

# Security of the Population in the Czech Republic from the Aspect of Crime and Penitentiary System

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## Abstract

The empirical study concerning wide area of security of the Czech population deals with both its aspects – crime and prison population. First, we have the picture of macro-economic view on the issues through the international comparison of government expenditures on individual areas of public order and security. More comprehensive part of the paper maps out the development of registered and cleared-up crime in the Czech Republic by main types, it pays attention to selected groups of perpetrators (children, juveniles, criminal repeaters) and also its significant regional dimensions, including attempts to explain it. Overwhelming quantitative view on crime is extended also by subjective evaluation of security of population near their residence. Significance of qualitative view increases mainly in attempt to make international comparison where traditional “hard” data on crime hit different legal environment also in geographically close countries within the EU. Social pathology and criminal legislation influence also the composition of prison population which is assessed from the aspect of sex, age, citizenship, education, the level of imposed sentence and criminal history. Increasing number of prisoners has recently negatively influenced the occupancy rate of prisons, which raises questions concerning sustainability of financing of penitentiary system especially in the period of total economic depression. Presidential amnesty in January 2013 released more than a quarter of all prisoners which resulted in one-shot significant decrease in occupancy rate. This event modified also the structure of prison population. The position of the Czech Republic within EU improved significantly in terms of occupancy rate, but still remained unfavourable as regards total rate of imprisonment of population.

## Keywords

*Public order and security, crime, prison issues, penitentiary system, public expenditure, regional difference, Czech Republic, European countries*

## JEL code

*D 63, H 56, J 19, K14, R 23*

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the most important attributes of the quality of life is an internal security (safety) of the population of a given country. It can be assessed on the basis of “hard” data (based on revealed crimes) and also according to subjective perception of security by individuals. Analysis is focused on selected aspects of

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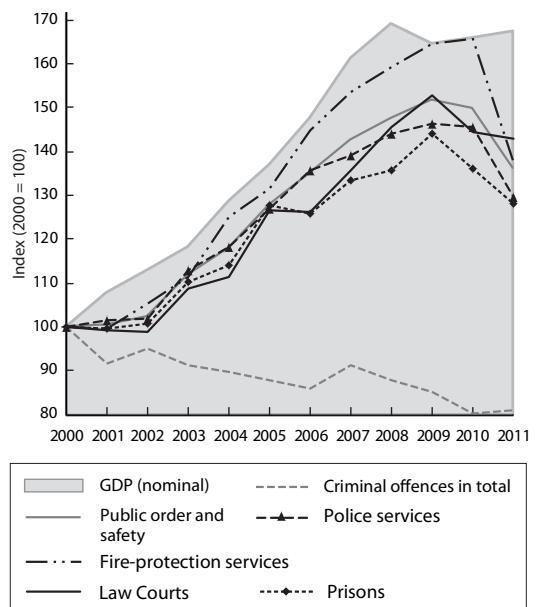
these issues using multi-source data with the attempt to reach more complex view. Crime and penitentiary system are examined from the aspect of disparities in individual regions of the Czech Republic and also from international aspect which is, however, in majority of indicators limited by methodological inconsistencies. Analysis is extended by comparisons of public order and security expenditures. These are also supplied with comment on possibilities of public finance which depend on the performance of the Czech economy. Analysis is focused on data in time series from 2000 and in majority of areas it brings also fresh data for 2011 or 2012 (data concerning prison population were updated to reflect significant impact of presidential amnesty declared in January 2013). Most of the data was obtained from the “official sources” – *Police Presidium of the CR or Prison Service of the CR*. By means of basic methods of descriptive statistics we analysed both volumes and structure of reported or cleared-up crimes as well as imprisoned population.

## 1 EXPENDITURES ON PUBLIC ORDER AND SECURITY

According to preliminary results of tables related to the sector of government institutions accounts (including except for central government also local government) in 2011 in the Czech Republic the total of CZK 70.2 billion was allocated to public order and (internal) security. Slightly over a half of this amount swallowed the expenditures on police services, one eighth went to fire safety, one sixth to courts including prosecutor’s offices and one tenth to prison issues. The growth rate of total nominal government expenditures on public order and security for the last decade fell behind the GDP growth. Taking into account of the assessed partial groups of expenditures only expenditure on fire safety maintained (till 2010) nominal growth-rate of GDP, on the other hand, the growth-rate of expenditure on prison system was by 65% slower in comparison to the output of the whole economy. Overall economic slowdown had negative effect on government expenditures on public order and security. In recent years nominal GDP of Czech economy has stagnated while expenditures on public order and safety has been reduced significantly – between years 2009 and 2011 by 10% (on fire safety by 16%, on penitentiary system only by 7% - deeper reduction was prevented only by the stable increase of “prison population”).

Total government expenditures on public order and security reached in 2010 in the Czech Republic 2.04% of the GDP. Compared to the situation in 2000 expenditures were by 0.22 p.p. lower, minimum in the last decade was reached in 2008. In most EU countries in the last decade the share of expenditures on public order and security moderately increased – most in Greece and Portugal, the more sensitive drop than in the Czech Republic was recorded in the Baltics. The Czech Republic, like most of new EU members, keeps in terms of its share of expenses slightly above the EU average from which the Northern countries, otherwise very “budgetary generous”, get out by their low expenditures. Strong budgetary pressure across EU members led in 2011

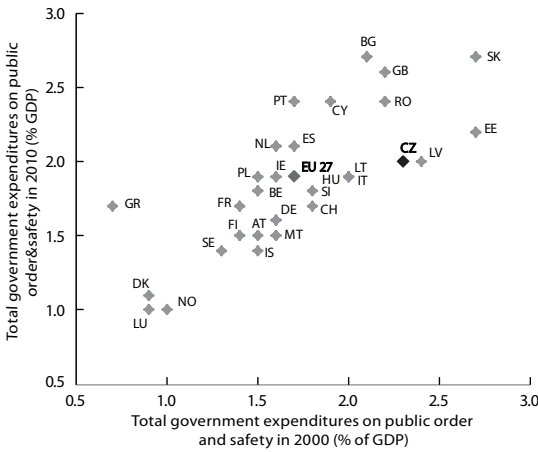
**Figure 1** Total registered crime and government expenditures by selected items\* (2000 = 100)



\* Based on International Classification of the Functions of Public Entities (COFOG).

Source: CZSO, Eurostat, own calculations

**Figure 2** Selected countries – total government expenditures on public order and safety (in % of GDP, 2010 compared to 2000)

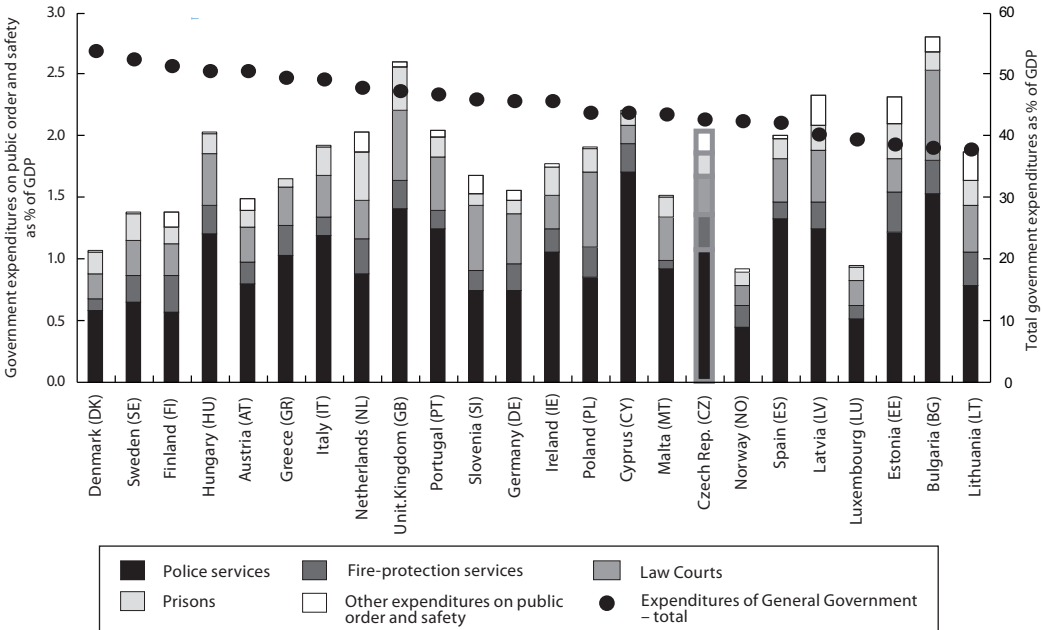


Source: CZSO, Eurostat, own calculations

to expenditure cuts on public order and security. In the CR these expenditures decreased to 1.84% of the GDP.

In the structure of government expenditures on public order and security in the European countries, given the moderately above-a-half share, significantly prevail expenditures on police service (see Figure 3). Expenses on police service swallowed in 2006–2010 in Cyprus almost four fifths of all expenditures on public orders and security, in Germany and in Northern Europe expenditures represent 45%. The second most expensive item in majority of countries form expenses on justice, which draw out around one fifth of all expenses on public order and security. The Czech Republic with the structure of its government expenditures on public order and security does not differ much from majority of European countries.

**Figure 3** Expenditures of the government sector on selected items of security & public order and total government expenditures in selected European countries (% of GDP, average in the period 2006–2010)



Source: CZSO, Eurostat, own calculations

In the group of 24 assessed countries (mostly from EU, see Figure 3) the Czech Republic allocated in the period 2006–2010 in relation to GDP bigger amount of public expenditures on fire safety (0.28% to

0.20% in EU), and lower on justice (0.32% to 0.40%). In justice expenditures there exist big disparities – Bulgaria expended on this item 0.73% of GDP while the Northern countries 0.2–0.3% of GDP. In percentage of expenditures on police or penitentiary system in the assessed period the Czech Republic did not differ much from the EU average and like majority of “new member” EU countries expand yearly on all areas of public order and security more than 2% of GDP which ranks it among the above-average countries within the EU. From among the “old members” also the Great Britain (2.6%), the Netherlands and Portugal belong to those with higher expenditures. While big expenditures of the Great Britain show in all main areas of security, in the Netherlands they are obvious only for fire safety and especially for penitentiary system (expenditures on penitentiary system here as in one of a few European countries exceed the expenditures on justice).

