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The UN Sustainable Development Goals and Provision of Security, Responses to Crime and Security Threats, and Fair Criminal Justice Systems

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1 NO POVERTY	**2** ZERO HUNGER	**3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	**4** QUALITY EDUCATION	**5** GENDER EQUALITY	**6** CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	**8** DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	**9** INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	**10** REDUCED INEQUALITIES	**11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	**12** RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13 CLIMATE ACTION	**14** LIFE BELOW WATER	**15** LIFE ON LAND	**16** PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	**17** PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	

The UN Sustainable Development Goals and Provision of Security, Responses to Crime and Security Threats, and Fair Criminal Justice Systems

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"Sustainable development cannot be realised without peace and security, and peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development."

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Article 35.

Introduction

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Acknowledgements

GORAZD MEŠKO, SANJA KUTNJAK IVKOVIĆ AND ROK HACIN
editors

It has been almost a year since the Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security of the University of Maribor celebrated the 50th anniversary and organised the 14th Biennial International Conference on Criminal Justice and Security in Central and Eastern Europe: *Criminal Justice and Security in Central and Eastern Europe: The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals – Rural and Urban Safety and Security Perspectives* (Ljubljana, 12-14 September 2023). More than seventy papers were presented at the conference by more than a hundred authors from all over the world. Participants were invited to contribute their papers to several publications. The first publication was a special issue of Policing – An International Journal on Rural Policing in Contemporary Society (2024). The second publication that resulted from entirely new papers is this edited volume.

All chapters in this book are unique, published for the first time, and subjected to a three-stage peer review process. The first stage was a peer review of professionals and researchers from criminology, criminal justice and security studies who reviewed individual draft chapters. The second stage was a review by the editors, followed by

a review by two criminology researchers who reviewed the entire manuscript. At each stage, authors revised their chapters in response to the reviewers' comments.

Whereas the book is published in English, it is remarkable that only one chapter is authored by a native English speaker. The authors come from different academic backgrounds and professions, and are in different stages of academic or professional careers, from Ph.D. students to well-established researchers and professionals. We consider this book an excellent opportunity for younger colleagues to publish internationally and start or pursue their academic or practitioner careers. Working with colleagues who contribute to an ambitious goal with zeal and dedication is always a privilege.

It is always challenging to reflect on the multidisciplinary contents in the book title. In the process, we have revised the book title and restructured the book organisation several times. In the end, we choose the title: *The UN Sustainable Development Goals and Provision of Security, Responses to Crime and Security Threats, and Fair Criminal Justice Systems*. We believe that this title best reflects the interdisciplinary contents of the chapters and the main ideas presented in the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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This chapter provides an overview of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and discusses the link between the SDGs and criminal justice systems. We utilise the 2016 Stockholm Resilience Centre classification of SDGs into three categories: 1) biosphere SDGs, 2) economy SDGs, and 3) society SDGs, to discuss the SDGs and provide examples of criminology and criminal justice research that fit each SDG. The main topics covered in this chapter relate to the understanding of deviance and crime (e.g., juvenile delinquency, sexual harassment, hate crimes, rural crime, organised crime, illegal production of drugs, white collar crimes, illegal construction, war and environmental crime) and social reaction to crimes (e.g., tolerance of sexual harassment, acceptance of illegal building), as well as the exploration of law enforcement and discussion of various policing models (e.g., community policing, proactive policing, gender perspectives in policing).

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Cilji trajnostnega razvoja Združenih narodov, kriminaliteta, kriminologija in kazensko pravosodje

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Poglavje predstavlja pregled ciljev trajnostnega razvoja Združenih narodov in obravnava povezavo med cilji trajnostnega razvoja in sistemi kazenskega pravosodja. Uporabili smo delitev 2016 Stockholm Resiliance Centre, ki je cilje trajnostnega razvoja razvrstil v tri kategorije: 1) cilje trajnostnega razvoja biosfere, 2) cilje trajnostnega razvoja gospodarstva in 3) cilje trajnostnega razvoja družbe. To klasifikacijo uporabljamo za pregled ciljev trajnostnega razvoja in primere raziskav kriminologije in kazenskega pravosodja v povezavi s cilji trajnostnega razvoja. Glavne obravnavane teme so povezane tako z razumevanjem odklonskosti in kriminalitete (npr. mladoletniško prestopništvo, spolno nadlegovanje, zločini iz sovraštva, kriminaliteta na podeželju, organizirana kriminaliteta, nezakonita proizvodnja drog, kriminaliteta belih ovratnikov, nezakonita gradnja, vojna in ekološka kriminaliteta) kot tudi z raziskovanjem organov pregona in razpravo o različnih modelih policijske dejavnosti (npr. policijsko delo v skupnosti, proaktivno policijsko delo, vidik spola v policijskem delu).

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1   Introduction

On 21st October 2015, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 70/1, entitled "Transforming the World: The Agenda for Sustainable Development". This resolution consists of 17 sustainable goals and 169 targets (see Appendix) that provide a universal framework for the realisation of human rights and environmental sustainability across a range of issue areas. In the introduction, the United Nations outlines its ambitious aim: "This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet, and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace and greater freedom" (United Nations, n.d.b.; United Nations General Assembly, 2015). Reducing crime and enhancing professionalism within the criminal justice system significantly contribute to the quality of people's lives (Blaustein et al., 2018). Furthermore, the United Nations promised to address several critical issues for humanity: "We resolve, between now and 2030, to end poverty and hunger everywhere; to combat inequalities within and among countries; to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources. We also resolve to create conditions for sustainable, inclusive, and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity, and decent work for all, considering different levels of national development and capacities." As the United Nations astutely notes in the Agenda, "Never before have world leaders pledged common action and endeavour across such a broad and universal policy agenda."

At the core of the ambition to make the world a better and more sustainable place are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 subgoals or targets. The SDGs focus on enhancing people's quality of life, protecting planet Earth from degradation, ensuring general prosperity and peace, and building partnerships. These SDGs are based on established instruments of international law such as the Charter of the United Nations (United Nations, 1945), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations General Assembly, 1948), international human rights treaties (e.g., Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948; Geneva Conventions, 1949; International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC], 2010), and the Millennium Declaration (United Nations General Assembly, 2000).

The agenda is based on a global analysis of many aspects of people's lives and societies. It includes a future vision of global development, aiming for a better and more sustainable future. The agenda addresses crucial topics such as building strong economic foundations for all countries, promoting humane migration, fostering community cohesion and personal security, establishing resilient local communities, protecting the environment and living beings, creating sustainable production and consumption, reducing pollution, and protecting natural resources. However, fully implementing the SDGs is possible only in peaceful and secure societies. Thus, the United Nations Agenda includes fostering anti-war efforts, building peaceful and inclusive societies with equal access to justice based on human rights, establishing effective rules of law and good governance at all levels, and creating transparent, effective, and accountable institutions. Multicultural understanding is crucial for achieving several goals. Therefore, tolerance, mutual respect, an ethic of global citizenship, and shared responsibility are vital (United Nations, n.d.b.).

Implementing such an extensive and ambitious global reform in just 15 years (between 2015 and 2030) requires significant political will, public awareness, and coordinated action at the global, continental, national, regional, and local levels. While local social, political, economic, and cultural contexts matter for development, the United Nations SDGs – common to all countries regardless of their geographic location or economic development – serve as a common denominator for global development and a better future. Member states are responsible for respecting, protecting, and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction based on race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, property, birth, disability, or other status. Therefore, governments worldwide must follow up and review their national, regional, and local developments.

The United Nations Agenda includes not only the 17 SDGs but also 169 targets and 231 unique indicators (e.g., United Nations, n.d.a.). These indicators should be used to help measure the progress in achieving the SDGs and targets, as well as identify potential problems with the achievements. For example, within SDG 16: Peace, justice, and strong institutions ("Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels"; United Nations, n.d.a.), target 16.5 seeks to "substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms." The

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two indicators listed for this target, 16.5.1 ("proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months") and 16.5.2 ("proportion of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months"), could be successfully measured through scholarly research in the field of criminology and criminal justice. Similarly, target 16.6 strives to "develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels" and one of its indicators, 16.6.2 ("proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services"), is quite suitable for exploration using the approaches developed by criminology and criminal justice scholars.

This book explores the latest criminology and criminal justice research that focuses on the SDGs and related targets. In this chapter, we first introduce the SDGs. To illustrate how criminology and criminal justice research can help with the measurement of SDG targets and indicators, we provide a brief outline of examples of existing research on the topic. We then describe the book's structure and include a quick overview of each chapter. The chapters in the book present cutting-edge criminology and criminal justice research aimed at directly addressing the SDGs. While this book primarily focuses on SDG 16, the chapters cover a variety of targets and indicators associated with this SDG. We conclude this chapter by discussing recommendations for, and challenges of, future SDG-related research in criminology and criminal justice.

2   Overview of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Related Criminology and Criminal Justice Research

A detailed description of the United Nations SDGs can be accessed on the United Nations webpage (United Nations, n.d.b.). We also provide an outline of SDGs and targets in the Appendix. In the following brief overview of the SDGs, we include selected references from the criminology and criminal justice literature to illustrate how research in these fields can contribute to the discussion about SDGs and related targets and indicators (Blaustein et al., 2018; Iturralde, 2020; Redo, 2015, 2017, 2021; Rodriguez-Spahia & Barberet, 2020). Our presentation includes a discussion of SDGs, related research, and key policy documents.

Based on their focus, the Stockholm Resilience Centre (2016) classified SDGs into three categories: 1) biosphere SDGs, 2) economy SDGs, and 3) society SDGs. We use this classification to provide a brief overview of the SDGs and examples of criminology and criminal justice research.

2.1   Biosphere Sustainable Development Goals

The category of biosphere SDGs includes four SDGs. SDG 6 ("Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all") emphasises that achieving universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water is vital for the survival of all beings. The United Nations points out that it is necessary to improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping, and minimising the release of hazardous chemicals and materials in the water, soil, and air; halving the proportion of untreated wastewater, and increasing recycling and safe reuse. Additionally, increasing water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensuring sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity are crucial to substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity (United Nations, n.d.b.). Eman et al. (2020) studied water governance and water crimes in Europe. Their study comprises criminological perspectives on water crimes, focusing on green criminology, environmental and organised crime, the politics of water rights, and policing water crimes. It also includes case studies of water protection and water crimes in the Canary Islands, Cyprus, Slovenia, Spain, and South Africa. Although the protection of these resources is critical for survival, green crimes are usually perceived as less serious than traditional crimes. In a study on Estonian police views of environmental or green crimes, Vallmüür (2019) discovered that police officers were much more likely to perceive green police misconduct as less serious, less likely to assess it as a violation of official rules, and less likely to view it as deserving discipline compared to traditional police misconduct.

SDGs 13, 14, and 15 can be viewed within the larger perspective of living environment protection. At a time when the world community is "standing at the brink of climate calamity" (United Nations, n.d.a., n.d.b.), it is critical to address the climate change crisis. Thus, SDG 13 ("Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts") emphasises the need to take urgent action to combat climate change. With increasing issues such as coastal eutrophication, ocean acidification, ocean warming, plastic pollution, and overfishing creating an "ocean emergency,"

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the United Nations developed SDG 14 ("Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development"). This goal requires countries worldwide to take urgent actions to safeguard and protect the Earth's largest ecosystem. As the world faces the largest species extinction event since the age of the dinosaurs, the United Nations established SDG 15 ("Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss") to prompt a fundamental shift in humanity's relationship with nature (United Nations, n.d.a., n.d.b.).

To address these three SDGs, existing criminological research on green criminology, rural criminology, and environmental security provides examples of how violations of basic rules regarding the proper use and treatment of soil, air, and water can harm living species. Ideas from green criminology research in Global North countries (Ceccato, 2024) have also expanded to different regions of the world, leading to recent efforts to raise public and professional awareness about the sustainability of our planet. These studies suggest that more attention needs to be paid to illicit abuse of natural resources, deforestation, new-era colonisation, and the use of countries in the Global South as dumping grounds for e-waste and other dangerous organised criminal activities that generate substantial profits while posing significant health and environmental risks (e.g., Blaustein et al., 2020; Ceccato, 2024; Eman & Meško, 2014; Eman et al., 2013; Iturralde, 2020). In this context, rural perspectives deserve special attention because many environmental threats occur in rural settings (Bowden & Meško, 2025; Donnermeyer & DeKeseredy, 2014).

2.2   Economy Sustainable Development Goals

Four SDGs focus on the economy. The first SDG in the group, SDG 8 ("Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all"), emphasises economic growth within national contexts, particularly in Global South countries. It promotes development-oriented policies that support productive activities, create decent jobs, foster entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalisation and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including access to financial services (Kowalski, 2021). The United Nations underscores the importance of reducing the proportion of youth who are not in employment, education or training,

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and taking immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking, and ensure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers (United Nations, n.d.b.). Studies by scholars such as Zhang (2007, 2008) explore the nature of human trafficking, the structures of networks used by traffickers, and the severity of victim suffering.

SDG 9 ("Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation") promotes the development of quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on ensuring affordable and equitable access for all (United Nations, n.d.b.). Promoting innovation within the police force is crucial in their efforts against crime. Crime mapping using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) provides an excellent example of integrating policing with modern technology (Meško et al., 2023). This technology enables the police to better understand crime patterns and distribute their resources efficiently to ensure safety and security for all individuals (Eman & Hacin, 2021). Similarly, recent studies on the use of drones by police demonstrate how innovative technology can enhance police capabilities (e.g., Liu et al., 2023).

SDG 10 ("Reduce inequality within and among countries") emphasises reducing income inequality within and among countries. The United Nations argues that it is necessary to progressively achieve and sustain income growth for the bottom population (United Nations, n.d.b.) and continue income convergence, despite the COVID-19 pandemic triggering the largest income inequality in recent times (United Nations, n.d.a., n.d.b.). Meško (2018) presented results from a regional study on comparative criminology, focusing on crime and indicators such as wealth, social processes, migration, and quality of governance in Southeastern Europe. His research indicated that, alongside poverty, many other crime-related, security, and other threats were prevalent in nine of the ten poorest European countries. However, the situation has not substantially changed since 2018; international studies show that the military conflict in Ukraine has even deepened poverty in Southeast and Eastern Europe (Meško, 2018; The World Bank, n.d.).

SDG 12 ("Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns") emphasises the need for countries to adopt sustainable consumption and production practices.

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The UN highlights that high-income countries have a material footprint per capita that is ten times greater than that of low-income countries (Lynch, 2020; United Nations, n.d.a., n.d.b.) and despite previous calls to minimise fossil fuel consumption, they have increased consumption in response to recent global crises. In a scholarly examination of the ecological impact of the wealthy, Lynch et al. (2019) found that the consumption of "luxury commodities" (e.g., super yachts, super homes, luxury vehicles, private jets) by a selected few in the United States results in a CO_2 footprint larger than that of entire smaller nations.

2.3   Society Sustainable Development Goals

The largest number of SDGs, eight in total, deal with society (Stockholm Resilience Centre, 2016). These SDGs are, at the same time, the most suitable to be explored in criminology and criminal justice research.

SDG 1 ("End poverty in all its forms everywhere") emphasises the importance of reducing the proportion of men, women, and children of all ages living in poverty. This goal requires the implementation of nationally appropriate social protection systems to achieve substantial coverage of people with low incomes and ensure that everyone, regardless of gender or age, has equal rights to economic resources. It also emphasises access to essential services, ownership, and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology, and financial services. Furthermore, these systems should reduce the exposure of people with low incomes vulnerability from climate-related extreme events and other economic, social, and environmental shocks and disasters (United Nations, n.d.b.). Challenges related to this goal are explored in the work of Hebberecht and Baillergeau (2012), who studied European perspectives on social crime prevention based on the activities of the welfare state and people's constitutional rights to safety, security, and psychological and physical integrity. They observed that social crime prevention was losing effectiveness due to neoliberal policies, social differentiation, cultural conflicts, and the marginalised position of immigrants and lower social classes. Conversely, there has been a rise in deterrent situational prevention measures. Therefore, their findings underscore the significance of SDG 1, establishing it as a top priority for governments worldwide.

SDG 2 ("End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture") emphasises the importance of eradicating hunger and ensuring access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food for all, particularly those experiencing poverty and vulnerability. This goal underscores the need to strengthen national agricultural systems, enhance food production, and ensure healthy, high-quality nutrition for everyone. It is crucial to maintain ecosystems that enhance resilience to climate change, including extreme weather events, drought, floods, and other disasters, while also progressively improving land and soil quality to reduce hunger and improve nutrition (United Nations, n.d.b.). Research in green criminology has addressed this goal by focusing on sustainable practices and ensuring crime-free activities in nature related to the proper use and treatment of water, soil, and air (Eman et al., 2009, 2013; Meško et al., 2012). Ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture are crucial aspects of sustainability discussed in criminological literature, particularly in green criminology and victimology. This literature highlights "invisible" victimisations in social science debates, such as threats to food safety and consumer protection challenges (Mičović et al., 2011a, 2011b).

SDG 3 ("Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages") addresses various aspects of quality of life, including improving medical services for pregnant women, reducing the global maternal mortality ratio, preventing deaths of newborns and children under five years old, and combating epidemics such as AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, neglected tropical diseases, hepatitis, water-borne diseases, and other infectious diseases. Targets also focus on reducing premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment, promoting mental health and well-being, and strengthening prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful alcohol use. Another priority is reducing deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents. The SDGs emphasise universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services, including family planning, information and education, and integrating reproductive health into national strategies and programmes. Achieving universal health coverage, ensuring financial risk protection, access to quality essential health care services, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all are also critical (World Health Organization [WHO], n.d.). It's crucial to significantly reduce deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals, air, water, and soil pollution and contamination (United Nations, n.d.b.). Research in criminology and criminal justice can contribute to

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addressing these challenges. For example, while research on the direct effect of pollution on human health is still emerging (Wu et al., 2021), extensive research exists on drug trafficking, drug-related crimes, and the relationship between drug addiction and involvement in crime (Anderson et al., 2002; French et al., 2000; Strang et al., 2009).

SDG 4 ("Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all") emphasises that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education. It also stresses the importance of ensuring that all children complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education, leading to effective learning outcomes. Additionally, the goal highlights the necessity for equal access to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university, to increase the number of youth and adults equipped with relevant skills for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship (United Nations, n.d.b.). The right to education is recognised as a fundamental human right (UNESCO, n.d.), and ensuring the quality of schooling, a supportive school climate, non-violent environments, and motivated teachers are critical. However, recent incidents of school violence and rampage killings among school children and personnel are concerning (Gec & Stojanovic, 2023; R. R., 2024). Studies such as the International Self-Reported Delinquency Study (n.d.) provide insights into the prevalence and patterns of school-related delinquency and victimisation globally, offering opportunities for evidence-based policy approaches.

SDG 5 ("Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls") emphasises the importance of ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls worldwide, as well as eliminating violence against them in both public and private spheres, including trafficking, sexual exploitation, and other forms of exploitation. The United Nations stresses the urgency of eliminating harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriages, female genital mutilation, and other severe forms of violence (United Nations, n.d.b.). Recent studies on violence against women and children highlight the prevalence of attitudes that support domestic violence across cultures, underscoring the need for increased awareness campaigns and the promotion of a culture of non-violence. Research also reveals that femicide manifests differently in various cultures, requiring tailored social responses and sensitivity (Hacin & Meško, 2024; Johnson et al., 2008; Molnar & Aebi, 2024).

SDG 7 ("Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all") emphasises governments' responsibility to ensure universal access to energy by significantly increasing the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix and doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency. Energy plays a crucial role in all aspects of human life, necessitating sustainable and clean energy sources to support various activities and developmental needs (United Nations, n.d.b.). Fetzer (2023) examined the implementation of energy price guarantees in the UK, highlighting that this policy disproportionately affected residents in low-energy efficiency properties. The study also linked areas experiencing energy price shocks with increased incidents of traditional crimes like burglaries (Fetzer, 2023). In a study focusing on rural Colorado, criminologists Opsal and O'Connor Shelley (2014) investigated crimes associated with energy extraction, particularly in the oil and natural gas sectors, emphasising the environmental and social consequences of exploitative industry practices within the framework of green criminology. Additionally, threats to energy infrastructure, combined with water resources, from potential terrorist and cyber attacks, such as those targeting river power plants, are highlighted (Eman et al., 2020).

SDG 11 ("Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable") focuses on building resilient communities by ensuring access to adequate, secure, and affordable housing and essential services for all. It also emphasises the need for safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, and improvement of road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with particular attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons (United Nations, n.d.b.). A notable example of a national initiative addressing this SDG is the research (2015–2018 and 2018–2024) conducted by the Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security, University of Maribor, on local safety and security. This research has organised international conferences on local safety and security (Meško & Lobnikar, 2016) and influenced policy-making in regional safety and security (Meško & Hacin, 2023a; Meško et al., 2018, 2021) to promote quality of life, safety, and security. Meško and Eman (2024) summarise that while all SDGs are essential for setting local priorities in Slovenia's sustainable development, activities related to SDG 16 are crucial for establishing strong institutions, good governance, and inclusive partnerships involving businesses and civil society in policy development and implementation. They advocate for raising awareness among local municipalities

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about the significance of research in their activities. The project led to nine national conferences supported by the Slovenian Association of Municipalities, fostering collaboration between researchers, local governments, and residents.

The primary focus of the book is on SDG 16 ("Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels"), which aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, ensure access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions globally. The United Nations emphasises the reduction of all forms of violence and related death rates worldwide, the eradication of abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and violence against children, and the promotion of the rule of law at national and international levels, ensuring equal access to justice for all (United Nations, n.d.b.). Legitimacy is a fundamental element of inclusive and efficient criminal justice institutions that provide equal justice and fair treatment to all individuals (Hacin & Meško, 2020). To achieve sustainable peace, safety, and security, criminal justice institutions (but especially the police) must enforce the legal rules in a predictable and just manner, including the individuals in the process of addressing and resolving security threats (Meško & Hacin, 2023b, 2024; Kutnjak Ivković & Haberfeld, 2015, 2019; Kutnjak Ivković et al., 2022; Long et al., 2013). Studies indicate that procedural justice – how individuals perceive they are treated by authorities – is crucial both externally and in interactions between the police and the public (e.g., Meško & Tankebe, 2015; Peacock et al., 2021; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003) and internally, within police organisations (e.g., Peacock et al., 2023; Reisig et al., 2012; Wolfe & Lawson, 2020). The legitimacy of policing is also vital. Meško et al. (2024) examined residents' perceptions of police legitimacy and its impact on their support for community policing, cooperation with police officers, and correlations between police officers' self-legitimacy and their endorsement of community policing practices.

2.4   SDG on building and maintaining partnerships

SDG 17 ("Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development") emphasises the importance of building and maintaining partnerships for the SDGs across all three categories (e.g., Pereira et al., 2022). This goal underscores the need for policy and institutional coherence and multi-stakeholder partnerships at all levels of social organisation, from local to

international. Partnerships are essential for connecting stakeholders, fostering engagement, and assigning responsibilities (United Nations, n.d.b.). The SDGs have been integrated into European Union policy documents, influencing national and local policies across most Member States. Reviews of these policies indicate that the SDGs significantly shape priorities at national, regional, and local levels (Meško & Hacin, in print). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), along with criminological and criminal justice research, play pivotal roles in understanding the causes, patterns, and responses to crime and other threats to safety, security, and quality of life. They contribute significantly to local safety and security, crime prevention, and building resilient communities. The following section outlines the book's structure and briefly describes each chapter.

3   Overview of the Book

This book primarily focuses on the exploration of SDG 16, which requires countries to build peace, justice and strong institutions (United Nations, n.d.a., n.d.b.). Based on the specific target within this SDG, the chapters in the book are organised into three sections. The first section of the book – Understanding and Responding to Violence and Other Crimes, primarily focuses on target 16.1, which requires countries to reduce all forms of violence and related deaths. The second section of the book, Reducing Illicit Financial Gains and Combatting Organised Crime, includes four chapters related to target 16.4, which calls for countries to significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets, and combat all forms of organised crime. Finally, the last five chapters in the book's third section, Developing Effective and Accountable Criminal Justice Institutions, address target 16.6, prompting governments to establish effective, accountable, and transparent criminal justice institutions.

While some chapters address multiple SDGs/targets, we categorised them into book sections based on the primary SDG/target they explore. The chapters in this book utilise various research methods, from literature reviews to surveys, interviews, focus-group interviews, legal analysis, and analysis of official statistical data using GIS and hot spot analysis. Their breadth and depth enhance the value of these individual contributions.

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3.1 Understanding and Responding to Violence and Other Crimes

The four chapters in this section illustrate how criminology and criminal justice research could be applied to help ascertain the building of peace, justice, accountable institutions, and related targets. All chapters are centred around target 16.1 and explore the nature and extent of and responses to violence and other forms of crime in Italy, North Macedonia and Slovenia.

The section opens with Chapter 2, in which Tinkara Bulovec and Katja Eman present the results of a study on sexual violence prevention in nightlife venues in Ljubljana, Slovenia. This chapter contributes to the growing body of research on bystander intervention in cases of sexual harassment (e.g., Katz et al., 2015). The study involved a total of 135 respondents, including stakeholders, nightlife personnel, and nightclub patrons, surveyed in 2022. The respondents mostly perceive inappropriate verbal comments related to sexuality as the prevalent form of sexual violence in nightlife. Additionally, nightlife personnel identified unwanted physical contact, while patrons reported unwanted advances as the most common form of harassment. The most observed preventive measures in nightlife venues by stakeholders and patrons were security guards. Stakeholders also emphasised awareness-raising and youth engagement, while personnel noted patrons' caution and self-protective behaviour.

In Chapter 3, Cinzia Broccolo, Rūta Grigaliūnaitė, Cloé Saint-Nom and Guido Savasta analyse the root causes of under-reporting from victims and witnesses of hate crimes against Muslim women in Italy. At a time when anti-Muslim sentiments in the USA and Europe appear to be high (e.g., Human Rights Council, 2021), this chapter offers valuable insider perspectives on extreme forms of anti-Muslim sentiments. Based on interviews conducted in 2022 with 60 stakeholders and victims, the authors demonstrate that multiple factors contribute to the low reporting rate, which, in turn, results in a lack of recognition of discriminatory crimes by the public and limited response from formal law enforcement agencies. The study also identifies potential flaws in recording episodes of hate speech and hate crimes targeting Muslim women. A lack of trust in the police and related confidence issues in other components of the criminal justice system significantly predict the victim's decision not to report crimes to the police, thus tacitly accepting discriminatory behaviour by offenders.

The theme of hate crimes continues in Chapter 4, where Olga Kosevaliska, Zhaneta Poposka and Elena Maksimova discuss the potential relationship between specific types of hate crimes and their occurrence in various municipalities throughout the Republic of North Macedonia between 2015 and 2020. The authors employ geovisualisation techniques to map these hate crimes and analyse their characteristics. The results showed that hate crimes are a critical issue affecting various regions in the country. Understanding the geographic distribution of hate crimes highlights the need for targeted responses in different areas of North Macedonia. The authors' findings indicate a high rate of ethnic-based hate crimes in municipalities with significant ethnic representation and politically-based hate crimes during election periods, suggesting the necessity for proactive measures in these contexts. This study contributes to the existing literature (e.g., Boeckmann & Turping-Petrosino, 2002) by providing insights into how effective strategies for preventing hate crimes should be tailored based on the contextual knowledge of a specific municipality.

In the last chapter of this section, Chapter 5, Iza Kokoravec, Gorazd Meško, and Ineke Haen Marshall report the results of a study on juvenile delinquency and victimisation in Ljubljana, Slovenia, using data from the International Self-Reported Delinquency (ISRD4) (n.d.) survey collected in 2022 and 2023. Based on a sample of students from the capital city, Ljubljana (n = 873), the chapter focuses on understanding factors related to juvenile delinquency and victimisation, particularly concerning gender, school grade, and immigration status. The chapter contributes to the existing literature exploring the link between juvenile delinquency and victimisation (e.g., Cuevas et al., 2007; Turanovic & Young, 2016). The results indicate that girls report experiencing more parental violence than boys, while boys report higher rates of delinquency. Disparities exist between native respondents and first- and second-generation immigrant respondents: immigrant respondents reported more incidents of hate crimes and social media hate, as well as higher overall delinquency rates. There are no apparent age or grade trends for victimisation, whereas reported delinquency generally increases with grade or age, particularly in drug dealing.

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3.2 Reducing Illicit Financial Gains and Combatting Organised Crime

While SDG 16 promotes peace, justice, and accountable institutions, specific targets break down these broad goals into manageable tasks. Target 16.4, the focal point of this section of the book, instructs countries to significantly reduce illicit financial flows and combat all forms of organised crime. The analyses presented in these chapters are based on data exploration from Czechia, Italy, Montenegro, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

This section of the book opens with Chapter 6, in which David Čep writes about illegal drug production and drug trafficking in Czechia, highlighting one of the challenges facing modern society and sustainable development. The issue is particularly pertinent today, given the availability of a wider range of potent drugs on the European market (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2023). The chapter contributes to the existing literature by identifying issues related to drug-related criminality from global and national perspectives, offering general recommendations for combating illegal activities, and discussing the cross-border impacts of illicit methamphetamine production on urban and rural environments. Furthermore, the chapter explores new synthetic drugs, particularly the semisynthetic cannabinoid HHC, and examines those associated with Czech anti-drug legislation and law enforcement practice.

The theme of organised crime continues in Chapter 7, where Kreseda Smith argues that the escalating victimisation of farmers globally by organised criminal groups affects a range of SDGs, significantly impacting farmers and the broader population. Using UK farmers as an example, Smith demonstrates that organised criminals targeting critical equipment such as tractors, tools, and machinery cause extensive damage and exploit illegal business opportunities, such as counterfeiting agrochemicals, disrupting food chain security, and exploiting forced labour for agricultural work. Organised criminals also infiltrate rural areas, exacerbating issues related to poverty, zero hunger, health, well-being, decent working conditions, and peace and justice. This chapter provides an exploratory commentary on how organised crime impacts agriculture and contributes to the underexplored field of rural criminology and criminal justice (e.g., Bowden & Meško, 2025). Governments are expected to respond more actively to prevent such activities, as global farming and food security significantly contribute to quality of life.

The following two chapters in this section focus on the illegal flow of finances. In Chapter 8, Roberta De Paolis argues that white-collar criminality epitomises modern-era criminality, affecting several sustainable development goals of the United Nations. These goals include promoting access to justice, combating organised crime, providing essential services, and reducing economic inequalities and vulnerabilities. De Paolis examines a crime with significantly underreported incidence (Benson et al., 2016), resulting in substantial monetary losses (National White Collar Crime Center, 2010). Using examples from Italy and the United States, De Paolis contributes to the existing literature by proposing that the United States, De Paolis contributes to the existing literature by suggesting that the enforcement of laws for white-collar crimes should rely on a customised punishment system combining traditional prison sentences with community service related to the context of the white-collar crime. Such an approach would have beneficial effects: deterring individuals from repeating offences, preventing peers from committing similar crimes, and allowing the community to benefit from the proper use of skills that were misused by white-collar criminals.

In the last chapter of this section, Chapter 9, Velimir Rakočević and Aleksandra Rakočević point out the harmful consequences of irrational consumption of natural resources driven by the over-dimensioning of construction areas. The authors explore a rarely studied issue and contribute to the growing body of literature on green or environmental criminology (e.g., Bierne & South, 2007; South et al., 2012; White & Heckenberg, 2014). The chapter reveals that Montenegro has struggled for over thirty years to combat the problem of illegal construction and the legalisation of illegally erected buildings. The state has introduced three new criminal offences to protect the environment: construction of an object without registration and construction documentation, construction of a complex engineering object without a construction permit, and illegal connection to the infrastructure. The chapter demonstrates that neither the local Law on the Regulation of Informal Buildings nor the Criminal Code is effectively implemented. Furthermore, the penal policy fails to deter environmental degradation while it worsens.

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3.3 Developing Effective, Accountable and Transparent Criminal Justice Institutions

At the heart of SDG 16 is the idea that countries should build and maintain governmental institutions, including criminal justice institutions, that are effective, accountable, and transparent. Target 16.6 directly requires countries to "develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions" (United Nations, n.d.a., n.d.b.). The four chapters in this section of the book explore governmental efforts related to Croatia, Slovenia, Ukraine, and the United States.

This section opens with Chapter 10, where Irena Cajner Mraović, Ivana Radić, Kaja Prislan Mihelič, and Branko Lobnikar present public assessments of the effectiveness of four primary models of police work: the military-bureaucratic model, the lawful policing model, the community-oriented policing model, and the public-private divide policing model. The authors adopt Ponsaers' (2001) taxonomy of police models and study the public evaluations of these policing models in an East-European country, thus contributing toward scarce literature on public views of policing models (e.g., Lobnikar & Prislan, 2021; Maskály et al., 2023; Prislan & Lobnikar, 2019). Data collection was based on an online survey of 254 Croatian citizens conducted in the summer and fall of 2022. The results indicate that participants strongly preferred the community policing model because it emphasises discretion, cooperation with the community, adherence to the law, professionalisation, legitimacy, prevention, and proactiveness. In contrast, the military-bureaucratic model was least preferred and ranked as the least desirable policing model.

The next chapter, Chapter 11, continues the exploration of policing with Robin Markwitz discussing proactive policing methods crucial for ensuring safety and security in alignment with the SDGs. The author examines aoristic crime data, where events occur within known time interval but at an unknown time, and connects this data with proactive policing strategies, thus contributing to the existing literature on proactive policing and its potential benefits (e.g., Koper et al., 2020; National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018). Markwitz employs a Bayesian likelihood-based approach to estimate the occurrence times of property crimes within known time intervals, modelling victim and offender behaviour as stochastic processes. The results demonstrate that the model, tested on an open-

source aoristic crime dataset from the United States, accurately predicts the most likely occurrence times through parameter estimation methods, identifies potential hot spots, and enables police to tailor proactive policing strategies accordingly. This approach aligns with SDG 16, which aims to strengthen institutions, foster safe and secure societies, and promote evidence-based policy and policing practices.

The theme of policing is further explored in Chapter 12, where Iva Balgač, Irena Cajner Mraović and Krunoslav Borovec delve into SDGs 5 and 16 by examining gender equality within law enforcement. Despite gender equality being a critical SDG, previous scholarly investigations reveal that equality remains elusive, with women still constituting a minority among police ranks (e.g., Holt & Lewis, 2011; Martin, 2008; O'Connor Shelley et al., 2011; Seklecki & Paynich, 2007). This study contributes to the existing literature by analysing attitudes toward gender equality among 706 Croatian male and female police recruits before and after their basic police training (2020-2021). The research focuses on perceptions of women's role in policing, attitudes toward violence against women, and general views on gender equality. The chapter documents that while women consistently hold more positive views on gender equality before and after training, the gender gap in attitudes toward gender equality widens post-training. This suggests that the socialisation process within police culture during training may negatively influence recruits' perspectives on gender issues.

In Chapter 13, Bojan Tičar and Andreja Primec assess how security elements at the municipal level can be placed in the context of SDGs. The authors explore the role of municipalities in building safer and stronger communities and adopting and implementing sustainable development policies. This study follows a growing body of research examining the implantation of SDGs in local communities worldwide, including countries such as Brazil (e.g., Teixeira et al., 2022), Germany (e.g., Jossin & Peters, 2022), Russia (e.g., Ilina & Plisetskiy, 2023), Spain (e.g., Benito et al., 2023) and Sweden (e.g., Gustafsson & Ivner, 2017). The study is based on the legal regulations of the Republic of Slovenia, international and legal conventions of the UNODC, and selected European Union regulations and directives regarding current and future regulations of sustainable development. The authors also explore the application of various legal rules in the context of municipalities in Ireland and the United Kingdom.

