by the Police of the Czech Republic on its website. Therefore, this chapter is mainly based on the findings obtained from the victimological research carried out by the IKSP.

The last survey of this type was conducted by the IKSP in 2022. The core of the survey was mapping respondents' victimization in the 3 years preceding the interview, which represented the period roughly starting in the fall of 2019. In total, 12 offences were tracked.¹⁴⁰ The research sample included 3,073 respondents from a representative sample of the population aged 15 and over. Experience of victimization in the previous three years was reported by 42% of respondents (N=1,294). Almost three-quarters (74%) of the victimized respondents had experienced one of the offences surveyed and the remainder had been victims of multiple offences.

The first place belongs to burglary into recreational buildings. More than a quarter of cottage or lodge users reported experience of this type of victimisation in the last three years. In the last year prior to the survey, 9% of users surveyed admitted to having been burgled. High number of households were also affected by bicycle theft (18%). Bicycle theft is more likely to occur in smaller towns (5,000 – 20,000 inhabitants) where up to 31% of owners are victims in the three-year period. In the largest cities (over 100,000 inhabitants), bicycle thefts tend to be below the national average. The first offence directly against the person of the respondent that emerged from the results was theft of personal belongings, of which over 13% of citizens were victims over a three-year period.

As in previous research of this type, this research confirmed that victimized respondents are more likely to report property offences to the police. The primary motivation appears to be the insurance claim as well as the fact that these offences are evidentially clear and do not even raise doubts as to whether the offence has been fulfilled and therefore that it is a matter that should be taken up with the police. After car theft, the most reported offence is bicycle theft. A higher proportion of reports were also recorded for theft of personal belongings compared to previous surveys. For offences against the respondent's person, the proportions of reported incidents are significantly lower. Only a very small proportion of victims used professional help. If respondents have already decided to contact a professional, it was usually a lawyer.

The pandemic period proved to be particularly risky in relation to domestic violence, with one third of victims reporting a negative impact of this specific situation on their problem. Although for the majority of respondents the pandemic did not affect their sense of safety, the results suggest that individuals who were already worried about their safety experienced a further increase in this fear.

The sixth chapter is devoted to the issue of **domestic partner violence** and is based mainly on criminal justice data. Working with this data was part of the research on partner violence carried out in the past four years in the IKSP.

In the period 2008–2022, an average of 545 cases of domestic violence were heard by the courts in the Czech Republic per year. The total number of cases was 8,170. The highest number of cases was registered in 2014, with 664 cases of domestic violence. On

140 Car theft, theft of items from a car, theft of a motorcycle, theft of a bicycle, burglary into home, burglary into recreational lodge, robbery, theft of personal items, physical assault, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

the other hand, the lowest number of cases, 434, was registered in 2010. Despite fluctuations in some years, the trend has been stable over the time period under review. Domestic violence cases dealt with by the courts accounted for less than one per cent (0.8%) of the total number of persons charged. Most often, this crime was recorded in the context of a partner relationship. There was an average of 384 cases per year. A more detailed analysis of cases of partner violence, showed that the number of cases in unmarried partnerships has increased significantly over the years at the expense of marital unions.

The structure of crime with a domestic partner violence component has also changed relatively over the decade. The offence of abuse is clearly one of the most frequent, but the offences of dangerous threats, bodily harm, extortion, and maltreatment of an entrusted person are also represented to a greater extent in the structure of crime, and their proportion is slightly increasing. This may be due to the easier availability of evidence in cases of other crimes. In contrast, the proportion of the crime of cruelty has been declining over the long term. The proportion of cases in which the offender is convicted of multiple offences with a domestic violence component in the concurrence is also increasing.

It is important to note, however, that criminal justice statistics are not the only source for describing partner domestic violence by its perpetrators and other relevant circumstances. Moreover, justice statistics are not comparable to police data and other data monitored by other institutions or authorities, and thus their explanatory value is limited to criminal proceedings. Besides, one cannot ignore the fact that most of the cases of domestic violence remain hidden not only from law enforcement authorities, but also from other institutions or organisations that encounter perpetrators or perpetrators of domestic violence in their practice.

Chapter 7 traditionally deals with **criminal activities of foreign nationals on the territory of the Czech Republic**. The share of foreigners in recorded crime is roughly equal to the share of foreigners with permanent and long-term residence in the total population of the Czech Republic, which was 10.2% in 2022 (in 2021 it was only 6.28%). However, this significant increase in the share of foreigners in the total population of the Czech Republic in 2022 was caused by an entirely extraordinary circumstance – Russian aggression against Ukraine and the subsequent arrival of refugees from Ukraine to the Czech Republic in a number exceeding 400 thousand people. The increase in the number of foreigners from other countries living here permanently and long-term was moderate – the number of foreigners from EU countries increased by about 4 thousand persons, while the number of foreigners from non-EU countries living permanently and long-term in the Czech Republic was rather stable. In 2022, however, there was a significant increase in detected illegal migration; almost tripling compared to 2021, with transit migration of Syrian citizens being the main cause.

From this perspective, the increase in crimes committed by foreigners does not appear to be excessive – the number of detected crimes committed by foreigners increased by 2,087 crimes year-on-year, and the number of prosecuted foreigners increased by 1,463 persons. The percentage share of foreigners in the total number of offences increased by 1.6% from 8.7% and 1.3% from 9.2% in the number of persons prosecuted.