**2 STRUCTURE AND INTENSITY OF CRIME IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

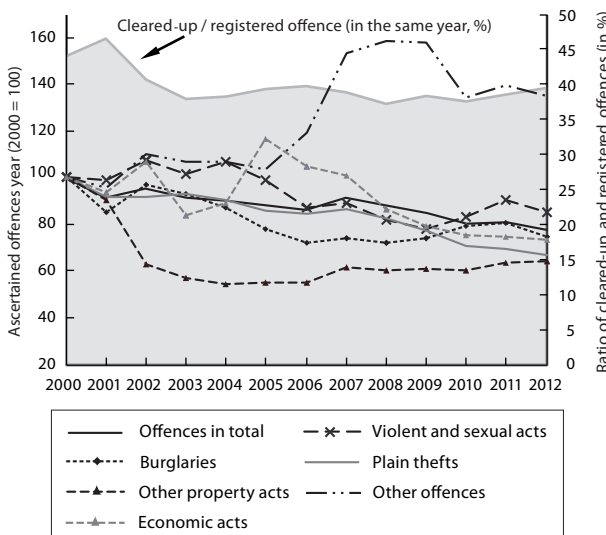
In actual fact, government expenditures on public order and safety are related mainly to crime (delinquency). This represents in current globalized world a serious social phenomenon. Free movement of labour force and capital at one hand enable more intensive interconnection of economy and individuals, at the other hand, it has many negative consequences (e.g. illegal migration streams or development of organised highly sophisticated forms of economic crime).

Besides external influence crime in individual countries is bound to the effect of many national specific factors. Important role in the Czech Republic belongs to criminal legislation (specification of offences, relation between transgressions and offences, determination of the term of punishment) as well as the work of investigative, prosecuting and adjudicating bodies (number of policemen “in the field“, their qualification and mutual co-operation in revealing increasingly sophisticated forms of economic and property crimes, including organized crime; how quickly justice works). This is related to confidence of persons (who suffered damage) in work of the above institutions which shows e.g. by willingness to report “minor“ offences. To make taboo of some offences or insufficient protection of their victims (so

called secondary victimization e.g. in case of domestic violence) shows continuing effect. Indisputable is also the impact of current climate in the society, worsened by social and economic situation (surviving of relatively high unemployment, drop of real purchase power of a big percentage of the population) as well as publicizing of increasing social tensions in certain troublesome regions. Dynamics of total number of offences is generally related to shifts in age structure of population and marginally also to growing foreign migration.

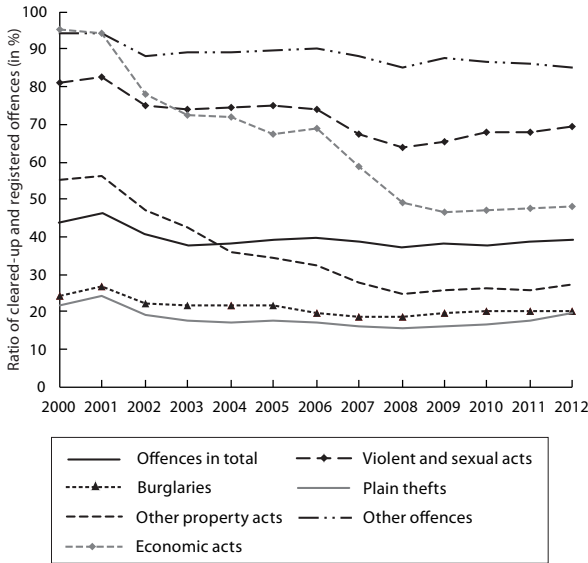
In 2011 in the Czech Republic police bodies registered 317.2 thousand offences, i.e. by 1.2% more, year-on year. Intensity of crime was by whole one fourth below the level recorded in 1999, when the big growth of crime started along with transformation of economy (related among other things with big

**Figure 4** Development of main types of registered (ascertained) offences in the CR



Source: Police Presidium of the CR, own calculations

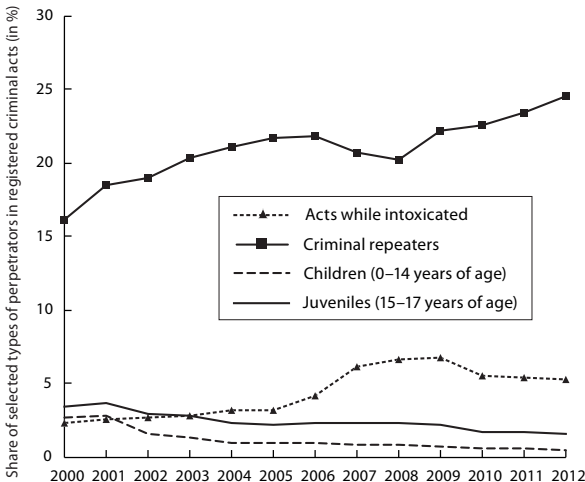
**Figure 5** Relation of cleared-up and registered offences in respective year in CR



Source: Police Presidium of the CR, own calculations

poisons” (compared to 2007 the number was by 40% bigger) – in both cases in 2011 the level of registered crime was close to the level in 2000. The period of total economic slow-down is accompanied by growth of cases of “perverting of the course of justice” (between years 2008 and 2011 growth by 50%) and notably “evasion of alimony payments (i.e. child neglect/desertion)” (between years 2008 and 2011 growth by 150% and on the contrary, in the period of economic growth in 2004–2008 the fall by almost one fifth was recorded). Both previous violations of laws are specific not only by high clear-up rate but

**Figure 6** Share of selected types of perpetrators in total crime in the CR



Source: Police Presidium of the CR, own calculations

property transfers) culminated. For the last decade this referred for only third y-o-y crime growth (previous two growths in 2002 and 2007, however, by their size slightly exceeded current moderate increase of crime).

Behind the y-o-y increase of registered crimes in 2011 there was mainly the increase of frequency of revealed acts of violence (by 7%), offences against morality (by 15%) and burglaries (by 2%). This did not refer to a random deviation since in all these categories of delinquency a moderate growth has been registered as early as since 2009 (in case of acts of violence since 2010). From among other acts (according to individual sections) increasing was the number of registered cases of “breach of the peace” (in 2011 by one third above the level of 2009) and “illegal production, possession and distribution of narcotics, psychotropic substances and poisons” (in 2011 by one third above the level of 2009) and “illegal production, possession and distribution of narcotics, psychotropic substances and poisons” (compared to 2007 the number was by 40% bigger) – in both cases in 2011 the level of registered crime was close to the level in 2000. The period of total economic slow-down is accompanied by growth of cases of “perverting of the course of justice” (between years 2008 and 2011 growth by 50%) and notably “evasion of alimony payments (i.e. child neglect/desertion)” (between years 2008 and 2011 growth by 150% and on the contrary, in the period of economic growth in 2004–2008 the fall by almost one fifth was recorded). Both previous violations of laws are specific not only by high clear-up rate but mainly by high share of criminal repeaters (in long-term around 60%) among their perpetrators who often end up with unconditional sentences and extend so far high number of “prison population“.

According to preliminary results, in 2012 the total number of registered offences was 4% lower than previous year. This can be assessed as a return on long-term trajectory. Police bodies revealed fewer violent and sexual acts (–5%), number of burglaries dropped (–7%) after three-year period of growth, also plain thefts were less frequent. On contrary stable moderate growth of other property acts continued (mainly frauds).

Growth of share of criminal repeaters in registered offences is a long-term phenomenon in the CR, since 2000 it

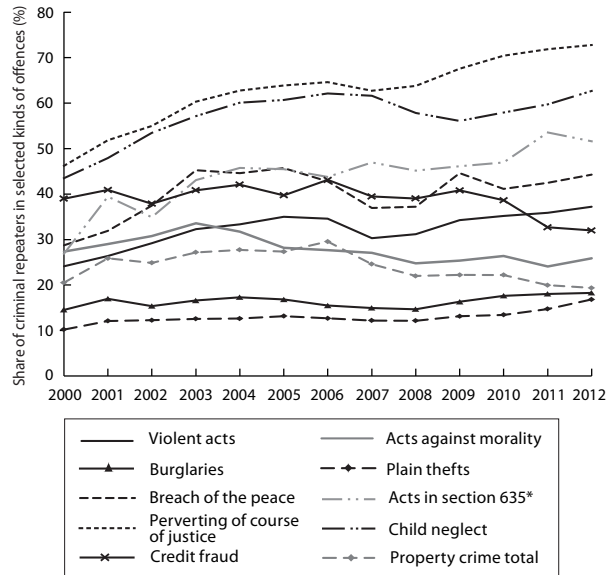
has been temporarily suspended only in 2007–2008. In 2012 criminal repeaters represented almost one quarter of all offences. The growing influence of recidivism (repeated crime) was caused by combination of two factors.

First, due to deeper drop of incidence of acts with low share of repeated offenders. This referred mainly to property offences – forming two thirds of total crime – which dropped as a whole between the years 2000–2012 by almost 32% while the total crime only by 22%. Property offences at the same time show long-term falling clear-up rate which in 2012 did not reach even 20%.<sup>3</sup> It is therefore possible that the drop of registered property acts is partly caused by lower readiness of the injured persons to report these acts to the police. The second course of increasing repeated crime subsists in the growth of absolute number of acts committed by criminal repeaters which increased mainly in the first half of the assessed decade (from 63 thousand to 75 thousand). This was contributed to not only by acts of violence and some economic offences (credit and other frauds) but mainly the above mentioned other criminal acts (breach of the peace, drug abuse, perverting of the course of justice, desertion, endangerment under the influence of toxic substances or alcoholism).

The growth of share of criminal activity committed under the influence of alcohol was related to the increasing share of drivers at fault who were intoxicated. Another factor was a fast growing number of registered acts “endangerment under the influence of toxic substances or alcoholism” and not falling number of other acts where alcohol played an important role (breach of the peace and some kinds of acts of violence). Changes in number of registered crime under the influence of alcohol might reflect also the inconsistencies applied in alcohol test made for perpetrators immediately after their detention.