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In the final chapter of this section, Chapter 14, Mykhaylo Shepitko and Valeriy Shepitko reviewed the SDGs in connection with the aggressive war against Ukraine launched by Russia in 2022. This war, waging in the heart of Europe, affects global and national security and rural and urban security in Ukraine and worldwide. The threat to security is apparent not only due to the potential expansion of the war to NATO countries but also because of the disruption of trade routes that provide regions of the world with food and clean water. This chapter expands the scarce literature on the implications of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the achievement of sustainable development goals globally and raises serious concerns about the effects of the war-induced disruption of the global supply chain (e.g., Bin-Nashawan et al., 2024; Masys, 2023; Mhlanga & Ndhlovu, 2023; Pereira et al., 2022). Pereira et al. (2022) argue about the extent of the war's effects on the regional and global SDGs and economic SDGs at the global level. However, in its totality, "the conflict in Ukraine is severely threatening the achievement of the SDGs" (Bin-Nashwan et al., 2024, p. 1).

4   Conclusion

A combination of the United Nations SDGs and the topics presented in chapters of this book follow the basic ideas of the 2030 United Nations Agenda and its Goals, offering a comprehensive vision for sustainable development. This vision is based on several key elements: 1) it is a global issue, not limited to "developing" countries as was the case with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), 2) it is founded on core values of equity and respect for human rights, 3) it relies on sustainable financing, scientific research and innovation, and monitoring and evaluation, 4) it necessitates a new way of working that involves intersectoral action by multiple stakeholders, and 5) it aims to strengthen criminal justice systems, and making them fair and accountable. The chapters in this book are centred around SDGs and cover topics critical to understanding contemporary crime, deviance, and criminality, as well as safety and security risks and efforts to reduce risks and prevent crime.

While the chapter topics range from juvenile justice and gendered issues in policing to tolerance of anti-Muslim sentiments and the environmental harms caused by long-term illegal building and drug manufacturing, they all fit well within the larger paradigm of the goal of building more inclusive, accountable, and transparent criminal justice institutions – namely, achieving SDG 16. However, as the last

chapter on the consequences of the war in Ukraine demonstrates, it is quite challenging, bordering on the impossible, to achieve this in a war-torn country. As Bin-Nashawan et al. (2024, p. 1) astutely note, "SDG16 (i.e. peace and justice) is an absolute pre-requisite to sustaining other goals." Once peace is achieved, the implementation of other SDG goals can commence.

The chapters in the book demonstrate how scientific research and innovation can make valuable contributions to the exploration of crime, the causes of crime, crime patterns, and responses to crime, as well as the police and other criminal justice institutions. Over time, monitoring and evaluation will require new technologies to manage volumes of crime and security data necessary to improve the world, provide healthy environments, and ensure a good quality of life and unbiased, effective governmental services. Scholars are well-positioned to contribute significantly toward building such a world. Blaustein et al. (2018, p. 767) argued that criminology and criminal justice scholars have a valuable contribution to make by "Supporting this agenda means assisting with the design, implementation, and evaluation of projects that contribute to safe, just and sustainable societies." As this book demonstrates, criminology and criminal justice research can play a crucial role in our effort to achieve this better world.

The topics covered in this book also open new avenues of research, policy debates, and practical dimensions of research from the perspectives of the public (Loader & Sparks, 2011) and translational (Telep, 2024) criminologies. These perspectives emphasise the importance of making criminal justice and criminology research understandable and applicable to policymakers, practitioners, and other audiences, be they the media, civil society, or the public. After all, achieving the SDGs and making the world a better place is our joint responsibility. This book provides insight into what criminologists and criminal justice scholars can do now. As Antonio Guterres, the United Nations Secretary-General, insightfully noted, "Unless we act now, the 2030 Agenda will become an epitaph for a world that might have been." (United Nations, 2023).

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Part
1

Understanding and Responding to Violence and Other Crimes

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT G🌐ALS

Sexual Violence and Its Prevention in Nightlife Venues Through the Lenses of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals – A Case Study in Ljubljana

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Sexual violence prevention in nightlife venues aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, promoting patron well-being, reducing inequalities, fostering gender equality, and contributing to peace, justice, and strong institutions through collaborative partnerships. The research on the perception and prevention of sexual violence in nightlife carried out in Ljubljana in 2022 involved stakeholders, nightlife personnel, and patrons. Stakeholders perceive inappropriate comments related to sexuality as the most prevalent form of nightlife sexual violence. In contrast, nightlife personnel identify unwanted physical contact as the most common form and nightlife patrons highlight unwanted advances as a prevalent form. The most commonly observed preventive measures in nightlife venues by stakeholders and patrons were security guards. Stakeholders also emphasised awareness-raising and work with youth, while personnel noted the caution and self-protective behaviour of patrons. Considering urban-specific factors is also crucial when shaping sexual violence prevention strategies.

SPOLNO NASILJE IN NJEGOVO PREPREČEVANJE V NOČNIH LOKALIH SKOZI OBJEKTIVE CILJEV TRAJNOSTNEGA RAZVOJA ZDRUŽENIH NARODOV – ŠTUDIJA PRIMERA V LJUBLJANI

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Preprečevanje spolnega nasilja na prizoriščih nočnega življenja je usklajeno s cilji trajnostnega razvoja Združenih narodov, spodbujanjem dobrega počutja obiskovalcev, zmanjševanjem neenakosti, spodbujanjem enakosti spolov in prispevanjem k miru, pravičnosti in močnim institucijam prek sodelovanja in partnerstva. Raziskava o zaznavanju in preprečevanju spolnega nasilja v času nočnega življenja v Ljubljani, izvedena v letu 2022, je vključevala deležnike, zaposlene na območjih nočnega življenja in obiskovalce. Deležniki dojemajo neprimerne komentarje, povezane s spolnostjo, kot najbolj razširjeno obliko spolnega nasilja v času nočnega življenja, medtem ko osebje kot najpogostejšo obliko prepoznava neželen fizični stik, obiskovalci pa kot prevladujočo obliko izpostavljajo neželeno osvajanje. Preventivni ukrepi na območjih nočnega življenja, ki so jih najpogosteje opazili deležniki in obiskovalci, so varnostniki. Deležniki so izpostavili tudi ozaveščanje in delo z mladimi, osebje pa je izpostavilo previdnost in samozaščitno vedenje obiskovalcev. Pri oblikovanju strategij za preprečevanje spolnega nasilja je ključnega pomena tudi upoštevanje dejavnikov, specifičnih za urbana okolja.

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1   Introduction

It is well-established that disparities exist in the rates of violence, including sexual violence, between urban and rural areas (Ceccato, 2015). The frequency, types and traits of victimisation are related to various factors, such as social, economic, cultural, and geographic distinctions between urban and rural settings. Sexual violence is a pervasive issue in many societies, often exceeding the awareness levels of the general public (Li et al., 2023). Ruback and Ménard (2001) discovered that while urban areas had higher absolute numbers of reported sexual victimisation cases, rural areas exhibited higher rates of victimisation. Moreover, reporting to the police was more common in urban areas than in rural areas, suggesting that experiencing a stranger assault significantly influenced the likelihood of reporting such incidents. In rural environments, sexual violence tends to remain hidden due to the close relationship between the perpetrator and victim, making it challenging for women to seek or receive appropriate assistance (DeKeseredy et al., 2016; Eman & Bulovec, 2021). Laub (1981) found that in the United States, rates of reporting for crimes like rape and assault did not significantly differ between urban and rural areas, but the motivations for not reporting did. Urban residents often cited a sense of futility or a lack of evidence, while rural residents were more likely to consider it a private or personal issue.

Nightlife plays a significant role in urban, suburban and rural social scenes, contributing to the vibrancy and diversity of their cultural life, enhancing their economic vitality and employment prospects, and even encouraging tourism (Calafat et al., 2011; Košir, 2013; Stuart & Hughes, n.d.). As noted by Shaw (2023), the term 'nightlife' includes a specific segment of nocturnal activity, typically occurring in pubs, bars, and restaurants, involving activities such as alcohol consumption, dancing, dining, and social interactions, from dating to celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, and job promotions, among many more. Due to lifestyle changes, including an increase in working and leisure activities at night, nightlife has gained significant importance in recent years (Song & Siu, 2011). Liu et al. (2023, p. 2) pointed out that urban nightlife areas: "*…have experienced economic growth in conjunction with urban affluence and play an important role in stimulating urban consumption through the promotion of recreational and entertainment activities.*" Furthermore, Liu et al. (2023) underscored the substantial contribution of the urban night-time

environment to urban living, providing essential venues for socialising and recreational activities.

A myriad of external and internal factors shapes the design and development of urban districts. External influences, including economic conditions, climate, and the demographics of the population, all play pivotal roles. Internally, factors such as the types and intricacy of businesses, population density, and pedestrian traffic volume are significant determinants. While the natural landscape remains relatively constant within a given region, there exists spatial variation in economic dynamics. As a result, the architectural diversity observed across different districts within a city is largely influenced by their geographical locations (He et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2017). Additionally, the dense (Ritchie et al., 2024) and hyper-diverse urban populations (Vertovec, 2007, 2017), along with specific nightlife trends stemming from the intricacies of city life (Hollands & Chatterton, 2003), are shaping the density and diversity of urban nightlife. Nightlife entertainment venues can, at times, be associated with an increased risk of sexual violence, which constitutes acts against sexual integrity (Fank & Štirn, 2013) and includes any sexual act or attempted acquisition thereof, unwelcome sexually-related comments or advances, human trafficking actions, and other acts targeting a person's sexuality, carried out through coercion, with the perpetrator potentially being anyone, regardless of their relationship to the victim (Krug et al., 2002).

Urban areas, including nightlife spots, may experience weaker informal connections and community familiarity due to the transient and diverse nature of their populations. Abovementioned can shape perceptions of acceptable behaviour, societal attitudes toward sexual violence, and victims' willingness to report incidents (Bardwick, 1971, as cited in Tangri et al., 1982; Heise et al., 1996; Rozée, 1993). Furthermore, Steblay (1987) found a significantly higher likelihood of helping behaviour occurring in nonurban settings than in urban environments. Amato (1993) observed that urban residents typically show less inclination to assist strangers, a phenomenon attributed to the diverse and fragmented nature of large cities. However, large cities cultivate numerous subcultures based on shared interests and lifestyles. Within these subcultures, individuals display levels of social cohesion and willingness to help akin to those in rural communities. In general, a lack of personal acquaintance might influence an individual's hesitation to intervene in potentially harmful situations, a phenomenon discussed by Darley and Latané (1968) as the diffusion of responsibility and bystander effect. This effect can be amplified

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in urban areas where numerous bystanders might lead to a belief that someone else will take action, resulting in overall inaction. The belief that someone else will step in, combined with the presence of many witnesses, often leads to a reduced likelihood of individual intervention. Franklin et al. (2020) and Katz et al. (2015) found that bystanders are more inclined to intervene when the victim is someone they know personally. This inclination is driven by heightened emotions of empathy, responsibility, loyalty, and the ability to assess the situation's urgency. Bennett et al. (2017) and Jacobson & Eaton (2018) observed that bystanders are more inclined to intervene when the severity of sexual violence is higher.

In certain instances, nightlife venues might lack comprehensive and effective prevention strategies, allowing inappropriate behaviour to go unaddressed. As highlighted by Bulovec and Eman (2021b), the responsibility for preventing and addressing sexual violence and harassment in nightlife entertainment spots is shared among various stakeholders, including venue owners, law enforcement, visitors (patrons), staff, and broader community members. Each of these groups has a role in fostering a safe and respectful environment or enabling it to occur. Powers and Leili (2016) highlighted that many staff members in nightlife venues have discussed the importance of environmental design features that aid in identifying situations requiring intervention. They also noted that a lack of knowledge and familiarity with sexual violence can lead to the oversight of potentially dangerous situations. Raising awareness about sexual violence can empower service staff to take more responsibility for intervening. However, Powers and Leili (2016) highlighted a significant issue: the potential lack of strong support from venue owners for the involvement of nightlife venue staff in preventing sexual violence. Additionally, the ambiguity of certain actions can lead to doubts about the necessity for intervention. Still, it remains crucial to encourage witnesses to respond to these incidents, as their intervention can play a pivotal role in preventing more severe consequences (Powers & Leili, 2016). Knowing that nightclub staff are willing to intervene can provide a strong deterrent to customers who might otherwise misbehave. Staff members have a responsibility to adhere to and enforce clear alcohol policies within nightlife venues (Te Hiringa Hauora/Health Promotion Agency, 2021). Responsible alcohol service is about balancing legal requirements with community well-being.

The discussion mentioned above aligns with developing the plan of responsibility for preventing and addressing sexual violence to fit several Sustainable Development

Goals (SDGs), reflecting the interconnected nature of social, economic, and cultural factors. The relevant SDGs include Good Health and Well-being (SDG 3), Gender Equality (SDG 5), Reduced Inequality (SDG 10), Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions (SDG 16) and Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17) (United Nations. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.). Sexual violence prevention measures are vital across the entire spectrum of nightlife to ensure the safety and well-being of patrons, regardless of the specific type of venue. The inclusive approach to reducing inequalities, promoting gender equality, and fostering partnerships is relevant and beneficial for creating a safer and more equitable environment in all facets of nightlife and entertainment.

The chapter's objective is to shed light on the issue of sexual violence in Ljubljana, Slovenia's most urban area. By examining sexual violence in nightlife venues from an urban perspective, the chapter considers the distinct dynamics, challenges, and opportunities that urban environments offer. In the theoretical section, the focus will be on presenting the unique aspects of sexual violence within a typical urban setting. The authors will present the findings of a study conducted in Ljubljana involving stakeholders employed in nightlife venues and patrons. This presentation will highlight the frequency of sexual violence, the perceived effectiveness of existing preventive measures, and suggestions for reducing and controlling sexual violence in nightlife settings. The discussion will delve into the potential strategies for preventing and controlling sexual violence in nightlife venues.

2   Factors Related to Sexual Violence and Harassment

The persistence of sexual violence and harassment in society at large, as well as in nightlife entertainment spots, can be attributed to a combination of factors. First and foremost, in nightlife entertainment spots, social norms, gender stereotypes, gender inequalities, and power imbalances between men and women contribute to sexual violence and harassment (Becker & Tinkler, 2015; Grazian, 2008; Thompson & Cracco, 2008; Tinkler et al., 2018). As Mellgren et al. (2017) noted, this creates an environment where disrespectful behaviour is tolerated or normalised.

Media and social networks, as highlighted by Baxter and Wilmot (1985), can influence the perception of sexual violence, victims, and perpetrators, thus shaping cultural norms. As discovered by Bulovec and Eman (2021a), sexual violence,

especially in nightlife areas, is misrepresented in the media. Reporting tends to focus on the most severe forms of sexual violence, which does not accurately reflect the true extent of the phenomenon and suggests that lesser forms of harassment are not forms of violence.

In addition to the acceptance of such disrespectful behaviour, numerous studies (Becker & Tinkler, 2015; Graham et al., 2014b; Hughes et al., 2008; Santos et al., 2015; Watt et al., 2012) have consistently emphasised the strong correlation between alcohol consumption, the use of prohibited drugs, and sexual violence within nightlife entertainment environments. Alcohol consumption, as pointed out by Clodfelter et al. (2008), can impair judgment and decision-making, rendering individuals more vulnerable to unwanted sexual behaviours or risky situations. Furthermore, Sanchez et al. (2018) have highlighted that beyond alcohol consumption, environmental factors within nightlife venues, such as the type of music and crowded conditions, significantly contribute to the occurrence of sexual violence.

In the context of sexual violence and harassment in or near nightlife venues, situational prevention measures – aimed at modifying immediate surroundings to minimise opportunities for criminal activities (e.g., Clarke, 1983) – seek to mitigate the risk factors contributing to such incidents. This approach aims to decrease opportunities for these offences by altering environmental conditions that facilitate them. Methods include physical security measures, surveillance, access control, environmental design, and adjustments to target accessibility and routines (Clarke, 1983). Based on the principles of situational prevention, we can conclude that factors such as crowding, poor lighting, alcohol policies and a lack of control make it easier for perpetrators to go unnoticed and incidents of sexual violence to occur without being noticed by other patrons. Additionally, diminished personal safety measures escalate the risk of victimisation (e.g., if people drink, they are less aware of their surroundings and more likely to put themselves in danger) (Clodfelter et al., 2008).

According to routine activities theory, alcohol consumption or intoxication impairs individuals' ability to protect themselves, particularly in the presence of motivated offenders, thereby increasing the likelihood of them becoming vulnerable targets (Clodfelter et al., 2008). In nightlife areas, alcohol consumption is linked to the occurrence of sexual harassment, where victims, especially women, may feel

pressured to tolerate such behaviours due to a prevailing culture of acceptance (Mellgren et al., 2017). Furthermore, specific gender norms in nightlife settings influence social interactions, particularly for young women, who may find easier access to popular venues by conforming to flirtatious and "attractive" dress codes (Grazian, 2008). These social norms, in conjunction with routine activities theory, underscore the aspect of target suitability.

Within the array of factors contributing to the perpetuation of sexual violence in nightlife venues, it is notable that individuals may exploit the social and intoxicating atmosphere of nightlife to engage in predatory behaviour, specifically targeting vulnerable individuals who might be less vigilant of their surroundings. An example of such behaviour is 'girl hunting', which, as described by Grazian (2007), represents a sort of collective, patriarchal ritual often considered a bonding activity among heterosexual men aimed at achieving sexual encounters. Building on this, we cannot disregard the influence of peer pressure and group dynamics, which can shape and encourage behaviours that might lead to boundary violations or non-consensual actions. Furthermore, patrons of nightlife venues may lack awareness of what constitutes sexual violence. As noted by Tinkler et al. (2018), many young people have encountered situations involving sexual violence but may not classify such experiences as violent. Additionally, there is a lack of understanding about consent (Monique Burr Foundation for Children, n.d.; The Crown Prosecution Service, 2021) and the significance of intervening when witnessing potentially harmful situations (bystander intervention) (Burn, 2019). This inadequate understanding of sexual violence, consent, and respectful behaviour can contribute to inappropriate actions going unaddressed.

Among the factors contributing to sexual violence in nightlife venues, inadequate enforcement of codes of conduct and legal measures is notable. According to Becker and Tinkler (2015), acts of sexual violence are not strictly regulated in nightlife areas. In Slovenia, criminal acts of sexual violence are regulated by the Criminal Code (2012), while the misdemeanour aspect is covered by the Protection of Public Order Act (2006). Despite this legislation, Bulovec & Eman (2021b) have highlighted a particularly grey area in actions that could potentially constitute misdemeanours and felonies. This ambiguity arises due to various forms of sexual violence, their severity, and the feelings of the victim. Victims may fear victim-blaming and social stigma if

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they report incidents of sexual violence or harassment. This fear can deter individuals from coming forward and seeking help (Welsh et al., 2006).

3　　Methodology

In this section, we attempt to gain insight into the nature of sexual violence in an urban environment. Consequently, we chose to conduct the research in the City of Ljubljana, the most urban area in Slovenia. This research was carried out between October and November 2022 as part of our involvement in the EU project SHINE (Sexual Harassment in Nightlife Entertainment Spots: Control and Prevention). We used the mixed methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research elements. As pointed out by Brent and Kraska (2010) and Kraska and Neuman (2008), using a mixed methods approach aims to obtain in-depth research. It improves the validity and reliability of the results. The findings from quantitative methods were supplemented with qualitative methods for additional explanation and interpretation of the results.

We conducted research on sexual violence in nightlife venues, utilising round tables, training sessions, and semi-structured interviews. One hundred thirty-five people participated in the research; including 18 stakeholders, 57 nightlife personnel, and 60 nightlife patrons. As this research utilised snowball sampling, it is essential to acknowledge its limitation in terms of representativeness. Initial participants were contacted via email and encouraged to disseminate the invitation further. Engagement was sought from pub managers across Ljubljana and students from diverse faculties, who in turn shared the research invitation with their networks.

All participants, regardless of the type of involvement in the research (round tables, training sessions, or semi-structured interviews), were asked the same questions, with the possibility of adding important observations freely. We gave the participants a paper with a brief introduction to the topic, followed by open-ended questions and ample space to write their answers. Additionally, participants were encouraged to express their thoughts freely at the end of the questionnaire. During semi-structured interviews, we followed the same topics and took notes. We adhered to the grounded theory approach by Glasser and Strauss (1967). All collected answers were transcribed and coded by the research team. We then compiled the texts to which

we attributed the same concept and organised the data into essential concepts and categories (Glaser in Strauss, 1967; Mesec, 1998).

The first part of the questions (during round tables, training sessions, or semi-structured interviews) aimed to gain insight into the perception of sexual violence in nightlife areas, including the types of venues involved and the frequency of such incidents. Respondents were asked whether they had observed any instances of sexual violence in nightlife areas, and if so, how frequently. If their response was affirmative, they were kindly asked to provide a brief description of the incident(s), including details such as the victim's involvement, the perpetrator, and the response from bystanders or others present. In the second part, we focused on the existing preventive activities. Respondents were asked if they had observed any preventive measures addressing sexual violence prevention in nightlife areas and if they answered affirmatively to provide a brief description. The last section was devoted to the proposals aimed at reducing, preventing, and controlling the incidence of sexual violence in nightlife areas. Respondents were asked to propose improvements for the prevention of sexual violence in nightlife areas and describe their suggestions. The following results are presented separately for each group of participants involved – stakeholders, nightlife personnel, and nightlife patrons.

4   Results

The findings regarding the prevalence of observed sexual violence within nightlife venues highlight significant differences in the perceptions of its frequency among stakeholders, nightlife personnel, and patrons (Figure 1). Stakeholders were quite heterogeneous in their views about the frequency of observing sexual violence: about equal proportions (33.3%) acknowledged that they observed sexual violence "rarely", "occasionally", and "very often". In contrast, nightlife personnel and patrons reported observing sexual violence less frequently. The largest share of nightlife patrons reported observing sexual violence in nightlife venues "rarely" (26.7%), followed by "occasionally" (21.7%). Similarly, the largest share of nightlife personnel noted that they observed sexual violence "rarely" (31.6%). However, there are distinctions within these groups, with personnel expressing slightly greater concern than patrons. This is evident in a higher proportion perceiving sexual violence to occur "often" or "very often".

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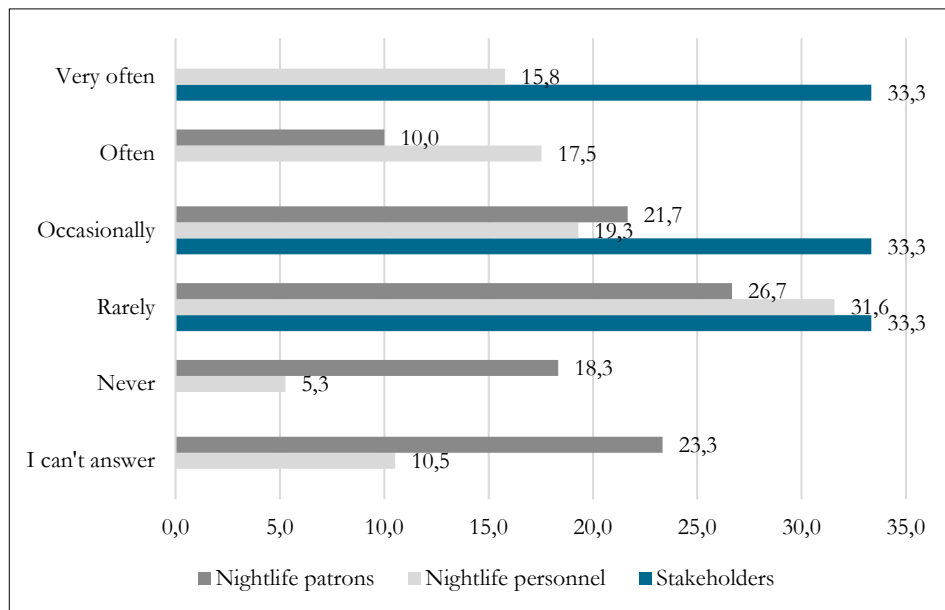
Figure 1: Frequency of Perception of Sexual Violence Incidents in Nightlife Venues (%)

The analysis reveals variations in the perceptions of different forms of sexual violence among stakeholders, nightlife personnel, and nightlife patrons (Figure 2). While some forms, such as unwanted physical contact, are widely recognised across all groups (mentioned by 72.2% of stakeholders, 64.9% of nightlife personnel, and 30% of nightlife patrons), perceptions of other forms depend on the respondent's role and perspective within the nightlife environment. Stakeholders view inappropriate comments related to sexuality as the second most prevalent form (50.0%), while nightlife personnel and nightlife patrons perceive them less frequently (26.3% and 18.3%, respectively). Nightlife personnel consider unwanted advances as the second most prevalent form of nightlife sexual violence (29.8%). Interestingly, stakeholders were also more likely to perceive a strong correlation between sexual violence and alcohol/drugs (38.9%), compared to personnel (12.3%) and patrons (3.3%). Other responses included staring, invading personal space, purchasing drinks, pressuring conversation (e.g., feeling 'obligated' to spend time with someone who bought a drink), stalking, offering rides home, and attempted rape.
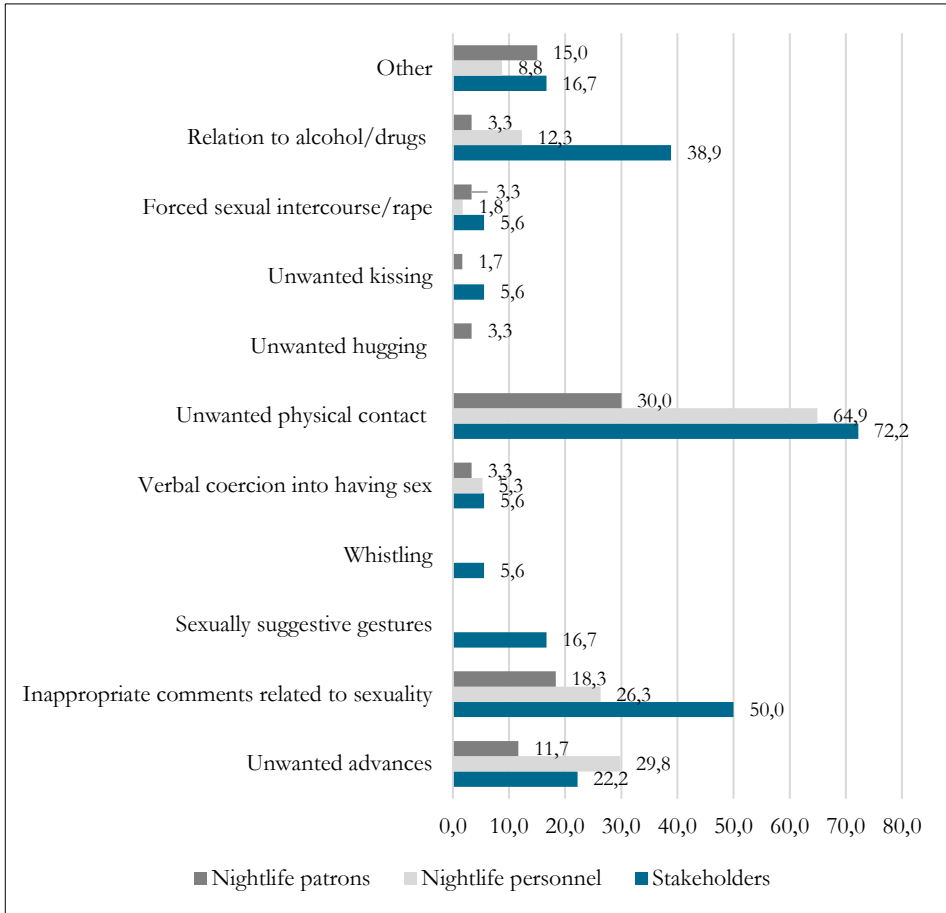
Figure 2: The Most Frequently Perceived Types of Sexual Violence (%)

Only a small percentage of respondents observed preventive activities against sexual violence in nightlife settings. Preventive activities were noted by 22.2% of stakeholders, 29.8% of nightlife personnel, and 21.7% of nightlife patrons. This indicates a potential gap in awareness or implementation of preventive measures within these environments. The responses regarding observed preventive activities in nightlife venues are grounded in the observations and involvement of respondents in the nightlife industry, whether as stakeholders, personnel, or patrons (Figure 3).

Stakeholders who have a vested interest in the management and safety of nightlife venues emphasise various preventive measures, such as the presence of security personnel and efforts to raise awareness (mentioned by 27.8% each), as well as

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initiatives aimed at raising awareness among employees and working with young people (11.1% each).

Nightlife personnel, encompassing employees working within these venues, provide insights based on their experiences. They mention measures such as encouraging patrons to exercise caution and promoting self-protective behaviour (7%), the presence of security guards, posters, and billboards addressing sexual violence and consent, as well as increased police presence (5.3% each). Additionally, they note initiatives like bystander intervention, age restrictions, adequate lighting, limited entry numbers, and prohibition of drug use promotion at parties (3.5% each). These responses indicate a focus on situational preventive measures among nightlife personnel, contrasting with the lack of mention of such measures among nightlife patrons. Among the nightlife personnel who did not observe preventive activities, one response stands out, suggesting that sexual violence is not prioritised in prevention efforts: "No, there are practically no preventive activities against sexual violence in nightlife areas. In recent years, the number of security guards stationed in nightclubs has increased, but they prioritise addressing fights and disorder rather than addressing sexual violence." This underscores a significant gap in prioritising and addressing sexual violence prevention within nightlife venues.

On the other hand, responses from nightlife patrons reflect their observations as venue-goers, with fewer references to specific preventive activities. The variety of preventive activities noticed by patrons was considerably smaller compared to those observed by stakeholders or nightlife personnel, totalling only five observed preventive activities. The most observed preventive measure was the presence of security guards (15%), as they are the most visible in nightlife settings compared to other measures. One nightlife patron observed that among the preventive measures, only security guards were noticed and pointed out that: "…*security guards do not necessarily carry out preventive activities directly related to the prevention of sexual violence.*" Some other respondents agreed with this statement, noting that security guards are "not a reliable source for help" or that "they do not fulfil their duties properly". Conversely, there were comments regarding the proper functioning of security guards and their intervention in cases of sexual violence in certain nightclubs. While some patrons (3.3%) mentioned warnings about being cautious with drinks, overall, their responses suggest a lower awareness of preventive measures than stakeholders and personnel. Only 1.7% in each category mentioned observing initiatives such as

employee awareness campaigns, posters and billboards addressing sexual violence and consent, and displays of care for others.
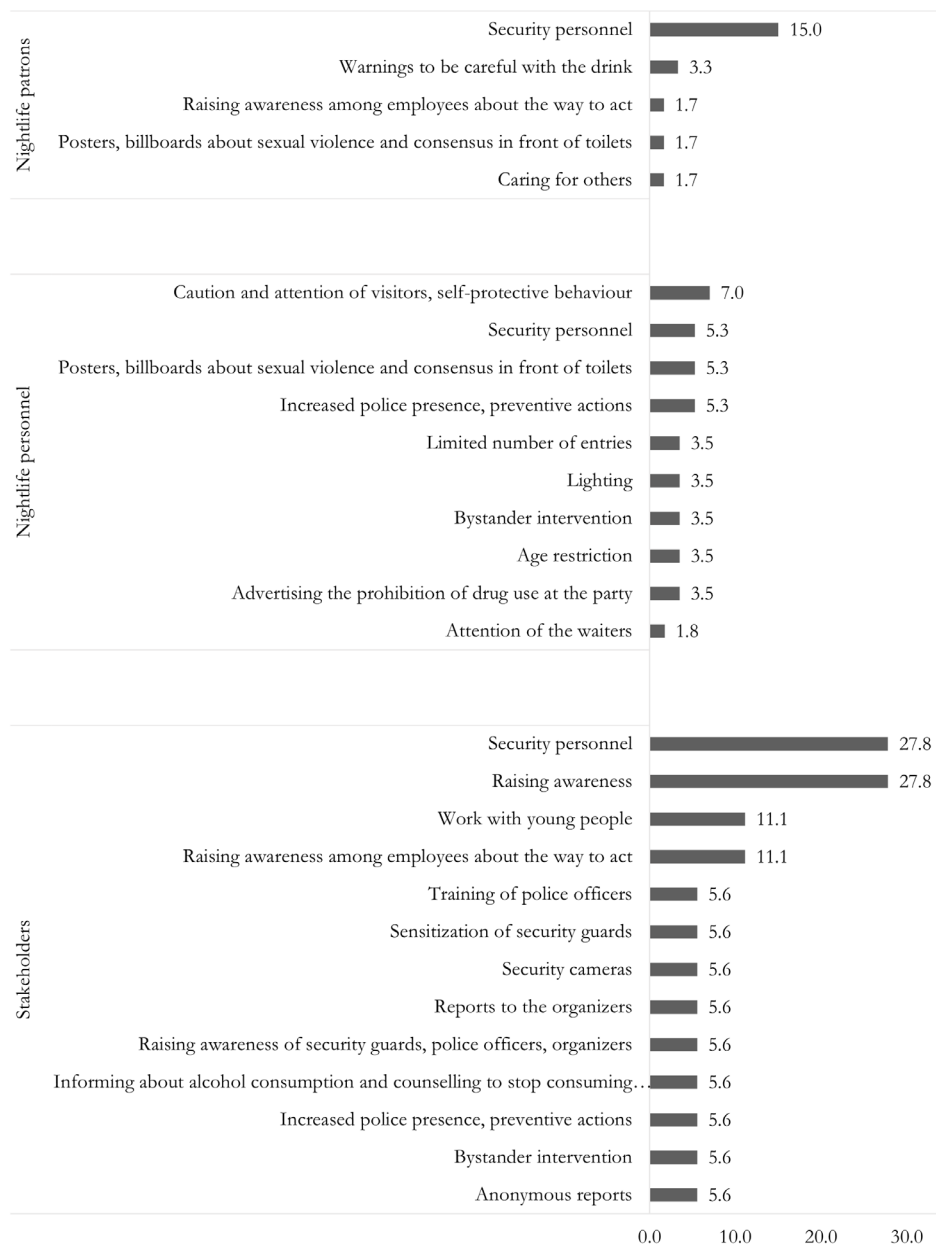
Figure 3: Areas Where Prevention Activities Were Observed (%)

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Below, we present areas where stakeholders, nightlife personnel, and nightlife patrons have recognised the importance of improving preventive activities (Figure 4). Stakeholders' responses regarding propositions for preventing sexual violence in nightlife venues spanned various categories. The highest percentage (44.4%) emphasised the importance of raising awareness about sexual violence prevention. Close behind, 33.3% of stakeholders highlighted the significance of trained security guards in these venues. Additionally, 22.2% of stakeholders underscored the role of society in fostering cultural changes and promoting respect and consent.

Meanwhile, 16.7% advocated for involving the police in effectively addressing sexual violence. Similarly, another 16.7% recognised the responsibility of managers and owners of bars to create safe environments and implement preventive measures. Within stakeholder responses, 11.1% each underscored the importance of educational initiatives, enforcement of sanctions, and active involvement of venue employees in sexual violence prevention efforts. An additional 5.6% of respondents mentioned the significance of addressing alcohol's role, implementing situational prevention measures, and providing comprehensive support services for both victims and perpetrators in combating sexual violence. These responses collectively underscore the multi-faceted approach required to effectively combat sexual violence in nightlife venues, with stakeholders recognising the importance of awareness, security, societal change, education, enforcement, and support mechanisms. As highlighted by the Ljubljana city manager, who participated in our survey: "*The collaborative efforts of local government and the community, facilitated by a city manager responsible for communication between bars and the city, further ensure the promotion of safety in nightlife venues. Besides the abovementioned collaboration with nightlife managers, local governments should work with state entities, especially the Police and NGOs, to battle the phenomenon of sexual violence in nightlife venues*".

The highest percentage of nightlife personnel (38.6%) proposed security guards as a preventive measure against sexual violence, highlighting significant reliance on trained personnel to ensure the safety of nightlife venues and respond to incidents effectively. Following closely, 26.3% of personnel suggested raising awareness about sexual violence prevention, indicating an acknowledgement of the role of education and information dissemination in fostering safer environments. Alcohol emerged as a notable concern, with 19.3% of respondents recognising its role in facilitating

sexual violence. This underscores the importance of implementing responsible alcohol service and management practices to mitigate risks. Additionally, 14.0% of personnel identified society as needing improvement in preventing sexual violence, signalling a broader societal responsibility in addressing cultural norms and attitudes contributing to such incidents. A smaller proportion, accounting for 12.3%, advocated for enhancing legal regulations and modifying sanctions as preventive measures. Similarly, the same percentage acknowledged the significance of providing support for both victims and perpetrators of sexual violence. Transportation and zero-tolerance policies each received responses from 10.5% and 8.8% of personnel, respectively, indicating considerations for ensuring safe transportation options and implementing strict policies against sexual misconduct.