The structure of detected crime of foreigners has been relatively stable in the long term. Among the offences committed, the crimes of endangerment under the influence of an addictive substance, obstruction of official decisions and negligent traffic accidents continue to dominate. Drug-related offences are also more prevalent and are the most frequent reason for sentencing foreigners to unconditional prison sentences, along with the offences of theft, obstruction of the execution of an official decision and robbery.

Citizens of many countries from all over the world are represented among known offenders, convicted, and imprisoned persons, but only citizens of a few countries are represented in greater numbers. These include citizens of Slovakia, who remain the most numerous among prosecuted offenders, and Ukraine, to a lesser extent, citizens of Moldova, Poland, Romania, Vietnam and Bulgaria. The number of Vietnamese citizens prosecuted is gradually decreasing, including in detention, and sentencing. The share of foreigners from Islamic or African countries in the crimes committed is quite minimal. In the execution of unconditional prison sentences, citizens of Slovakia, Ukraine and Vietnam are the most numerous.

The publication traditionally concludes with a chapter on the **development of organised crime in the Czech Republic**, based on the results of an expert inquiry conducted for the thirty-first time. In 2023, 48 responses were received, of which 40 were from the staff of the National Centre against Organised Crime, 6 from the staff of the National Drug Headquarters and 2 from the staff of the General Headquarters of Customs.

From the perspective of experts on the representation of advanced organised crime activities, there has been a further decline in drug production, trafficking, and distribution. The question is whether this is rather a relative decline, resulting from the greater rise or frequency of other activities falling mainly into economic crime, which clearly prevailed among the developed activities in 2022. It can be mentioned that in 2021, experts pointed to the laundering of the proceeds of crime with predicate crimes committed outside the territory of the Czech Republic; in 2022, this has already appeared even in the top ten of the reported activities. In relation to 2022, the alerts on possible new activities that had not appeared before included twice alerts on violations of international sanctions and trafficking in dual-use goods. This alert is based on the current international situation and that organised crime can benefit significantly from this circumstance.

Corruption, which is more of a tool to achieve one's own profit goals, has taken the first place among the developed activities. The experts' statements showed that corruption efforts are predominantly aimed at securing the primary objective of organised crime, i.e., making a profit, and that they are significantly directed towards public finances. Also significant is the attempt to influence the activities of the state administration and the political sphere to gain power and influence through corruption.

After the signalled decline in the organisation of groups in previous years, experts perceive a shift towards more organised structures in 2021 and 2022. The share of external experts has fallen to 46% and, according to respondents, these collaborators mainly carry out administrative and logistical work.

In 2021, experts put the proportion of women in organised crime groups at 21%, a relatively noticeable rise to a level never reported; in 2022, this estimate was essentially unchanged. It could be said that the expert estimate of women's involvement in organised crime groups more or less follows the general upward trend in the share of women in reported crime. The experts' statements on the activities carried out by women in organised crime groups also indicate their growing role.

The ratio of the international and domestic elements in organised crime has remained essentially balanced in the long term, with only a slight shift towards a higher representation of Czechs. In relation to foreigners involved in organised crime activities in the Czech Republic, in the opinion of experts, Ukrainians have moved into first place. However, it can be stated that the representation of foreigners is still steadily dominated by citizens of four countries: Ukraine, Vietnam, Russia, Albania (including Kosovo Albanians). For the most frequently represented nationalities, there has been a certain reverse shift towards a more significant representation of violent crime, a higher representation of illegal migration and a significant frequency of illegal employment among Ukrainians. For the Vietnamese, drug crime and economic or tax crime continue to dominate as strongly as in previous years. For Russians, economic crime activities are at the forefront, dominated by the laundering of profits, which appear to be largely derived from abroad. For Albanians, drug trafficking has long been the dominant activity.

Overall, it can be summarised that the opinions of experts on the development of organised crime in the Czech Republic point to some partial rather than fundamental shifts in the view of 2022.

Analysis of available data shows that recorded crime in 2022 has increased and is approaching the pre-pandemic period. However, this rise is not yet steep and other characteristics of crime and penal policy have not changed significantly. Rather, there have been partial shifts in the areas studied, despite very turbulent socio-economic influences over the last five years.

Analysis of crime trends in the Czech Republic in 2022

Autoři: Miroslav Scheinost
Simona Diblíková
Kateřina Grohmannová
Jana Hulmáková
Viktorie Paloušová
Hana Přesličková
Michaela Roubalová
Kazimír Večerka

Vydavatel: Institut pro kriminologii a sociální prevenci
Nám. 14. října 12, Praha 5

Určeno: Pro odbornou veřejnost

Design: addnoise.org

Sazba: Lukáš Pracný, sazbaknih.cz

Vydání: první, prosinec 2023

the first of these is the fact that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear. The second is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear.

The third is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear. The fourth is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear.

The fifth is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear. The sixth is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear.

The seventh is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear. The eighth is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear.

The ninth is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear. The tenth is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear.

The eleventh is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear. The twelfth is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear.

The thirteenth is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear. The fourteenth is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear.

The fifteenth is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear. The sixteenth is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear.

The seventeenth is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear. The eighteenth is that the system is not a simple one. It is a complex system, and the behavior of the system is not linear.