Share of the youth and children in total crime is falling moderately on long-term basis. One of reasons may also be a low birth-rate implicating decrease in the number of potential perpetrators (between the years 2000 and 2012 by 230 thousand (11.5%). The share of juvenile perpetrators dropped in all main categories of criminal activity (mainly for those who at the beginning of past decade reached more than 10% of share in all the perpetrators – i.e. for the acts of violence and against morality and for specific acts such as breach of the peace, sprayers, drug crime and some minor thefts). In case of juvenile delinquency

**Figure 7** Share of criminal repeaters in selected kinds of criminal activity in the CR<sup>2</sup>



\* Acts in section 635: Unlicensed manufacture and possession of psychotropic matters and poisons.

Source: Police Presidium of the CR, own calculations

<sup>2</sup> Criminal activity as mentioned in Figure 7 in connection with drugs refers to section 635 (illegal production, possession and distribution of narcotics, psychotropic substances and poisons).

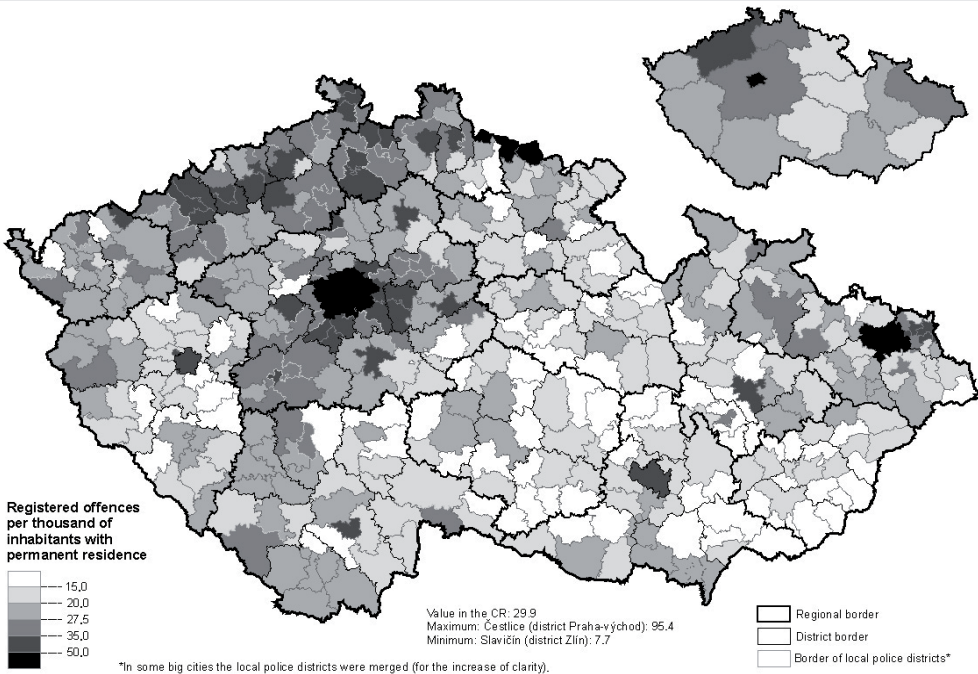
<sup>3</sup> Clear-up rate is understood as the relationship of clear-up and registered acts at the same calendar year. This does not refer to „net clear-up rate“ (this would have to be calculated by more sophisticated cohort method) because a part of cleared-up acts in the monitored year is “overvalued” by offences recorded in the previous years and on the other hand is “underestimated” by offences recorded at the same calendar year but revealed as late as in subsequent years. For the purpose of gross comparisons of basic categories of offences in long-term aspect can be however considered the created indicator as sufficient.

legal assessment of acts<sup>4</sup> (e.g. the difference between an offence and transgression) is important and also trend to apply educational and less repressive forms of correction of perpetrator. Along with these general factors also specific impacts related closely with specific locality (e.g. program of crime prevention at local or regional level) are applied.

### 3 STRUCTURE AND INTENSITY OF CRIME AT REGIONAL LEVEL

Regional disparities represent one of important features of registered (ascertained) crime. For their assessment analysis at the level of regions (enabling to map out current trend also according to basic kinds of criminal activity) was used. We also dealt with the level of lower territorial units (local police districts),<sup>5</sup> which we assessed as one whole (i.e. crime in total) in respect of lower frequency of criminal acts. Due to changing borders of individual district departments only the period 2010–2011 was analysed.

Map 1 Ascertained offences per 1000 inhabitants (average for 2010 and 2011).



Source: Police Presidium of the CR, own calculations

The above map shows that from the above-average crime suffers the population of most regional cities (with *Prague* and *Ostrava* at the first place), practically the whole *Ústecký* region and western part of *Liberecký* region, wider surroundings of *Prague*, also *Příbram* district and selectively some of other border districts (near *Cheb*, *Tachov*, *Břeclav*). On the other hand, relatively most secure territory is the

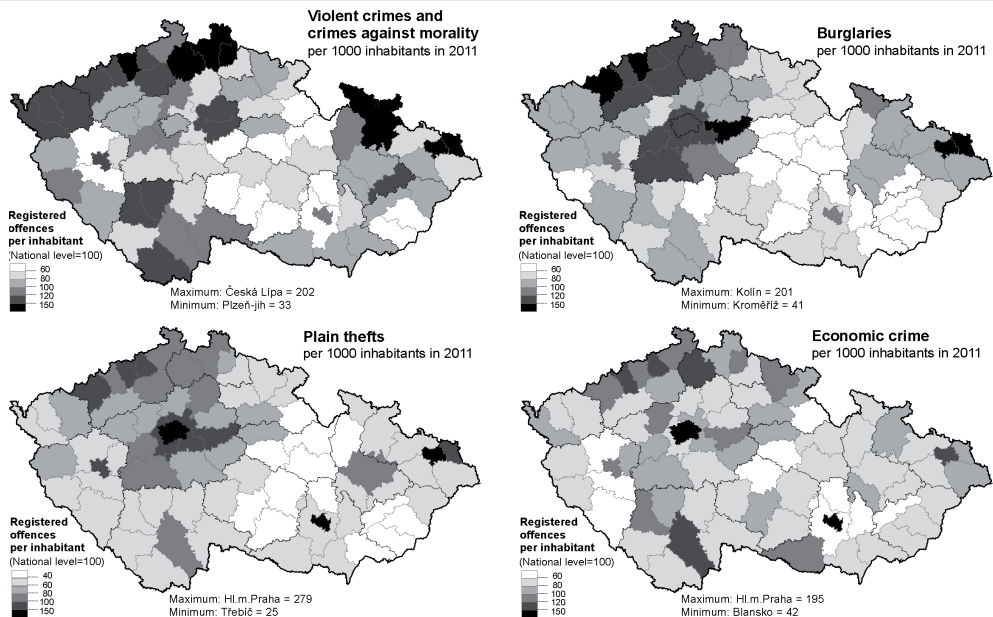
<sup>4</sup> E.g. No. 218/2003 Sb. (regulating the level of social danger and manner of treating children and minors who committed offences) significantly supporting educational measures.

<sup>5</sup> Police Presidium of the CR keeps records of registered crime (on the level of individual sections) up to the level of more than 550 district police departments. With respect to more frequent changes of borders of these districts within big cities, the problem of allocation of corresponding number of residents and also to significant disparities between “de-jure population” (permanent residents) “de-facto population” (which is more suitable for measuring of intensity of crime) in big cities these districts were merged. Thereby, we had about 430 of territorial units under which the intensity of crime was assessed (see Map 1).

southern part of eastern Bohemia and especially whole *Vysočina* region and rural submontane regions of Moravian and Silesian borderland. The level of criminality is influenced by complex multifactor and partly also inertial phenomena. It is not surprising that its territorial structure has not changed much for the last decade in basic above mentioned features.

Among more important recent changes it should be mentioned the growth of intensity of crime in *Ostrava*, *Karviná* and *Bruntál* districts especially in the last five years (peaked in 2010–11). An increasing trend showed crimes also in *Kolín* and *Dečín* districts (where the y-o-y growth of crime affected almost the whole district despite the fact that high intensity of crime survived in the region of *Sluknov* and *Varnsdorf* which are known from the media). Some big cities with the highest crime-rate in the whole CR succeeded in reducing the number of registered offences down to a half (*Mladá Boleslav*). Recent developments in *Mladá Boleslav* was in contradiction with near *Kolín* (with also important automotive industry) where after the entry of strong foreign investor and subsequent migration of workers the crime increased. One third of the drop of crime since 2000 was recorded in *Karlovy Vary* or *Tábor*, higher dynamics of drop compared to the CR was maintained also by other cities (and their neighbourhood): *Kladno*, *Teplice*, *Pardubice*, *Hodonín*, *Vsetín*, *Zlín*, *Opava*.

Map 2 Difference in intensities of selected types of criminal activity by districts in 2011.



Source: Police Presidium of the CR, own calculations

In addition to general factors with the nation wide effect (mentioned in introduction to this chapter) we should point out also other ones which might explain the differences of criminal activity at regional or local level. The key role is attributed to social structure of the population: mainly higher level of education, low migration turnover, phenomenon of patriotism or religiousness – these mitigate the crime. Complex conditionality of crime is denuded by unfavourable situation in big cities (with higher education of the population) where due to the influence of increased anonymity the drop of general social control takes place. Criminal activity is also contributed to population with short stay (tourists, commuters to work and schools) and also segments of population which are difficult to quantify (illegal migrants, homeless people).



Comparison of the number of offences to the population with permanent residence has in big cities its limits like in areas with intensive tourism and leisure time activities (i.e. border mountain areas, southern surroundings of *Prague*). The quality of measurement of crime intensity might be improved in the near future by final results of the population census, where population was according to EU standards classified by the place of usual residence. From among other factors co-shaping the crime the influence of preventive measures (e.g. camera systems or more generally, action programmes of struggle against crime and social exclusion) cannot be neglected. Finally, the criminal activity is certainly stimulated by worsened physical quality of living and also by quality, cleanliness and lay-out of public spaces (streets, play-ground, greenery, etc). Many of these factors are affected by not only by national policy but predominantly by regional or local policy.