Moreover, 8.8% of respondents emphasised the importance of empowering employees to play an active role in preventing sexual violence, suggesting a need for training and support for venue staff. A minority of personnel, at 7.0%, mentioned involving the police and promoting self-protective behaviours and situational prevention measures. Other factors, such as drugs, school-based initiatives, age verification, and control measures, received lower percentages, suggesting they are perceived as less significant contributors to sexual violence prevention in nightlife venues. Interestingly, none of the nightlife personnel respondents mentioned the role of managers or owners of bars, indicating a potential gap in awareness or acknowledgement of their responsibility in creating safe environments.

Among the propositions for prevention improvements, nightlife patrons prioritise the presence of trained security personnel to ensure their safety and prevent incidents of sexual violence, with security guards receiving the highest percentage response at 50.0%. Situational prevention measures were also deemed essential to improve, with 38.3% of patrons acknowledging their effectiveness in reducing the likelihood of sexual violence by modifying the environment or circumstances. Awareness campaigns were mentioned by 21.7% of patrons, indicating a recognition of the role of education and information dissemination in promoting safer behaviours and attitudes. Improvements in addressing alcohol's role in facilitating sexual violence were acknowledged by 18.3% of respondents, suggesting a need for responsible alcohol service and consumption practices within nightlife venues. Society was identified as needing improvements by 16.7% of patrons, highlighting the broader societal attitudes and norms that influence behaviours and perceptions

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related to sexual violence. A smaller percentage, at 13.3%, emphasised the importance of empowering venue employees to play an active role in preventing and responding to incidents of sexual violence. Control measures received responses from 8.3% of patrons, indicating considerations for implementing policies and regulations to maintain a safe environment. Other factors, such as drugs, transportation options, police involvement, age verification, school-based initiatives, sanctions, and self-protective behaviours, were mentioned by smaller percentages of patrons, suggesting varying degrees of awareness or perceived relevance. Interestingly, none of the patrons mentioned the need to improve the role of managers or owners of bars, like the responses from nightlife personnel. This could indicate a gap in awareness or acknowledgement of their responsibility among patrons.

Upon closer examination of the results presented in Figure 4, a list of suggestions emerges for enhancing preventive activities targeted at mitigating sexual violence in nightlife areas, encompassing contributions from all participants involved in the research.

Regarding proposed preventive activities related to security personnel, respondents emphasised the need for more trained security staff, visible security presence, an increased number of security personnel mingling among visitors, training on response methods, and encouragement for intervention in observed incidents of sexual violence.

Within observed awareness-raising activities, participants highlighted educating young individuals, displaying warnings at entrances, signposts indicating help locations, labelling establishments with a zero-tolerance policy (e.g., LGBT-friendly), involving volunteers and NGOs, and conducting awareness campaigns at venues and enhancing awareness of the unacceptability of sexual violence responses, consent, safe alcohol consumption, and self-protective behaviour. An on-site awareness team was also suggested.

Nightlife patrons

Category	Value
Zero tolerance	1.7
Victims and perpetrators	3.3
Self-protective behaviour	5.0
Legislation and sanctions	5.0
School	5.0
Age verification	6.7
Police	6.7
Transport	6.7
Drugs	6.7
Control	8.3
Employees	13.3
Society	16.7
Alcohol	18.3
Awareness	21.7
Situational prevention	38.3
Security guards	50.0

Nightlife personnel

Category	Value
Control	3.5
Age verification	3.5
School	5.3
Drugs	5.3
Situational prevention	7.0
Self-protective behaviour	7.0
Police	7.0
Employees	8.8
Zero tolerance	8.8
Transport	10.5
Victims and perpetrators	12.3
Legislation and sanctions	12.3
Society	14.0
Alcohol	19.3
Awareness	26.3
Security guards	38.6

Stakeholders

Category	Value
Victims and perpetrators	5.6
Situational prevention	5.6
Alcohol	5.6
Employees	11.1
Legislation and sanctions	11.1
School	11.1
Managers/owners of bars	16.7
Police	16.7
Society	22.2
Security guards	33.3
Awareness	44.4

Figure 4: Areas Where Prevention Activities Were Proposed (%)

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Situational prevention measures proposed by study participants included video surveillance, improved indoor and outdoor lighting, enhanced space visibility, minimising blind spots, controlling visitor numbers, implementing entry controls, and providing separate restroom entrances. Suggestions to prevent risks of sexual violence due to alcohol consumption included overseeing drink preparation and service, video surveillance of bars, restricting alcohol intake, adhering to alcohol policies and regulations, providing safe areas for sobering up, using glass covers, refraining from accepting drinks from strangers, implementing indicators for drug presence incorporated in straws and glasses.

Regarding societal-focused proposals, participants highlighted mutual assistance, informal interpersonal supervising, active involvement in nightlife with encouragement for bystander intervention, and sensitising visitors to the unacceptability of sexual violence. Employee-related preventive actions involved educating and training staff about recognition and response, increasing staff numbers, and protecting serving staff from visitor violence. Within the sanctions category, potential solutions included consistently enforcing sanctions, promoting reporting to the police and notifying staff, stricter penalties, and penalties for even "milder" forms of sexual violence.

Apart from participation in nightlife itself, suggestions regarding safe transportation emerged due to the potential for sexual violence after participating in nightlife. These proposals involved organised safe transportation from nightlife areas, modelled after "Mon Cheperon" in France – verified drivers and traceability, and facilitating safe transportation home for visibly intoxicated individuals.

Improvements in police work were suggested, encompassing increased police presence, officer training, preventive actions, and the use of modern investigative methods to identify perpetrators and detect prohibited substances, primarily drugs used for assault. Measures concerning victims included safely removing them, immediately removing perpetrators from the scene and offering the "angel shot" or asking for Angela (a signal for help). They also underscored the need for stricter substance control upon entry to nightlife areas and the development of techniques to identify drug content in drinks.

Opportunities for enhancing the situation were also identified in the education sphere, particularly in terms of conducting awareness training focused on recognising sexual violence, understanding consent, acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Less frequently mentioned as prevention possibilities were actions such as age verification and other measures directed at operators or venue owners who might otherwise tolerate sexual harassment and violence. These include creating a venue policy on zero tolerance for sexual violence, sensitising operators to the problem of sexual violence, and encouraging nightlife providers to respond appropriately if the potential for violence is suspected.

5   Discussion

Our survey revealed varying reports from stakeholders, personnel, and patrons regarding observed sexual violence in nightlife venues. Prevalent forms included unwanted physical contact, inappropriate comments, unwanted advances, and incidents related to alcohol or drugs. These findings highlight differences in awareness and perspectives, underscoring the necessity for targeted interventions to prevent sexual violence effectively.

Comparing our findings with those of a US survey (Kearl, 2014) involving 2,000 individuals aged 18 and older, roughly divided by gender, we observe a concerning prevalence of street harassment. Their survey revealed that a significant portion of women, approximately 65%, reported experiencing street sexual harassment. This harassment primarily involved verbal and physical forms, including aggressive behaviours like sexual touching, stalking, and exhibitionism. Additionally, a smaller percentage of women reported coercion into sexual acts. In comparison, men experienced street sexual harassment at a lower rate, with verbal and physical harassment being less prevalent. In our research, we observed various forms of sexual violence to a lesser extent, ranging from actions like whistling and unwanted hugging to more severe instances such as coercion into sexual acts or forced intercourse. Despite their varying degrees, each of these forms constitutes a serious violation of human dignity and undermines the safety of nightlife venues. Collective action from owners, nightlife employees, patrons, police, and the community is necessary to prevent such incidents (Bulovec & Eman, 2021b).

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The goal is to establish nightlife venues where harmful behaviours are intolerable, allowing individuals to socialise without fear. These spaces should promote respect, consent, and safety. Preventing sexual violence aligns with SDG 3, promoting good health and well-being. Sexual violence prevention contributes to the well-being of individuals attending nightlife entertainment spots. Creating safer environments enhances mental and physical health, fostering a safer and healthier society. Effective prevention measures not only reduce the incidence of sexual violence but also foster an environment conducive to the well-being of all individuals, thus creating a safer and healthier society.

Our findings underscore the importance of considering the perspectives and experiences of different participants within the nightlife ecosystem when implementing and evaluating preventive strategies to ensure the safety and well-being of all individuals involved. Security guards were identified as the most observed preventive measure, noted by stakeholders, nightlife patrons, and personnel to varying extents. Additionally, suggestions for enhancing prevention often emphasised the importance of well-trained security staff. These findings highlight the critical role of security personnel in ensuring safety within nightlife venues. Furthermore, recommendations were made to enhance the visibility of security personnel to deter potential offenders and help when needed. Among the commonly observed preventive measures among stakeholders were awareness-raising initiatives, youth outreach programs, and training sessions for nightlife personnel regarding responding to sexual violence incidents in nightlife venues. Conversely, nightlife personnel, including security guards, emphasised the importance of promoting caution and self-protective behaviours among patrons, displaying posters and billboards about sexual violence and consent, and increasing police presence. Overall, responses from nightlife patrons suggest lower awareness of preventive measures compared to stakeholders and personnel. Specifically, our research highlights the need for enhanced awareness-raising initiatives concerning all nightlife participants. Implementing such initiatives can bridge the awareness gap and empower individuals to recognise and address instances of sexual violence effectively. It is essential to consistently raise awareness about the prevalence and impact of sexual violence and harassment through campaigns, workshops, and informative materials.

Additionally, participants emphasised the necessity for enhanced activities within educational systems. The significance of public education was also mentioned in the context of general preventive measures (Nevisi, 2019). Education is key in helping individuals identify such behaviours and take preventive action (Storer et al., 2016). This involves promoting awareness campaigns that educate patrons on the issue, the negative impact on the victim, and the importance of bystander intervention (Banyard et al., 2004). Banyard et al. (2004, p. 65) noted that: "*full community perspective demands that we not stop here but that we continue to build individual and community competence in the face of sexual violence and more fully engage all community members in the process of sexual violence prevention.*" McMahon (2015) explored the influence of contextual factors on bystander intervention across various emergency scenarios. Social norms, community cohesion, prosocial role modelling, implementation of policies and accountability measures, and the physical environment were identified as significant factors shaping bystander response. As pointed out by Koss and Harvey (1991, p. 280) we must "…*combine educational activities to build individual competence with action strategies to create new social supports for those at risk.*" Hence, nightlife venues should be viewed as key and strategic locations within a community where education about and prevention of sexual violence can diffuse through the larger community, creating even greater benefits. While specifics may vary, training programs typically encompass several common components, including education on sexual violence awareness, techniques to identify markers of sexual risk, instruction on bystander responsibility when encountering risky situations, and discussions or simulations regarding interventions in such scenarios (Storer et al., 2016). Nightlife venues are pivotal and strategic locations within communities for disseminating education about and preventing sexual violence. This is especially pertinent considering that alcohol intoxication is a prevalent factor in over half of sexual assaults (Abbey, 2002; Testa et al., 2000), and bystanders frequently encounter increased barriers to intervention when the potential victim is intoxicated (Pugh et al., 2016). According to Leone et al. (2018), a primary objective of bystander training programs is to heighten awareness regarding the potential progression from less severe forms of sexual violence to more serious acts. They further emphasise that the presence of alcohol intensifies the ambiguity in sexual risk situations, making intervention more challenging.

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In general prevention efforts, implementing and enforcing explicit codes of conduct against sexual violence and harassment are crucial. Our research also emphasises the need for improvements in legal regulations and sanctions, as supported by participants. Strengthening legal measures and penalties for such offences can enhance deterrence. Nevisi (2019) underscores the significance of factors such as deterrence, intimidation, and public education in prevention measures. Specific regulations addressing these concerns already exist in Ljubljana, a city where nightlife is significant for tourism. The Action Plan for Gender Equality in the Municipality of Ljubljana and the Social Welfare Development Strategy in the Municipality of Ljubljana define strategies for violence prevention, including sexual violence (Mestna občina Ljubljana, 2019, 2021).

Gender equality, encompassed in SDG 5, addresses sexual violence in nightlife venues rooted in gender-based discrimination and power imbalances. This initiative aligns with Goal 5 by challenging societal norms perpetuating violence and promoting an inclusive nightlife culture where all genders feel safe. Bulovec and Eman (2021b) emphasise that successful prevention efforts rely heavily on collaboration among stakeholders. The initiative also aligns with Goal 17 by fostering partnerships and coordinated measures, emphasising collective action for community safety, well-being, and equality.

Building upon our discourse concerning preventive measures, it is pertinent to underscore the discernible inclination among nightlife patrons towards prioritising the enhancement of situational preventive measures, particularly when contrasted with the perspectives of nightlife personnel and stakeholders. Situational prevention methods, including physical security measures and environmental design (Clarke, 1983), aim to reduce factors like crowding and poor lighting, making it harder for perpetrators to go unnoticed and incidents of sexual violence to occur (Clodfelter et al., 2008). Regarding potential venue alterations, well-lit areas enhance visibility and discourage potential offenders from engaging in inappropriate behaviours. Additionally, strategically placed security cameras can monitor activities and serve as evidence in case of incidents. Furthermore, our research has highlighted restrooms as critical locations for sexual violence incidents. Ensuring well-maintained, secure, and monitored restrooms can help prevent occurrences in secluded areas. Diminished personal safety measures, such as alcohol consumption leading to decreased awareness, also escalate the risk of victimisation (Clodfelter et al., 2008).

In our research, the proposed measures include the establishment of safe spaces within venues where patrons can seek assistance or take a break. Defined pathways and exits also diminish opportunities for offenders to isolate victims. In line with routine activities theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979), sexual violence in nightlife areas can be interpreted because of a motivated offender, a potential victim without capable guardianship, and a specific time and location (Ceccato, 2014). Visible and well-trained security personnel can deter potential offenders and respond promptly to incidents (Johnson et al., 2016).

To effectively recognise and respond to incidents of sexual violence, comprehensive training should be provided to all staff members, including security personnel. Our study found that stakeholders, nightlife personnel, and nightlife patrons stressed the significance of empowering nightlife personnel through training initiatives. Powers and Leili (2016) emphasised that a lack of knowledge and familiarity with sexual violence may result in overlooking potentially dangerous situations. Increasing awareness about sexual violence can empower service staff to take greater responsibility for intervening. However, they also highlighted a significant issue: the potential lack of strong support from venue owners for the involvement of nightlife venue staff in preventing sexual violence. They added that: "*bar managers need to be made to feel responsible as well*" (Powers & Leili, 2016, p. 703). Johnson et al. (2016, p. 29) find out that: "*…proactive security efforts appear to increase return customers might motivate managers to implement better security policies*". Powers and Leili (2016, p. 703) pointed out that "*Bar owners/managers may be more open to bystander prevention if they perceive it as a means of positive promotion. Their participation can help bars develop and maintain a positive image in the community, which may in turn make them more profitable*".

Combating sexual violence in nightlife venues contributes to promoting peace and justice (SDG 16) by establishing strong institutions capable of enforcing laws and protecting individuals from harm. This involves implementing measures to hold perpetrators accountable, ensuring a just response to incidents, and fostering trust in responsible institutions. Providing comprehensive support services is essential for survivors, aligning with SDG 3 by addressing mental and physical health impacts and contributing to public health. Access to counselling, medical assistance, and legal guidance helps victims cope and navigate the aftermath. Making information about these services readily available within venues is crucial, and law enforcement's prompt and thorough response to incidents is also vital.

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In our study, suggestions were made regarding societal measures aimed at enhancing sexual violence prevention in nightlife venues. These included promoting mutual assistance, informal interpersonal monitoring, actively engaging and encouraging bystander intervention, and sensitising visitors to the unacceptability of sexual violence. Bystander intervention training is crucial, empowering individuals to intervene and prevent incidents. Encouraging patrons to intervene and providing them with tools can create a culture of responsibility (Burn, 2019). Byrnes et al. (2016) found that groups with strong social bonds and lower expectations for alcohol consumption among their members were more inclined to intervene. Leone et al. (2018) also highlighted how intoxication narrows bystanders' focus, exacerbating the diffusion of responsibility and hindering intervention. Alcohol can also shift focus towards perceived norms regarding sexual behaviour, such as judgments about the victim's "worthiness", rather than towards the risk of sexual violence.

Furthermore, extant research found that alcohol is a significant contributing factor to sexual violence (Becker & Tinkler, 2015; Clodfelter et al., 2008; Graham et al., 2014b; Hughes et al., 2008; Sanchez et al., 2018; Santos et al., 2015; Watt et al., 2012). Respondents in our study proposed preventive measures related to alcohol consumption. Therefore, it is essential to incorporate both encouraging bystander intervention and implementing alcohol-related measures as integral components of comprehensive prevention strategies. Ensuring that alcohol policies are in place and followed can help mitigate this risk and create a safer environment for patrons (Te Hiringa Hauora/Health Promotion Agency, 2021).

Kavanaugh's (2013) research highlights how women inadvertently reinforce attitudes that enable sexual violence. Often, women mentioned their own alcohol or other psychoactive substance consumption during their time at nightlife venues or interactions with potential perpetrators in nightlife venues. This unintentional reinforcement can normalise unwanted behaviours and uphold gender-related social norms. Preventive activities should address traditional gender norms and environments that perpetuate sexism and objectification (Graham et al., 2014a). Sexual violence prevention efforts should be inclusive, aligning with SDG 10, to ensure nightlife venues are safe for all individuals, regardless of their background or identity. By actively considering and addressing the needs of various groups, such as LGBTQ+ communities or marginalised individuals, the initiative contributes to the

reduction of inequalities within the community. It fosters a more equitable and just social environment. Challenging and changing cultural attitudes that might suggest the acceptability of sexual violence or harassment in any context, including nightlife settings, is crucial.

6   Conclusion

Combining situational and general prevention strategies offers a comprehensive approach to combatting sexual violence and harassment in nightlife entertainment venues. These strategies should be customised to suit the unique context of each venue and regularly assessed for their effectiveness. Achieving progress requires a proactive and holistic approach to addressing and preventing these issues. This effort demands collaboration among venue owners, staff, patrons, community members, and authorities, especially the police. As emphasised by Fileborn (2016), tackling unwanted sexual attention in entertainment areas necessitates a multifaceted prevention approach. This involves implementing measures such as staff training to respond effectively to incidents, establishing venue-specific policies, and implementing broader educational initiatives aimed at cultivating ethical behaviours among young individuals. The effectiveness of these strategies hinges on their flexibility, as venues may respond differently to unwanted sexual attention and exhibit distinct cultural and environmental factors.

Consequently, adapting preventive actions to suit the characteristics of each entertainment venue is imperative. Creating a secure nightlife environment entails a fusion of preventative measures and active participation from all stakeholders associated with the nightlife scene. Through a collaborative and adaptable approach, we can work towards fostering an atmosphere free from sexual violence and harassment.

Carefully crafted crime prevention strategies not only discourage criminal activities and victimisation but also contribute to sustainable development. Prevention is instrumental in achieving the SDGs (United Nations. Office on Drugs and Crime, n.d.). Efforts to prevent sexual violence in nightlife venues align with key SDGs, reflecting a holistic approach to societal well-being. In addressing Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being), the initiative aims to create safer environments within entertainment venues, promoting patrons' mental and physical health by mitigating

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the risks of harassment and sexual violence. The emphasis on Goal 5 (Gender Equality) underscores the commitment to challenging discriminatory gender norms and fostering an inclusive nightlife culture where individuals of all genders can participate without fear. Additionally, the initiative contributes to Goal 10 (Reduced Inequality) by recognising and addressing the diverse populations affected, ensuring that nightlife activities are accessible and safe for everyone. As part of Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), combatting sexual violence involves implementing measures that hold perpetrators accountable, contributing to a sense of justice and security in various nightlife venues. Lastly, the collaborative nature of addressing sexual violence aligns with Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), emphasising the importance of collective efforts involving venue owners, law enforcement, community organisations, and patrons to create safer and more equitable nightlife venues.

The current study aims to provide insights into sexual violence within an urban setting, specifically in Ljubljana. The presented research has certain limitations, primarily stemming from the methodology employed, such as the utilisation of the snowball sampling technique. This approach may introduce measurement biases and potential inaccuracies in the gathered data. Moreover, the study was conducted with a relatively small sample size that lacks representativeness. Consequently, caution should be exercised when attempting to generalise the findings to broader populations or contexts. However, further research is warranted in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon and to develop more effective prevention measures that consider the diversity of norms and values found in different types of urban and rural communities.

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UNDER-REPORTING AND UNDER-RECORDING OF HATE CRIMES AGAINST MUSLIM WOMEN IN ITALY

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The chapter analyses the root causes of under-reporting (the low number of reports from victims and witnesses), which causes a lack of recognition of the discriminatory matrix of reported crimes and, therefore, under-recording (erroneous reporting and investigation – by law enforcement agencies) of hate crimes against Muslim women in Italy. A survey of practitioners and members of the Muslim community in Italy was conducted between May and September 2022. The findings reveal that multiple factors contribute to the low reporting rate and the flaws in recording episodes of hate speech and hate crimes of intolerance and hatred towards Muslim women. Lack of trust in the judiciary or the police and the significant "tendency" to not report a case of intolerance represent the main causes of under-reporting. This brings out a habituation of victims towards hate and discrimination.

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Nezadostno prijavljanje in neevidentiranje zločinov iz sovraštva proti muslimankam v Italiji

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Poglavje analizira temeljne vzroke nezadostnega prijavljanja (nizko število prijav žrtev in prič), ki povzroča premajhno priznavanje diskriminacijske matrike prijavljenih kaznivih dejanj in s tem premajhno evidentiranje (napačno prijavljanje in preiskovanje organov kazenskega pregona) zločinov iz sovraštva proti muslimankam v Italiji. Anketa med praktiki in pripadniki muslimanske skupnosti v Italiji je bila izvedena med majem in septembrom leta 2022. Ugotovitve razkrivajo, da k nizki stopnji prijavljanja in pomanjkljivostim pri beleženju epizod sovražnega govora in zločinov iz sovraštva, nestrpnosti in sovraštva do muslimank prispeva več dejavnikov. Pomanjkanje zaupanja v sodstvo ali policijo ter izrazita »nagnjenost« k neprijavljanju primerov nestrpnosti sta glavna vzroka za nezadostnost prijavljanja ter hkrati vplivata na sprijaznjenost žrtev s sovraštvom in diskriminacijo.

1   Introduction

As of 2020, there was an estimated population of 2.96 million Muslims in Italy, accounting for 4.9% of the total population (Pew Research Centre, 2020a). They are the second-largest religious community in Italy, comprised of both people with Italian citizenship and third-country nationals (Pew Research Centre, 2020b). Due to specific identity traits, Muslims may be targeted and become victims of intolerance and racism, ranging from xenophobic slurs to harassment and physical aggression. In Italy, police officers recorded 1,160 racist and xenophobic hate crimes in 2021 (OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2023). These crimes are motivated by bias against race, skin colour, language, religion, ethnicity and nationality of the victims. This situation raises significant concerns, not only in terms of individual security but also about broader societal implications. However, hate crimes tend to be under-reported and under-recorded (Redattore Sociale, 2018), paving the way to impunity and generating the so-called risk of escalation, which is the normalisation of hate against a certain group. This is exemplified by the "Hate Pyramid" scheme (developed by the Anti-Defamation League), according to which "the phenomena of 'low-intensity' intolerance, if not adequately countered, are likely to degenerate into progressively escalating episodes of violence, eventually leading to outright hate crimes and, finally, to the ultimate expression of hatred, which is genocide." (Ministry of the Interior, 2021)

"Structural injustices, inequalities, and emerging human rights challenges aggravate obstacles to achieving inclusive societies. Achieving Goal 16 by 2030 requires decisive action to address these problems and restore trust in institutions. Strengthening the capacity of these institutions is essential to ensure justice for all and facilitate peaceful transitions to sustainable development" (United Nations Development Programme, n.d.). Under Goal 16.3, promoting the rule of law both nationally and internationally and ensuring equitable access to justice for all can truly serve as a driver for a more just, equitable, and inclusive society.

Improving access to justice for marginalised communities through a participatory, multi-level and multi-agency approach involving public institutions, civil society organisations, legal practitioners and community representatives is presented as a potential solution to under-reporting and under-recording. This approach aligns with United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16 (hereinafter SDG 16) –

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, ensure access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. The key lies in institutional changes that promote greater access to justice for all and policy dialogue interventions to enable knowledge exchange, cross-sectoral collaboration, and sharing of resources and expertise to overcome barriers and build a more inclusive and equitable society (United Nations Development Programme, n.d.).

On the one hand, victims may decide not to report cases and file formal complaint with public authorities for various reasons that will be addressed later in this chapter. On the other hand, law enforcement officials might not recognize the discriminatory nature of the crime and thus inaccurately record the case as an "ordinary offence". These issues cause significant social problems and hinder national and European efforts to counter hatred and bias-motivated crimes.

The obligations set out in the so-called EU Victims Directive clearly state that "Individual assessments should consider the personal characteristics of the victim such as his or her age, gender and gender identity or expression, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, health, disability, residence status, communication difficulties, relationship to or dependence on the offender and previous experience of crime. They should also consider the type or nature and the circumstances of the crime, such as whether it is a hate crime, a bias crime, or a crime committed with a discriminatory motive" (Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JH, 2012). Moreover, racist and xenophobic offences, as envisaged in the Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law (2008), shall not remain unpunished, and each EU Member State "shall take the necessary measures" to prosecute such crimes. Furthermore, failing to combat discrimination and intolerance hinders and poses serious barriers to the integration of Muslim migrants and refugees who have arrived in Europe, including Italy, "with all the potentially harmful consequences" (European Agency for Fundamental Rights–FRA, 2017).

In this context, our chapter will offer an analysis of the goals achieved through the TRUST project, which explored the state of the art of under-recording and under-reporting phenomena in an Italian sample (TRUST, n.d.). By analysing the results of the project, we will shed light on an increasingly frequent and, at the same time, hidden problem. Furthermore, we will delve into the systemic barriers and sociocultural factors that contribute to under-recording and under-reporting while highlighting best practices and innovative approaches highlighted by TRUST to improve data collection and reporting mechanisms. By synthesising the work done and findings that have emerged from different perspectives on the Italian territory through the direct involvement of key stakeholders, our chapter aims to provide actionable recommendations and strategic directions for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers. Through this effort, we intend to contribute to the existing literature by advancing the discourse on under-reporting and under-reporting, ultimately promoting a more inclusive and equitable society in which all voices are heard and considered.

2   Anti-Muslin Sentiment

Twenty years after 9/11, Islamophobia is still used as a "political tool" to gain political consensus among U.S. citizens (Alfonseca, 2021). The waves of refugees, mainly originating from Muslim countries, and the terrorist attacks in Europe, such as the bombing in Madrid in 2004 and London in 2005 "are often catalysts for anti-Muslim sentiments" (OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2023) and are linked to prejudiced opposition (Borell, 2015). According to the EU-MIDIS II report, Muslims, accounting for 4% of the EU's total population, "face high levels of discrimination because of their ethnic or immigrant background – including skin colour, ethnic origin or immigrant background, and religion or religious belief" (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights–FRA, 2017). Several surveys at both national and international levels (Borell, 2015; European Monitoring Center on Racism and Discrimination, 2006) show that Muslims in Europe are discriminated against in various contexts, such as employment, education and housing. At the same time, some European countries have introduced specific measures and limitations on the practice of Islam (Awan & Zempi, 2016). Additionally, hatred and violence against this specific ethnic group have reached "epidemic proportions." As stated by Ahmed Shaheed, UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, special attention should be also given to the

intersectional aspects of this widespread phenomenon (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, 2021).

The term intersectionality was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. It describes how interconnected systems of power affect those who are most marginalised in society. Intersectionality opposes analytical systems that treat each axis of oppression in isolation. For example, being a woman, an immigrant, and a Muslim corresponds to three discriminatory variables that together create a more complex form of discrimination to address (Crenshaw, 1989).

Heated debates over Islamic values and their perceived incompatibility with Western customs or "our way of life" are a persistent issue in Italy. In 2016, 61% of Italians believed that " Muslims do not wish to participate in the broader society," while geopolitical events and shocking terrorist attacks have highlighted the negative attitude toward Muslims existing in some segments of the Italian society (69% in 2016) (Wike et al., 2016). Intersectional hate speech is an emerging trend, and Muslim women, especially those wearing a hijab in public spaces, have often been victims of racist attacks, including slurs or xenophobic expressions and, to a lesser extent, of physical violence (i.e., attempting to strip off their hijab). These negative attitudes and views in Italy are also tied to political affiliation and ideology; those supporting populist or right-wing parties are more likely to have an unfavourable opinion of Muslims (Wike et al., 2019).

The escalation of hate speech against Muslims is most pronounced when directed at women, precisely because of intersectionality. Muslim women are more vulnerable to intimidation, violence, and harassment (Awan & Zempi, 2016), rooted in prejudice and stereotypes, often in public settings. Regardless of nationality, Muslim women are subject to these forms of discrimination, both in real life and online via social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Bebo, and MySpace (Awan & Zempi, 2016). Such language and these actions, often justified by the perpetrators, reinforce perceived superiority based on gender, religion, ethnicity, or cultural affiliations. Beyond ideological differences, the mistreatment of Muslim women reflects anthropological biases that view them as vulnerable because of their gender and threatening because of their religious identity. These distorted narratives are perpetuated by political figures, institutions, and the media, shaping societal attitudes and contributing to the normalisation of hate crimes (Panighel, 2021).

However, hate crime victims often do not file a complaint with public authorities or report the incident. In 2021, the European Agency for Fundamental Rights–FRA registered "concerning rates of non-reported bias-motivated violence and harassment against ethnic minorities". As the incidents of Islamophobia in Europe demonstrate, the level of hostility and enmity towards this community is high (Bayrakli & Hafez, 2016; Borell, 2015). Hence, Muslims represent one of the most vulnerable ethnic groups affected by bias-motivated crimes.

This is particularly true for episodes of racism and violence targeting the Muslim community, especially Muslim women. Muslim women are more likely to be targeted by hate speech and hate crimes than men and thus suffer from multi-layered discrimination due to their gender, ethnic origins, and religion (Awan & Zempi, 2020). In this context, being a woman, an immigrant, and a Muslim can constitute a major cause of discrimination in Italy (Dessi, 2016). According to the Map of Intolerance created in 2021 by Vox-Diritti in collaboration with several Italian Universities, Islamophobia has escalated to worrying levels, and stereotypes and social stigma have been reinforced and widely spread online. An online survey carried out on Twitter revealed that racist slurs and xenophobic expressions, such as "terrorists" or "jihadists", are widely used to define members of the Muslim community in Italy. Additionally, a study conducted in 2019 by the Italian sociologist Fabrizio Ciocca revealed that 60% of Italian Muslims felt discriminated against or experienced stereotypes and violence.

On top of that, descendants of migrants, including Muslim young people, face twofold discrimination: on the one hand, they feel discriminated by the state, which does not recognize them as full-fledged citizens, and on the other hand, they face racist attacks from those who do not accept them for their identity traits such as skin colour, ethnicity and religion. Often, second-generation immigrants, especially young people born and raised in Italy, struggle to be accepted and recognised as Italian citizens, facing enormous obstacles and hardships in defining their own identity. Perceiving themselves as second-class citizens or undesired guests, they may curb any form of active citizenship or political participation. Additionally, young Muslims may be encouraged from reporting cases of intolerance and hatred. As stated by the European Agency for Fundamental Rights–FRA (2017, p. 10): "*EU Member States […] correctly expect immigrants to comply with the host societies' legislation and values while rarely promoting their meaningful participation, especially that of youth, in the society*

in which they live". [...] All EU Member States should consider providing more favourable conditions for citizenship acquisition and naturalisation for descendants of immigrants who were born and/or educated in the country [...]. This would foster their sense of belonging, building on their strong attachment to the countries they live in and their high levels of trust in their democratic institutions".

3 Under-Reporting and Under-Recording of Hate Crimes

The phenomenon of under-reporting represents the tendency of the victims and witnesses of hate crimes not to report them (Chrico et al., 2020). Despite the above-mentioned figures, hate crimes and episodes of racism remain highly under-reported by "vulnerable categories". According to a European survey conducted in 2021 by the European Agency for Fundamental Rights, "only 12% of Muslim respondents who felt discriminated against because of their ethnic or immigrant background in the five years before the survey reported the most recent incident or filed a complaint with an authority" (European Agency for Fundamental Rights–FRA, 2021). The lack of hate crime recording may lead to the normalisation of hate against certain categories, in this case, a religious minority, and to a higher risk of escalation towards more serious criminal acts, such as extremist violence against people and their properties. Across the EU, the most relevant and well-known reasons behind this issue are a lack of trust in the public authorities (e.g., police officers, judicial system) and fear of further victimisation (OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2023).

The issue of under-recording occurs when members of law enforcement agencies (LEAs) do not identify the bias indicators or the discriminatory nature of the crime and thus "do not record it or investigate it as such" (Chirico et al., 2020, p. 5). This is mainly due to a lack of training concerning this phenomenon, which leads to the LEAs' inability to recognise the anti-Muslim bias in a specific crime. As a result, victims' needs remain invisible when the specific nature of the crime is undetected by public authorities, granting impunity to those spreading and promoting anti-Muslim hatred, both online and offline.

When we talk of hate crimes, we refer to criminal offences committed or motivated by bias or prejudice against a group of people, or even those perceived to be part of such a group, characterised by specific identity traits, such as religion, ethnicity, and

language. However, in Italy, a legal definition of hate crime and hate speech is still missing, and we rely on EU directives or international documents to categorize and interpret such phenomena. Furthermore, there is no law in Italy setting clear boundaries on which conduct, or actions should be considered as an episode of hate speech or hate crime.

By the principle of legal certainty, to avoid and mitigate an extensive interpretation of the norms, whose application is also dependant on the discretion of judicial bodies and law enforcement agencies (LEAs), the legislators, namely the members of the Italian Parliament, should adopt an unambiguous definition of the crimes to be prosecuted and sanctioned. In summary, the interpretation of the cases to be punished must occur within the Parliament and not in the Courts (Garante per la protezione dei dati personali, 2022). However, the Reale-Mancino laws and their provisions (Penal Code, 2018) do provide a legal framework to fight racism but do not address these specific crimes or offer a clear definition of the felonies. Thus, the norms need to be updated and adapted to new circumstances to curb hate speech and hate crimes.

Furthermore, no guidelines or practical tools have been provided to instruct and support police officers in identifying and recording hate crimes (OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, n.d.). Difficulties in recording hate crimes are also evident from the extremely low number of judicial proceedings related to hate crimes held between 2016 and 2021: specifically, 300 cases (Ministry of Justice, 2022). Additionally, 80% of these cases were archived, highlighting the inefficiency of articles 604 bis (Propaganda and incitement to commit crimes of discrimination based on ethnicity, national origin, and religion) and 604 ter (Civil Protection Code, 2018) in combating hate discourse, both online and offline.

The Observatory for Security against Acts of Discrimination (OSCAD), an interagency operational body within the Public Security Department – Central Directorate of Criminal Police, was established in September 2010 to enhance the prevention and countering of discriminatory offences. OSCAD aims to create a bridge between hate crime victims and law enforcement agencies (LEAs) by facilitating the reporting process, monitoring emerging trends raising awareness, and training police officers on these matters. Additionally, anyone who is a victim or

witness of a hate crime may inform and report a discriminatory episode to OSCAD (Ministry of the Interior, n.d.).

As of 31 December 2021, over 38.600 law enforcement officers were trained, directly or indirectly, by OSCAD (Ministry of the Interior, n.d.). However, in 2017, the personnel of the State Police and Carabinieri amounted respectively to 94.715 and 109.793 units, respectively. The national training programme delivered by OSCAD aims to generate a cascade effect, reaching territorial offices and local personnel deployed across Italy (Censimenti Permanenti Istituzioni Pubbliche, 2020). In this regard, it is extremely challenging to train and sensitize every single officer on these matters, and such training activities seem to be limited to certain officials with specific ranks and roles. Consequently, not all police officers may be aware of or able to identify bias indicators, recognize the discriminatory nature of the crime, and provide an adequate response when Muslim women decide to file a complaint and report an episode of hate speech or hate crime.

At present, due to structural and normative barriers, it is impossible to identify the specific bias motivating and triggering criminal conduct. Furthermore, official data collected by OSCAD and forwarded to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) do not provide a reliable statistical overview of the phenomenon (Ministry of the Interior, 2021). Lastly, as highlighted by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights "since 2018, Italy has not reported data to ODIHR on hate crimes recorded by the prosecution and judiciary" (OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2023).

4   Methodology

The assessment of the Italian situation concerning hate speech and hate crimes against Muslim women was conducted through a series of semi-structured interviews and focus groups. These engagements involved public officials, representatives from civil society organisations (CSOs), and community leaders identified through the mapping activity undertaken in the initial phase of the TRUST project (TRUST, n.d.). TRUST, which stands for Tackling Under-Reporting and Under-Recording of Hate Speech and Hate Crimes Against Muslim Women, is two-year project co-funded by the CERV programme (CERV-2021-EQUAL) and implemented by an Italian Partnership including the Public Prosecutor's Office at the Ordinary Court

of Trento, Ce.S.I. – Centre For International Studies, CESIE ETS, L'Albero Della Vita Onlus, ActionAid International Italia Onlus, A Buon Diritto Onlus, COREIS Italian Islamic Religious Community, Carabinieri/Ministry Of Defense, led by Agenfor International. The project studies the vulnerability of a group that is particularly affected by episodes of intolerance, racism and xenophobia in Italy, and, according to available studies, tends to under-report episodes of discrimination or hate crimes (OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2023).

To meet the objectives set by the TRUST Partnership, researchers primarily focused on the following questions: How can we facilitate the reporting and recording of hate speech or hate crime cases and support victims, with a special focus on Muslim women in Italy? Which factors deter women from reporting xenophobic and racist attacks against them or members of their own community? The TRUST project engaged frontline practitioners, members of relevant public authorities, law enforcement agencies (LEAs), and representatives of Muslim communities across Italy to address these questions and identify potential solutions. These interviews were conducted not only in Palermo, Milano, and Trento – where the project was implemented – but also in Rome and Torino, involving civil society organisations dedicated to social inclusion and fighting discrimination. Additionally, representatives from the Carabinieri, serving as LEAs, participated in the interviews, along with public institution officials such as social assistance and integration officers. This comprehensive approach ensured a diverse and holistic perspective in understanding the challenges faced by Muslim women and devising effective strategies to address them.

From May to September of 2022, CESIE and A Buon Diritto Onlus conducted 40 online interviews, each lasting one hour. These interviews aimed to assess the current level of cooperation between CSOs, Muslim organisations, and public authorities in managing online and offline hatred. Stakeholders were carefully selected based on their interest in the project and geographical area, representing government departments, regional authorities, municipalities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs)/civil society organisations, professional groups (e.g., scholars and researchers addressing these topics), media influencers involved in promoting the fight against discrimination and hate crimes against Muslim women, as well as Muslim communities and Muslim women. Additionally, during the same period, project partners conducted 20 interviews with Muslim women to explore their

perceptions of threats and experiences of discrimination in their daily lives, as well as to assess the assistance offered by Italian institutions and associations. All interviews were recorded with the consent of the respondents.

All interviews took place online. Additionally, on the 28th and 29th of June 2022, CESIE conducted two focus groups in Rome and Milan with members of LEAs, CSOs, and the Muslim community. These engagements provided valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities for collaboration in combating discrimination and hate crimes against Muslim women.

The semi-structured interview questions included a comprehensive exploration of how individuals, public bodies, or organisations deal with discrimination, particularly against the Muslim community, and the activities undertaken to prevent and counter it. They aimed to understand the degree of interaction with associations or representatives of the Muslim community and to identify any obstacles encountered in these interactions. Additionally, the questions sought to understand and address the prevalence of Islamophobia and discriminatory attitudes toward Muslim women, as well as the difficulties in reporting hate crimes and incitement incitement. Therefore, they attempted to assess the adequacy of legal instruments in combating racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination in Italy.

Another online focus group was conducted on September 14, 2022, to gather further insights and solicit feedback from stakeholders and frontline operators in several Italian cities. During this virtual meeting, special attention was paid to several critical issues. First, discussions focused on assessing the current level of cooperation among local stakeholders and identifying opportunities to strengthen collaboration. Additionally, participants delved into the specific challenges faced by Muslim women, emphasising the need to promote strong and reliable relationships between these individuals and local authorities. Attention was also drawn to identifying any gaps or deficiencies in the support provided to victims of hate speech and hate crimes. Through these extensive discussions, the focus group sought to generate actionable strategies to address these pressing issues in the Italian context.

5 Findings on Under-Reporting in Italy: Root Causes and Potential Solutions

The multidimensional analysis conducted by TRUST members through interviews and focus groups shed light on the root causes of under-reporting and identified effective strategies to tackle this issue.

5.1 Anti-Muslim Sentiment

Most respondents, including professionals and Muslim women interviewed, expressed serious concern about the rise of Islamophobia in Italy and the spread of toxic narratives targeting the Muslim community, both online and offline. Most of the Muslim women interviewed reported experiencing unequal treatment, especially those wearing a hijab, and agreed that Muslim women in Italy face a higher risk of being victims of hatred and intolerance. The interviews and subsequent statements revealed distinct recurring elements that describe the challenges faced by Muslim women in Italy:

> *"I was verbally and physically attacked, insulted on the street";*
> *"A boy tried to cut my veil with scissors";*
> *"When people talk assuming that I don't understand Italian";*
> *"At the university, a professor didn't want me to pass the exam because I was wearing a veil";*
> *"In HR interviews, the hijab was a problem".*
> (TRUST, n.d.)

Furthermore, nearly all women and girls interviewed by the TRUST partners agreed that Muslim women are at higher risk of being victims of racism and xenophobia due to their appearance and their gender. Discrimination manifests in various ways, both physically and digitally, presenting different challenges depending on how it is expressed. In many cases, various forms of discrimination lead to a sense of resignation or helplessness among victims, fostering a tendency to tolerate mistreatment due to familiarity or perceived futility in reporting incidents. This sentiment also extends to the public security institutions responsible for prosecuting such crimes, as indicated by a participant from the Muslim community during the Thematic Focus Group: "*The fear is not unwarranted and the crime cases are recurrent. However, it is disheartening that even when perpetrators are identified by name, justice remains elusive. Why do perpetrators often escape punishment?*" (TRUST, n.d.)

5.2   Root Causes

As emerged from the research, the absence of a legal definition of hate crime and hate speech adds a further layer of confusion and may also have negative repercussions on the investigations and prosecution of discriminatory offences by LEAs. Some respondents pointed out that the norms are too vague and not necessarily applicable in specific situations, often requiring interpretation rather than straightforward application. LEAs and relevant practitioners interviewed by TRUST researchers stressed this aspect and highlighted the role and sensitivity of judges in prosecuting cases of hate speech, emphasising the importance of considering and applying the existing legislation.

All respondents and the participants in the focus groups confirmed the concerning trend of under-reporting and provided interesting insights on that matter. Consistent with the European context, the analysis of the interviews revealed a general lack of trust in the Italian criminal justice system and in the effective prosecution of cases reported to local authorities.

First and foremost, victims are oftentimes discouraged by rumours circulating within their own community and resigned to the idea of maintaining a "low profile" within Italian society as a strategy to cope with the racist episodes and daily cultural barriers These sentiments, expressed as "nothing will change" or "they won't believe you", were commonly quoted during interviews within the community. These phrases, repeated over time and by people, serve to deter potential victims from reporting hate crimes by formally filing a complaint with law enforcement.

Most of the respondents expressed profound discouragement about the prosecution of so-called haters or those insulting, inciting or promoting racist narratives against Muslims. Poor knowledge of the reporting procedure and the formal steps leading to the formal prosecution of the crime may also add a further layer of confusion and mistrust, generating concerns or doubts about the effective response of the relevant authorities. Within this framework, having an insecure legal status, namely, the lack of a valid residence permit, has a relevant impact on the victim's final decision to report the crime. The fear of being deported or expelled from the country could induce the victim to keep silent when confronted with a racist offence, avoiding further issues with public authorities.

Factors affecting reporting rates include a lack of awareness of available support services, which emerges as a significant barrier. Many women interviewed, particularly first-generation Muslim or migrant women, are often unaware of support services, hotlines, and public support centres that can help them report crimes or hate speech directed at their community or themselves. In contrast, second-generation Muslim women demonstrate greater familiarity with reporting procedures, tools and services for dealing with bias-motivated crimes or hate speech, especially online. Instances of racist slurs and comments aimed at Islam, or the Muslim community are prevalent on social media platforms, and young Muslim women interviewed by TRUST researchers express confidence in their understanding of the services and actions needed to report offenders online.

The extension of the phenomenon, especially online, has also led to peculiar forms of acceptance or resignation to anti-Muslim hatred spread on social media, and to a lesser extent in public spaces. "It happens all the time, so I got used to it" represents one of the most common responses provided by Muslim women during the survey. Some respondents even justified their aggressors or simply underestimated the discriminatory nature of the actions or "racist jokes" against them or their community. Linguistic barriers also represent a major cause of under-reporting. Cultural mediation is not always immediately available, and in some cases, the presence of a mediator at the police station, for example, may not be guaranteed at all.

5.3   Potential Solutions

Practitioners and representatives of CSOs participating in the survey highly recommended awareness-raising campaigns and outreach activities to sensitise, orient, and inform Muslim communities in Italy, especially the most vulnerable groups such as women and girls. The respondents argued that raising awareness about relevant support services and the existing helpdesks through tailored social media campaigns, including messages in Arabic, is crucial. However, despite such strategies having already been implemented at both national and local levels, respondents proposed that they need to be adapted and improved to reach a much larger audience, including those less social media savvy, to debunk stereotypes, and to inform people about the importance of reporting criminal conducts. In this regard, the role of the community, particularly the imam, emerged vividly during the

focus groups, and respondents stressed the need for a more effective and regular commitment of the Muslim community in addressing these issues.

Among the proposals presented by the respondents, it emerged that COREIS (Italian Islamic Religious Community based in Milan) and UCOII (Union of Islamic Communities and Organisations in Italy)—along with all other entities representing the different Muslim communities living and working in Italy- should create a united front against Islamophobia and also disseminate valuable information within their respective community about the existing services and tools to defend themselves from hatred and intolerance. Religious leaders and relevant community members are respected, share the same cultural background, and speak the same language as the people within their communities. Therefore, message conveyed through awareness-raising campaigns are more likely to reach their target and achieve their main objective if such individuals are involved and actively engaged in supporting potential victims of hate speech or hate crimes. Our respondents believed that creating a strong and effective collaboration between Muslim leaders, representatives of each community, and LEAs could lay the foundation for a solid communication campaign against Islamophobia and improve the victim-police officer relationship, thereby mitigating the mistrust and concerns circulating within the community in question. Additionally, Muslim women who are victims of hate speech or hate crimes may face prejudice and lack of sensitivity even when they decide to report episode of racism or the violence perpetrated against them or their properties.

According to a respondent from the second-generation Muslim community, Muslim women face enormous barriers both outside and within their own community. Instead of finding an emphatic environment, whether at the police station or at home, women may suffer revictimisation and social stigma for denouncing a xenophobic episode. Hence, patriarchy still represents a serious problem in some specific contexts, and the community or even the family may discourage the victim and prevent her from filing a complaint and reporting a racist offence. One participant in the third focus group pointed out that strict gender roles within some Muslim families may be, among other things, a serious obstacle to reporting hate speech or hate crimes. "*If she cannot even say stop! It's enough! within her own family, I highly doubt that she can file a complaint against those who insult her on the street or rip off her veil while she's walking*" one Muslim participant said. Additionally, the hijab is still perceived as

a symbol of submission and enslavement of a woman, whose agency and free choice in wearing the veil due to her religious belief is not considered.

Negative experiences with LEAs, even if there were a few, have a multiplier effect and quickly spread throughout the Muslim community, generating a detrimental impact on the relationship between victims and law enforcement authorities. As mentioned by some respondents, police officers and public authorities who are more likely to interact with Muslims should receive adequate training and acquire basic competencies in Islamic doctrine to avoid misinterpretations or the spreading of "false myths" about Islam.

Lastly, participants in the focus groups provided remarks about the causal link between the legal status of the potential victim and the attachment to the country.

Considering the above, the lack of trust in the legal system and law enforcement in the country, the real or perceived level of racial discrimination, and feelings of belonging to the country where Muslim youth live are deeply intertwined. Respondents emphasised that those who feel discriminated against and unwelcome within the country may also perceive that their homeland rarely relies on public support services or LEAs to denounce a hate crime, which, in turn, may lead to lower levels of active citizenship.

5.4   Development of Action Plan

During the interviews and the focus groups, members of CSOs, LEAs, and the Muslim community expressed their availability and enthusiasm for creating more fruitful collaborations with all entities working on this matter. Establishing a national or local network of relevant actors committed to tackling Islamophobia would facilitate the recording of hate speech cases and hate crimes. Within this framework, data collection and monitoring activities are also crucial to gain a deep understanding of the phenomenon and identify the most suitable measures to fight against it.

Between October and December 2022, four workshops took place in Milan as part of the European project TRUST, aimed at addressing hate crimes and discrimination in Italy. The workshops brought together diverse stakeholders, including civil society organisations, Muslim communities, law enforcement agencies (LEAs), and public

authorities. Participants shared their experiences to overcome prejudices and stereotypes that hinder dialogue and perpetuate discrimination, aiming to promote cooperation and trust among different actors. Civil society and public institutions played a mediation role, particularly focusing on Muslim communities and law enforcement.

The main limitations identified by the respondents include victims' habituation of crimes and hate speech, which leads to under-reporting and under-recording. This is compounded by a lack of collective knowledge about hate incidents and distrust of institutions, especially the police. Additionally, there is a lack of structured support networks for Muslim communities and women affected by hate and discrimination. Participants expressed commitment to creating such networks to prevent hate crimes and raise awareness. Prevention efforts were discussed among the respondents at the primary, administrative, and judicial levels. Primary prevention through education is perceived to be the key, but it must be complemented with reporting and alternative measures to break the cycle of impunity.

To address these challenges and propose concrete actions, participants collaborated to draft an Action Plan applicable in several Italian cities, piloting it in Palermo, Milano and Trento. Proposals for the Action Plan included improving stakeholder training and awareness, promoting greater collaboration between the public and private sectors through formal agreements, and implementing preventive measures to effectively combat hate speech (TRUST, n.d.).

Consequently, the Workshop for the co-design of the Action Plan, organised by the TRUST Consortium and held in Milan, marked a significant step forward. Building on the outcomes of previous meetings held between October and December 2022, which included Participatory Action workshops, representatives from public authorities, Muslim communities, and civil society organised collaborated to outline the objectives of the Action Plan. The workshop saw active participation from institutional representatives such as the National Police, Arma dei Carabinieri, and local municipalities including Comune di Rovereto, alongside civil society representatives from organised like Articolo 3 – Observatory on Discrimination, Associazione Eva, and ISPI – Italian Institute for International Political Studies, in collaboration with Milan, Palermo, and Trento as focal cities for implementing the Action Plan, designed activities to strengthen collaboration between local

authorities, Muslim communities, and civil society organisations. The aim is to facilitate the reporting and recording of discrimination and hate crimes against Muslim women. Key components of the plan include co-responsibility agreements between these entities and the establishment of a database of professionals within the Muslim community. Technical working groups, comprising representatives from local authorities, the Islamic Religious Community (COREIS), and CSOs, will oversee the implementation of the Action Plan in each city, ensuring gender balance and long-term project success through training events, awareness campaigns, and sustainable actions (TRUST, n.d.).

The results of the final joint workshop evaluation showed that all participants reported a significant increase in their awareness of hate phenomena and hate speech directed towards Muslim women, which they attributed to the collaborative efforts and discussions during the workshop. Additionally, all respondents believed that effective solutions were identified to address the problem of under-recording and under-reporting of hate incidents. The most appreciated aspects of the workshop were the opportunity for collaboration and dialogue among diverse stakeholders and the increased awareness and knowledge about Islamophobic discrimination. Overall, the workshop was deemed successful in achieving its objectives of raising awareness and fostering collaboration to combat discrimination and hate crimes against Muslim women.

6   Conclusion

As the main findings of the research illustrated, Muslim women are particularly vulnerable and represent one of the largest groups affected by racism and hatred, both online and offline. Despite the countermeasures adopted so far (i.e., the EU Code of Conduct signed by IT platforms to remove hate speech within 24 hours), racist comments and Islamophobia are still too common and widely spread on social media channels and TV shows. This issue persists, and non-reporting of hate speech cases or hate crimes may also be caused by the shared opinion within the Muslim community that "nothing will change" and "it happens all the time, so why should I file a complaint".

The focus groups indicated a significant tendency to underestimate hate crimes among victims, aggressors, and the social context itself. Reasons for this underestimation include low levels of education, poor integration into society (especially among immigrant women), lack of knowledge of Italian hate crime legislation, socio-cultural barriers, and lack of trust in institutions and reporting procedures. In addition, the absence of specialised training for professionals dealing with hate crimes poses challenges, as does the disconnect between public discourse on hate speech and actual initiatives to address it. Particularly, Islamophobia tends to be more accepted than other forms of discrimination in Italy, and insults against Muslim women are often normalised in various contexts. These findings underscore the need for improved reporting mechanisms, enhanced education and training, and increased societal awareness and action to combat discrimination and hate speech in Italy.

As our research demonstrates, toxic narratives targeting Muslims, promoted and spread by public figures, with a special focus on politicians, have a detrimental effect on the entire community and pave the way to the marginalisation of this group. Additionally, hate discourse is often socially tolerated, if not accepted or even embraced by some segments of Italian society, whose anti-Muslim sentiment is not limited to the political spectrum (Vitullo, 2021).

The serious concern emerges from the fact that victims of such criminal offences cannot exercise their right to an effective remedy as envisaged in the EU Victims' Directive. For Muslims to regain trust and confidence in legal proceedings and the police, criminal conduct and bias-motivated offences need to be prosecuted. Furthermore, victims, as well as those at risk of becoming victims, need to be supported in reporting and informed about the services available to rely on in case of emergency (Giordano, 2021).

Cultural mediators working within police stations, as highlighted by participants during the focus group held in Rome, play a key role in this context. Additionally, community members, such as associations driven by Muslims, especially those composed and led by women, can assist victims in the decision-making process that may lead to reporting. The results of our research indicate that the active participation and commitment of local Muslim communities should be encouraged and enhanced, involving the most relevant Islamic Cultural Centres and Institutions

in Italy. Their long-lasting presence in almost every Italian region or city constitutes added value in supporting Muslim women in reporting acts of racism. Furthermore, the existence of an effective referral mechanism is fundamental. Therefore, the creation or enhancement of a local or national network committed to supporting vulnerable individuals and tackling Islamophobia is highly recommended.

As emerged during the research, CSOs can also play a crucial role and may represent a bridge between LEAs and the Muslim community at local and national levels. Creating mutual connections and strengthening multilateral cooperation, including Muslim representatives from different communities, can be a major step forward in the fight against hatred and the anti-Muslim sentiment. Our research suggests that a bilateral exchange of knowledge, participation in regular roundtables, and the promotion of intercultural dialogue could represent promising paths in combating hatred and the anti-Muslim sentiment.

As our example illustrates, a multi-agency approach can foster the creation of a communication campaign to debunk stereotypes about Muslims, as well as address rumours concerning the futility of reporting a crime and the inactivity of law enforcement officers. Additionally, our respondents proposed that informative sessions on Italian anti-discrimination laws and procedures to report racist conduct could be held within cultural Islamic centres and mosques. Such places should also be open to the whole community, including law enforcement agencies (LEAs), to promote inter-religious dialogue and facilitate a better understanding of the Islamic culture and the community. On the other hand, OSCAD territorial centres, located in every Italian region, can serve as a lever for cooperation. Therefore, each territorial unit should be part of and actively participate in local networks, working side-by-side with CSOs and Muslim communities.

To enhance the recording and reporting of hate speech cases and hate crimes, indicators of bias-motivated crimes and self-assessment tools, like those developed by the Carabinieri to tackle gender-based violence and bullying (Minister of Defence, n.d.), would provide significant support to potential victims. Police officers and the judiciary should also be aware of these indicators and be able to identify the discriminatory nature of the offence. Further training sessions are needed, and in this regard, without questioning the undeniable commitment of LEAs in Italy, much work still needs to be done. Alongside OSCAD trainers, the participation of relevant

members of the Muslim community may offer a valuable opportunity for police officers to learn or enhance their competencies and skills in handling real-life situations involving Muslim women.

Our research documents that the participatory approach is in line with the principles of SDG 16. By analysing the representation of intersectional discriminated populations such as Muslim women, a conflict-sensitive approach was adopted, adhering to ethical standards in working with vulnerable populations. In addition, capacity-building initiatives empower stakeholders to understand the needs of different groups, while data transparency fosters accountability. By promoting cross-sectoral collaboration, complex societal challenges were addressed holistically, contributing to the promotion of peaceful, inclusive, and just societies in Italy, in line with the SDG 16 goal (United Nations Development Programme, n.d.).

In conclusion, under-reporting and under-recording are deeply intertwined, and resolving one of these issues cannot be fully effective without addressing the other. CSOs and Muslim communities can work side-by-side with law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to increase reporting trends at local and national levels. However, if recording issues persist and structural or legal barriers hinder the effective identification and prosecution of hate crimes, trust in the judicial system and LEAs will remain low, discouraging victims from reporting. Inclusive societies and institutions, as promoted by SDG16, ensure access to justice, especially in cases of intersectional discrimination suffered by Muslim women. Muslim communities and front-line practitioners must collaborate with public institutions to tackle these institutions and shed light on this complex matter.

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Prevalence of Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents in Municipalities in North Macedonia

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The chapter aims to explore the potential correlation between specific types of hate crimes and their occurrence in various municipalities throughout the Republic of North Macedonia. Geovisualisation techniques are employed to map these hate crimes and analyse their characteristics based on various factors. The results showed that hate crimes are a critical issue in North Macedonia, affecting various regions in the country. The Skopje Region records the highest number of hate crimes based on ethnicity and political beliefs, indicating a dire need for law enforcement to play a more preventive role. Meanwhile, cities near the border primarily experience hate crimes based on migrant status, which calls for increased police patrols in "hotspots" to prevent potential attacks. The high rate of ethnic-based hate crimes in municipalities with significant ethnic representation and political-based hate crimes during election periods also require proactive policing measures.

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Razširjenost zločinov in incidentov iz sovraštva v občinah v Severni Makedoniji

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Namen poglavja je raziskati morebitno povezavo med posebnimi vrstami zločinov iz sovraštva in njihovim pojavljanjem v različnih občinah v Republiki Severni Makedoniji. Uporabljene so bile tehnike geovizualizacije za preslikavo zločinov iz sovraštva in analiza njihovih značilnosti na podlagi različnih dejavnikov. Rezultati so pokazali, da zločini iz sovraštva predstavljajo kritični problem v Severni Makedoniji, ki vpliva na različne regije v državi. Regija Skopje beleži največje število zločinov iz sovraštva na podlagi etnične pripadnosti in političnih prepričanj, kar kaže na nujnost preventivne vloge organov kazenskega pregona. V mestih blizu meje se dogajajo predvsem zločini iz sovraštva na podlagi migrantskega statusa, kar zahteva povečano prisotnost policijskih patrulj na žariščih, z namenom preprečiti morebitne napade. Visoka stopnja kaznivih dejanj iz sovraštva na podlagi etnične pripadnosti v občinah s precejšnjo etnično zastopanostjo in kaznivih dejanj iz sovraštva na podlagi politične pripadnosti med volilnimi obdobji zahtevata proaktivne policijske ukrepe.

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1   Introduction

According to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, "sustainable development cannot be realised without peace and security for everyone; and peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development" (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.). The United Nations has a long-standing history of mobilising the global community against all forms of hatred to defend human rights and promote the rule of law. Hate crimes impact various areas of focus for the United Nations, from protecting human rights to maintaining peace and security. Academic research has been addressing how to prevent and counter hate crimes driven by intolerance or discrimination and the role of criminal justice systems in fostering sustainable development, which could be instrumental in achieving lasting peace and security (Perry, 2001; Walters, 2014).

Hate crime is a social construct. It emerges from a complex network of events, structures, and underlying processes and, as such, can be constructed according to different actors' perceptions, whether they are scholars, law enforcers, or victims (Chakraborti & Garland, 2015). Every criminal act may or may not appear as an act of hate, depending on whether it is motivated by hatred, bias, or the discrimination of the victim as a member of a certain social group. Therefore, hate crimes are criminal acts motivated by bias or prejudice towards groups of people, comprising two elements: a criminal offence and a bias motivation (OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights [OSCE/ODIHR], 2014). These crimes "involve acts of violence and intimidation, usually directed towards [already] stigmatised and marginalised groups. As such, it is a mechanism of power and oppression, intended to reaffirm the precarious hierarchies that characterise a given social order" (Perry, 2001).

The response of local communities to hate crimes can vary widely, ranging from acts of solidarity and support to indifference or complicity. Understanding how specific communities react to hate crimes and the mechanisms they employ to address or mitigate such incidents is crucial for developing effective prevention strategies (Boeckmann & Turpin-Petrosino, 2002). Research by Iganski and Lagou (2017) highlights the importance of community-based interventions and public initiatives in combating hate crimes and fostering social cohesion.

This chapter seeks to determine whether certain types of hate crimes, such as xenophobia, hate violence, and racial violence, are consistently associated with specific types of municipalities. Understanding this potential association is crucial for identifying patterns in hate crimes. To achieve this, the chapter employs geovisualisation techniques to map hate crimes and their characteristics, potentially informing localised prevention efforts. Geovisualisation could reveal spatial clustering influenced by local and regional socio-political factors, which is vital for prevention efforts (e.g., Herbert, 2020). If patterns linking hate crimes to specific geographic locations emerge, they could inform the development of strategic prevention plans.

2   Literature Review

Hate crimes are a significant challenge for societies across the globe, involving a complex interplay of social, cultural, and structural factors. Existing research suggests that hate crimes are not randomly distributed but tend to cluster in specific geographic areas or communities. Brimicombe et al. (2001) suggest that certain types of neighbourhoods, characterised by specific ethnic demographics, may experience higher rates of racially motivated incidents compared to others. A study conducted by Brimicombe et al. (2001) suggests that the ethnic composition of an area has a significant impact on the rate of such incidents. Specifically, incidents of racial harassment and hate crimes tend to be significantly higher in areas where there is a large white majority and smaller groups of other ethnicities. Furthermore, a study by McDevitt et al. (2002) found that hate crimes are more likely to occur in areas with higher levels of social disorganisation, economic deprivation, and intergroup tensions.

By clarifying the relationship between specific local communities and hate crimes, we can better understand community dynamics and hate crimes, seek policy interventions, and promote social justice and equality Based on the results of their studies, scholars can inform the development of targeted policies and interventions aimed at reducing prejudice, promoting tolerance, and enhancing community resilience. For example, a study by Perry et al. (2020) underscored the importance of implementing hate crime legislation and providing support services for victims within affected communities.

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In addition, examining the relationship between specific local communities and hate crimes based on grounds allows for an intersectional analysis that recognises the intersecting identities and vulnerabilities of individuals within these communities. For example, research by Chakraborti and Garland (2009) emphasises the need for an intersectional approach to understanding hate crimes and addressing the unique challenges faced by marginalised groups.

2.1   Society-Level Factors

However, one more risk factor must be considered in the context of the Macedonian response to hate crimes. Namely, according to the report from the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in 2023, civil society representatives have pointed out that if violent interactions continue without appropriate responses, it may pose a significant threat to the country's societal cohesion and ethnic tolerance in the future. They allege that the authorities usually consider some of the hate crime incidents as mere juvenile hooliganism rather than expressions of inter-ethnic tensions and hate-motivated violence. According to some of ECRI's civil society interlocutors, the police refrain from acting in this regard also because of worries that arresting ethnic Macedonians or ethnic Albanians in this conflictual setting could add fuel to the fire and escalate the already tense situation (European Commission against Racism and Intolerance [ECRI], 2023).

Furthermore, the report notes that a hands-off approach towards conflicts may seem like an easy solution, but it can have serious consequences in the long run. Allowing existing resentments to fester can lead to a dangerous cycle of perpetual hatred and low-intensity violence. This, over time, can become increasingly difficult to control and may spiral out of hand. Therefore, ECRI believes that hate-motivated violence between ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians is a significant problem that requires immediate attention.' ECRI recommends that the relevant authorities take this issue seriously and respond appropriately by conducting thorough investigations into such incidents and holding the perpetrators accountable. Otherwise, this non-punishment practice could represent an additional risk factor for the occurrence of hate crimes (ECRI, 2023).

2.2   Community-Level Factors

Structural factors, such as social disorganisation, economic deprivation, and marginalisation, have been identified as risk factors for hate crimes as well and these factors are best described as 'dominance over difference', resulting in the 'othering' of certain minority individuals (Perry, 2001). The analysis of hate crimes and their association with specific communities is guided by social disorganisation theory. Social disorganisation theory, developed by Shaw and McKay in 1942, focuses on how changing environments and community structures affect different demographic groups (Shaw & McKay, 1942). This theory is focused on the changing environment and community structures that influence how different demographic groups experience difficulty and hostility in the adaptation process to other groups. Social disorganisation theory is defined as the inability of community members to realise the shared values of their residents and maintain effective social controls (Ciobanu, 2019; Osgood & Chambers, 2003). This theoretical framework posits that neighbourhood characteristics, such as poverty, residential instability, and ethnic heterogeneity, contribute to social disorganisation, thereby increasing the likelihood of crime, including hate crimes (Benier, 2017; Sampson et al., 1997). Communities characterised by high levels of poverty, unemployment, residential instability, and social isolation may be more susceptible to hate-motivated violence due to heightened social tensions and a lack of cohesive social networks (Walters, 2014).

Based on these theoretical underpinnings, hypotheses can be developed to explore the relationship between community characteristics and hate crime prevalence, considering factors such as ethnic composition, socio-economic status, and community cohesion. Therefore, the main goal of this chapter is to explore the potential correlation between certain types of hate crimes based on grounds, and the geographic locations of municipalities throughout North Macedonia. There is a prevailing perception that specific types of hate crimes predominantly occur in certain municipalities within the country. Drawing from social disorganisation theory, social identity theory, and realistic group conflict theory, our analysis seeks to clarify the underlying dynamics of hate crimes within different regions. For instance, in the Skopje and Polog Region, where ethnic tensions are noticeable, hate crimes based on ethnicity are anticipated to be prevalent, as suggested by social psychological theories. Additionally, in communities along migrant routes, as posited by social disorganisation theory, heightened xenophobic tendencies may manifest,

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potentially resulting in increased hate crimes targeting migrants or minority groups. For example, in the Eastern Region, xenophobic hate crimes might be observed. At the same time, in the Vardar Region and border areas, offences related to refugee or migrant status could be more prevalent. Moreover, social psychological theories suggest that hate crimes based on sexual orientation might be more common in the Northern Region. By integrating these hypotheses, our study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how community dynamics influence the prevalence of specific criminal behaviours.

2.3   Individual-Level Factors

Research has shown that individual-level factors like prejudice, bias, and stereotypes are significant motivators of hate crimes. Numerous studies have demonstrated the role of social identity and intergroup dynamics in shaping attitudes towards out-groups and fuelling prejudice and discrimination (Acosta, 2015).

Social psychological theories, such as social identity theory and realistic group conflict theory, suggest that individuals may be more likely to engage in hate-motivated behaviour when they perceive a threat to their own group identity or when they perceive members of other groups as competitors for resources or status (Cuhadar & Dayton, 2011). Those who have prejudiced views towards particular social groups are more likely to endorse violence or aggression against members of those groups, as exemplified in the case of immigrants (Pauwels & Williamson, 2024). Implicit biases, which operate beyond conscious awareness, may also contribute to the perpetration of hate crimes.

3   Legal Framework for Countering Hate Crime in North Macedonia

North Macedonia has a well-established legal framework for countering hate crime, with the Criminal Code (1996) largely aligning with European standards following the inclusion of "hate" as a motive for numerous crimes. Before 2018, hate crime or hatred was only considered an aggravating circumstance in determining sanctions, as outlined in Article 35 of the Criminal Code (1996). However, in 2018, amendments to the Criminal Code (Amendment of the Criminal Code, 2018) introduced a definition specifying what constitutes a hate crime, stating that: "*A hate crime expressly provided by the provisions of this Code is considered a criminal offence against a*

natural or legal person and related persons or property committed in whole or in part due to a real or presumed (imagined, conceived) characteristic or connection of the person on grounds of race, skin colour, nationality, ethnicity, religion or belief, mental or physical disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation and political belief." (Article 122 of the Amendment of the Criminal Code, 2018).

Additionally, phrases such as "out of hatred" or "if the crime was committed out of hatred" have been incorporated into over 20 offences. This more explicitly sanctions crimes resulting from hatred or biases. Criminalising acts of violence driven by such biased motives enhances understanding of what constitutes hate crimes and should improve efficiency in detecting offences and gathering statistics and other relevant data on hate crimes. The adoption of amendments to the Criminal Code in February 2023, which address criminal acts of gender-based violence – including stalking – and hate crimes based on gender identity, represents significant legislative progress (Amendment of the Criminal Code, 2023).

According to the 2023 Screening Report from the European Commission, North Macedonia's legal framework for combating racism and xenophobia partially aligns with the European Union acquis (European Commission, 2023). The report also indicates a need to revise the Criminal Code, particularly to incorporate provisions addressing hate speech. Furthermore, alignment with Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin (2000), which implements the principle of equal treatment regardless of racial or ethnic origin, is necessary. The legal framework for combating hate speech requires further enhancement, consistent with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance's (2015) General Policy Recommendation No. 15 on combating hate speech.

The Screening Report also underscores the primary challenge of collecting official data on hate crimes, which posed an obstacle during the preparation of this paper. Previous reports from the European Commission consistently highlighted that "the collection of data on hate crime and hate speech is not systematic, despite an increase in hate crime cases" (European Commission, 2019–2022). According to the 2023 report (European Commission, 2023), there is a need for more systematic gathering of official data, along with increased efforts to develop a recording and data collection framework by the authorities. Despite the obligation to register hate

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crimes as a distinct phenomenon, detailed data from the courts remains unavailable. Ensuring the systematic collection of disaggregated data and statistics on hate crime and hate speech is essential. Additionally, efforts should focus on enhancing the capacity of law enforcement and criminal justice officials to effectively prevent and prosecute all instances of violence, hate crimes, and hate speech.

4   Governmental Data Collection of Hate Crimes

As mentioned earlier, law enforcement officers do not always classify incidents as hate crimes, regardless of whether they are not trained to recognise hate crimes or choose to avoid complicating the case, thereby making it more challenging for prosecutors to establish a subjective, biased motive. Police officers should document relevant information in a section titled "Indications that a Hate Crime Has Been Committed" (OSCE/ODIHR, 2014). This section should identify indicators suggesting that the incident constitutes a hate crime and specify the relevant characteristics of the victim (e.g., gender, race, skin colour, age, ethnic affiliation, language, mental or physical disability) targeted by the perpetrator.

Data concerning criminal charges filed under the relevant articles should be entered into the Ministry of Internal Affairs' electronic data system. The Ministry's Unit for Criminal Intelligence and Analysis is responsible for maintaining national police records. The Ministry of Internal Affairs utilises a unified criminal report form that includes a dedicated field for hate crimes. Additionally, the Ministry employs an internal electronic bulletin with a designated checkbox for hate crimes (Law on Police, 2015; Netkova & Parry, 2022). However, based on available information, it appears that law enforcement agencies have not consistently documented the biased motivations behind hate crimes (ECRI, 2023; OSCE ODIHR Hate Crime Reporting, n.d.). The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights reminds us that Ministerial Council Decision 9/09 (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe [OSCE], 2009) calls upon OSCE participating States to promptly investigate hate crimes and ensure acknowledgement of the motives of those convicted of such offences. Since North Macedonia is a member of the OSCE, it should adhere to the commitments outlined in Decision 9/09.