Looking at main kinds of criminal activity (see Map 2) we find out that its territorial structure differs. “The phenomenon of big cities” are mainly plain thefts (typical pick pocketing, stealing of items from car and also car thefts). Almost one third of them was recorded in *Prague*, three biggest cities in the CR contributed in 2011 to the republic total of plain thefts by 47%. Plain thefts significantly co-create a picture of total crime to which they contribute by 40%. In case of burglaries (forming one fifth of total crime) the dominant position is attributed in addition to the biggest cities also to southern part of the *Středočeský* region, to the whole area of *Ústecký* region and western part of the *Liberecký* region. In border areas there are higher intensities of violent crimes and acts against morality (these areas including also territories where the total intensity of crime is rather lower in long-term basis (i.e. *South Bohemia* borderland, *Jesenicko-Bruntálsko*).

The last important group – economic crime – which to the total crime contributes by one tenth, is typical mainly of big cities and their territorial structure comes close to plain thefts. Dominant position of the biggest cities was, however against current thefts lower. *Prague* contributed to the total registered economic crime in 2011 by one fifth and along with *Brno* and *Ostrava* by one third. The share of three biggest cities in the Czech Republic in the total of registered economic crimes is increasing, on the long-term basis since those in 2000 concentrated only one fifth of this criminal activity. This fact may relate to long-term change of the structure of committed economic crimes – birth of new forms of criminal activity (e.g. subvention fraud) and strengthening of influence of sophisticated offences (e.g. criminal acts related with currency and means of payment including credit cards). Changes of structure of economic crime are probably related also to certain changes of structure of perpetrators (increasing of crime committed by “white collars”), including its territorial structure. Change of structure of acts within economic crime is reflected in sharp drop in cleared-up (for the last decade the clear-up rate dropped down to a half) party due to increasing lapse of time between detection and clear-up of criminal activity.

#### 4 RELATION OF REGISTERED AND SUBJECTIVELY PERCEIVED CRIME

The above-mentioned results reflect the fact on the basis of registered or cleared-up crime. Since it refers to “hard data” it can be hardly presumed that we could only by their means obtain the exhaustive picture of total actual crime. This can bring closer the qualitative views, i.e. subjective perception of this phenomenon by (local) population. The advantage of this approach is that among other things it may map out criminal acts incl. “mere” transgressions (which escape from police records) has, however, also its own limits.<sup>6</sup> For the purpose of subjective assessment of crime the results of survey of the CZSO “Living con-

<sup>6</sup> It should be taken into account that statements of residents may be burdened by certain mistake resulting from insufficient knowledge or disinterest in the given range of problems or, on the contrary, from uncritical assessment of the situation related to exaggeration of own experience, generalization of reality from immediate neighbourhood to wider area (quarter, city, region). The problem is also availability of data, the information is possible to obtain only by sample survey which is always burdened by certain error in relation to the size of surveyed sample of the population and selected method for sampling.

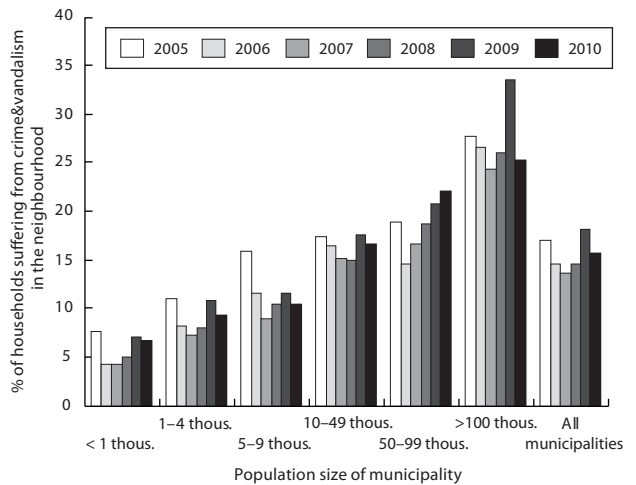
ditions“ were used where respondents answered also to the question whether or not they consider vandalism and crime in the neighbourhood of their residence as problem.

Along with increasing size of municipality of residence the households report bigger dissatisfaction with crime and vandalism near their residence (in cities with over 100 thousand inhabitants their share is on long-term basis four times bigger than in rural municipalities). Subjective perception of crime was moderately improving (during 2005–8), in subsequent years of economic slow-down, however, households began to perceive this problem in their neighbourhood as more burning (regarding the size of their domicile). Although citizens of most of the regions subjectively assessed crime in 2010 slightly better than five years ago (which corresponded with the general drop of registered criminal activity). Exception formed regions with lower registered crime: the Jihočeský region and region in the east of Bohemia and also Vysočina region where parallel growth of registered crime was recorded. The sequence of regions by objectively registered criminal activity well corresponds with the ranking by subjective perception of crime (except for three regions whose citizens fell problems with crime in their neighbourhood less). The reason for this partial disharmony may be the fact that the inhabitants assessed their situation only in their neighbourhood (not in the whole region) and might include wider range of criminal behaviour.

**5 CRIME IN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON**

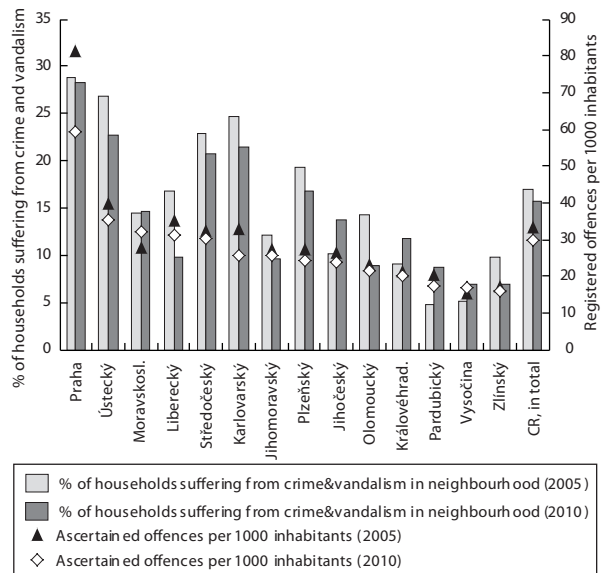
If we try to map out the phenomenon of crime in the widest possible context we soon must come across the problems arising in attempts to make more profound international comparison. Even though individual European countries have relatively detailed criminal records their data are often incomparable due to the influence of different definition of

**Figure 8** Share of households suffering from crime and vandalism in the neighbourhood (by size of municipality of residence)



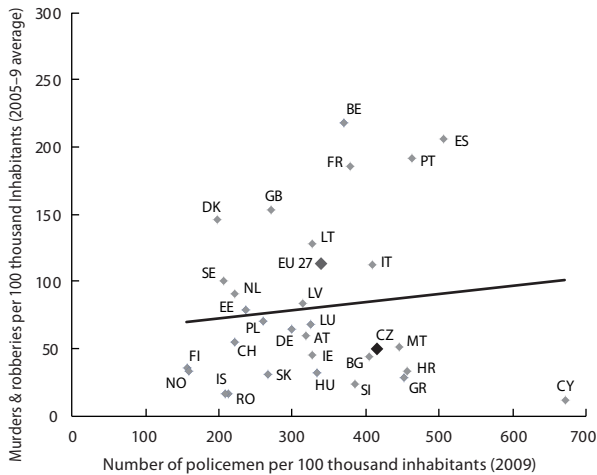
Source: Police Presidium of the CR, CZSO (survey Living conditions), own calculations

**Figure 9** Relationship of subjectively perceived crime near residence and registered crime by regions of the CR



Source: Police Presidium of the CR, CZSO (survey Living conditions), own calculations

**Figure 10** Number of policemen and number of registered murders and robberies in selected European countries (per 100 thousand of population)<sup>8</sup>



Source: Eurostat, own calculations

strong ethnic immigration (Britain, France, Belgium, countries of the Pyrenees peninsula). Relatively low figures of murders and robberies are typical of majority of northern countries (where they are in contrast to high total recorded criminal acts) and also “new” EU member countries (except for the Baltic states with high number of recorded murders). The Czech Republic does not go beyond the borders of general characteristic of new member countries, by relative number of most serious offences it belongs (along with the whole area of Central Europe) to „safer“ areas of the continent. From among our neighbours relatively higher number of murders and robberies are recorded only in Poland, however, even here less than in the whole EU.

If we relate roughly 40 thousand of policemen to the size of the population in the Czech Republic we come (in the context of EU alongside with numerous representatives of southern Europe) to the countries with relatively higher number of police corps. Relative number of policemen was according to data from the year 2009 (last available) also for all our neighbours lower. In Europe it is possible to see a north-south gradient, in northern countries (also in the GB) there was smaller number of policemen per head.

In the group of thirty European countries no direct linear dependence of the number of policemen (per head) on any other of the main kinds of registered crime was proven. If we rule out Cyprus from the

criminal legal acts, relationship between criminal activity and transgressions, etc. Equally important are also different legal practice (enforcement of punishments or records of actual criminal activity). If we assess individual countries only on the basis of total crime recorded by police bodies we would easily come to paradoxical conclusions.<sup>7</sup> We may, however, suppose that in certain segment of registered offences (mainly the most serious) their record rate also in the countries with generally lower quality of record keeping (south European countries, the Balkan) is sufficient enough to be able to carry out at least general comparison across Europe.

On the basis of recorded murders and robberies (with a 2% share in total crime in the EU countries) per head bigger figures are recorded only in member EU countries traditionally associated with

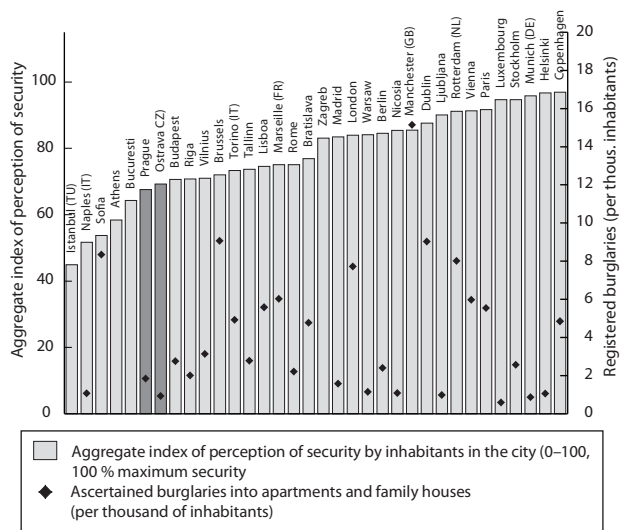
<sup>7</sup> It is supported by the fact that according to the number of all recorded offences per heard Sweden shows the biggest figures (triple of the level in EU), at the opposite end of the spectrum there is majority of Balkan countries whose crime rate according to the official statistics does not reach even one tenth of the level in Sweden. In ten European countries with the highest assessed crime there are all northern countries, Benelux countries and most of Alpine countries (e.g. Switzerland). Hinted differences attest to the quality (completeness) of its record by means of long-term system of registers rather than to total real crime. Certain role is played also by better willingness of the population to co-operate with the bodies caring for public order and safety which is related to confidence in their activity.

<sup>8</sup> List of countries and their abbreviations (pursuant to valid nomenclature of CZEM countries): Belgium (BE), Bulgaria (BG), Czech Republic (CZ), Denmark (DK), Estonia (EE), Finland (FI), France (FR), Croatia (HR), Ireland (IE), Island (IS), Italy (IT), Cyprus (CY), Lithuania (LT), Latvia (LV), Luxembourg (LU), Hungary (HU), Malta (MT), Germany (DE), Netherlands (NL), Norway (NO), Poland (PL), Portugal (PT), Austria (AT), Rumania (RO), Greece (GR), Slovakia (SK), Slovenia (SI), Great Britain (GB), Spain (ES), Sweden (SE), Switzerland (CH).

group (with very specific political situation on long-term basis) we may find weaker relationship<sup>10</sup> only with number of registered robberies (see Figure 10).

Slightly different view on the assessment of the scope of real crime may provide different sociological surveys. On the basis of survey by Eurostat (conducted in 2006 and 2009 to collect “soft” data for urban statistics) less favourable position of Prague among European metropolis was obvious (Question: “How do you assess security and crime in the city you live?”<sup>11</sup>). Compared to Prague, worse results according to the survey were recorded for some big cities in the Balkans or big Italian cities. At the other hand, similar position as Prague reached Budapest or capitals in the Baltics. The best rating received security in the capitals in the north of Europe and in some bigger cities (Amsterdam, Munich, Hamburg) where the level of total official (i.e registered) crime was mostly above average. Behind this apparent discrepancy there is a fact that subjective assessment of security by citizens (besides level or real crime) reflects also more general factors (perception of the quality of work of bodies responsible for public order, quality of integration of foreigners, care for public areas in the city, proper preparation of crime-prevention programmes etc.). More objective data on security of the population in the advanced European countries may provide relative numbers of prisoners (see Figure 12). This comparison should be, however, considered as only general since the numbers of prisoners are significantly influenced by criminal legislation and its application in different countries (e.g. application of alternative punishment).

**Figure 11** Subjective assessment of security by inhabitants of European cities and intensity of recorded burglaries into apartments and houses (2006–2009)<sup>9</sup>



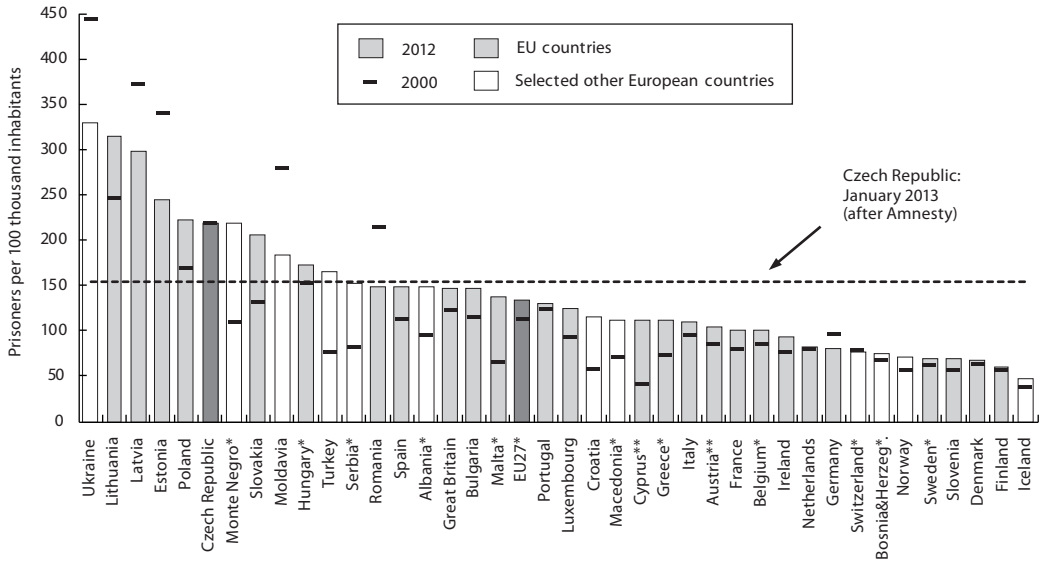
Source: Eurostat, own calculations

<sup>9</sup> Data proceeded from the series „European perception survey“, organized within the project „Urban Audit“ by Eurostat (random interviewing of households by phone) in the years 2006 and 2009. The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain from the population of a hundred of important European cities (capitals, in bigger countries also other selected important cities) their opinion on widely conceived quality of life in their city.

<sup>10</sup> Pearson’s correlation coefficient between the number of policemen and registered robberies (in both cases related to citizens) recorded in 2009 the value +0.35. The relationship between the number of policemen with total registered crime (-0.43) reflect the situation mainly in northern countries where the influence of lower numbers of policemen is combined with relatively higher total registered crime (partly due to more consistence records and partly due to different legal definitions of criminal activity – in total crime more probably are more often represented relatively “minor” acts, e.g. transgressions).

<sup>11</sup> In Prague in 2009 answered 30% of respondents that the city is generally safe, 35% considered the city safe only time from time and the same share of the inquired perceived security of city as positive seldom or not at all. In Ostrava corresponding shares of responses were 30%, 37% and 30%. In comparison with almost 80 surveyed cities (capitals of the EU countries, including Turkey and Croatia and other big EU cities) the situation in two our big cities was less favourable since the total average value (each city had the same weight) for the surveyed cities was 50% (mostly safe city), 33% (sometimes safe) and 15% (rarely or not safe at all). Between the years 2006 and 2009 only small changes (at European level and also for Czech cities) can be understood from the respondents’ answers.

**Figure 12** Number of prisoners<sup>12</sup> per 100 thousand inhabitants in selected European countries



\*\* Latest data for 2010, \* data for 2011.

Source: International Centre for Prison Studies <<http://www.prisonstudies.org/info/worldbrief/wpbcountry.php?country=158>>, own calculations

## 6 PENITENTIARY SYSTEM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The number of prisoners in the Czech Republic was increasing since 2003 in spite of long-term falling registered crime. The number of imprisoned persons on the territory of the Czech Republic<sup>13</sup> recorded except for 2006 the y-o-y continuous growth for almost ten years. In the last months the growth rate of the number of prisoners speeded up. While by the end of 2010 the total of 21 892 prisoners were in the Czech prisons, a year later it was 23 154 persons. The growth continued also in the first half of 2012 (almost +500 prisoners), but at the end of 2012 the “prison population” dropped to 22 609. Both total number of prisoners and their structure were significantly modified due to presidential amnesty declared at the beginning of 2013.

### 6.1 Development of the number and structure of prisoners

Total number of prisoners is a result of two partial components – number of accused persons (in custody) and the number of the imprisoned (convicted persons). These both components underwent for the last decade different paths. The number of persons in custody between the years 2000 and 2002 dropped by a half and decisively contributed at that time to the total decrease in the number of all prisoners. The drop was actually caused by legislative changes (especially Act No. 265/2001 Sb.) which make the conditions under which persons can be taken into custody stricter and regulated also the term of custody. Since 2003 the number of prisons in custody has stabilized, for males until 2007 the number has been slightly falling. The share of the accused in the total number of prisoners fell significantly, in 1998 the persons in custody formed almost one third of all prisoners, in 2011 only one tenth. In January 2013

<sup>12</sup> It includes all the accused (in custody) and sentenced adults or juvenile perpetrators of criminal acts who stay in prisons (including custodial and facilities for minors) or special hospital facilities (e.g. for drug addicts or mentally ill perpetrators). It does not include detained for non-criminal acts (i.e. during processes related to immigration proceedings).

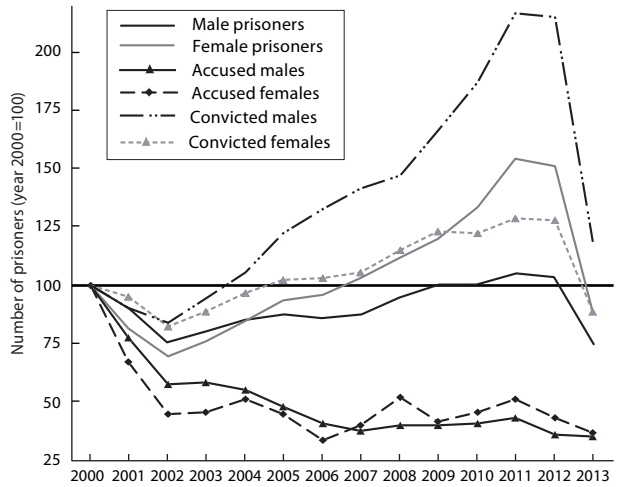
<sup>13</sup> More than one thousand of the Czech citizens are imprisoned in aboard, those, however, were not included into this analysis.

the share of accused rose to 13%, since presidential amnesty reduced sharply figures of sentenced prisoners but had negligible impact on persons in custody (see Figure 13).