In October 2020, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of North Macedonia, launched a website called "the red button for hate crime," allowing citizens to report hate crimes, hate speech, and other forms of violence. Although the Ministry manages this reporting platform, the subsequent actions taken are not entirely transparent (European Commission, 2022). According to the 2022 Report of the European Commission: *"The lack of organised data collection on hate crimes and the ineffective response of authorities to them remains a significant concern. Hate crime incidents are recorded in the civil society database, which results in reports."* In addition, the report from the ECRI in 2023, states that North Macedonia regularly reports hate crime data to the OSCE. According to this statistic, the police recorded 33 hate crime incidents in 2018, 23 in 2019, 29 in 2020, and 22 in 2021 (OSCE ODIHR Hate Crime Reporting, n.d.) However, according to ECRI, there is also no integrated and comprehensive data system available that indicates the number of indictments and convictions for crimes involving a biased motivation. ECRI received information that civil society organisations maintain an unofficial count of incidents that indicate around 800 hate-motivated attacks of various levels of severity over recent years (compared with the around 100 cases reported from the police, for the same period). About 70% of these cases are presumed to be between ethnic Macedonian and ethnic Albanian youngsters at a low-intensity level, and they are often not officially reported' (ECRI, 2023).

The Public Prosecution utilises an electronic Case Management System, a web-based application that includes a checkbox for hate crimes. Data input begins with a data administrator and is later taken over by a public prosecutor once appointed (Netkova & Parry, 2022). However, in the annual reports of the Public Prosecution Offices in North Macedonia from 2016 to 2021, no data on hate crimes are available. The 2019 report mentions that several public prosecutors received training on prosecuting hate crimes, while the reports for 2017 and 2018 highlight the need to strengthen efforts against hate crimes (Javno obvinitelstvo na Republika Severna Makedonija, 2016–2021). Proving biased motives presents greater challenges than establishing the underlying crime, as prosecutors must demonstrate that the offender acted out of hatred or biases based on a protected characteristic. Due to this difficulty, hate crimes are not always recognised, identified, or prosecuted as such. The definition of a hate crime outlined in Article 122 of the Criminal Code (1996) requires that the motive be rooted in prejudice towards a protected characteristic (such as race, skin colour, nationality, ethnicity, religion or belief, mental or physical disability, gender,

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gender identity, sexual orientation, or political belief) without explicitly stating "hate" as a prerequisite. This approach facilitates a practical application of these provisions in identifying, prosecuting, and handling such offences (Netkova & Perry, 2022).

Ultimately, courts should also collect data on hate crimes using the Automated Court Case Management Information System (ACCMIS). ACCMIS is a highly advanced system with numerous options for storing and analysing data. Similar to the Electronic Bulletin of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Case Management System used by public prosecutors, ACCMIS features a checkbox specifically for hate crimes. This checkbox should be utilised after the court delivers its judgment. However, like the other two systems, we can only presume the possibility that judges often neglect to check this box, resulting in a limited number of registered hate crime cases. Furthermore, ACCMIS can categorise cases by the law articles but not by specific paragraphs, posing a challenge for compiling hate crime statistics since hate crimes are specified within the paragraphs of broader article incriminations.

Thus, the legal framework alone is insufficient for combating hate crimes. Inadequate implementation of the laws by all relevant actors leads to a significant number of unreported crimes or cases that are reported but do not initiate appropriate procedures (Iganski, 2019). These factors contribute to the underdevelopment of the national framework for monitoring, mapping, and preventing hate crimes, hindering efforts to accurately portray the prevalence of hate crime incidents in North Macedonia.

5   Methodology

As previously mentioned, collecting accurate data on hate crimes is burdened with several challenges, including failure by police officers to register data, reluctance to prosecute hate crimes as such, and victims' lack of faith in the system leading to underreporting. Hence, we combine the official data and the NGO data. Specifically, we rely on quantitative and qualitative cross-referenced data from the annual reports of the Macedonian Helsinki Committee (hereinafter MHC), monthly reports from the MHC, data from the OSCE/ODIHR hate crime reporting for North Macedonia (OSCE ODIHR Hate Crime Reporting, n.d.), and reports and data provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The quantitative dimension entails the systematic analysis of 561 cases reported. We analysed the data on a case-by-case basis, noting instances where multiple protected characteristics might be applicable (e.g., different ethnicities can encompass variations in language and may also involve elements of racism or xenophobia). The 561 cases are distributed according to the year, bias motivation, and the region in which they occur. The regions are categorised based on the last regionalisation from the Parliament in 2009 (Law on Spatial and Urban Planning, 2009).

The qualitative dimension of the analysis includes an analysis of the bias motivation for the hate crime as well as the region where the hate crime occurred. The latter is done to determine if certain types of hate crimes predominantly occur in specific municipalities within the country. In comparisons across cities, we standardise the number of hate crimes per 100,000 people in each region.

The paper also uses 'geovisualisation' techniques to map hate crimes and analyse their characteristics based on bias motivation and spatial distribution, according to the region in North Macedonia. Two interactive maps allow readers to explore spatial data and gain deeper insights into the spatial relationships within the data.

This chapter has several methodological shortcomings, mainly due to limitations in data collection and measurement errors. The latter is because some hate crimes based on ethnicity can also be perceived as hate crimes based on nationality or race. Additionally, in instances of sports events, hate crime incidents can occur in a municipality or region that is hosting two different guest sports teams from other regions. Additionally, the absence of the 2021 report from the Macedonian Helsinki Committee (MHC) poses a significant obstacle, hindering the analysis of recent trends and possibly leading to incomplete or outdated conclusions.

6   Results

6.1   Hate Crimes in 2015

Between January 1st and December 31st, 2015, a total of 44 hate crimes and incidents were registered. Of these, 31 incidents were verified through various means such as police contact, bulletins, media reports, and victim meetings, as detailed in Table 1. Additionally, 13 incidents that were not verified were still included in the report due

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to the presence of bias indicators (Stojanovski et al., 2016). The OSCE/ODIHR reported five cases from police sources and 34 cases from civil organisations (OSCE ODIHR Hate Crime Reporting, 2017).

The majority of hate crimes are motivated by the refugee or migrant status of the victim (48%) or by the differing ethnic backgrounds of the victim and perpetrator (43%). Between the end of 2014 and throughout 2015 and 2016, the country experienced an unprecedented influx of refugees passing through to enter the European Union's Schengen zone (Veigel et al., 2016). During this period, hate crimes often involved attacks and robberies targeting refugees and migrants in transit through the country. Nearly all these incidents featured ethnic Macedonians and Albanians as victims and/or perpetrators, with refugees from Morocco, Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan being targeted. Incidents related to political affiliation accounted for 11% of all cases (Stojanovski et al., 2016). In general, hate crimes in 2015 were triggered by the migrant crises in the regions that are close to the state borders on the south and north – the Northeastern Region (6 cases), the Southeast Region and the Vardar Region. In the Skopje Region, most of the hate crimes were based on ethnicity.

6.2   Hate Crimes in 2016

During the period from January 1st to December 31st, 2016, the Annual Report from the MHC indicated a total of 70 registered hate crimes and incidents (Stojanovski et al., 2017). Of these, 35 incidents were verified through police contact, bulletins, and media reports, while the remaining 35 were unverified. However, these unverified incidents are included in both the report and this analysis due to the presence of bias indicators. These indicators encompass factors such as victim or witness perceptions, comments made at the scene, ethnic differences between victim and perpetrator, frequency of previous incidents, nature of violence, absence of other motives, and location and timing considerations (Stojanovski et al., 2017). Additionally, the OSCE/ODIHR reported three incidents from police sources and 18 incidents from international organisations (OSCE ODIHR Hate Crime Reporting, 2017).

While the regions near the border with Greece and Serbia, continued to be hotspots for xenophobic hate crimes in 2016, political tension had a great impact on hate crimes in 2016 as well. North Macedonia experienced a "Color Revolution" in 2016, marked by widespread protests of alleged government corruption and electoral fraud. Sparked by the opposition's claims of authoritarianism, the movement demanded political reform and transparent elections. The effects of this movement can be found in the higher numbers of hate crimes based on political belief, especially in the capital – the Region of Skopje – but also in the Vardar, Polog and Northeastern Region.

6.3   Hate Crimes in 2017

Between January 1st and December 31st, 2017, the MHC's Annual Report registered a total of 70 incidents as hate crimes. Of these registered incidents, 58 were verified, while 12 remain unverified (Delovski & Saplieva, 2018). The OSCE/ODIHR did not have available data for the year 2017 (OSCE ODIHR Hate Crime Reporting, 2018).

In 2017, the main motivations for hate crimes were political affiliation (35 incidents) and nationality (30 incidents). These findings can be attributed to the local government elections held in 2017. This tumultuous environment is reflected in the statistics, showing a significant increase in hate crimes based on political affiliation or belief as the motivating bias for these crimes. In Skopje, 25 hate crime cases based on ethnicity had been registered, but also a great number of cases (23) based on political belief. The other regions also had a small portion of hate crimes based on political belief, and as in the previous years – borderline regions are typical for xenophobic hate crimes.

6.4   Hate Crimes in 2018

In its Annual Report for 2018, the MHC registered a total of 123 incidents as hate crimes for the period between January 1st and December 31st, 2018 (Shterjova-Simonovikj & Barlakovska Velko, 2019). Of these 123 incidents, 60 (49%) were verified at the time of the report's filing, while 63 (51%) remained unverified. In 2018, the OSCE/ODIHR received reports of 33 cases from the police (OSCE ODIHR Hate Crime Reporting, 2019), while the MHC reported 73 cases. Among

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the 123 cases analysed in the 2018 Annual Report (Shterjova-Simonovikj & Barlakovska Velko, 2019), several were categorised as hate speech rather than hate crimes, particularly those involving biased motivation against members of political parties. Furthermore, the context of hate crimes for this year was unique due to the referendum (the Prespa Agreement) and the subsequent change of the state's name to the Republic of North Macedonia.

According to the MHC Annual Report on hate crimes in North Macedonia for 2018 (Shterjova-Simonovikj & Barlakovska Velko, 2019), ethnicity (79 incidents) and political affiliation (31 incidents) were the primary motivations for hate crimes that year. In the Skopje Region, most of the crimes (67 cases) were based on ethnicity, 14 cases were based on political belief, and a small portion were based on nationality, religion or belief, and racism and xenophobia. In the Vardar Region hate crimes based on racism and xenophobia are typical. In the Polog Region, most cases were based on ethnicity, and a few were based on political belief. In the Pelagonia Region, for this year, there are a significant number of cases based on political affiliation and 4 cases based on ethnicity. The Southwest, East and Northeast Regions, also have a small number of cases based on political belief and few cases based on racism and xenophobia.

6.5   Hate Crimes in 2019

Between January 1st and December 31st, 2019, the MHC registered a total of 159 incidents as hate crimes (Amet & Barkajivska Velko, 2020). Many of these incidents were recorded based on police bulletins and media reports. Out of the total registered incidents, 33 (20%) were verified, while 126 (80%) remained unverified at the time of the report's presentation by the police authorities. As unverified remains, most of the cases were according to the other indicators (location, manner of execution, involvement of minors and high school students, etc.). There is a reasonable belief that these are biased incidents motivated by the ethnicity of the victim. On the OSCE/ODIHR website for 2019, only 23 incidents were reported by the police (OSCE ODIHR Hate Crime Reporting, 2020). In contrast, the MHC reported a total of 144 incidents, with 134 categorised as racist and xenophobic crimes.

According to the MHC report (Amet & Barkajivska Velko, 2020), the primary grounds for hate crimes committed in 2019 were ethnicity, with 135 incidents, and political affiliation, with 15 incidents, given the Presidential elections that year. Also, in 2019, amendments to the Criminal law introduced a definition of hate crimes and special paragraphs in the general incriminations. In the Skopje Region, the majority of the hate crime incidents (115) were registered based on ethnicity, and a few cases were based on political beliefs (8) and other reasons (6). In the Vardar Region, there was only one case based on political belief; in the Pelagonia Region, there was one case based on nationality and one based on ethnicity; in the Polog Region, most of the cases (6) were based on ethnicity.

6.6   Hate Crimes in 2020

In 2020, the MHC documented a total of 104 incidents as hate crimes (Drpljanin, 2021). Among these, 37 incidents (36%) were verified, while the remaining 67 (64%) remained unverified. Most of the unverified cases concern situations where according to other indicators, there is a reasonable belief that these are biased incidents motivated by the ethnicity of the victim. Despite the requests for confirmation of the indicators, the Ministry has yet to verify these hate crimes/incidents. Concurrently, the OSCE/ODIHR official website for the year 2020 reported 29 registered incidents, with 13 documented by the police and 103 by the MHC (OSCE ODIHR Hate Crime Reporting, 2021). According to the MHC's annual report (Drpljanin, 2021), ethnicity (76 incidents) and political affiliation (12 incidents) were the primary grounds for hate crimes in 2020. Additionally, five hate crimes targeted migrants or refugees based on their status, four incidents were motivated by nationality, three were due to religious beliefs, two were based on sexual orientation, one was attributed to intellectual disability, and one was gender-based (Drpljanin, 2021).

The year 2020 marked the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly influenced hate crimes. It is essential to highlight that the most pronounced impact was observed in the context of hate speech, particularly targeting Asian nationalities. Additionally, there were instances of hate crimes directed at citizens returning from abroad and being quarantined in hotels. The Skopje Region is the main Region for hate crimes based on ethnicity, with 54 cases registered, seven cases based on political belief, and also seven cases based on racism & xenophobia founded on

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migrant status, language, and skin colour (hereafter racism and xenophobia). In the Vardar Region, there were two hate crime cases of racism and xenophobia and one based on nationality. In the Southwest Region, most of the cases (5) were about racism and xenophobia. The Pelagonia Region had two hate crime cases based on ethnicity and also two based on racism and xenophobia, one case based on political belief, one based on mental and physical disability, and one based on sexual orientation. The Northeast Region has 5 cases based on xenophobia and racism and one case based on ethnicity. The Easter Region has one case based on racism and xenophobia and the Polog Region has 2 cases based on religion and belief.

6.7   Summary Distribution of Hate Crime for the Period 2015–2020

The hate crime rate is calculated depending on the total number of cases of hate crimes and the population in a specific region. The number of the population per region is according to the last census conducted in 2022 (Statistical Office of North Macedonia, 2023): Skopje region (66.1), Vardar region (15.9), Northeast region (21.6), Southwest region (10.2), Polog region (11.5), Pelagonia region (16.3), East region (7.4), and Southeast region (8.8). Figure 1 also contains these rates, with lighter colours indicating a lower rate of cases. This map shows that the Skopje Region–the capital–has the highest hate crime rate, followed by the Northeast Region (Figure 1). On the other hand, the Eastern Region has a lower hate crime rate.
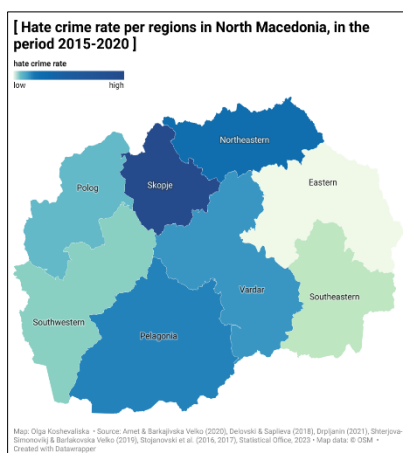
Figure 1: Hate Crime Rate per Regions in North Macedonia in the Period 2015–2020
Source: https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/GdcdO/1/.

The distribution of the percentages of hate crimes depending on the bias motivation and the region in which they occur is presented in Figure 2. The proportion of all hate crimes motivated by ethnicity was the highest in the Skopje Region (75%), Polog Region (66%), and the East Region (55%). On the other hand, racism and xenophobia accounted for the highest percentage of hate crimes in the Southeast Region (77%), Northeast Region (64%), and the Vardar Region (55%). The Pelagonia Region was the only one with a substantial proportion of the cases motivated by political belief (50%).
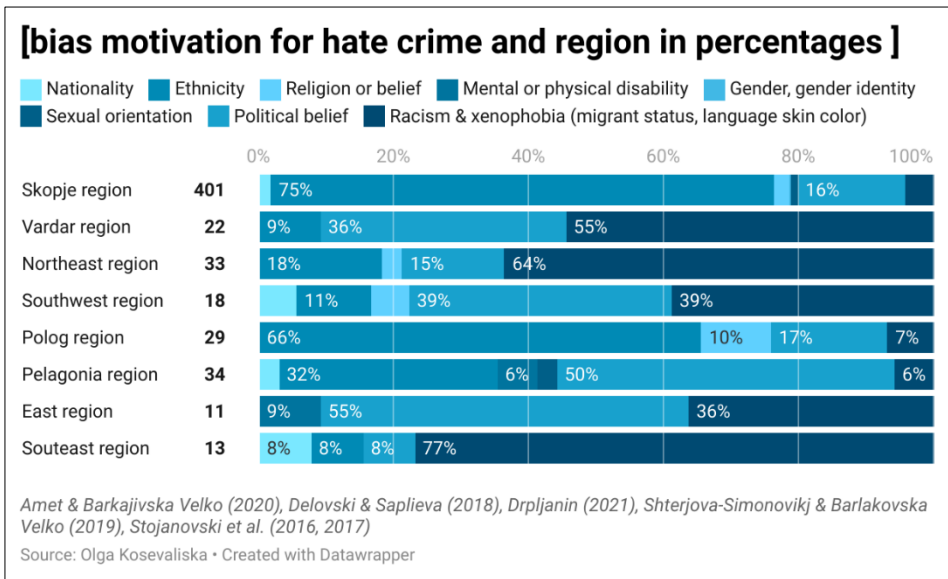
Figure 2: Bias Motivation for Hate Crime
Source: https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/6VQjj/2/.

7   Summary of the Bias Motivation for Hate Crime in Different Regions in the Period 2015–2020

As shown in Table 1 and Figure 4 the Skopje Region records the highest percentage of hate crimes. The predominant types of hate crimes in this Region are those based on ethnicity and political beliefs. Regarding hate crimes rooted in ethnicity, many incidents in Skopje have occurred in public transport, particularly on routes connecting neighbourhoods predominantly inhabited by ethnic Macedonians and Albanians. Additionally, a significant number of incidents have taken place in

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schools with mixed ethnicities and during sports matches involving teams of ethnic Albanians and Macedonians. These findings underscore the preventive role that law enforcement can play and help anticipate potential conflicts. Concerning hate crimes based on political beliefs, they predominantly occur during election years or significant political events, such as the signing of the Prespa Agreement (United Nations, 2019) and related referendums. Most of these incidents involve property damage to political parties, but they also frequently include online threats against politicians and the dissemination of racial and xenophobic materials through information systems. As for hate crimes based on religious beliefs, they are primarily concentrated in Skopje and its surrounding municipalities.

Cities located in the region near the border (the Vardar, the Northeast and the Southeast Regions) primarily experience hate crimes based on migrants' status. Many of these crimes involve attacks or robberies, including armed robberies, targeting refugees or migrants passing through the country. Therefore, these findings suggest that increased police patrols in "hotspots" like the villages of Lojane and Vaksince in Kumanovo could aid in prevention efforts. The city of Veles, located in the central part of North Macedonia stands out on the hate crime map due to its location along the Balkan route for migrants, making hate crimes against migrants particularly common in this city.

Municipalities with a significant representation of ethnic Albanians, in the Polog Region experience a higher rate of hate crimes based on ethnicity. Half of these incidents occur during sports matches involving teams perceived as 'opponents' based on ethnicity, such as between Albanians and Macedonians. Therefore, proactive policing measures at sporting events could help prevent such hate crimes. Additionally, political hate crimes tend to increase during election periods. It's also crucial to highlight hate crimes motivated by religion and religious beliefs, which often result in property damage to sacred places, temples, and places of worship.

In the Pelagonia Region hate crimes based on ethnicity and political motivations are most prevalent. Bitola, with its diverse ethnic population, has previously witnessed similar incidents, especially targeting the Roma community. Most hate crimes based on ethnicity involve damaging objects and property belonging to others. For instance, the Museum of Albanian Alphabet has faced multiple attacks during the research period. Additionally, it's essential to highlight hate crimes based on political

beliefs in both Bitola and Prilep, contributing significantly to the overall number of political hate crimes. Many of these offences involve public threats against politicians and damage to political party headquarters during elections or significant political events. Recognising these patterns can aid in preventing such incidents. Furthermore, there were instances in Bitola where billboards displaying LGBTI messages were vandalised with Nazi symbols, along with two cases targeting individuals based on mental or physical disabilities.

The Eastern Region is notable for hate crimes based on political affiliation or belief. While these municipalities are primarily inhabited by the Macedonian ethnic community with a smaller Roma population, hate crimes based on ethnicity are not common. However, xenophobic hate crimes are prevalent in this area, particularly offences related to the dissemination of racial and xenophobic material through information systems. The Southwest Region is also a significant area for hate crimes based on political affiliation, as well as hate crimes related to migrant status, racial, and xenophobic motivations.

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Table 1: Summary Distribution of Hate Crimes in North Macedonia in the Period 2015–2020

Region	Year	Nationality	Ethnicity	Religion or belief	Mental or physical disability	Gender, gender identity	Sexual orientation	Political belief	Racism & xenophobia	Total number per year and region
Skopje region	**Total**	**7**	**299**	**9**	**0**	**1**	**4**	**64**	**17**	**401**
	2015	2	11	0	0	0	0	3	2	18
	2016	0	27	3	0	0	0	9	3	42
	2017	0	25	2	0	0	1	23	1	52
	2018	2	67	2	0	0	0	14	1	86
	2019	1	115	1	0	1	2	8	3	131
	2020	2	54	1	0	0	1	7	7	72
Vardar region	**Total**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**8**	**12**	**22**
	2015	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	4
	2016	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	8
	2017	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	5
	2018	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
	2019	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2020	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Northeast region	**Total**	**0**	**6**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**5**	**21**	**33**
	2015	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	6	7
	2016	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	4	8
	2017	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
	2018	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	5
	2019	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	5
	2020	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	5	6
Southwest region	**Total**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**7**	**7**	**18**
	2016	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2017	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
	2018	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
	2019	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	5
	2020	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	5	8

Region	Year	Nationality	Ethnicity	Religion or belief	Mental or physical disability	Gender, gender identity	Sexual orientation	Political belief	Racism & xenophobia	Total number per year and region
Polog region	Total	0	19	3	0	0	0	5	2	29
	2015	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	2016	0	5	0	0	0	0	1	0	6
	2017	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	2018	0	6	0	0	0	0	3	0	9
	2019	0	6	1	0	0	0	0	2	9
	2020	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Pelagonia region	Total	1	11	0	2	0	1	17	2	34
	2015	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
	2016	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	4
	2017	0	2	0	0	0	0	5	0	7
	2018	0	4	0	1	0	0	7	0	12
	2019	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	2020	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	2	7
East region	Total	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	4	11
	2015	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	2016	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
	2017	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	2018	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
	2019	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
	2020	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	2	7
Southeast region	Total	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	10	13
	2015	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10
	2018	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	2019	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	2020	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	2015–2020	10	340	14	3	1	5	114	75	561

Note: "Year" indicates the year of the reported hate crimes. If no cases were reported in a region for a given year, that year is not included in the table. "Region" denotes the specific Region where the hate crimes took place. "Bias Motivation" lists the motivations/grounded reason behind hate crimes (e.g., Ethnicity, Religion, Sexual Orientation, etc.). "Number of Hate Crimes" indicates the count of hate crimes reported for each combination of year, region, and bias motivation. "Total number per year & region" indicates the total number of hate crime cases that occurred in one region, and "total" is the total number according to the bias motivation, the region and the year the hate crime occurred.

Source: Amet & Barkajivska Velko (2020), Delovski & Saplieva (2018), Drpljanin (2021), Shterjova-Simonoviki & Barlakovska Velko (2019), Stojanovski et al. (2016, 2017).

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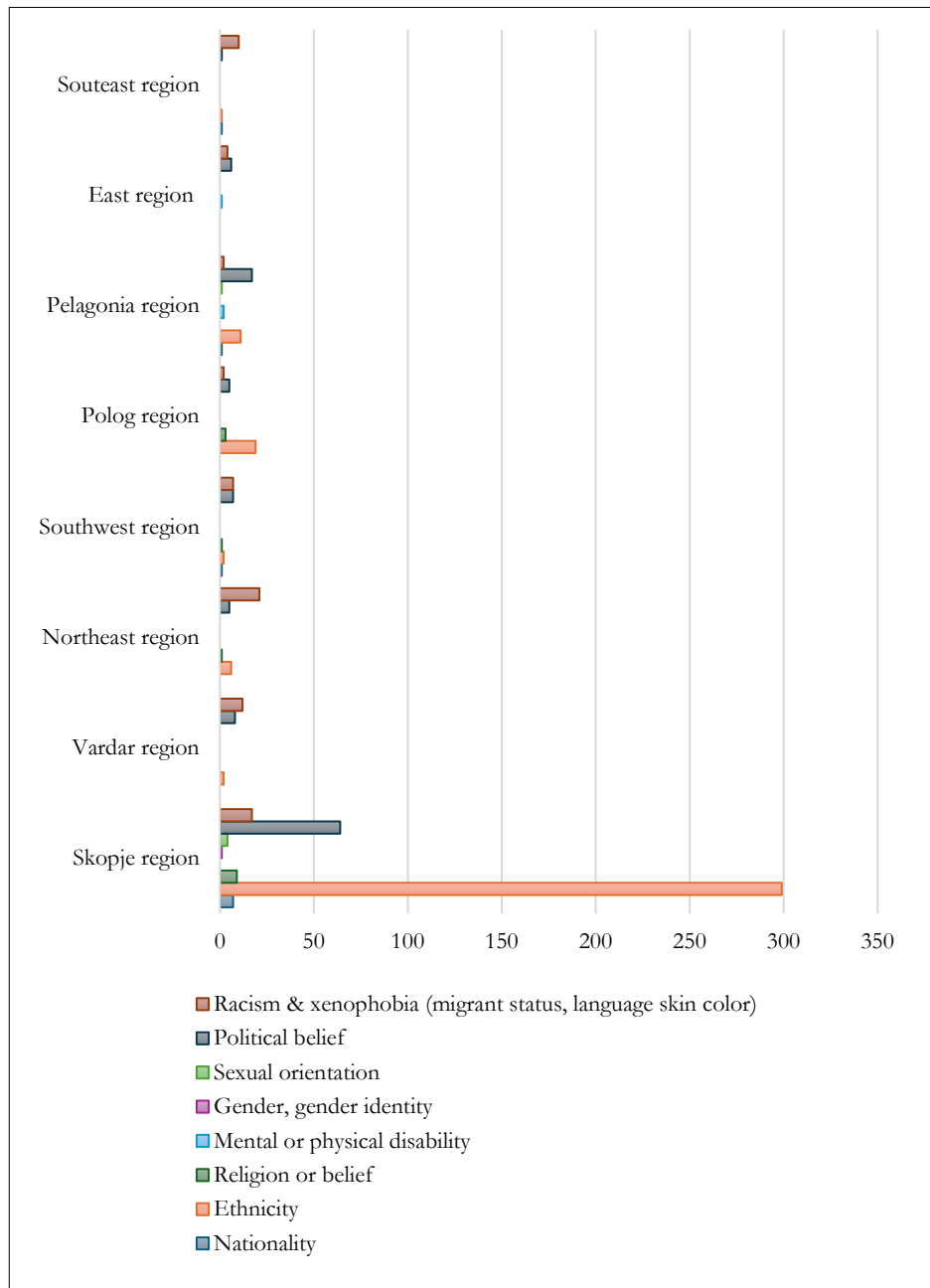
Figure 3: Summary Distribution of Hate Crimes in North Macedonia in the Period 2015–2020
Source: Amet & Barkajivska Velko (2020), Delovski & Saplieva (2018), Drpljanin (2021), Shterjova-Simonovikj & Barlakovska Velko (2019), Stojanovski et al. (2016, 2017).

As shown in Figures 3 and 4, Skopje Region has the highest percentage of hate crimes based on ethnicity and political belief. In contrast, the Northeast Region has the highest prevalence of xenophobia and hate crimes based on migrant status, followed by the Southwest Region. The Pelagonia Region is the second in line for hate crimes based on political belief but also has a significant number of hate crimes based on ethnicity.
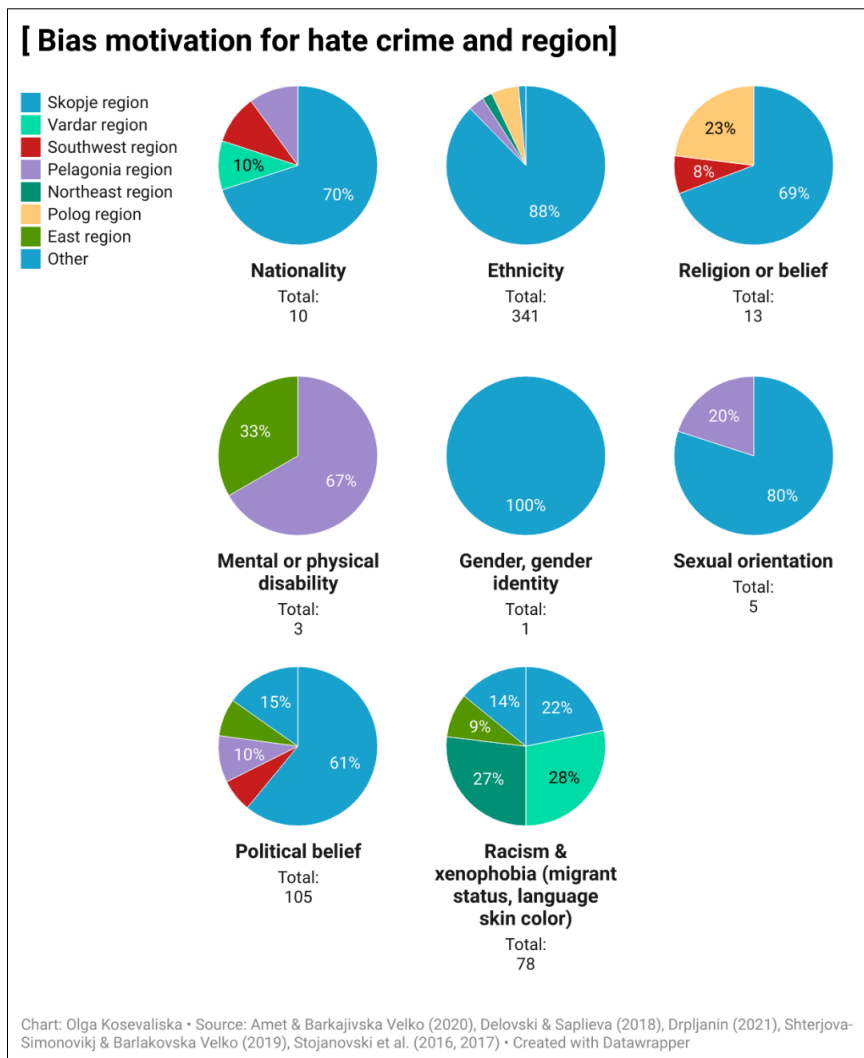
Figure 4: Bias Motivation for Hate Crime and Region
Source: https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/CSKl8/2/.

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8   Discussion

Our results show that the highest number of hate crimes committed in North Macedonia between 2015 and 2020 targeted ethnic communities. Most of these crimes occurred in Skopje, particularly in municipalities with diverse ethnic populations. Numerous incidents took place on public transportation routes connecting municipalities with diverse ethnicities. Additionally, incidents frequently occurred before, during, or after sports matches involving teams from various ethnic backgrounds. A significant number of cases also occurred in public schools with students from different ethnicities, involving minors as both perpetrators and victims.

The Criminal Law amendments of 2019 may have had a positive impact on the recognition and reporting of hate crimes. We can see an increase in reported cases for the Skopje Region in 2019, but not in 2020. Also, in 2019, the Presidential election took place, so the impact of the amendments could not be seen independently. The insertions of general information for hate crimes incidents in the Public Prosecution report (Javno obvinitelstvo na Republika Severna Makedonija, 2023) and the Ministry for Internal Affairs report (Ministerstvo za vnatrešni raboti, 2022) may be a result of these amendments. We expect that the amendments could increase the number of reported hate crimes, as previously unreported incidents come to light. The amendments might also serve as a deterrent to potential offenders, sending a message that hate-motivated behaviour will not be tolerated. However, the effectiveness of these amendments will depend on enforcement, public education, and broader societal attitudes towards hate and discrimination.

Hate crimes based on migrant status peaked in 2015 during the height of the migrant crisis. They were predominantly prevalent in border municipalities, except for Veles. In subsequent years, these types of hate crimes were primarily registered in the territory of Kumanovo and its municipalities.

As compared to 2015, hate crimes based on political affiliation or belief increased by 320% in 2016. This increase can be attributed to the political tension that arose in 2016 following the 'Colour Revolution' and the numerous demonstrations held to demand a change of the ruling party. In subsequent years, political affiliation

remained a prominent motive for hate crimes, especially during political events and contexts in the Skopje Region, Pelagonia Region, and the Eastern Region.

Incidents motivated by the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity are seldom reported. This might suggest increased confidence within the LGBTI community in institutions, possibly due to the positive messages and public support from the ruling party and certain political figures, such as the participation of the President in the LGBTI Parade in 2021. However, this does not necessarily indicate greater societal tolerance towards the LGBTI community. It is crucial to note that many hate crimes based on sex and sexual orientation go unreported, so the statistics should not be taken at face value.

It is important, again, to mention the latest ECRI report from 2023, which highlights the current situation regarding prosecuting and sentencing hate crimes and the raised concerns about the potential danger to the country's societal cohesion and ethnic tolerance in the future if violent incidents are not dealt with appropriately. If left unchecked, this could become increasingly difficult to control and may escalate out of hand. Therefore, ECRI recommends that the relevant authorities take this issue seriously and respond appropriately by thoroughly investigating such incidents and holding the perpetrators accountable.

9   Conclusion

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can relate to hate crimes by understanding the wider societal implications of hate crimes and how they intersect with various aspects of sustainable development (Peacock, 2021). For instance, the 16th Goal of the SDGs which focuses on peace, justice, and strong institutions, deals with hate crimes by promoting peaceful and inclusive societies to achieve sustainable development, ensuring justice for all, and building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. Hate crimes can undermine peace and stability in societies and often indicate systemic issues within institutions. Hate crimes, such as in the case of North Macedonia, which persistently stay unregistered, undermine the trust in the institutions (European Commission, 2023; Netkova & Perry, 2022). These crimes often target vulnerable populations like children, which can aggravate their vulnerability to violence and exploitation. Achieving the 16th Goal of the

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SDGs requires preventing and addressing hate crimes as a form of violence against children while ensuring their protection and well-being.

Hate crimes are often rooted in prejudice and discrimination against certain groups based on factors [protected characteristics] such as sex, "race", skin colour, gender, belonging to a marginalised group, ethnic affiliation, language, or nationality. This analysis, as well as many more scholarly articles (Iganski, 2023; Poposka, 2015, 2022; Poposka & Josevski, 2017; Stojanovski, & Poposka, 2017; Veigel, 2016), have shown that the multicultural, multi-ethnic society in North Macedonia, is still in a glitch with prejudice. Achieving the 10th Goal of the SDGs involves combating discrimination and promoting social, economic, and political inclusion for all, which means addressing hate crimes as a manifestation of inequality and exclusion.

Hate crimes can also target individuals based on their gender or gender identity. By connecting hate crimes with the 5th Goal of the SDGs, we can identify and address the intersectionality of hate crimes with gender-based discrimination and violence and promote gender equality to combat such crimes. Despite North Macedonia's authorities' efforts, the low number of reported hate crimes based on gender or gender identity and the alarming number of femicides in recent years suggest that their prevention measures are not up to par. It is crucial that they take effective actions to address these issues and to ensure the safety and well-being of all citizens.

Hate crimes can disrupt communities and undermine efforts to build inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities and communities and sustainable cities and communities is the 11th SDGs Goal. Addressing hate crimes requires promoting social cohesion, tolerance, and respect for diversity within urban areas. These crimes can have significant psychological and emotional impacts on individuals and communities, affecting their mental health and overall well-being. By connecting hate crimes with Goal 3 of the SDGs, we can address the health consequences of hate crimes and promote mental health support and services for affected individuals.

By recognising the links between hate crimes and the broader goals of sustainable development, policymakers, advocates, and communities can develop more holistic approaches to addressing hate crimes and promoting inclusive and equitable societies for all.

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Demographic Variations in Self-Reported Delinquency and Victimisation amongst Juveniles in Ljubljana

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Understanding juvenile delinquency and victimisation is essential for safely guiding juveniles into adulthood and designing effective prevention strategies. This chapter examines self-reported juvenile delinquency and victimisation in Ljubljana, Slovenia, utilising data from the ISRD4 study collected in 2022 and 2023, involving 873 respondents. The focus of this chapter is on understanding the factors that contribute to juvenile delinquency and victimisation, in particular gender, grade and immigration status, consistent with the 16th UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). Our results show that girls do not statistically differ from boys in victimisation experiences but that boys are more delinquent in several categories. Disparities exist between native and first- as well as second-generation immigrant respondents. Immigrant respondents report experiencing more hate crimes, while they also seem to report being more delinquent overall. There are no apparent age/grade trends for victimisation or delinquency, except for the delinquent category of drug dealing.

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Demografske razlike v samonaznanjenem prestopništvu in viktimizaciji med mladoletniki v Ljubljani

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Razumevanje mladoletniškega prestopništva in viktimizacije je ključno za oblikovanje mladih v odgovorne odrasle in oblikovanje učinkovitih prevencijskih strategij. Poglavje s pomočjo podatkov študije ISRD4, zbranih v letih 2022 in 2023, ki je vključevala 873 anketirancev, preuči samonaznanjeno mladoletniško prestopništvo in viktimizacijo v Ljubljani. Poglavje se osredotoči na razumevanje dejavnikov, ki prispevajo k mladoletniškemu prestopništvu in viktimizaciji, zlasti spol, razred in priseljenski status, skladno s 16. ciljem trajnostnega razvoja Združenih narodov (SDG). Dekleta se od fantov statistično ne razlikujejo v viktimizacijskih izkušnjah, vendar so fantje v več kategorijah bolj delinkventni. Obstajajo razlike med anketiranci, rojenimi v Sloveniji ter prvo in tudi drugo generacijo priseljencev. Priseljeni anketiranci izkusijo več kaznivih dejanj iz sovraštva, medtem ko so na splošno tudi bolj prestopniški. Pri viktimizaciji in prestopništvu ni opaziti očitnih trendov v starosti/razredu, z izjemo prestopniške kategorije preprodaje drog.

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1   Introduction

Juvenile delinquency represents a global phenomenon that impacts all modern societies to varying degrees. While it can be narrowly defined as criminal offences committed by juveniles, it is a heterogeneous concept encompassing a broader spectrum of deviant acts and maladaptive behaviours of adolescents (Filipčič, 2015). The term "delinquency" typically refers to the delinquent behaviour of juveniles, often characterised by repeat offending (Azeredo et al., 2019). In a broader sense, juvenile delinquency includes criminal offences, misdemeanours, and other forms of deviant behaviours or status offences, such as bullying, truancy, curfew violations, running away from home, and licit and illicit drug use (Cardwell et al., 2020; Filipčič, 2015). It is not uncommon for juveniles to exhibit some delinquent behaviour or engage in minor delinquent acts; approximately 90% or more of all adolescents reportedly engage in delinquency at least once during adolescence (Agnew & Brezina, 2018). According to Agnew and Brezina (2018), common deviant acts committed by juveniles typically include minor offences like petty theft, fighting, underage drinking, truancy, curfew violations, and vandalism. Understanding the range and nature of juvenile delinquency is essential for developing distinct interventions and preventive measures in addressing the diverse behaviours exhibited by juveniles. Researchers, including Berg (2012), Cuevas et al. (2007), and Turanovic and Young (2016), agree on the interconnectedness of juvenile delinquency and victimisation. They emphasise similarities between offenders and victims, often coming from the same population.

Juvenile victimisation, manifesting in diverse forms, is a significant concern for researchers and practitioners alike. Turanovic (2017) elucidates that as children transition into adolescence, their growing autonomy and increased time spent with peers elevate the risk of victimisation. The author defines victimisation as a traumatic and stressful life event with lasting negative consequences on emotional, physical, cognitive, and behavioural well-being. Consequently, victimisation can lead to negative behavioural outcomes such as heightened aggression, delinquency, and the misuse of licit and illicit drugs. Particularly noteworthy is the prevalence of peer victimisation, a pervasive problem significantly impacting the well-being of juveniles, as highlighted by Felix and McMahon (2007). Understanding this phenomenon and its development is crucial for developing effective interventions and support systems to address the complex dynamics of juvenile victimisation.

Researching juvenile delinquency and victimisation and their causes also directly correlates to several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs strive for the sustainable development of society and the well-being of all people, presenting a solid plan to address global polycrises (United Nations, 2023). Research on juvenile delinquency and victimisation aligns with several of the 17 goals, such as investigating the link to poverty, exploring implications for the health and well-being of both perpetrators and victims, examining the quality of educational backgrounds and their connection to early dropouts, studying gender disparities and potential inequalities, exploring disparities in the justice system and society at large, and fostering collaboration and partnerships between governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and other stakeholders. The most significant connection to the set goals can be recognised in the 16th SDG, which addresses Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, as it involves understanding the factors that contribute to juvenile delinquent behaviour and victimisation.

The findings from research on juvenile delinquency and victimisation can inform the development of effective and fair justice systems and contribute to evidence-based policies and strategies. Recognising the unique needs of juveniles, the justice system mainly emphasises rehabilitation and correctional programs over punitive measures (Agnew & Brezina, 2018). Roche and Hough (2018) underscore the importance of recognising that juveniles often underreport crimes, meaning only a small proportion of juvenile delinquency and victimisation, excluding severe cases, comes to the attention of the police. To overcome the limitations of official statistics, self-report and victimisation studies prove effective, especially when engaging with juveniles through the school system, providing valuable insights into their experiences and behaviours (Meško & Bertok, 2013a).

In this chapter, we delve into a comprehensive examination of self-reported juvenile delinquency and victimisation in Ljubljana, Slovenia, shedding light on crucial demographic differences and similarities, including gender, immigrant status, and grade/age. We emphasise the importance of recognising the unique needs of juveniles within the justice system, advocating for evidence-based interventions and targeted prevention. By exploring the intricate dynamics of juvenile delinquency and victimisation, our study contributes to national and international literature and a broader discourse on societal well-being, aligning with several SDGs. Our findings inform policy development and intervention strategies and underscore the

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significance of utilising self-report and victimisation studies, such as the data from the ISRD4 study, to capture the true extent of juvenile delinquency and victimisation, particularly by engaging with juveniles through educational institutions.

2   Juvenile Delinquency and Victimisation

Delinquency or deviant behaviour does not stem from a single cause, as diverse backgrounds and factors contribute to varying experiences among adolescents. Nevertheless, several factors have repeatedly been connected to the onset of delinquency and victimisation or have emerged as significant predictors of the seriousness and extent of these phenomena. Both delinquency and victimisation share similar environmental factors and individual characteristics, and they are strongly interrelated; for instance, previous victimisation experiences can increase the risk of delinquency onset (Cuevas et al., 2007). However, there are notable differences in the emergence of risk and protective factors associated with delinquency, such as exposure to delinquent peers and substance abuse, compared to victimisation, which may involve exposure to factors like unsafe neighbourhoods and domestic violence (Pauwels & Svensson, 2011).

Among the most frequently discussed and substantiated predictors, demographic factors play a prominent role, including gender, age, and ethnicity/immigration status. Undoubtedly, a multitude of risk and protective factors, encompassing individual propensities, peer influence, family dynamics, community environment, socioeconomic status, and other factors, either hinder or influence the incidence of delinquency or victimisation. Several delinquency theories have emerged over the decades that tackle the emergence of delinquent behaviour, study various risk and protective factors, and their correlations (e.g., Routine Activity Theory, General Strain Theory, Self-Control Theory, Social Bonding Theory). However, our study exclusively focuses on examining demographic dynamics.

2.1   Gender and Juvenile Delinquency and Victimisation

Several authors over the decades found that males generally report higher rates of delinquency and exhibit greater delinquency rates (e.g., Azeredo et al., 2019; Blackmon et al., 2016; Cohen, 1955; Cuevas et al., 2007; Kruttschnitt, 2013;

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Savolainen et al., 2017). Agnew and Brezina (2018) observe that gender differences are most noticeable in severe property and violent crimes but are less prominent in status offences or minor offences, where both genders exhibit similar rates of involvement. Enzmann and Wetzels (2002), who studied self-reported delinquency among several ethnic groups, found that boys report more violent delinquent acts regardless of the ethnic group they belong to. However, gender differences are more significant in certain ethnic groups, and these differences are more pronounced for boys than for girls. In brief, the gender gap in delinquent behaviour is a well-established fact.

Despite most studies indicating that males are more likely and frequent delinquents, Hart et al. (2007) emphasise that researchers have frequently overlooked females in their examination of juvenile delinquency or have only conducted tests on samples with small percentages of females. The authors highlight the distinction between female and male juvenile delinquency, underscoring the essential need for research particularly focused on females in the context of delinquency. They report that the nature and extent of females' involvement in crime differs from that of males. Girls are statistically more inclined toward non-aggressive delinquent behaviours, such as minor property crimes or substance use, while boys are more inclined toward violent and aggressive delinquent acts (Liu & Miller, 2020). Smith et al. (2020) examined the varying degrees of girls' involvement in delinquency, identifying four distinct subtypes distinguished by the severity of their self-reported victimisation experiences and mental health issues. They found that girls with higher levels of victimisation tended to report increased engagement in delinquent acts.

Researchers have also found significant gender differences in terms of victimisation; males are more likely to be involved in risky lifestyles and consequentially often become victims of criminal offences (Bunch et al., 2015; Heimer & Kruttschnit, 2006). Additionally, the frequency of bullying among males is two to three times higher than among girls (Dekleva & Razpotnik, 2001; Hamby et al., 2013). Authors like Hamby et al. (2013) and Finkelhor et al. (2005), who studied multiple forms of victimisation at home, in school, and in the community, report that males experience physical assault and property victimisation more frequently. In contrast, females experienced higher rates of sexual victimisation. Females are also more likely to experience relational victimisation (indirect aggression), whereas males are more likely to experience direct verbal and physical victimisation.

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2.2   Age and Juvenile Delinquency and Victimisation

The role of age in offending has been debated for a long time (e.g., DeLisi & Vaughn, 2015). Crime rates are highest for juveniles in mid to late adolescence (Agnew & Brezina, 2018; Farrington et al., 2013). Agnew and Brezina (2018) observe that arrest rates for property crime peak in mid to late adolescence and then decline rapidly, while arrest rates for violent crime and rates of illicit drug use peak in late adolescence to early adulthood and then decline somewhat more slowly. In the Seattle Social Development Project, Farrington et al. (2003) compared delinquency rates between the ages of 11 and 18, revealing an increase in the prevalence of offending, either through court referrals or self-reports, with age. Additionally, Farrington et al. (2013) demonstrate that the prevalence of certain property crimes (such as burglary, shoplifting, and vandalism) is highest at ages 10–14 and then declines, while some property crimes, assault, and drug use are most prevalent at ages 15–18 and then also decline.

There is some evidence suggesting that the apparent high crime rates during adolescence may be somewhat exaggerated, possibly due to adolescents being more prone to arrest than adult offenders, either because they do not plan their crimes as carefully or are more conspicuous, often committing offences in groups of friends (Agnew & Brezina, 2018; Snyder, 1999). Nevertheless, the peak of delinquency during adolescence is mainly attributed to many juveniles starting to commit crimes during that time, with the majority ceasing their delinquent behaviour upon reaching adulthood (Agnew & Brezina, 2018).

Adolescence is a period during which delinquency is almost normalised, and occasional delinquent acts are considered part of the usual social and psychological maturation process for juveniles. However, these acts can pose a problem if minor delinquent acts escalate into more serious offences and persist into adulthood, potentially leading to a criminal career (Morgan & Newburn, 2012). Farrington et al. (2013) note that an early onset of delinquency typically predicts multiple convictions and an extended criminal career. The authors reveal that men who began their conviction careers at the earliest ages tended to commit the largest number of offences and have the longest criminal careers, lasting up to age 56.

2.3   Immigrant Status and Juvenile Delinquency and Victimisation

The global phenomenon of growing immigration and increasing ethnic diversity has made the study of the involvement of ethnic minorities in crime, particularly juvenile crime, a highly controversial topic. Enzmann and Wetzel (2002) highlight how official German statistics consistently reveal a disproportionate number of offenders of non-native origin, with prison statistics indicating a significant predominance of foreigners. However, the authors caution that analysing the relationship between migration and crime, based on data from the police or the federal judicial information system, has its limitations. There is a question about whether the overrepresentation of non-native ethnic groups in police statistics, a statistical artefact, might be, as the inclusion of offenders not accounted for in population statistics (such as tourists and illegal immigrants) can artificially inflate the calculated crime rate. Conversely, immigrants with native passports (for example, those with native ancestors) are categorised among the native population in police and judicial statistics. The authors also note substantial differences between the native-born population and immigrants in socio-economic status, education, employment, place of residence, and related variables, all linked to crime.

Some studies, such as those by Agnew (2006) and Bersani (2014), emphasise distinguishing between first- and second-generation immigrants. Siegmunt and Lukash (2019) conducted a study in Switzerland on International Self-Report Delinquency Study 3 (ISRD3) data ($n = 4,158$) and tested the link between classroom heterogeneity (mixture of native, 1st generation immigrant, and 2nd generation immigrant respondents) and delinquency. They argue that delinquency reflects a lack of social integration, suggesting that students in more heterogeneous classrooms may struggle to communicate and form strong bonds. Their findings indicate that juveniles were likely to commit offences in classes with higher heterogeneity, significantly impacting the frequency of graffiti, vandalism, shoplifting, group fights, robbery, burglary, bicycle theft, vehicle theft, and theft.

Roche and Hough (2018) confirm the challenges faced by juveniles with an immigrant background in integrating into society, both in adhering to moral norms that prohibit violence and in socio-economic aspects such as neighbourhood or poor family supervision. Marshall and Marshall (2018) discuss the role of migration status and religion in the multi-nation ISRD3 study, influencing the moral condemnation

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of violent behaviours. For instance, in that multinational sample of youth, native respondents condemn robbery more than 1st generation immigrants. Relatedly, Cohen and Nisbett (1997) proposed the theoretical concept of a "Culture of Honor" to explain differences in violence between citizens of Northern and Southern states in the United States. Their theory suggests that in cultures where individuals rely on themselves for protection, violence becomes a positively valued activity, serving to maintain reputation and honour. Young immigrants may exhibit more positive attitudes toward norms of masculinity legitimising violence, as found by Enzmann and Wetzels (2002) in their study of juvenile immigrants from Turkey. Furthermore, delinquent immigrant juveniles often come from underprivileged families and are frequently exposed to family violence (e.g., Enzmann & Kammigan, 2018). Enzmann and Kammigan's analysis (2018) of the ISRD3 study data documented substantial differences in prevalence rates of parental punishment between immigrant and native youth in several countries.

2.4   Juvenile Delinquency and Victimisation in Slovenia

The available official crime data, released annually by the police, only provides a general count of juvenile crimes, lacking details on municipalities or broader delinquent behaviours. Figure 1 illustrates a significant decrease in juvenile criminal offences since 1991, with a notable spike in 1992 and a slight rise between 1998 and 2000. Despite a minor increase in 2022, the trend has steadily declined, reaching 922 offences in 2021. Juvenile delinquency comprises approximately 2% of total crime on average and has sharply declined for almost two decades in Slovenia.

However, to achieve a better understanding of the state of delinquency and victimisation in Slovenia and particularly Ljubljana, official statistics must be complemented by victimisation and self-report studies. We present the primary findings of delinquency and victimisation studies conducted in Slovenia since its independence in 1991, focusing mainly on demographic factors such as gender, immigrant status, and grade/age.
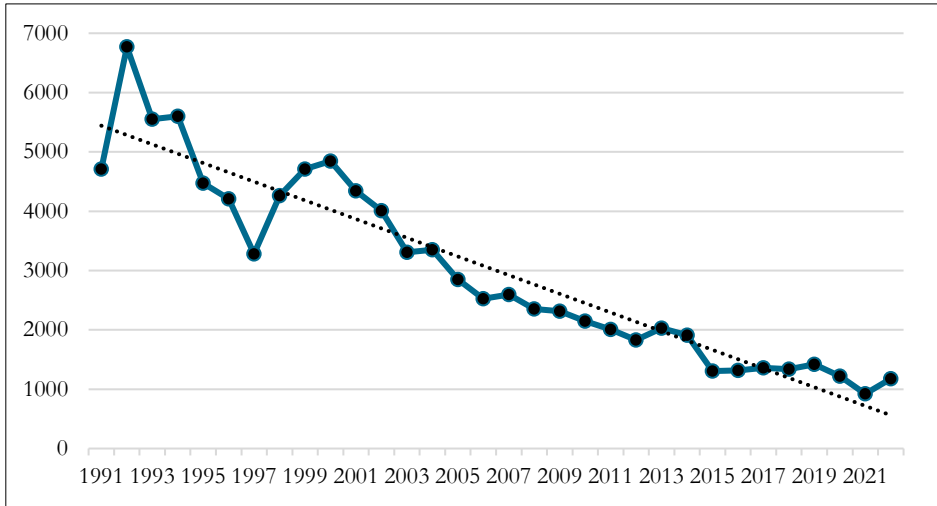
Figure 1: Juvenile Crime in Slovenia from 1991–2021 According to Official Police Statistics
Source: Filipčič (2004), Ministrstvo za notranje zadeve, Policija (2020, 2023).

The prevalence of peer violence and bullying is a recurring theme across multiple studies and proves to be significant and frequent among students (e.g., Cvek & Pšunder, 2013; Črešnik et al., 2005; Jeriček Klanšček et al., 2019; Koprivnikar et al., 2015; Muršič, 2010; Pušnik, 1999; Scagnetti, 2011; Stergar et al., 2006). It is prevalent across different grade levels, from primary to secondary schools. Physical fights and various forms of delinquent behaviours are also evident among students (e.g., Bučar Ručman, 2004; Dekleva, 1996; Dekleva & Razpotnik, 2001; Gorenc, 2007; Tivadar, 2000). Online bullying is recognised as a significant issue as well, with studies reporting a substantial percentage of adolescents experiencing or engaging in cyberbullying (Bučar Ručman et al., 2022; Lobe & Muha, 2011; Jeriček Klanšček et al., 2019, 2023). Meško and Bertok (2013a) note that Ljubljana exhibits higher rates in most delinquency categories than Slovenia's third biggest city, Kranj. In contrast, Dekleva (2010) notes that the prevalence of most delinquent categories in Ljubljana was lower than in the other cities in the Slovenian ISRD2 sample.

Boys consistently appear to be more involved in aggressive behaviours such as bullying and physical fights, as well as more violent offences (e.g., Bučar Ručman, 2004; Dekleva, 2010; Gorenc, 2006; Jeriček Klanšček et al., 2019; Meško & Bertok, 2013b; Pušnik, 1996; Tivadar, 2000). They are also recognised as victims more often

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than girls, who report less violence and bullying (e.g., Dekleva & Razpotnik, 2010; Gorenc, 2006; Kralj et al., 2013; Scagnetti, 2011). Age trends are observable in many studies, indicating variations in the prevalence of peer violence among different age groups. Generally, the frequency of bullying and physical fights tends to decrease with age (Dekleva, 1996; Jeriček Klanšček et al., 2023; Pušnik, 1996; Scagnetti, 2011). Some studies indicate higher rates of delinquency and victimisation among the immigrant population compared to the native population (Dekleva & Razpotnik, 2001, 2010; Meško & Bertok, 2013b; Razpotnik, 2006). Other studies also establish a link between family violence and peer violence, emphasising the importance of considering family dynamics in understanding adolescent behaviour (Filipčič et al., 2017; Muršič, 2010).

In short, there have been a significant number of empirical studies of youth in Slovenia over the last three decades. The results indicate that bullying, as well as physical, psychological and verbal violence, are not unusual within a school setting. Based on the official statistics (Figure 1), there appears to be a consistent decline in delinquency levels in Slovenia. However, due to the different designs and samples used in these self-report surveys, it is not possible to use these studies to draw conclusions about changes over time in the extent and nature of juvenile delinquency and victimisation in Slovenia. This chapter gives insight into the current landscape of delinquency and victimisation by focusing on self-reported data, which provides new information on juvenile delinquency and victimisation in Ljubljana, Slovenia, since the last comprehensive study conducted in 2013. It also examines demographic variations, compares the findings to previous studies in Slovenia, and aligns key findings with the SDGs.

3   Methods

The 4th sweep of the ISRD study (ISRD4) commenced in 2020 and will be completed in 2024 (for details on the ISRD project, see Marshall et al., 2022). About 40 countries from across the globe are participating in this study. Slovenia participated in ISRD2 and has now re-engaged in the study for the 4th cycle, with the third author of this chapter leading the initiative. The ISRD4 study was conducted using standardised questionnaires in all participating countries. The questionnaire includes topics related to experiences with delinquency and

victimisation and insights into individuals' social backgrounds, including aspects such as friends, family, leisure time activities, and individual characteristics.

To adapt the questionnaire to the Slovenian context, we translated it into Slovenian language, conducted back translation and conducted a pilot study involving first-year students from the Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security, University of Maribor, and a few willing participants aged 13–17. Approval was obtained from the Ethical Board of the Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security, University of Maribor, declaring the study suitable for application to underage individuals. Before initiating data collection, we secured cooperation permissions from schools, obtained parental consent – where parents could choose to opt their child in or out of the survey – and provided juveniles with anonymity, the option to opt out of the survey themselves, and assured them they would suffer no repercussions for their cooperation.

We used Probability Proportional to Size sampling (PPS), where the probability of selecting a unit is proportional to its size (Skinner, 2016). The ISRD4 survey and its sampling method are designed to ensure the representativeness of the cities where they are conducted, rather than at the country level. According to Enzmann et al. (2018), the ISRD study samples are city-based because their main objective is theoretical explanation rather than the production of national statistics.

Data collection for the ISRD4 sample took place between October 10, 2022, and March 30, 2023. It was conducted on-site at schools, with individual sessions held for each selected class, employing a mixed-method approach. The questionnaire was administered to juveniles either online through the online survey tool LimeSurvey (70% of the sample) or in person using the paper-and-pencil method (30% of the sample). While the ISRD4 study protocol originally intended to use exclusively online questionnaires, practical constraints such as insufficient computers in some schools or lack of access to computer classrooms necessitated paper-and-pencil-based questionnaires. Survey administrators dedicated at least one school hour (45 minutes) to the survey for each class. Notably, some students required only 20–30 minutes to complete the questionnaire, while others needed additional time or did not fully finish it. Given the extensiveness and complexity of the questionnaire, coupled with potentially sensitive content for juveniles, respondents were free to choose not to answer specific questions. Despite some questionnaires not being fully

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completed, all respondents were retained in the sample for further analyses, as the authors recognise that even partially completed surveys can provide valuable insights.

3.1   Sample Description

The original Slovenian ISRD4 sample includes 2,653 juveniles from urban environments (Ljubljana and Kranj) and rural environments (across Slovenia). In this chapter, we only focus on about a third of the sample ($n = 873$), which includes juveniles from Ljubljana (response rate of 59%). As the largest city and the capital of Slovenia, Ljubljana is the most representative urban setting. While this sample does not represent the entire country, it is representative of the population of juveniles from 8th to 12th grades in Ljubljana.

In the Ljubljana sample, there were 436 (49.9%) girls and 409 (46.8%) boys. For the first time, the ISRD4 study incorporated an option to include another category in gender – non-binary – to examine its prevalence among students. Ultimately, about 2% of students opted for this alternative category. Available statistical data for Ljubljana (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 2023a) show that the juvenile population consists of 51.5% females and 48.5% males. Our sample closely matches the population of juveniles in Ljubljana.

The ISRD4 study was initially designed for juveniles aged 13 to 17; however, its primary focus is collecting data from grades where these age groups are typically found. Consequently, the sample may include juveniles younger and older than the specified target population, a characteristic reflected in the sample description. We collected more data in primary schools – 8th and 9th grade – than in secondary schools (10th, 11th, and 12th grade that correspond to the first three years of high school in the Slovenian school system). The most data were collected from 14-year-olds (22.3%) and in 8th grade (23.5%).

Most of Ljubljana's juveniles are native residents (75.7%), 16.3% are 2nd generation immigrant residents, and only 8% are 1st generation immigrant residents. Most immigrant respondents or their parents come from former Yugoslav countries (e.g., Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, and North Macedonia). In the case of Ljubljana's population, 13.6% of all citizens are foreign citizens (Statistical

Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 2023b). Our collected data seems to be representative of the composition of juveniles in Ljubljana.

3.2   Measures

Respondents were asked to report if they had experienced victimisation in the past year in the following nine categories: robbery, assault, theft, hate crime, social media hate, social media threats, sharing intimate content, physical punishment from parents, and parental maltreatment. They were also asked to report if they had committed any acts in the 14 delinquent categories in the past year: graffiti, vandalism, shoplifting, burglary, vehicle theft, robbery, weapon carrying, group fight, assault, drug dealing, sharing intimate content online, online hate speech, cyber fraud, and hacking. The response options for these questions were no (0) and yes (1). We used these categories as items measuring the self-reported prevalence of victimisation and delinquency in the past year among respondents. Furthermore, we created the binary variables "last-year general delinquency" and "last year general victimisation", which comprised involvement in at least one or more categories of delinquency or victimisation. Non-delinquent and non-victimised were coded as 0, and delinquent and victimised respondents were coded as 1.

The following analyses also incorporate the demographic variables "gender", "immigrant status", and "grade." Gender includes male and female (because a small number of respondents selected this category, we excluded the respondents who selected 'non-binary' from the analyses). Immigrant status includes native respondents, 1st generation immigrant respondents, and 2nd-generation immigrant respondents. Grade includes 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. We use 'grade' rather than 'age' to conform to the recommendation made by Enzmann et al. (2018) to accommodate the classroom-based sampling design.

Our initial analysis consists of descriptive statistical examinations to portray self-reported lifetime and last-year victimisation and delinquency prevalence among juveniles from Ljubljana. Subsequently, we conducted logistic regressions to assess the effect of the demographic variables of "gender", "immigrant status" and "grade" solely on last-year prevalence of juvenile victimisation and juvenile delinquency categories. When testing for the effect of "grade", using lifetime prevalence would be expected to show higher levels of involvement among higher grades, as the 'at

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risk' period is longer. Therefore, using last-year victimisation and delinquency prevalence is more appropriate when testing for the effect of grade/age. Initially, we compared lower grades using the highest grade (12th) as the comparison category. Still, due to some of the delinquency categories in the 12th grade having rates of zero, interpretation of the findings was challenging. Consequently, we decided to compare the delinquency rates in the different grades to those in the 11th grade, which reported one of the highest general delinquency and victimisation rates (as seen in Figures 6 and 11). Using logistic regressions, we aimed to identify any disparities in prevalence rates in Ljubljana related to gender, immigration status, and grade. In presenting the results, we use a threshold of $p \leq .05$ for statistical significance.

4 Results

4.1 Victimisation

Figure 2 displays self-reported lifetime prevalence for nine victimisation categories and shows that victimisation rates are generally low, typically below 10%. The exceptions include a few categories: physical punishment has been reported by about 41% of students, theft by around 38%, receiving threats over social media by 21%, and parental maltreatment by almost 16% of students.
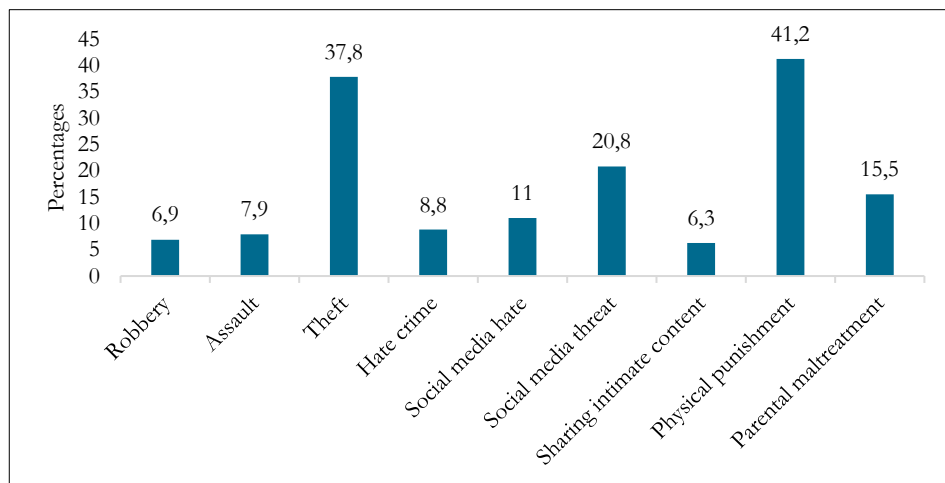
Figure 2: Lifetime Prevalence in Percentages for Victimisation Categories in Ljubljana

Figure 3 shows that 37.8% of students report they have been victimised in at least one category last year. The three most prevalent victimisation categories for the previous year are theft (21%), physical punishment (14%) and social media threat (12%). As expected, compared to lifetime victimisation prevalence, the victimisation rates are lower than last year's prevalence and match the most frequent categories of victimisation.
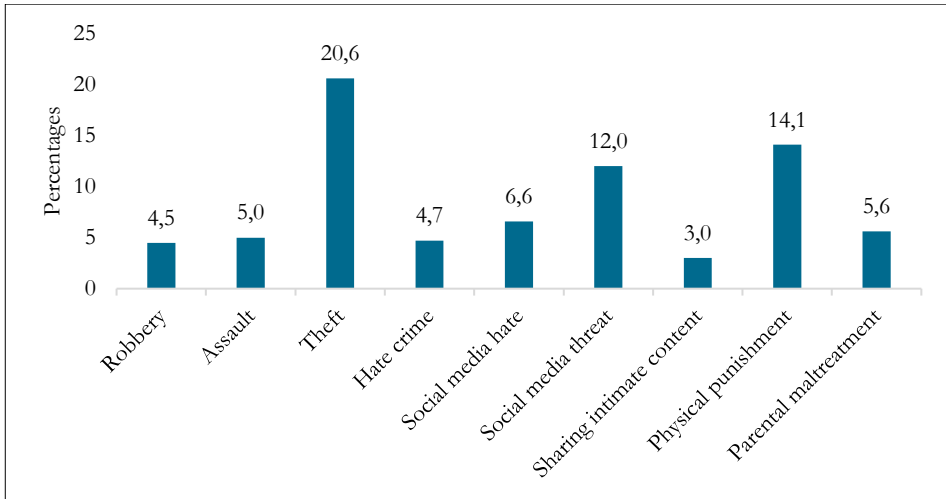
Figure 3: Last-Year Prevalence in Percentages for Victimisation Categories in Ljubljana

Figures 4, 5 and 6 display last-year prevalence of victimisation categories in percentages by demographic variables of gender, immigrant status, and grade while also showing prevalence for general victimisation. In Table 1, we present the results of 10 logistic regressions used to explore the effect of gender, immigrant status, and grade on the nine categories of last year's victimisation and general victimisation.

Boys and girls report similar involvement in victimisation experiences in most of the categories. Figure 4 shows girls report they have been victims in at least one category in the last year (general victimisation) (36.2%) to a similar extent as boys (37.9%). Some categories show bigger variations between genders, where boys report experiencing robbery more often (5.8%) compared to girls (3%), while girls experience more physical punishment (18.2%) and parental maltreatment (7.8%) compared to boys (physical punishment = 14.9%; parental maltreatment = 4.7%). However, as can be seen in Table 1, "Gender" is neither a significant predictor for

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any of the victimisation categories nor the general victimisation variable, indicating no statistical differences between genders for last-year victimisation when other demographic factors are included in the analyses.
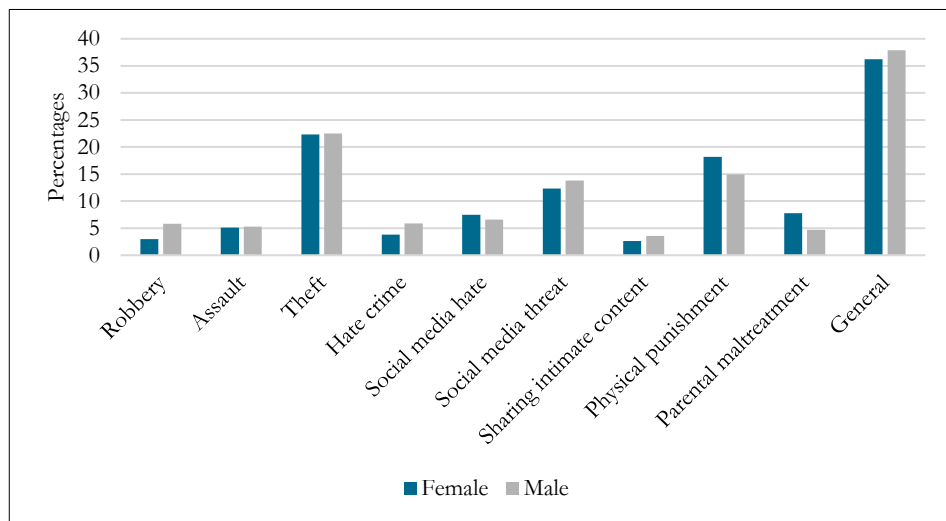
Figure 4: Last-Year Prevalence in Percentages for Victimisation Categories by Gender in Ljubljana

Figure 5 shows that generally, 1st generation immigrant respondents have reported being victims in at least one category in the last year the most (45.7%) compared to 2nd generation immigrant respondents (39.4%) and native respondents (35.9%). Involvement in specific victimisation categories shows some variations, with 1st and 2nd generation immigrant respondents usually in the lead. However, as seen in Table 1, "Immigrant Status" is a statistically significant predictor only for the victimisation category of hate crime ($p = .033$), where 2nd generation immigrant respondents have higher odds of experiencing hate crime ($OR = 2.525$) than native respondents.

General experiences with victimisation, according to Figure 6, are highest in the 11th grade (40.2%) and lowest in the 12th grade (36.1%). Involvement in specific types of victimisation across grades shows variation without following a certain pattern or trend. The most noticeable difference between the grades is in the category of physical punishment, where 11th graders self-report the most experiences (22.7%) compared to other graders (14.5% – 16.2%). Table 1 shows that "Grade" is a

significant predictor for 2 out of 9 categories of victimisation ($p = .045$; $p = .050$) and is not significant for general victimisation. 9th graders have higher odds of experiencing social media hate ($OR = 2.268$) than 11th graders, while 8th graders have lower odds of experiencing physical punishment ($OR = .560$) than 11th graders.