On the contrary, the numbers of sentenced prisoners has been constantly increasing since 2002, while increases reached the level of the 90th. In the last three years there was a sharp growth of sentenced women whose number almost doubled compared to 2005, however, their contribution to the total number of prisons in relatively low (by the end of 2011 women imprisoned contributed by almost 6.5% moderately exceeding the EU averages). Although the number of releases from prisons is slightly increasing on long-term basis (from 3.1 thousand in 2003 to 4.4 thousand in 2010), the decisive factor of the growth of the prison population are bigger numbers of persons starting to serve their sentence from civil life (e.g. persons for whom community work showed no effect, i.e. suspended sentences and sentences entailing community works which were therefore changed into unconditional sentences). Long-term stable growth of “prison population” was disrupted by presidential amnesty. In January 2013 more than 28% of sentenced prisoners were released. Some penitentiary establishments released almost 50% of prisons. Due to the uneven spatial distribution more than a third of all released prisoners left establishments in north-western part of Czechia (neighbouring with the Saxony).

Growth of prisoners in the CR in the last decade was only marginally affected by persons with foreign nationality. The number of foreigners in prison facilities in the CR in the period 2000–2007 was decreasing, on the contrary, the later growth due to its intensity slightly

**Figure 13** Numbers of the accused (in custody) and convicted (sentenced) and the number of prisoners in the CR (as of 31 December\* year 2000 = 100)

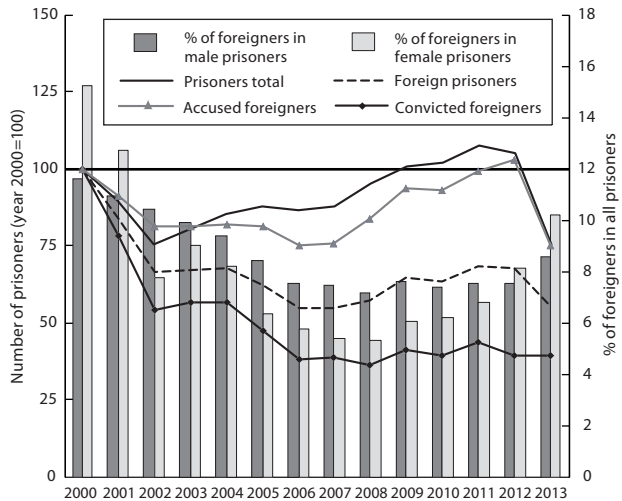


\* Latest data: January 2013 (after Amnesty).

**Note:** A foreigner is a person with other than Czech citizenship; former nationals of the CSFR for whom it is not obvious from available documents whether they are citizens of the CR or SR, are not included into foreigners.

**Source:** Prison Service of the CR, own calculations

**Figure 14** Numbers of the accused and sentenced foreigners and the share of foreigners in Czech prisons (as of 31 December\* year 2000 = 100)

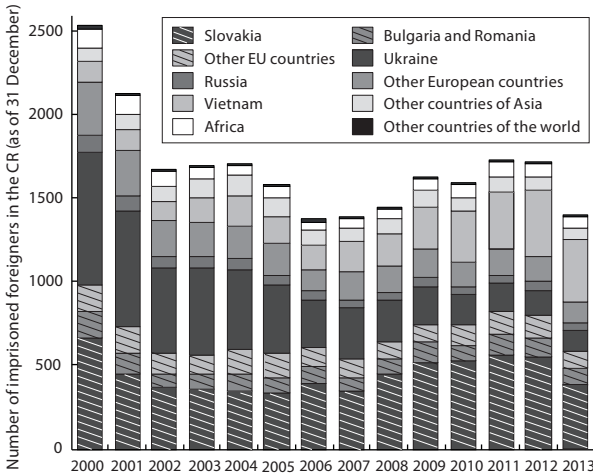


\* Latest data: January 2013 (after Amnesty).

**Note:** A foreigner is a person with other than Czech citizenship; former nationals of the CSFR for whom it is not obvious from available documents whether they are citizens of the CR or SR, are not included into foreigners.

**Source:** Prison Service of the CR, own calculations

**Figure 15** Numbers of prisoners – foreigners in the CR by citizenship (as of 31 December)\*

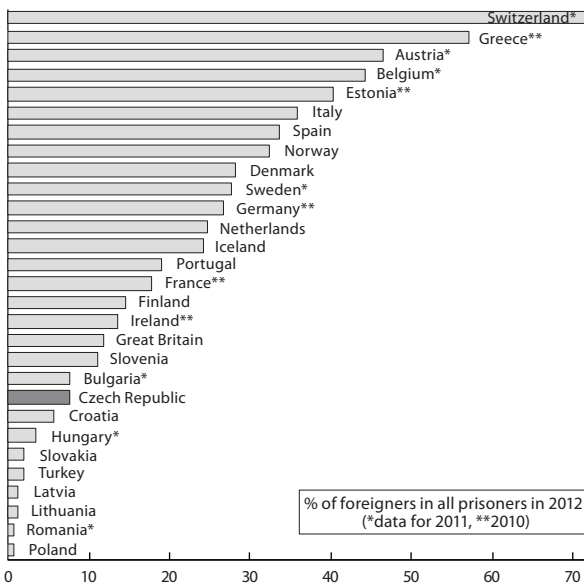


\* Latest data: January 2013 (after Amnesty).

Source: Prison Service of the CR, own calculations, International Centre for Prison Studies

the EU ranked the Czech Republic to a third of countries with the lowest share. From old-member EU countries lower share was only in Luxembourg (accompanied by the total low number of prisoners). In comparison with neighbouring countries the CR remained deeply behind Germany and Austria and

**Figure 16** Share of foreigners in the number of all prisoners in 2010–2012



Source: Prison Service of the CR, own calculations, International Centre for Prison Studies

exceeded the growth-rates showed by prisoners with Czech citizenship. By the end of 2012 in Czech prisons the total of 1715 foreigners were served their sentence, i.e. by one third less than at the end of 2000. The key factor behind the drop of imprisoned foreigners was lower number of the accused who are placed in custodial prisons (in 2000 they made 55% of all imprisoned foreigners, in 2012 only one third). Presidential amnesty reduced the number of foreign prisoners almost by a fifth. The share of foreigners in total prison population have risen to 8.7% (in January 2013), since they are still more frequently (in comparison with Czech nationals) taken into custody than into prison (and amnesty influenced mainly those in prisons).

To the total number of prisoners the foreigners contributed by 8% which in the EU ranked the Czech Republic to a third of countries with the lowest share. From old-member EU countries lower share was only in Luxembourg (accompanied by the total low number of prisoners). In comparison with neighbouring countries the CR remained deeply behind Germany and Austria and, on the other hand, it came closer to the position of Poland and Slovakia (belong in the EU to the countries with the lowest share of prisoners with foreign citizenship (1–2%)). Low contributions of imprisoned foreigners in most of new member EU countries correspond with so far lower share of all foreigners in the total population.

In the last decade significant shift took place in the structure of imprisoned foreigners in the CR by citizenship. If we abstract from the development in 2000–2002 (affected by legislative regulations of custodial prisons) then for the most important trend of the last decade we can consider weakening of the share of prisoners from the Ukraine and the Balkans in favour of the EU countries (mainly Slovakia) and Vietnam. Foreigners from the EU represented by the end of 2012 almost half of prisoners in the CR, in 2002 only one third. The share

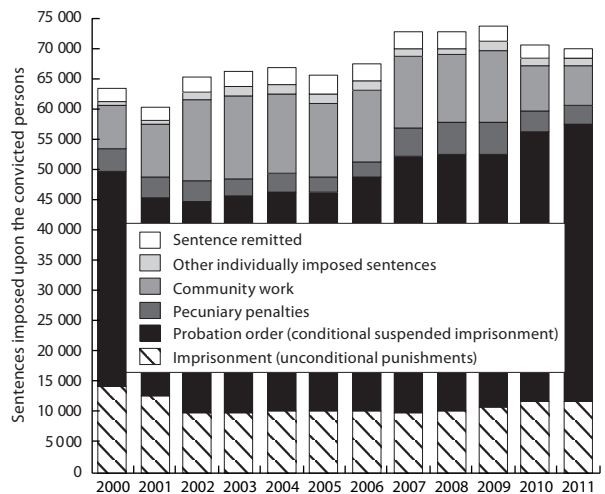
of prisoners with Vietnamese citizenship has quadrupled for the same period. Precisely opposite was the development in case of Ukrainians whose share dropped down to one tenth. The Vietnamese and Ukrainians represent at the same time the main drive of the growth of the number of all foreigners (with permanent residence or long-term stay) in the CR, for the last decade their number increased by 105% and 80%, respectively.

Among the convicted a long-term phenomenon can be recorded, i.e. more often conditional suspended imprisonments are applied, in 2011 almost 66% persons were convicted thereby, ten years earlier only 55%. More often the community works and pecuniary penalties are applied although in 2010 their shares dropped significantly from the first time since 2000 (partly obviously in favour of conditional sentences). The falling percentage of convicted persons were imprisoned, however, this long-term trend stopped in 2007. This fact along the growth of the number of conditional sentences (part of which will be transformed into unconditional in case of committing other offences) was the main cause of the growing number of prisoners in the last decade in the CR.

Convicted prisoners are still most often imprisoned in medium security prisons where (at the end of 2012) almost a half of prisoners was placed. On a long-term basis, the share of convicted persons in prisons with supervision and low security (i.e. in departments with lower security) is slightly growing. Especially in the 1990's the share of convicted persons placed in departments with the strictest regime (high security) was growing, in 2002 every twelfth convicted person was put there but ten years later only every seventeenth. In special prison for juveniles almost 1% of convicted persons was placed and since 2000 their percentage showed only intangible increase.

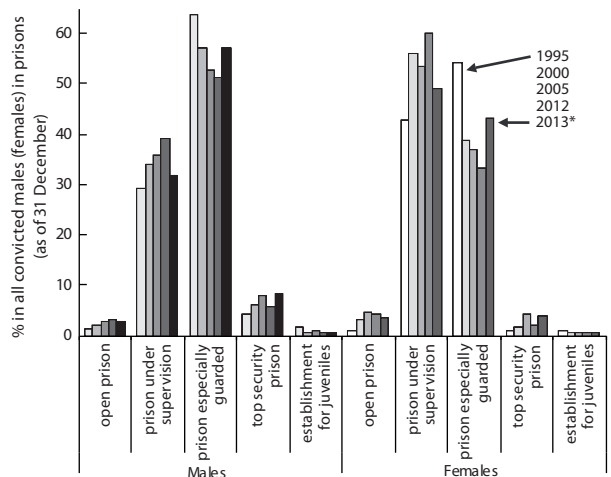
Convicted females are, contrary to males, more often placed in low security prisons. At the end of 2012 share of women placed in lower security prisons was twice as in prisons with medium or high security. For females as well as for convicted males the same development trends apply. They are more often placed in prisons with lower level

**Figure 17** Numbers of convicted in the CR by more frequent types of sentences



Source: Ministry of the justice of the CR, own calculations

**Figure 18** Number of convicted by type of prison in the CR



\* Latest data: January 2013 (after Amnesty).