Figure 5: Last-Year Prevalence in Percentages for Victimisation Categories by Immigrant Status in Ljubljana

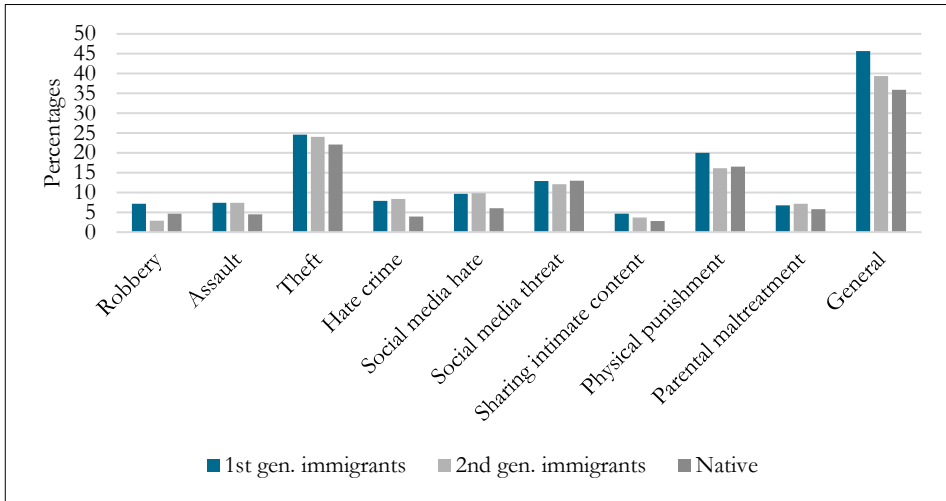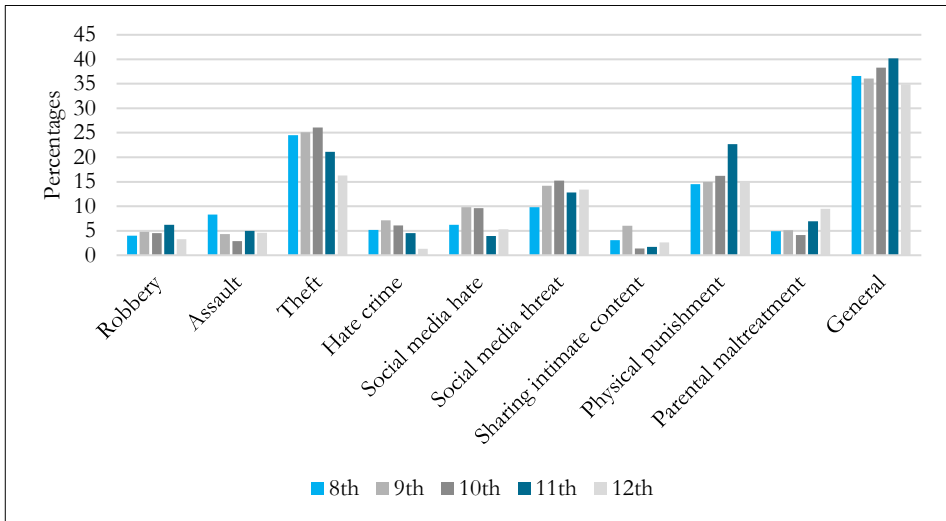**Figure 6: Last-Year Prevalence in Percentages for Victimisation Categories by Grade in Ljubljana**

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Table 1: Logistic Regression Analysis of Last-Year Prevalence in Victimisation Categories by Gender, Immigrant Status, and Grade

Demographic (independent) Victimisation (dependent)	Male			1st gen. immigrants			2nd gen. immigrants		
	b	se	OR	b	se	OR	b	se	OR
Robbery	.653	.363	1.920	.121	.630	1.129	-.047	.380	0.954
Assault	-.038	.319	0.962	.272	.557	1.313	-.439	.546	0.644
Theft	.027	.177	1.027	.012	.334	1.012	.077	.236	1.081
Hate crime	.504	.345	1.656	.509	.567	1.664	.819	.385	2.268
Social media hate	-.024	.283	0.976	.512	.467	1.669	.444	.339	1.559
Social media threat	.177	.216	1.194	.125	.405	1.134	-.061	.296	0.941
Sharing intimate content	.284	.416	1.329	.548	.652	1.730	.217	.523	1.243
Physical punishment	-.283	.207	0.754	.341	.378	1.406	.055	.280	1.057
Parental maltreatment	-.573	.311	0.564	.336	.555	1.399	.263	.391	1.301
General	.075	.146	1.078	.288	.268	1.334	.172	.193	1.187

Table 1: Continued

Demographic (independent) Victimisation (dependent)	8th Grade			9th Grade			10th Grade			12th Grade			n	χ2	pseudo R2
	b	se	OR	b	se	OR	b	se	OR	b	se	OR			
Robbery	-.723	.524	0.485	-.190	.469	0.827	-.306	.567	0.736	-.569	.554	0.566	827	7.025	.028
Assault	.435	.439	1.545	-.227	.503	0.797	-.568	.622	0.567	-.092	.519	0.912	821	6.066	.022
Theft	.244	.255	1.277	.175	.264	1.191	.215	.294	1.240	-.270	.293	0.764	773	4.516	.009
Hate crime	-.034	.505	0.967	.390	.472	1.477	.298	.547	1.347	-1.243	.801	0.288	810	13.847	.053
Social media hate	.432	.490	1.540	.926*	.462	2.525	.943	.493	2.567	.309	.532	1.362	815	9.820	.030
Social media threat	-.222	.339	0.801	.203	.322	1.224	.260	.353	1.297	.141	.337	1.152	792	3.060	.007
Sharing intimate content	.606	.720	1.833	1.188	.674	3.280	-.091	.931	0.913	.487	.774	1.627	816	7.020	.036
Physical punishment	-.579*	.296	0.560	-.546	.301	0.579	-.525	.347	0.592	-.505	.307	0.604	713	7.163	.017
Parental maltreatment	-.419	.458	0.657	-.417	.460	0.659	-.724	.555	0.485	.266	.414	1.305	779	8.656	.029
General	-.167	.214	0.846	-.194	.219	0.823	-.073	.239	0.930	-.162	.231	0.851	845	2.756	.004

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

4.2   Delinquency

Figure 7 displays self-reported lifetime prevalence for 14 delinquency categories and shows that 48.1% of students report having committed at least one delinquent act in their lifetime. Juveniles, in general, report low rates of involvement in various delinquent categories. Three categories that stand out the most and have the highest self-report prevalence rates are shoplifting (26%), weapon carrying (15%), and graffiti (14%).
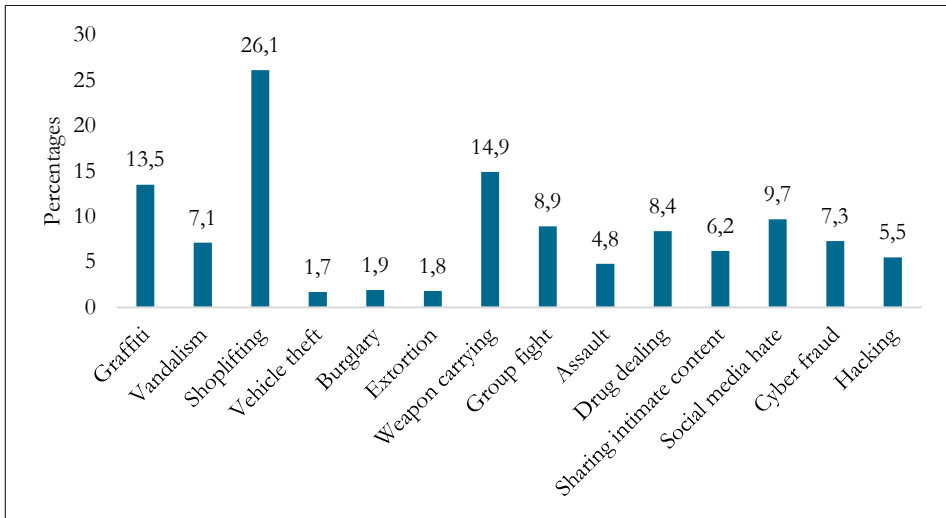
Figure 7: Lifetime Prevalence in Percentages for Delinquency Categories in Ljubljana

Figure 8 shows that 29.8% of students report having committed at least one delinquent category in the last year. The three most prevalent delinquent categories for the previous year remain shoplifting (12.7%), weapon carrying (9.5%), and graffiti (7.8%). As expected, in comparison to lifetime delinquency prevalence, the delinquency rates are lower than last year's prevalence.

Figures 9, 10, and 11 display the prevalence of delinquency categories in percentages by demographic variables of gender, immigrant status, and grade while also showing the prevalence of general delinquency. In Table 2, we present the results of the logistic regressions used to explore the effect of gender, immigrant status, and grade on the 14 categories of lifetime delinquency and general delinquency.

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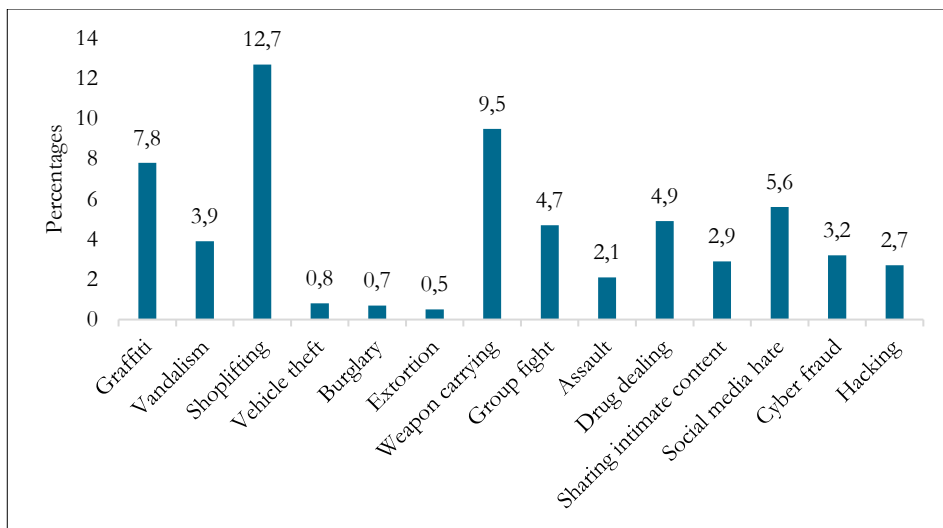
Figure 8: Last-Year Prevalence in Percentages for Delinquency Categories in Ljubljana

Boys and girls report similar involvement in victimisation experiences in most categories. Figure 9 shows that boys self-report higher involvement in most delinquency categories than girls. Still, they report being victims in at least one category in the last year (general victimisation) (29.3%) to a similar extent as girls (27.4%). Particularly, some categories show bigger variations between genders, where boys report more involvement in painting graffiti (10.9%), weapon carrying (14.1%) and social media hate (10%) compared to girls (graffiti = 6%; weapon carrying = 6.7%; social media hate = 2.4%). As seen in Table 2, "Gender" is a significant predictor for 5 out of 14 delinquency categories ($p = .010$; $p = <.001$; $p = .043$; $p = < .001$; $p = .025$) but is not significant for general delinquency. In all the significant delinquency categories, boys have higher odds of being involved in painting graffiti ($OR = 2.013$), weapon carrying ($OR = 2.351$), group fighting ($OR = 2.019$), social media hate ($OR = 4.681$), and hacking ($OR = 2.853$) than girls.

Figure 10 shows that 1st generation immigrant respondents have generally reported being involved in at least one delinquency category in the last year the most (34.3%), compared to 2nd generation immigrant respondents (33.3%) and native respondents (27.3%). Involvement in specific delinquency categories shows some variations, with 1st and 2nd generation immigrant respondents typically in the lead. However, as seen in Table 2, "Immigrant Status" is a statistically significant predictor for 2 out of

14 delinquency categories ($p = .003$; $p = .006$; $p = .034$) but is not significant for general delinquency. 1st generation immigrant respondents have higher odds of involvement in vehicle theft ($OR = 15.678$) than native respondents, while both 1st and 2nd generation immigrant respondents have higher odds of involvement in sharing intimate content ($OR = 4.664$; $OR = 2.851$) than native respondents.
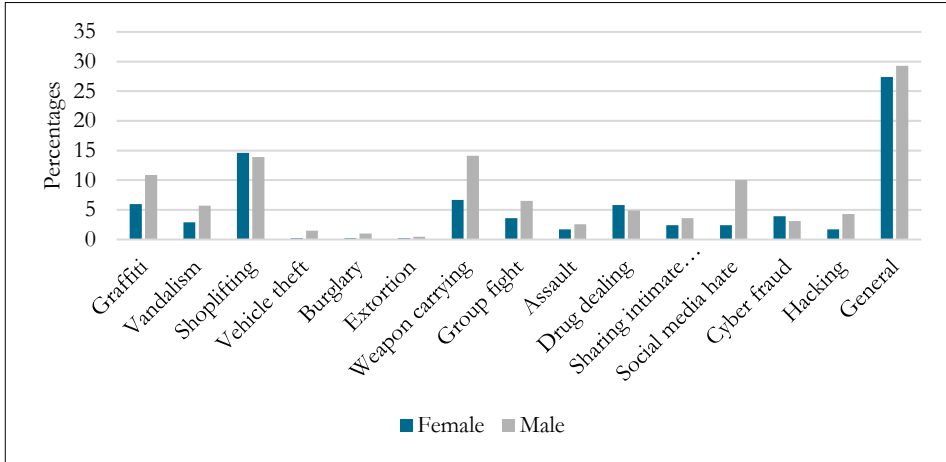
Figure 9: Last-Year Prevalence in Percentages for Delinquency Categories by Gender in Ljubljana

Figure 10: Last-Year Prevalence in Percentages for Delinquency Categories by Immigrant Status in Ljubljana

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General involvement in delinquency, according to Figure 11, is highest in the 12th grade (34.4%) and lowest in the 8th grade (21.4%). Involvement in specific types of delinquency across grades shows variation, with no discernible pattern or trend. The most noticeable differences between the grades are in the categories of weapon carrying, where 11th graders self-report the highest involvement (13.6%) compared to other graders (6.7% – 10.5%), and cyber fraud, where 12th graders self-report the highest involvement (6.2%) compared to other graders (2.2% – 3.3%). Table 2 shows that "Grade" is a significant predictor for 3 out of 14 categories of victimisation ($p = .016$; $p = .020$; $p = .007$; $p = .007$; $p = .029$) and is not significant for general victimisation. Eighth graders have lower odds of involvement in painting graffiti ($OR = .348$) and weapon carrying ($OR = .404$) than 11th graders. Eighth, ninth, and tenth graders all have lower odds of being involved in drug dealing ($OR = .213$; $OR = .214$; $OR = .282$) than 11th graders.

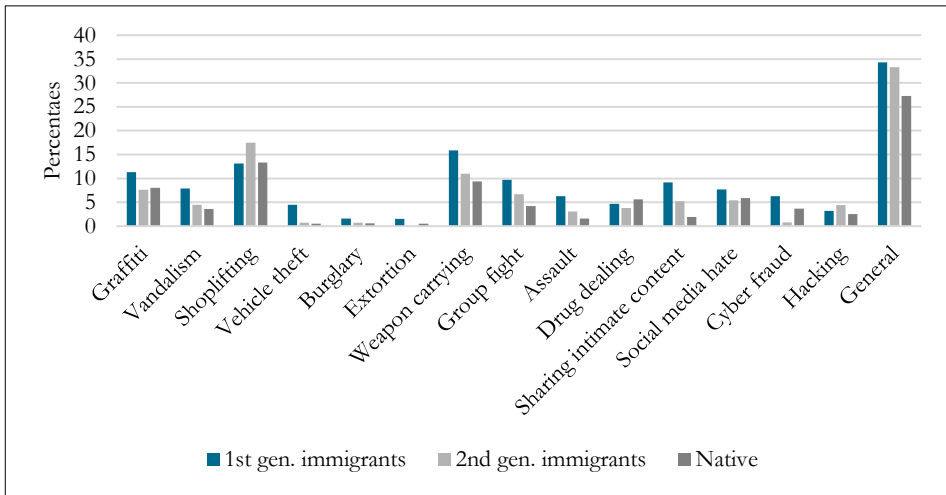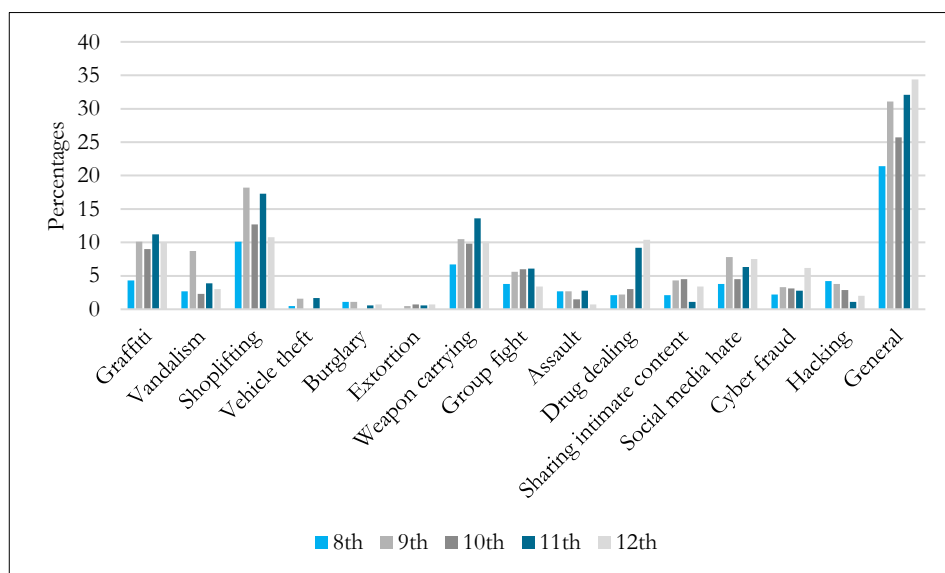**Figure 11: Last-Year Prevalence in Percentages for Delinquency Categories by Grade in Ljubljana**

Table 2: Logistic Regression Analysis of Last-Year Prevalence in Delinquency Categories by Gender, Immigrant Status and Grade

Demographic (independent) / Delinquency (dependent)	Male			1st gen. immigrants			2nd gen. immigrants		
	b	se	OR	b	se	OR	b	se	OR
Graffiti	.700**	.273	2.013	.577	.441	1.781	.009	.367	1.009
Vandalism	.695	.376	2.003	.843	.532	2.324	.139	.478	1.150
Shoplifting	–.083	.212	0.920	–.079	.425	0.924	.305	.267	1.357
Vehicle theft	1.808	1.104	6.098	2.752**	.924	15.678	.560	1.182	1.751
Burglary	1.323	1.123	3.756	/*	/	/	.246	1.131	1.279
Extortion	.985	1.269	2.679	/	/	/	/	/	/
Weapon carrying	.855***	.254	2.351	.719	.401	2.053	.256	.322	1.292
Group fight	.702*	.347	2.019	.817	.520	2.264	.575	.406	1.777
Assault	.405	.510	1.499	1.235	.686	3.438	.722	.607	2.060
Drug dealing	–.290	.326	0.748	.194	.635	1.214	–.283	.496	0.753
Sharing intimate content	.649	.440	1.913	1.540**	.564	4.664	1.048*	.494	2.851
Social media hate	1.543***	.371	4.681	.240	.563	1.271	–.062	.435	0.940
Cyber fraud	–.199	.398	0.820	.678	.569	1.970	–1.622	1.029	0.197
Hacking	1.048*	.467	2.853	.102	.773	1.108	.526	.497	1.693
General	.075	.146	1.078	.288	.268	1.334	.172	.193	1.187

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Note: These delinquent categories also had a 0 rate, which is why comparison among all the grades was not possible. Consequentially, these grades were not included in the analysis.

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Table 2: Continued

Demographic (independent) Victimisation (dependent)	8th Grade			9th Grade			10th Grade			12th Grade			n	χ²	pseudo R²
	b	se	OR	b	se	OR	b	se	OR	b	se	OR			
Graffiti	−1.055*	.438	0.348	−.150	.356	0.860	−.015	.399	0.985	−.488	.408	0.614	803	15.668	.044
Vandalism	−.446	.603	0.640	.846	.475	2.330	−.342	.713	0.711	−.632	.702	0.532	806	17.697	.074
Shoplifting	−.615	.324	0.540	.002	.288	1.002	−.359	.345	0.699	−.554	.337	0.575	772	8.449	.019
Vehicle theft	−1.790	1.239	0.167	−.458	.901	0.633	/	/	/	/	/	/	540	12.656	.179
Burglary	.709	1.233	2.031	.053	1.429	1.054	/	/	/	.328	1.424	1.388	683	2.211	.039
Extortion	/	/	/	/	/	/	.589	1.465	1.803	.299	1.424	1.349	453	0.688	.020
Weapon carrying	−.907*	.389	0.404	−.277	.336	0.758	−.089	.379	0.914	−.326	.361	0.722	791	20.406	.053
Group fight	−.570	.504	0.566	−.258	.472	0.773	.179	.498	1.196	−.569	.555	0.566	798	9.701	.037
Assault	−.140	.653	0.869	−.347	.691	0.707	−.616	.865	0.540	−1.437	1.104	0.238	805	6.900	.046
Drug dealing	−1.548**	.573	0.213	−1.544**	.574	0.214	−1.266*	.581	0.282	.111	.382	1.117	797	22.452	.081
Sharing intimate content	.438	.883	1.549	1.061	.819	2.889	1.588	.843	4.895	1.152	.850	3.164	805	15.375	.080
Social media hate	−.527	.505	0.591	.237	.436	1.267	.102	.538	1.108	.348	.450	1.417	792	24.896	.084
Cyber fraud	−.283	.686	0.753	.193	.622	1.213	.028	.694	1.028	.831	.575	2.296	797	10.267	.049
Hacking	1.407	.803	4.086	1.309	.816	3.702	1.334	.889	3.798	−.726	.923	2.066	812	11.304	.059
General	−.167	.214	0.846	−.194	.219	0.823	−.073	.239	0.930	−.162	.231	0.851	845	2.756	.004

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Note: Male gender is compared to female, 1st generation and 2nd generation immigrant respondents are compared to native respondents, and all grades are compared to 11th grade.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

Reports of general victimisation rates appear high in our study, with around two-thirds of students (66%) reporting they have been victims in at least one category in their lifetime. While the percentage of students victimised in the last year is lower (38%) than the lifetime prevalence, it is nonetheless considerably high. Although our general measures include many relatively non-serious types of victimisation, such high rates are still concerning. Although some studies have primarily focused on bullying among adolescents, several studies have confirmed comparable relatively high victimisation rates (20–68%) (e.g., Bučar Ručman, 2004; Cvek & Pšunder, 2013; Jeriček Klanšček et al., 2019; Pušnik, 1999; Scagnetti, 2011). One of the most prevalent victimisation categories is theft (lifetime = 38%; and last year = 21%), a commonly reported experience among adolescents (Dekleva & Razpotnik, 2010).

Rates of parental punishment (lifetime = 41%; and last year = 14%) and parental maltreatment (lifetime = 16%) are also significant, especially concerning adolescents and their family situations. Filipčič et al. (2017) note that juveniles experiencing violence in the family and domestic strain are more likely to be delinquents, particularly exhibiting aggressive behaviours and vandalising property. They emphasise the need to consider and explore family dynamics when trying to understand adolescent behaviour, as it may be connected to their involvement in further victimisation or the onset of delinquency.

Reports of general delinquency rates are likewise relatively high, with almost half of the students (48%) reporting involvement in at least one type of delinquent category in their lifetime and nearly 30% of students in the last year, which coincides with findings from previous studies on delinquency, peer violence, and bullying prevalence (e.g., Dekleva, 1996; Gorenc, 2007; Jeriček Klanšček et al., 2023; Meško & Bertok, 2013b; Muršič, 2010). Shoplifting remains one of the most prevalent (lifetime = 26%; and last year = 13%) delinquent categories among juveniles, followed by less severe acts of delinquency such as graffiti and weapon carrying.

Generally, around 29% of boys and about 27% of girls reported involvement in at least one delinquent category in the last year. Although the gender difference in general delinquent involvement is not statistically significant, a closer analysis of specific delinquent categories shows boys report higher involvement in certain types

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of delinquency (graffiti, weapon carrying, group fighting, social media hate, and hacking), while in the other categories, girls do not statistically differ from boys. Boys, in general, seem to report more involvement in violent and destructive offences, while girls are on par with boys, particularly in minor offences such as shoplifting and sharing intimate content, as well as in other property offences and drug dealing. Several studies confirm boys' inclination toward more violent behaviour and girls catching up to them in delinquency rates (e.g., Agnew & Brezina, 2018; Enzmann & Wetzels, 2002; Liu & Miller, 2020). While last year, victimisation affects a slightly larger proportion of boys (almost 38%) than girls (around 36%) in general, the gender disparity lacks statistical significance. Upon closer examination of victimisation experiences by type, it remains evident that there are no statistically significant differences between boys and girls.

Our finding of some differences in the involvement of immigrant and native-born youth in delinquency is consistent with several national and international studies (Dekleva & Razpotnik, 2001, 2010; Enzmann & Wetzels, 2002; Meško & Bertok, 2013b; Razpotnik, 2006). General involvement in last-year delinquency differs among native respondents (27.3%), 2nd generation (33.3%), and 1st generation (34.3%) immigrant respondents, although the differences are not statistically significant. However, disparities become more evident in individual categories of delinquency. Although both 1st- and 2nd-generation immigrant youth exhibit higher rates for most delinquency categories compared to natives, 1st generation immigrant respondents report higher involvement mainly in vehicle theft (4.5%) and sharing intimate content (9.2%) compared to 2nd generation immigrant respondents (*v. t.* = 0.7%; *s. i. c.* = 5.2%). This finding confirms the notion of Agnew (2006) and Bersani (2014), emphasising the importance of distinguishing between immigrant respondents of the first and second generation. While 2nd generation immigrant youth may be more involved in delinquency than native youth, they might have assimilated and integrated into their environment, thus showing slightly lower rates of delinquency compared to 1st generation immigrant youth. A similar observation may be made regarding victimisation. Both generations of immigrant respondents (1st generation = 45.7%; 2nd generation = 39.4%) report having at least one victimisation experience in the last year at a higher rate than native respondents (35.9%), with 1st generation immigrant respondents in the lead. We find that immigrant youth generally seem to experience more victimisation, a finding which is consistent with several studies (Enzmann & Kammigan, 2018; Meško & Bertok,

2013b; Razpotnik, 2006), particularly in categories of hate crime, social media hate, and parental maltreatment.

We find that general involvement in last-year delinquency is lowest in 8th grade (21.4%) and highest in 12th grade (34.4%), although the increase across grades is not exactly linear. Generally, there is an upward trend in reported victimisation experiences up until the 11th grade (36.6%–40.2%) with a noticeable drop in the 12th grade (34.9%). The individual delinquent categories do not seem to show an apparent decrease or increase with age, except for drug dealing, which exhibits a notable increase with age (2.1%–10.4%). Individual victimisation categories also do not show any apparent linear trends in increase or decrease with age. Previous studies have shown that bullying and physical fights tend to decrease with age (e.g., Dekleva, 1996; Gorenc, 2007; Jeriček Klanšček et al., 2023; Pušnik 1996; Scagnetti, 2011), while Meško and Bertok (2013b) found that there does not seem to be an age-related decrease in reported criminal acts. Grade differences in our study, in general, vary significantly for each victimisation or delinquency category, with peaks at different ages/grades.

Our study is not without limitations. One limitation is that we only tested discriminant validity for categorical variables of victimisation and delinquency, verifying if last-year prevalence in specific categories differs according to gender, immigrant status, and grade (as a substitute for age). Additionally, the current study is limited in exploring the risk and protective factors of delinquency and victimisation, merely touching upon the disparities in these phenomena. Future research should focus on exploring causes and mitigating factors to gain comprehensive insight into delinquency and victimisation among juveniles. Among the study's limitations, we also acknowledge the possibility that, despite their voluntary participation and the assurance of anonymity, juveniles may have under- or over-reported their experiences or provided socially desirable responses due to the fear of disclosure and potential sanctions that might follow.

The findings of this study have significant implications for advancing the SDGs, particularly SDG 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. Insights into juvenile delinquency and victimisation emphasise the critical need for effective and accountable institutions that address disparities based on gender, age, and immigration status. The study advocates for interventions that ensure access to

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justice for all, contributing to the overarching goal of building peaceful and inclusive societies. Juvenile delinquency in Ljubljana appears to echo broader Slovenian and international trends. By recognising demographic variations, it enhances our understanding of juvenile delinquency, guiding future efforts toward localised, targeted, and effective strategies to address both juvenile delinquency and victimisation in Ljubljana. Continued research on these phenomena and their causes is recommended to monitor evolving trends and ensure ongoing effectiveness. The study significantly contributes to our understanding of juvenile experiences in Slovenia, particularly in Ljubljana, and aims to support the global pursuit of a just, peaceful, and institutionally strong society.

Acknowledgement

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Part
2

Reducing Illicit Financial Gains and Combatting Organised Crime

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT G◯ALS

DRUG CRIME AS A CHALLENGE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE CZECH REPUBLIC EXPERIENCE

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The issue of illegal drug production and trafficking represents one of the major challenges of modern society and the sustainable development of mankind. Achieving sustainable development goals such as good health and well-being (SDG 3), sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) and peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16) would be much more difficult if the issue of drugs-related crime were neglected. This chapter highlights problems associated with this type of criminality from both a global perspective and the perspective of the Czech Republic. It provides general recommendations on effective measures to combat such illegal behaviour. First, the paper discusses the cross-border context of illegal methamphetamine production and its impacts on the environment in both urban and rural areas. Second, it addresses the issue of new synthetic drugs, with an emphasis on semisynthetic cannabinoid HHC, focusing on the approach of Czech legislation and the practices of law enforcement authorities.

KRIMINALITETA, POVEZANA Z DROGAMI KOT IZZIV TRAJNOSTNEGA RAZVOJA: IZKUŠNJA ČEŠKE

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Problematika nedovoljene proizvodnje in prometa z drogami predstavlja enega izmed izzivov sodobne družbe in trajnostnega razvoja človeštva. Doseganje ciljev trajnostnega razvoja, kot so zdravje in dobro počutje (SDG 3), trajnostna mesta in skupnosti (SDG 11) ter mir, pravičnost in močne institucije (SDG 16), bi bilo veliko težje, če bi zanemarili vprašanje kriminalitete, povezane s prepovedanimi drogami. Prispevek opozarja na težave, povezane s to vrsto kriminalitete, z globalnega in češkega vidika ter podaja splošna priporočila za učinkovito zaščito pred tovrstnim nezakonitim ravnanjem. Najprej razpravljamo o čezmejnem kontekstu nezakonite proizvodnje metamfetamina in njegovih vplivih na okolje v mestnih in podeželskih območjih. Nadalje je predstavljena problematika novih sintetičnih drog, specifično polsintetični kanabinoid HHC, s poudarkom na češki zakonodaji in praksi organov kazenskega pregona.

1   Introduction

Based on the United Nations World Drug Report from 2023, the production, trafficking, and subsequent abuse of drugs together constitute a global phenomenon. According to the United Nations, there have been changes in drug production over recent years. For instance, the area dedicated to cultivating opium poppy decreased by 40 per cent in 2021 compared to the previous year, while coca bush cultivation remained relatively stable during 2021 compared to previous years (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2023). However, opium production has followed a persistent upward trend since 1998, with a seven per cent increase in 2021 compared to the previous year, resulting in a total of 7,930 tons (for data since 1998 see the United Nations World Drug Report from 2023; UNODC, 2023). Cocaine production reached a record high in 2020, with an estimated 1,982 tons of pure cocaine produced – an 11 per cent increase compared to 2019. In tandem with production, the demand for drugs and their subsequent usage remain substantial. In 2020, approximately 284 million individuals worldwide aged 15 to 64 acknowledged using some form of drug within the preceding 12 months, which represents 5,6 per cent of the population in this age group. This also represents a 26 per cent increase from the estimated 226 million people who reported drug usage in 2010, representing 5 per cent of the population in the same age group (UNODC, 2023).

The current state of this field of criminality arises from a variety of factors. These factors include cultural and social tolerance of some drugs, which has transformed into political movements advocating for the legalisation of specific drug types, such as Hippies in the US (Husak & de Marneffe, 2005) or various liberal political parties in the EU (Khan & Landwehr, 2023). Additionally, the emergence of new kinds of substances, such as semisynthetic psychoactive cannabinoids and synthetic cannabinoids, has contributed to the situation. The globalisation of the world has facilitated the rapid transfer of drugs and their precursors across vast distances (UNODC, 2023). Coupled with this, the adoption of novel technologies and online marketing strategies has further exacerbated the issue (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023). Each of these factors represents a very complex topic but due to the limited space, this chapter will not focus on them in more detail.

Drug-related criminality produces numerous negative consequences, including secondary criminal activities such as corruption, which erodes the rule of law and stability, and gang violence, which affects entire communities. Health concerns encompass the costs associated with medical treatment for drug users or victims of related criminality, expenses linked to legal and administrative proceedings, and the social impact on individual communities and society Moreover, there are environmental impacts to consider, such as water pollution caused by chemical substances used for production, soil pollution and exhaustion from plant-based drugs, and air pollution linked to methamphetamine production (UNODC, 2023). The externalities from drug-related crime represent challenges to the sustainable development of mankind. This is particularly evident when considering objectives such as good health and well-being (SDG 3), which includes providing healthcare for drug addicts, developing substitute drugs, relying on substance testing to detect risky additives, using preventive measures, and addressing drug-related pollution. The context of sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) also comes into play, requiring efforts to prevent drug addiction within communities, with special emphasis on vulnerable social groups, identifying new drugs in localities, and addressing drug-related environmental pollution. Furthermore, the pursuit of peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16) underscores the need to select an optimal drug policy, develop legislation that respects cultural, historical, and societal backgrounds, and react effectively to the emergence of new types of drugs. Communication of such policy and its reasoning is another crucial issue, as is the necessity for international cooperation between public authorities in this area as demonstrated below).

This chapter aims to provide recent information on the drug crime landscape in the Czech Republic, with a specific focus on selected issues and their implications for sustainable development. The Annual Report of the National Drug Headquarters for the year 2022 indicates that the prevailing situation in the Czech Republic is characterised by several new phenomena linked to drug-related crime (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023). Firstly, there is a widespread demand for methamphetamine across Europe that local production cannot adequately meet (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2023). Secondly, traditional substances like cocaine are experiencing heightened availability due to overproduction, while new substances of both natural and synthetic origin are gaining popularity (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction,

2023). Thirdly, Europe has entered a new era of the pursuit of new approaches to drug regulation (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2023). All these new challenges resonate in the Czech Republic due to its national specifics – the historically strong local position in methamphetamine production (Zábranský, 2007) and the popularity of cannabinoids, as well as new synthetic and semi-synthetic substances (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023). These core themes will be explored in this article, subjected to thorough analysis to comprehend the peculiarities of the issue within both global and local contexts, and thereby, to ascertain the most appropriate and effective resolutions.

2   Methamphetamine: The Old Threat to Sustainable Development

To provide a comprehensive overview of the current methamphetamine situation in the Czech Republic, we present basic information about this drug as well as the global situation regarding its production, trafficking, and consumption.

Methamphetamine (N-methyl amphetamine) belongs to the broader category of drugs known as stimulants (alongside cocaine), which are typically used to enhance to increase mental and physical energy levels (Harris & Lee, 2019). Within the subcategory of amphetamine-type stimulants, to which methamphetamine belongs, its effects are achieved by influencing the central nervous system through stimulating actions (UNODC, 2023). The general effects of methamphetamine use include suppression of hunger and fatigue, acceleration of psychomotor functions, induction of feelings of euphoria, warmth, empathy, and solidarity, as well as an increase in sexual appetite. Conversely, negative after-effects include feelings of despondency, depression, anxiety, and exhaustion; at the somatic level, they include weakness, muscle spasms, insomnia, hallucinations, and disillusion, leading to irrational behaviour. The primary danger associated with methamphetamine use lies in the development of irreversible mental disorders like paranoia and toxic psychosis, as well as the rapid development of both mental and physical dependence (Válková et al., 2019). Vearrier et al. (2012) describe numerous health effects of methamphetamine abuse, such as cardiovascular, dermatologic, haematologic, gastrointestinal, musculoskeletal or neurological diseases.

The current global landscape of methamphetamine production, trafficking, and abuse is experiencing significant growth. United Nations data on annual seizures of amphetamine-type drugs (which represents only detected drugs) indicate that approximately 72 per cent of seizures occurring between 2016 and 2020 are related to methamphetamine. The number of countries reporting seizures of this drug has risen from 84 during the 2006–2010 period to 117 in the 2016–2020 period, signifying a notable expansion in the geographical reach of methamphetamine trafficking (UNODC, 2023).

2.1   Methamphetamine Production

Unfortunately, methamphetamine production does not require a high level of expertise, as recipes are readily available on the Internet, and most of the necessary ingredients can be purchased at local hardware stores and pharmacies. This ease of access facilitates the production of methamphetamine in domestic laboratories, which can yield profits ten times greater than the costs spent on basic ingredients (Wyble, 2008). There are two types of methamphetamine laboratories: large-scale operations that can produce more than 4.5 kilogrammes (i.e., "superlabs") and small-scale operations that produce drugs for personal use or limited distribution ("mom and pop labs," as popularised in the TV series "Breaking Bad") (Wyble, 2008).