Source: Prison Service of the CR, own calculations

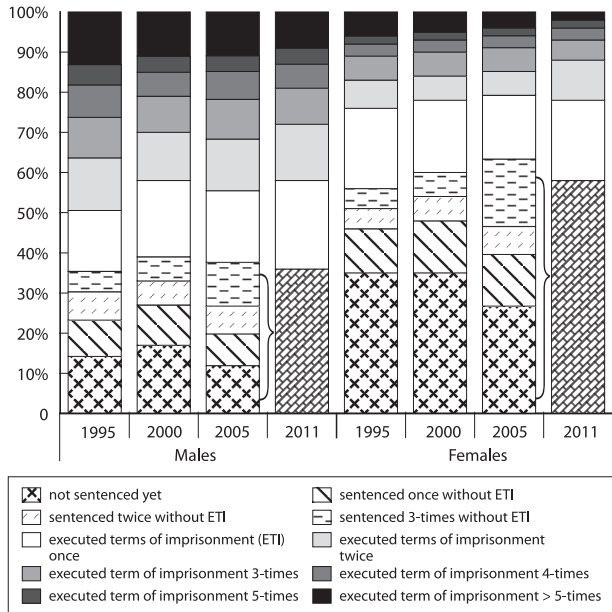


of security. In prisons with the highest security bigger percentage of foreigners is placed on a long-term basis (by the end of 2012 every tenth prisoner was imprisoned there, ten years earlier every sixth prisoner). The presidential amnesty changed these trends since the majority of released came from lower security prisons (see Figure 18).

Placement of convicted persons into prison facilities with a different level of security is affected by not only capacities of prisons but mainly by the term of sentence imposed by court. On long-term basis persons with sentence from 9 to 24 months prevailed, by the end of 2012 they made 41% of all convicted prisoners. Until 2005 share of convicted persons with unsuspended sentence up to 9 months (often referred to females) increased, later these short sentences were imposed by court less often, obviously in favour of unconditional sentences (between the years 2005 and 2011 the number of probation orders increased from 36 thousand up to 46 thousand). Long stability is, on the contrary, attributed to the percentage of convicted perpetrators of very serious crimes (with the imposed sentence 7 and more years). By the end of 2012 they made one eighth of the convicted, difference between sexes were not surprisingly big (for males 12.4% and for females 10.3%). The presidential amnesty lead to significant shift in structure of prisoners by term of sentence. Almost all persons with sentence from up to 12 months were released so the share of prisoners with longer sentence have risen (see Figure 20).

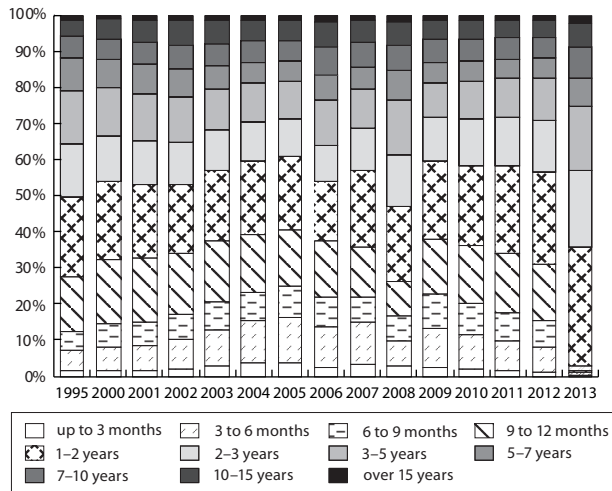
Convicted prisoners were in 2011 of the average age of 37 years still by four years younger than the total Czech population, the difference, however, was reduced for the last decade by two years. Half of convicted persons are of the age 25–39, the age difference between sexes are small. In relation to the total Czech population in 2011 the biggest number

**Figure 19** Structure of convicted prisoners in the CR by previous sentences (as of 31 December)



Source: Prison Service of the CR, own calculations

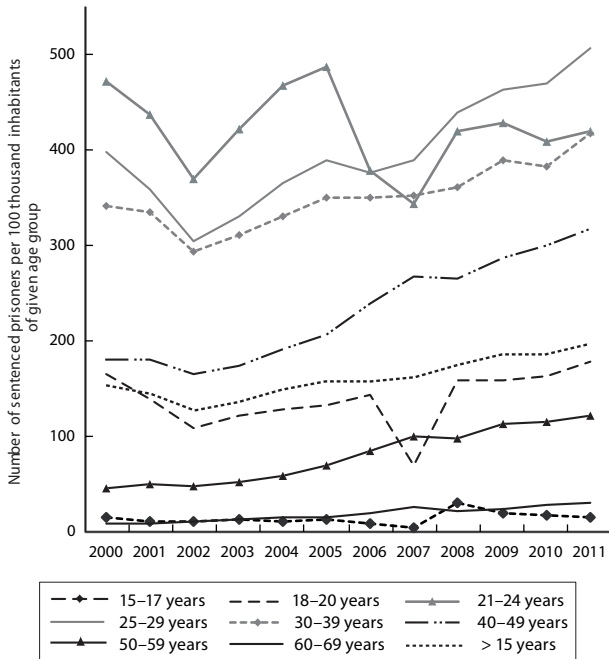
**Figure 20** Structure of convicted persons in the CR by the term of sentence (as of 31 December)\*



\* Latest data: January 2013 (after Amnesty).

Source: Prison Service of the CR, own calculations

**Figure 21** Number of convicted persons in prison per 100 thousand inhabitants by age groups in the CR (as of 31 December)

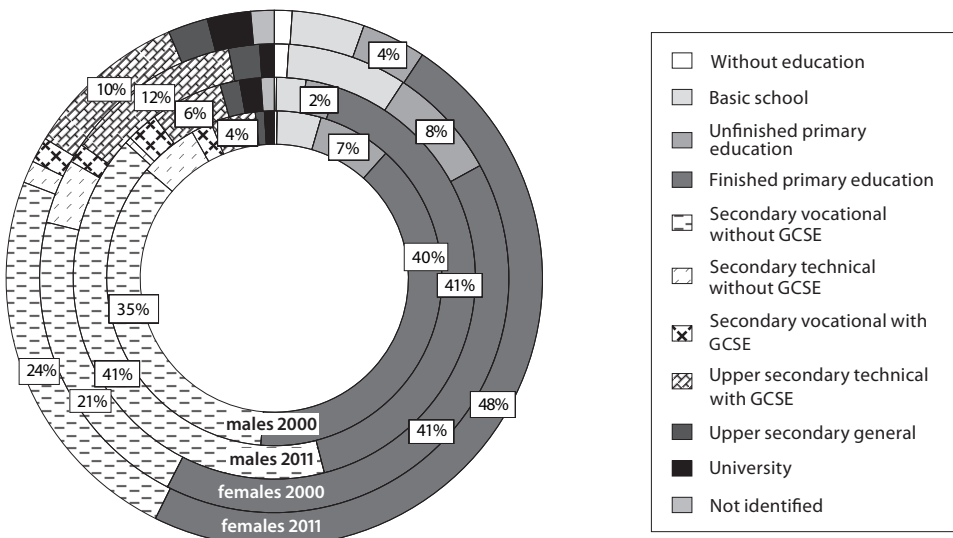


Source: Prison Service of the CR, own calculations

of convicted prisoners are in the age group 25–29 (every two hundredth persons was prisoner). Except for the group of twenty year old persons, compared to 2000 the probability of “imprisonment” in all main age groups increased, most for the people aged 40–49). Bigger growth can be attributed to the fact that certain part of convicted persons of the middle age return to prisons as criminal repeaters.

Probability to become convicted prisoners in the Czech Republic falls sharply with the level of the highest attained education. Among persons aged 15 and more with unfinished basic education or special education was in 2011 every fiftieth person a prisoner, in case of university graduates the ratio was 1 : 3000. Level of education of convicted females differed from males, at least secondary school (leaving exam passed) each sixth convicted woman, while in case of men only each ninth. Among the convicted women was, on the contrary, bigger rep-

**Figure 22** Comparison of all prisoners in the CR\* by sex and the highest attained education (as of 31 December)



\* In 2000 only convicted prisoners, in 2011 prisoners in total (i.e. including persons in custodial prisons).

Source: Prison Service of the CR, own calculations

resentation of persons with unfinished basic education. In 2011 46% of convicted males attained primary education at maximum and for females it was 57%. Between the years 2000 and 2011 in compliance with overall social trends the educational level of prisoners slightly increased but especially in case of males for which the share of convicted persons with maximum primary education fell by 5 p.p. Share of university graduates among the convicted prisoners doubled although at the end of 2011 it did not reach 2%.

Real employment rate of convicted prisoners<sup>14</sup> has been increasing on long-term basis, but in recent years this positive development have ceased (see Figure 23). In 2012 it reached 59%, but ten years ago it was only around 40%. In relation to the total number of convicted the share of working prisoners has been increasing at the same period more slowly (from 36% to 46%) since permanently falling proportion of convicted persons was included into the employment records. Possibility of employment is related to the level security in prisons as well as the level of application of re-socialization programmes – usually it is higher for prisoners placed in establishments with lower security.

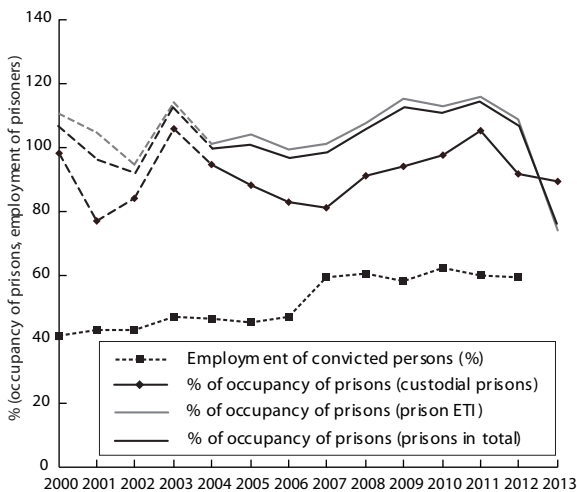
## 6.2 Prison occupancy level

Increase in the number of convicted was reflected in the growing prison occupancy level. Applying the limit 4 m<sup>2</sup> per person the number of sentenced prisoners exceeded available capacity in the CR as early as in 2008, in remand prisons this situation occurred in 2011. By the end of May 2012 the occupancy of capacities in remand prisons attained 102%, in prisons for sentenced persons 115%. In three quarters of all prisons in the CR the occupancy level exceeded 100% and in every fifth prison 130%. Overcrowding of capacities is recorded for big prisons and facilities with lower or medium security.

This problem would have aggravated if more than 6 thousand persons who have not started to service their sentence arrived. Faster increase of overcrowding was partly prevented by regular increase of accommodation capacities which have been extended by one tenth since 2005. New prisons in the CR, however, are not built on the greenfields but often some buildings are reconstructed which have lost their original purpose (often former military quarters). At the beginning of 2012 new female prison near Prague (*Velké Přílepy*) was put into operation which can be perceived as a response to the growing number of sentenced women in recent years.

The presidential amnesty declared at the beginning of 2013 released more than a quarter of all prisoners which resulted in one-shot significant decrease in occu-

**Figure 23** Occupancy level in custody and imprisonment in the CR



**Note 1:** Data on occupancy level in 2000–4 are not fully comparable due to unequal space limit per prisoner.

**Note 2:** ETI = execution of terms of imprisonment. Latest data: January 2013 (after Amnesty).

**Note 3:** Percentage of the occupancy level (as of 31 December) expresses the relationship between the number of prisoners (in all types of prisons including prison hospitals and detention facilities) and accommodation capacity (limit is 4 m<sup>2</sup>/person); data from the period 2000–2004 are not fully comparable due to the influence of different space limit (3.5 m<sup>2</sup>/person in 2000 and 2001, 4 m<sup>2</sup>/person (year 2002), and 4.5 m<sup>2</sup>/person (year 2003)).

**Source:** Prison Service of the CR, own calculations

<sup>14</sup> Employment rate is expressed as the share of working people serving their sentence of imprisonment in total number of sentenced persons able to work. Convicted persons may work in internal regular operation of prison, can carry out own manufacture, can work in shops of the Centre of economic activity, at businesses or in educational and therapeutic programmes.

pancy rate. It decreased from 106% at the end of December 2012 to 76% a month later. Its reduction was evident also in remand prisons which was, however, caused by natural flows of convicted persons in the second half of 2012 rather than by amnesty (see Figure 23). The amnesty was predominantly aimed at convicted persons with the short term of sentence so we witnessed only a slight reduction in occupancy rate in prisons specialized on severe crime. At the end of January 2013 almost one fifth of all prisons for sentenced persons had occupancy between 95% and 107% on the other hand one half of prisons achieved low rate (between 40–65%). Significant decrease in occupancy rates also modified territorial structure of prison establishments in the CR. Newly opened female prison was closed and two projects aimed at transformation of former refugee camps into new prisons will be cancelled.

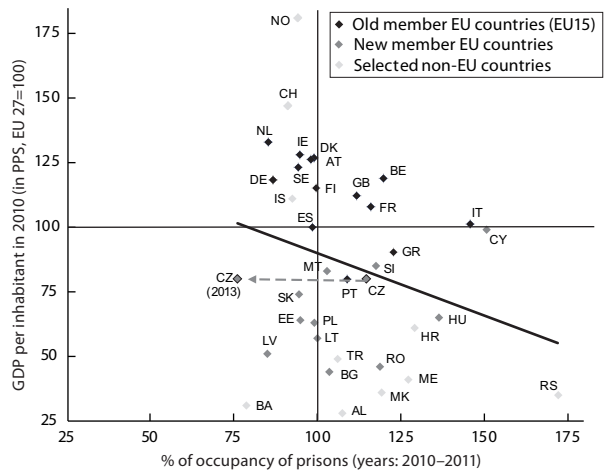
In international comparison the occupancy level of prisons we have to take into account possible differences in space standards (mainly the size of cells) which mainly in the countries with lower economic level may not be strictly applied. Overcrowded prisons in the CR is not in context with the EU countries anything special. However, it appears more often in new member countries. Overcrowded prisons with higher or comparable occupancy level than in the Czech Republic were observed in the period from 2010 to 2011 in one third of old EU member countries mainly due to high share of foreigners among prisoners. In comparison with all our neighbours the occupancy level of prisons was highest in the Czech Republic. On the other hand, lower occupancy rate in prisons is typical only of six European countries (out of 36 of the assessed) – from countries with big population it referred only to Germany and the Netherlands. Percentage of occupancy level of prison capacities to a certain extent depend on total economic level mainly in old EU member countries. In countries which joined the EU after 2003 there exist big disparities in the occupancy level of prisons. Their relationship with the GDP level per head or with the share of government expenditures on security and public order is not obvious.

The current position of the Czech Republic within EU improved due to amnesty significantly in terms of occupancy rate (see Figure 24), but still remained unfavourable as regards total rate of imprisonment of population (see Figure 12).

## CONCLUSION

Long-term slight drop of total registered crime in the CR was reflected also in government expenditures on public order and security which during the last decades were lagging behind the nominal growth of GDP. The exception formed only expenses on fire protection whose faster growth was connected with not falling frequency of fires and also higher expenditures on preventive measures related to the occurrence of devastating natural disasters in the last years. Nevertheless in the context of following economic

**Figure 24** Occupancy level of prisons (%) and GDP per capita (in PPS) in selected European countries (2010–2011)



**Note:** Names and abbreviations of countries out of EU: Albania (AL), Bosnia and Herzegovina (BA), Monte Negro (ME), Croatia (HR), Iceland (IS), Macedonia (MK), Norway (NO), Republic of Serbia (RS), Switzerland (CH), Turkey (TR).

**Source:** Eurostat, International Centre for Prison Studies <[http://www.prisonstudies.org/info/worldbrief/wpb\\_country.php?country=158](http://www.prisonstudies.org/info/worldbrief/wpb_country.php?country=158)>

recession total government expenditures on public order and security were in 2011 severely reduced (by tenth) especially on police and fire-protection services. In the context of the EU countries, government expenditures on public order and security (expressed as % to GDP) in the CR (similarly as in majority of new EU members countries) still belongs to slightly above-average. This happened despite the fact that in twenty member countries – mainly in the south of Europe – the expenses expressed as above recorded a moderate increase between 2000 and 2010.

In 2011 in the CR y-o-y increase of registered crime (+1.2%) was recorded due to the growing frequency of the acts of violence (+7%), sexual offences (+15%) and burglaries (+2%). This was not an accidental deviation since in all these categories of offences a slight increase has been registered as early as since 2009 (for acts of violence since 2010). In the last 2–3 years the frequency of offences committed especially by criminal repeaters (e.g. breaking the peace, drug crimes, perverting the course of justice or desertion) is also growing. The last mentioned act shows also certain dependence on economic cycle.

Intensity of crime similarly like in other countries also in CR shows significant regional disparities. High crime intensities on long-term basis survive in big cities (*Prague* and *Ostrava*), almost in the whole area of *Ústecký* region and western part of *Liberecký* region, wider surroundings of Prague and selectively in some other near-border areas (*Chebsko*, *Tachovsko*, *Břeclavsko*). The other way round, relatively most safe area can be considered the southern part of Eastern of Bohemia, most area of *Vysočina* region and rural submontane borderland area of East Moravia. Intensity of crime differs also by various types of criminal activity – economic crime and small thefts flourish in big cities, offences against morality and acts of violence are more often registered in border areas. In the last five years the crime increased especially in the *Moravskoslezský* region. The above-mentioned disparities of registered crime correspond also with subjective perception security by the population of these localities.

The importance of quality views then grows mainly in attempts for international comparison where traditional “hard” data on crime hit different legislation and practice even in geographically close EU countries. Social pathology and criminal legislation reflect into the frequency and structure of prison population where significant selectivity by sex, education, age or previous criminal history is obvious. The other way round, from the aspect of citizenships no selectiveness in the CR was confirmed, however, obvious are changes in the structure of imprisoned foreigners (weakening of the share of prisoners from the Ukraine and the Balkans in favour of the EU countries – mainly Slovakia – and in addition also from Vietnam). Increasing number of prisoners in the CR (obvious from 2008) and in most of European countries contributes negatively to occupancy of prison capacities which raises questions how to sustain funding of the system especially in the period of total economic slump.

The presidential amnesty at the beginning of 2013 released more than a quarter of all prisoners which resulted in one-shot significant decrease in occupancy rate (mainly in prisons with low security). Nevertheless one fifth of all prisons for sentenced persons had still occupancy between 95% and 107% significant decrease in occupancy rates also modified territorial structure of prison establishments in the CR. The current position of the Czech Republic within EU improved due to amnesty significantly in terms of occupancy rate, but still remained unfavourable as regards total rate of imprisonment of population.

In near future moderate increase of “prison population” in the CR could be expected. Almost two-thirds of sentenced persons (before amnesty) had been imprisoned repeatedly. So it is very probable that significant portion of released person will return to prisons within several months. That can be assumed also on the basis of experience of vast amnesty at the beginning of 90’s which resulted in a return of one half of released persons to prisons within two years after their amnesty. Almost 6.5 thousand released prisoners in January 2013 may have negative effect on criminality, homelessness or unemployment. The presidential amnesty was also applied not only on imprisoned but also on persons convicted to alternative sentences (i.e. probation order less than two years, community work, house arrest). It is assumed that only amnesty on probation will apply on almost 15 thousand persons. This measure will probably delay

expected increase of imprisoned people since one of the main factors explaining recent gradual increase of prison population is recidivism of minor criminal acts.

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