However, the production methods differ by region and are closely tied to the use of different precursors. The most common methods, according to Lehmert and Hýbl (2016), include the Red-P method (which uses red phosphorus and iodine in the reaction with ephedrine or pseudoephedrine), the P-2-P method (based on the reaction of phenylpropane-2-one with methylamine in a reducing environment), the Birch/Nazi method (which uses ammonium with lithium or sodium as catalysts in the reaction with ephedrine or pseudoephedrine), and the Leuckart method (involving the synthesis of amphetamine from BMK, a compound known as 1-phenyl-2-propanone). The United Nations notes that in Asia, Oceania, Africa, and most parts of Europe, production traditionally relies on ephedrine or pseudoephedrine (first and third methods). In North America, on the contrary, production involves various chemicals required for the manufacture of P-2-P and then methamphetamine. Recent seizures by national authorities indicate that many laboratories are increasingly switching to P-2-P for methamphetamine production, using various, even designer-made, precursors, with the largest quantities found in

Mexico, Belgium, and the Netherlands. The current trend in production includes the use of non-controlled chemicals as potential precursors (such as methyl glycidyl acid derivatives, benzyl chloride, benzyl cyanide, propiophenone, 2-bromopropiophenone, and bromine). Another significant trend involves the use of the Ephedra plant, which grows wild in Afghanistan and is used for ephedrine extraction (UNODC, 2023).

2.2   Methamphetamine Markets and Trafficking

According to the United Nations, intraregional trafficking of methamphetamine is a consistent trend, particularly within East and South-East Asia and North America. This is because many countries in these regions serve as primary departure or transit locations. The main destination markets for methamphetamine have remained relatively stable over the years. European countries and Near and Middle Eastern countries continue to play significant roles in methamphetamine production and trafficking, although this represents only 14 percent of all amphetamine-type production and trafficking in Europe, according to seizures conducted by national authorities. The only exceptions to this European trend in amphetamine-type drugs are the Czech Republic and Slovakia, where methamphetamine seizures surpass those of amphetamine (UNODC, 2023).

The consumption of methamphetamine in European countries has increased compared to the previous years, although it remains overshadowed by the usage of other amphetamines. According to United Nations data, the use of amphetamine overweighs that of methamphetamine in Western and Central Europe (28 percent for amphetamine vs 9 percent for methamphetamine) and Southeastern Europe (20 percent for amphetamine vs 8 percent for methamphetamine. The estimated prevalence of amphetamine users in Europe in 2020 stood at 0.5 percent of the population aged 15 to 64, corresponding to 2.9 million users (UNODC, 2023).

2.3   Impact of Methamphetamine Production and Use on Public Health

The effects of methamphetamine production and use on individual health, as well as on public health and the environment, have been the subject of various studies (Kates et al., 2014; Vearrier et al., 2012; Wright et al., 2020; Wyble, 2008). These studies illustrate that this problem is highly complex, its solution demands extra

costs, and the effects of methamphetamine production persist long after it ceases, even after decontamination of premises.

The impact of methamphetamine production and use on public health is deeply concerning for several reasons. Individual users and producers not only pose a risk to themselves (for effects of methamphetamine use on individual health (Válková et al., 2019; Vearrier et al., 2012) but also to society. This extends beyond the altered behaviour resulting from consumption to the strain on hospital resources due to the treatment of overdosed users and victims of methamphetamine laboratory explosions (Wyble, 2008), as well as individuals exposed to contamination effects (leading to skin, respiratory, immune problems, even behavioural and cognitive effects) following the cessation of production (Wright et al., 2020). Other impacts of methamphetamine use on local communities include, as noted by Grau (2007), an increase in crime, prison overcrowding, and child welfare cases.

The entire process associated with drug-related crimes, spanning from drug production and trafficking to consumption, exerts significant impacts on the environment (Wright et al., 2020). These impacts typically differ when comparing plant-based drugs, such as marijuana, cocaine, opium, or kratom, with synthetic drugs. The first category is linked to effects such as the carbon footprint generated during drug manufacture, as well as water and soil pollution caused by pesticides and other chemicals (UNODC, 2023). The impacts of the secondary category, including amphetamine-type drugs like methamphetamine or MDMA, are partially influenced by production methods, waste patterns, and waste disposal methods.

Since synthetic drug production typically concentrates in specific locations, waste disposal can significantly impact soil, water, air, and indirectly, the ecosystem, animals, and the food chain in these communities. According to the United Nations, the waste generated during methamphetamine and other amphetamine-type drug production is estimated to be between 5 and 30 times the volume of the product. These side effects of drug production must necessarily factor into the considerations of law enforcement authorities during their operations, as laboratories used for this type of production pose a substantial health risk. The United Nations also emphasises that a major portion of global methamphetamine production takes place in remote areas without water treatment, meaning that wastewater treatment – a key element in mitigating the environmental impact of drug production – is often

disregarded when addressing the environmental consequences of methamphetamine production (UNODC, 2023).

According to United Nations estimates, the waste generated in the production of synthetic drugs is at least five times the weight of the product. For amphetamine and methamphetamine, the minimum estimates range between 1,152 and 1,728 tons of global waste annually for the former, and between 1,233 and 2,466 tons for the latter. Another interesting data point concerns the expenses associated with cleaning up synthetic drug production sites, storage, and disposal locations. Estimates from Belgium and the Netherlands place the cost per site at 33,372 EUR (Belgium) and 13,566 EUR (Netherlands) (UNODC, 2023).

During methamphetamine production, various types of chemical waste are generated (Vearrier et al., 2012). Based on reports from methamphetamine laboratories in the Netherlands, this waste includes iodine, phosphorus, sodium hydroxide, ether, acetone, sulphuric acid, and hydrochloric acid, hydrochloric acid, lithium hydroxide, lithium, acetone, and dichloromethane. For amphetamine-type drugs, a distinctive feature of their production is that the waste contains significant residues of pre-precursors, precursors, impurities, as well as the product, along with volatile organic compounds like acetone, toluene, and ether. The latter compounds can potentially contaminate groundwater, and in substantial quantities, they could harm or eliminate the bacterial growth essential for sewage treatment in a drain field. In the case of methamphetamine, the use of fuels and solvents during production leaves its trace in the waste, often accompanied by traces of various metals such as lithium or mercury, both of which are highly toxic (UNODC, 2023). Similar outcomes of methamphetamine production are described by Kates et al. (2014). Wyble (2008) also highlights an additional problem, which is the level of residuals remaining after the decontamination of disposal sites or production facilities. It must be also mentioned that impact of disposing of this type of waste on the environment varies based on the physical and chemical conditions of the natural surface upon which it is spilt, as well as the dilution it undergoes (UNODC, 2023).

The worldwide situation shows us that methamphetamine production has numerous and severe effects on health and the environment. These effects are not limited to production itself, which, due to its nature as a combination of physical and chemical reactions and the conditions in which it is implemented, is highly dangerous and

poses an imminent threat to everything present or nearby. Contamination of premises, surrounding areas, individuals, and dumping grounds represents indirect and long-term threats to health and the environment. The costs incurred in waste disposal and decontaminating production areas are enormous (UNODC, 2023), yet the contamination of premises persists even after decontamination (Wyble, 2008).

3   Methamphetamine in the Czech Republic

The current state of methamphetamine production, trafficking and abuse in the Czech Republic is characterised as stable. According to National Drug Headquarters 2022 Annual Report, methamphetamine, alongside marijuana, represents the most frequently used drug in the country, with domestic production. Small-scale laboratories, producing up to 50 grams of the drug, predominantly satisfy local demand, while large-scale production, often orchestrated by Vietnamese-speaking criminal organisations, focuses on exporting the drug. In 2022, Czech law enforcement authorities managed to dismantle 199 illegal laboratories, confiscating 41 kilogrammes of methamphetamine, 20 kilogrammes of pseudoephedrine, and over 3.5 million pharmaceutical tablets of Ephedrine Arena (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023).

3.1   Methamphetamine Production

As previously mentioned, methamphetamine production in the Czech Republic is carried out by both domestic small-scale laboratories and more extensive industrial-scale laboratories, primarily situated in rural regions to minimise detection risks. The final product is distributed abroad or to nearby urban areas. One of the new trends involves methamphetamine synthesis in the Netherlands by criminal groups formerly operating in the Czech Republic, followed by re-importation to the Czech Republic or trafficking of "Mexican-methamphetamine", created in the Netherlands using the BMK method. The standard method of methamphetamine production is still based on extracting it from ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, closely linked to the use of pharmaceuticals containing these precursors, often imported from Poland and Romania. The National Drug Headquarters reports a decline in the sales of ephedrine- and pseudoephedrine-containing pharmaceuticals, now aligning with actual medical usage (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023).

Such pharmaceuticals are produced legally and illegally across various European countries, and their import into the Czech Republic surged notably in 2022. Pharmaceutical Ephedrine Arena, containing 50 milligrams of ephedrine hydrochloride per tablet, was found in packages of up to 1,500 tablets – potentially providing precursor materials for approximately 45 grams of methamphetamine production. By the end of 2022, a new pharmaceutical named "Cold Relief", originating from Romania, was seised in the Czech Republic, containing 120 milligrams of pseudoephedrine per tablet. Both pharmaceuticals lack medical registration in the Czech Republic and are often transported from Poland, emerging as the primary precursors for domestic methamphetamine production. This situation characterises Czech methamphetamine production due to strict regulations on the sales of ephedrine- and pseudoephedrine-containing pharmaceuticals, as well as the sales of red phosphorus (the primary precursor for the Red-P production method, widely used in the Czech Republic). As a result, local producers face greater difficulty obtaining the necessary manufacturing equipment. Consequently, due to the rapid development of alternative methods, there is likely to be a shift from the formerly dominant Red-P production method to other methods such as P-2-P or BMK (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023).

Considering the quantity of methamphetamine production, local laboratories are predominantly capable of manufacturing tens of kilogrammes, whereas Mexican methamphetamine laboratories can produce hundreds of kilogrammes. The most recent local trend in methamphetamine production involves the use of short-term rents of premises. After carrying out several manufacturing cycles, the manufacturers move the entire laboratory to another rented location, making it quite difficult for law enforcement authorities to track down and document these illegal activities (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023).

3.2 Methamphetamine Markets and Trafficking in the Czech Republic

In terms of methamphetamine trafficking within the Czech Republic, significant shifts are underway. Although local consumption continues to be met by domestic small-scale laboratories, large-scale production has moved beyond the country's borders, where precursors are more readily available and criminal penalties are much lower (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023). Since January 13, 2021, red phosphorus, used in the Red-P method, was reclassified in Annex II of Regulation

(EC) No 273/2004 of the European Parliament and the Council (2023). Consequently, it is categorised as a Category 2A substance, with its European Union-wide marketing in quantities exceeding 100 grams requiring registration. This legislative change has notably curtailed the use of domestically traded red phosphorus for methamphetamine production. Methamphetamine produced abroad, often in the Netherlands and Germany, is then brought back to the Czech Republic. The "Mexican methamphetamine" produced using the BMK method in other European countries was primarily seized in the Czech borderlands with Germany in 2022. This trend has also impacted the export of domestically produced methamphetamine, as the European market was inundated with cheaper BMK methamphetamine. Consequently, the remaining Czech Republic-to-Germany or Slovakia exports constitute a small fraction of domestic production (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023).

Drug consumption in the Czech Republic is predominantly centred around cannabis products, with approximately one-fourth to one-third of the adult population having used such substances. However, the use of other illegal drugs is significantly lower and decreasing among teenagers. Approximately 6–10 per cent of adults reported using cannabis products, accounting for 500,000 to 900,000 individuals, while methamphetamine and cocaine use were reported by 2–3 per cent of adults. The 2022 Dependency Summary Report identified 35,000 methamphetamine users at risk in the Czech Republic, indicating a 25 per cent increase over the past decade. Among these users, 1 per cent were children (Chomynová et al., 2023). Based on 2021 estimates, methamphetamine consumption in the Czech Republic reached 6.4 tons, compared to 600 kilogrammes of heroin or 1.1 tons of cocaine, reflecting stable methamphetamine consumption but a slight increase in cocaine use (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023).

3.3   Impact of Methamphetamine Production and Use on Public Health in the Czech Republic

Several studies have investigated the possible impacts of methamphetamine production and use on individual and public health and the environment in the Czech Republic (Hampl, 2015; Kuhn et al., 2019; Lehmert, 2018; Lehmert & Andrlík, 2017; Lehmert & Hýbl, 2016). This includes a study on the effect of methamphetamine water pollution on non-human organisms (Horký et al., 2021).

All these studies highlight the fact that methamphetamine use, and production have widespread effects, and their impacts are long-term and difficult to remove.

The environmental and potential health hazards associated with methamphetamine production are widely acknowledged in the Czech Republic. The presence of illegal domestic and professional laboratories raises concerns about site contamination, explosions, and waste disposal. The risks extend not only to the producers themselves but also to others residing near these labs and police officers conducting interventions (Lehmert & Hýbl, 2016).

Lehmert and Hýbl (2016) underscore that various high-risk substances (e.g., ammonium, hydrochloric acid, phosphine, ether) are used or created during the production process, with concentrations often exceeding permissible limits for firefighting interventions in full emergency gear, including respiratory protection. In case of laboratory contamination, according to Lehmert and Hýbl (2016), even one production cycle can affect a wide area, and the quantities of methamphetamine produced annually are growing. Inhalation exposure of 0.26 mg/kg body mass can result from contact with contaminated hands, leading to subsequent contamination of walls, furniture, carpets, and other items. Such contamination, persisting even after laboratory dismantling, poses potential health risks for subsequent occupants unaware of the dangers. A study by Lehmert (2018) indicates that residing in such premises could result in severe health issues even a decade later because of proven methamphetamine persistence if the drug penetrates walls. In the case of the first building decontamination in the Czech Republic (after the methamphetamine laboratory operating on nearby premises was dismantled), methamphetamine levels three times higher than considered safe were found even 57 metres away from the former laboratory (Lehmert, 2018).

The production process is not the sole issue. Contamination can also arise from laboratory accidents or during the discovery and dismantling of laboratories. Lehmert and Andrlík (2017) describe a case in which a methamphetamine producer, upon realising a home search was being conducted, decided to destroy all laboratory equipment and halt the chemical reaction by spilling the entire mixture of chemicals on the floor, causing significant contamination. The risk of accidents during production is increased by several factors, including using open flames, handling flammable liquids and chemicals, and mobility of necessary equipment that can be

easily transported during production (Hampl, 2015). If a laboratory explodes, methamphetamine disperses in high concentrations and doses throughout the surrounding area, seeping not only through water and soil but also through buildings and organisms.

The laboratory location holds immense importance when assessing direct and indirect damages. If situated in a remote location, as is often the case with large-scale laboratories, typically in rural border regions of the Czech Republic that are sparsely inhabited, the main issue is decontamination of the surrounding area, soil, and waters. This phenomenon of using remote rural regions is not unique to the Czech Republic; a similar situation is evident in the United States (Wyble, 2008). Small-scale laboratories are frequently located in apartments, rented hotel rooms, or even trucks. During firefighting operations in these locations, usually after an explosion, methamphetamine and associated substances penetrate the building and its equipment together with firefighting water and smoke. This poses major health risks for everyone involved (firefighters, law enforcement officers, inhabitants). For these reasons, firefighting water should be the last choice in such cases (Kuhn et al., 2019).

Methamphetamine production-related waste constitutes yet another pollution source connected with methamphetamine production. Depending on the method employed, its amount differs from 10 to 40 kilogrammes per 1 kilogram of methamphetamine produced. Such waste represents a severe hazard not only due to massive contamination but also because of possible reactions between individual chemicals, which can lead to the ignition of other materials. Disposal methods vary from improper spilling or dumping waste in rural areas through burning unloaded containers to setting the entire vehicle on fire with the loaded material. In the Czech Republic, sporadic waste disposal attempts are evident, often involving direct dumping onto streets or community garbage cans. Unfortunately, such actions led to fires in garbage trucks due to the ignition of discarded red phosphorus. In an incident involving a burning garbage truck, on-site decontamination efforts led to chemical spills on the road and surrounding grain fields. This event occurred just a few days after the fields were harvested by local farmers (Lehmert & Hýbl, 2016). Another concerning approach involves direct dumping in rural areas. Though initially packaged, the decomposition of these materials poses long-term threats. This method profoundly affects the environment and public health, as chemicals disperse through rain and wind, contaminating surface and underground waters.

Remarkably, a study by Horký et al. (2021) even demonstrated instances of methamphetamine addiction in fish due to freshwater pollution. This underscores the far-reaching consequences of such pollution.

From the previous text, it is evident that methamphetamine production, trafficking, and use in the Czech Republic follow global trends (increasing demand, new ways of production and the rise of new criminal groups). However, there are also some unique local characteristics such as changes in production methods, precursor composition, and the increasing import of both precursors. Economically more advantageous P-2-P or BMK methamphetamine produced in other countries is also a concerning development. Coupled with increased awareness of the severity of pollution related to methamphetamine production, shifts in traditional production and trafficking patterns due to regulations and emerging trends might lead to a rise in large-scale production using more efficient methods in rural areas. In contrast, small-scale domestic output will remain a significant threat in urban locations. According to Zeman (2014), prevention efforts in the Czech Republic primarily focus on reducing demand and supply. Moreover, harm reduction, including addressing environmental pollution in populated areas, should be of paramount concern.

4   New Psychoactive Substances: New Threat to Sustainable Development

The concept of new psychoactive substances is designed to bypass anti-drug legislation due to the lack of regulation on both national and international levels (Chiappini et al., 2021; Luzak, 2014). Consequently, they are typically not sold in the same manner as "traditional" drugs and are readily available in local gas stations, stores, and, of course, on the Internet (Cohen, 2014). Some of these substances are even sold in forms as innocent as a piece of candy. These substances pose a significant challenge to both national and international anti-drug policies and legislation, and various myths surround the public discourse concerning their regulation as well as facts about their use in medical treatment (Dleštíková, 2022).

4.1   New Psychoactive Substance Production

The United Nations identifies a broad category of new psychoactive substances as substances designed to evade existing national and international drug laws such as the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs or the Convention on Psychotropic Substances. Within this expansive category lies a group of newly synthesised chemicals designed to mimic the psychoactive effects of controlled drugs. This category of substances is dynamic, volatile, and continually diversifying. As of December 2021, there were 1,127 new substances reported to the United Nations, including synthetics and plant-based variants. This is in comparison to 302 substances that were under international control by the same date (UNODC, 2023).

Given these circumstances, the scope of new synthetic drugs spans widely, encompassing aminoindanes (MDAI), Phencyclidine-type substances (ketamine), piperazines (mCCP, BZP), synthetic opioids, fentanyl analogues, phenethylamines (MBDB, PMMA), synthetic cathinones (mephedrone, butylene), and synthetic cannabinoids (UNODC, 2023). However, two main categories emerge: synthetic cannabinoids and synthetic cathinones (Cohen, 2014).

4.2   New Psychoactive Substances Markets and Trafficking

Most of these substances lack legitimate uses and established global markets, making monitoring their production and trafficking challenging. The continuous discovery of new substances adds to the complexity as they lack standardised nomenclature across different regions (UNODC, 2023). Various countries also have different mechanisms and thresholds for listing substances as "under control", as Lin et al. (2023) noted.

The transient usage patterns of some of these substances complicate their categorisation. This transience stems from either diminished demand, often due to the emergence of newer substances, or the substance being identified as illegal under national or international law. United Nations data on the assumed scale of the global drug market indicate that while it experienced rapid expansion between 2009 and 2018, it has since stabilised. Approximately 550 such substances are identified in the drug market, with 50 of them first identified in 2021. These substances primarily fall under stimulants like cathinones and phenethylamines, followed by synthetic

cannabinoid receptor agonists, hallucinogens (tryptamines and phenethylamines), and opioids – the latter being the third-largest group of new synthetic drugs reported to the United Nations by member states in 2020 (after new stimulants and cannabinoid receptor agonists) (UNODC, 2023).

The global issue of new synthetic drugs continues to expand. Seizures of these substances were reported in 57 countries from 2019 through 2020, a notable increase from the 30 countries reporting such seizures in 2009–2010 (equating to 41 percent of countries). Noteworthy seizures of new synthetic drugs included ketamine and synthetic cannabinoids, primarily in regions such as East and Southeast Asia, Turkey, the United States, Egypt, and the Russian Federation. In Western, Central, and South-Eastern Europe, the use of new psychoactive substances has decreased overall. However, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Transcaucasia have reported the spread of new synthetic substances, as evidenced by the quantities seised – 116 kilogrammes in 2005–2010 versus nearly 11 tons in 2015–2020. In 2021, European Union countries reported a total seizure of 8.5 tons of new psychoactive substances, with synthetic cathinone accounting for 72 per cent and synthetic cannabinoids comprising 28 per cent (UNODC, 2023). The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction highlighted that in the first half of 2022 alone, 24 new synthetic cannabinoids were reported to the EU Early Warning System, constituting half of the new substances reported (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2023).

While a relatively positive trend of stable or declining usage of these substances exists, this does not apply universally. Ketamine stands as an exception. The driving force behind this trend is not fully understood. Still, one theory posits that initial positive reports on the effects of new synthetic drugs propagated faster than reports of adverse reactions, leading to a subsequent decline. This optimistic situation primarily concerns high-income countries and the general population. However, specific vulnerable groups, such as the homeless or prisoners, may have a higher prevalence of synthetic cannabinoid use (17.9 percent compared to 1.2–2.8 percent in the general population). Factors contributing to this trend include the affordability of these substances compared to standard drugs, and the lack of effective drug tests for detecting them (UNODC, 2023).

4.3   Impact of Psychoactive Substances Production and Use on Public Health

Assessing the health risks associated with these drugs proves challenging due to a lack of current data. Generally, the societal harm caused by such substances is less severe than that inflicted by conventional drugs, albeit this is partly because of their lower prevalence (UNODC, 2023). The general effects of individual health are difficult to point out; however, due to the complex pharmacodynamics of new psychoactive substances, there is an increasing level of concern about the onset of acute or chronic psychopathological consequences associated with them (Chiappini et al., 2021). Individual cases have shown health risks as severe as those posed by regular drugs.

Yet there are few studies available. A recent study by Chiappini et al. (2021) has identified suicidal and self-injurious tendencies linked to cathinones, synthetic cannabinoids, and synthetic opioids. A study by King and Corkery (2018) provides data on fatal toxicity connected with the use of new psychoactive substances.

The process of adding new substances to the list of illegal narcotics and psychotropic substances specified in international treaties often creates the fundamental issue of establishing legal grounds for criminalisation. However, this process, both on international and national levels, is time-consuming – time that is typically scarce when combating drug-related crimes. According to Luzak (2014), while some countries choose to directly include these substances in their national legislation (as done by Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom, and China), others take an alternate approach by penalising the sale of such substances under health or medicine control laws until comprehensive drug legislation is passed. Nevertheless, categorising synthetic cannabinoids as health-threatening medical products, as evident in the CJEU judgment in cases C-358/46 and C-181/14, was deemed unacceptable (Luzak, 2014).

5   Psychoactive Substances in the Czech Republic

The situation regarding new synthetic drugs in the Czech Republic can be exemplified by the significant increase in cases involving the seizure of new psychoactive substances in 2022 compared to 2021. Synthetic cathinone, stimulants

like substitutable amphetamines, and ketamine largely dominated these cases. A similar trend was observed with synthetic cannabinoids, opioids, and benzodiazepines, all of which pose a serious threat to public health (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023). The National Strategy to Prevent and Reduce Harm Associated with Addictive Behaviour 2019–2027 identifies new psychoactive substances as a challenge for the drug control system (Secretariat of Government Council for Drug Policy Coordination, 2020).

5.1   New Psychoactive Substance Production

According to the National Drug Headquarters Annual Report for 2022, the absolute numbers of such substances continue to rise, with new substances from different groups entering the system compared to previous years. While the past five years were marked by the prevalence of synthetic cannabinoids and cathinones, the years 2021 and 2022 saw the emergence of highly risky synthetic opioids in the form of fentanyl derivatives. Another concerning phenomenon in Czech drug culture involves the addition of potent substances to common drugs or non-psychoactive plant materials, such as synthetic cannabinoids being added to non-potent technical cannabis (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023).

One of the most discussed substances, aside from plant-based Kratom, which falls outside the scope of this chapter, is the semisynthetic cannabinoid hexahydrocannabinol (hereinafter HHC). This substance was imported in substantial quantities to the Czech Republic in 2022. While HHC is naturally present in cannabis plants in minimum concentrations, it is typically synthesised from another cannabinoid known as cannabidiol (CBD). The ease of production and its affordability have made HHC one of the most prevalent cannabinoids. It is readily available in the Czech Republic, sold in e-cigarette cartridges, as an active ingredient in vaping pens, and even added to edibles like jellybeans, cookies, and brownies (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023).

5.2   New Psychoactive Substances Markets and Trafficking in the Czech Republic

These substances are often transported into the Czech Republic via planes in small packages facilitated by shipping companies. Purchases of these substances are

frequently conducted online, raising questions about the quality of the ordered substances and the potential for fatal intoxication due to toxic impurities (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023).

The Czech Republic is a contracting party to both the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (United Nations, 1961) and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances (United Nations, 1971). The lists of illegal drugs stated by these international treaties were subsequently incorporated into Czech national legislation that provides lists of so-called addictive substances (Government Regulation on List of Addictive Substances, 2013; Law on Addictive Substances and Amendments to some Other Laws, 1998). In 2022, progress was made in addressing the synthetic drug situation in the Czech Republic through an amendment of relevant law (Government Regulation on the List of Addictive Substances, 2013). This amendment added 283 substances to the list of addictive substances, including 155 synthetic cannabinoids and 86 cathinones. This legal change rendered various substances illegal, making their possession or distribution punishable by law.

Interestingly, this regulation did not apply to all previously mentioned substances. In the case of HHC, its addition to the addictive substances list was proposed by the National Drug Headquarters and the Ministry of Defence. However, the Czech government ultimately chose not to include HHC on the list, instead subjecting it to further forensic analysis to ascertain its effects on the human body. Another factor in this decision was the consideration of categorising HHC as a "psycho-modulating substance", a new classification that would also apply to plant-based substances like Kratom and THCP. This category would involve regulated substances subject to quality controls and access restrictions for minors (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023).

5.3   Impact of Psychoactive Substances Production and Use on Public Health in the Czech Republic

As mentioned above, the impacts of psychoactive substances production and use on public health are the subject of only a few studies (Chiappini et al., 2021; King & Corkery, 2018). In the Czech Republic, the work of Kuchař (2018) is available, and as Dlešníková (2022) shows, the discussion is focused on the possible benefits of such substances rather than the negatives.

Kuchař (2018) asserts that synthetic cannabinoids are associated with severe health risks due to their significantly stronger effects, sometimes hundreds of times more potent than non-synthetic cannabinoids. Acute intoxication from these substances can lead to symptoms like agitation, abnormally increased heart rate, nausea, vomiting, and severe outcomes including heart and kidney failure, prolonged violent vomiting, panic attacks, loss of consciousness, and even the development of psychosis. Long-term use can also result in addiction with withdrawal symptoms similar to opioids, albeit without a readily available antidote. Incidents of mass intoxication involving 84 and 200 individuals were reported in the United States and Poland. In the Czech Republic, two cases of intoxication with fatal consequences were documented in 2018 (Kuchař, 2018). For comparison, a study by King and Corkery (2018) mentions 22 deaths connected with synthetic cannabinoids in Wales and England between 2014–2016).

Although the effects of HHC on the human body have not yet been extensively studied, consumer reports suggest that its effects may subjectively resemble those of cannabis, according to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2023). Additionally, concerns have arisen about the potential health implications of these substances, particularly when available in forms that can deliver high doses.

The Czech government opted for a new approach, unique within the European context, by introducing a new category for substances with effects similar or analogous to other substances deemed illegal according to international treaties and national law. This decision was driven by the recognition that comprehensive scientific research is necessary due to the uncertain effects of these substances on the human body. At the same time, this approach allows for the use of these new psychoactive substances while research is conducted. However, while aligned with the fundamental principles of criminal law as ultima ratio (a last resort), this decision has not been accompanied by an official campaign highlighting the uncertainties surrounding the health effects of these substances. This lack of public communication potentially fosters unregulated use, magnifying issues related to dosing and the inclusion of additional substances that pose substantial health risks. Given these considerations, the chosen concept of new psycho-modulating substances raises concerns as it needs to effectively address the dangers associated

with these substances due to our limited understanding of their effects on the human body.

As a result, preventive efforts in this domain are primarily carried out by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which focus on risk reduction through information dissemination and the provision of substance testing facilities for medical and user purposes. However, applying these ideas that are well-established in treating "traditional" drugs is not as common in the case of these unregulated substances (Macher et al., 2012).

6   Conclusion

This chapter provides an overview of the status of methamphetamine and new synthetic psychoactive substances from both a global and the Czech Republic perspective. The emergence of new methamphetamine production methods and significant developments in new psychoactive substances, particularly synthetic cannabinoids and cathinones, represent only a fraction of the complex array of challenges that humanity must address to ensure sustainable development. The Czech perspective underscores how contemporary local issues are intricately intertwined with global dynamics. The spreading of innovative methamphetamine production techniques is driven by their economic advantages, poised to replace costlier methods. Unfortunately, this is also influenced by legislative measures focused on the acquisition of essential precursors for the manufacture of methamphetamine using ephedrine and pseudoephedrine (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023).

Methamphetamine production and use pose an obvious imminent threat to public health and well-being (SDG 3). The production itself, by its nature as a combination of physical and chemical reactions, is highly dangerous and creates immediate risks to the health of the individuals involved, as well as those in surrounding areas. This becomes evident in cases where production occurs in densely populated areas, such as rental apartment buildings. As Lehmert and Hýbl (2016) noted, even a single production cycle can affect the entire surrounding area, leaving contaminated premises, such as an entire apartment building. The costs of waste disposal and decontamination of production areas are enormous (UNODC, 2023) and contamination of premises often persists after decontamination process (Wyble,

2008). Therefore, potential health issues remain even after production has ceased. The list of health problems connected with exposure to methamphetamine production ranges from cardiovascular, dermatologic, haematologic, gastrointestinal, musculoskeletal or neurological diseases (Vearrier et al., 2012) to death caused by ignition or explosion of chemicals at production sites. Since these health problems are associated with the premises, it raises questions about whether new inhabitants are aware that a methamphetamine lab was previously operating there. This specific aspect of methamphetamine production creates another threat to public health – it makes "hidden" contaminated premises that pose a serious threat to the health of new inhabitants. Another issue relates to pollution of water, soil, and air by both production and disposal of chemicals. Such pollution represents another severe source of danger to human health and well-being (SDG 3), which is easy to detect but costly to dispose of.

The current situation requires careful consideration from national law enforcement authorities and the international community when rethinking antidrug policies. Only by addressing these threats directly, along with providing information on possible risks to the public, will we be able to preserve sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) and promote peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16).

The landscape concerning new psychoactive substances necessitates a distinct approach – one centred on an early identification and scientific risk assessment before determining their legality. The European Union has already adopted such a stance through the EU Early Warning System. In the Czech Republic, the situation is more intricate. Despite the absence of scientific research on the effects of the semisynthetic cannabinoid HHC on the human body, the Czech government opted not to classify this substance as an addictive substance (Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2023). Instead, a novel category of psycho-modulating substances is being developed based on scientific evaluations. Until such a framework is established, HHC remains easily accessible to the general population, despite the uncertainty surrounding its physiological impacts and potential long-term consequences. It is regrettable that conclusions regarding the assumed effects on human health and risks connected with the use of HHC, which led to the decision not to regulate this substance strictly, collided with reality represented by the health problems of several individuals. The fulfilment of SDG 3 and SDG 16 by the Czech government in this area obviously represents a problem; these substances should be

subjected to further government efforts to secure the good health of individuals and establish strong, effective institutions.

This chapter presents the direct and indirect effects of drug production, trafficking and consumption, which represent a threat to the good health and well-being of individuals (SDG 3), sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), and peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16). Shedding light on these challenges lays the groundwork for their resolution. A comprehensive solution should be multifaceted, founded on balanced anti-drug legislation and prevention efforts that prioritise raising awareness within society about the risks of drug consumption and aftermath associated with drug production and trafficking. This emphasis is particularly relevant for emerging substances often portrayed as being alternatives to traditional drugs.

Acknowledgement

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The Intersection of Rural Criminology and Food Security: The Impact of Organised Criminal Groups in the Rural Space

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Farming feeds the population, but the escalating victimisation of farmers globally by organised criminal groups is leading to impacts across a range of UN Sustainable Development Goals having a significant effect on farmers and the wider population. Organised criminals are targeting critical physical equipment such as tractors, tools, and other machinery. As criminal entrepreneurs, they are able to identify business opportunities such as the counterfeiting of agrochemicals and disruption of food chain security, and the provision of forced labour for agricultural work. As organised criminals find their way into the rural space, there are potential implications on the aspirations set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, leading to additional issues affecting poverty, zero hunger, health and wellbeing, decent working conditions, and peace and justice. This chapter provides an exploratory commentary on how organised criminality impacts agriculture, farming, and food security globally in light of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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PRESEK RURALNE KRIMINOLOGIJE IN VARNOSTI HRANE: VPLIV ORGANIZIRANIH KRIMINALNIH ZDRUŽB NA PODEŽELJU

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Kmetovanje hrani prebivalstvo, vendar naraščajoča viktimizacija kmetov po vsem svetu v rokah organiziranih kriminalnih združb negativno vpliva na vrsto ciljev trajnostnega razvoja Združenih narodov, ki pomembno vplivajo na kmete in širše prebivalstvo. Člani organiziranih kriminalnih združb ciljajo na kritično fizično opremo, kot so traktorji, orodja in drugi stroji. Kot kriminalni podjetniki lahko prepoznajo poslovne priložnosti, kot so ponarejanje agrokemikalij in prekinitev varnosti prehranjevalne verige ter zagotavljanje prisilnega dela za kmetijska dela. Ne glede na to, kako se organizirana kriminaliteta znajde na podeželju, ima potencialne posledice, na cilje določene v Agendi za trajnostni razvoj do leta 2030, ki vodijo do dodatnih problemov, ki vplivajo na revščino, lakoto, zdravje in dobro počutje, dostojne delovne razmere ter mir in pravičnost. To poglavje ponuja razlago o tem, kako organizirana kriminaliteta vpliva na kmetijstvo, kmetovanje in prehransko varnost po vsem svetu v luči ciljev trajnostnega razvoja.

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K. Smith: The Intersection of Rural Criminology and Food Security: The Impact of Organised Criminal Groups in the Rural Space

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1   Introduction

"As the world faces cascading and interlinked global crises and conflicts, the aspirations set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are in jeopardy." (Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations cited in United Nations, 2022, p. 2)

The factors that Mr. Guterres refers to in the Sustainable Development Goals Report (United Nations, 2022) are highly relevant to the underlying issues affecting global food security. To begin with, the COVID-19 pandemic created significant problems in the production and processing of food, particularly in the horticultural sector, due to the inability of skilled workers to travel for picking seasons throughout Europe and beyond (United Nations, 2020). Furthermore, the climate change emergency is creating challenges within agriculture due to increased occurrences of extreme weather events affecting crop growers and animal farmers alike, from flood to extreme, prolonged drought (EPA, 2023). Additionally, the presence of conflict creates instability within affected countries and beyond. The Ukraine war is currently having a direct impact on the European agri-food sector through increased feed and food prices, fuel prices, and fertiliser costs (Bodnar & Schuler, 2022). The rise in input costs – fuel and fertiliser – affects farmers across Europe and beyond, leading to increased expenses. Despite the rise in food prices, these increases have likely not been passed on to farmers, meaning output prices have not risen in line with input prices, thus creating a deficit in farming income. Lastly, and linked to many of these aspects, is the impact of global economic inflation and the global cost of living crisis on farming communities. This leads to inflationary costs being pushed back onto producers by retailers and the erosion of wages within the agricultural sector.

These factors are interlinked in the effect they have on farmers globally. Furthermore, they present opportunities for Organised Criminal Groups (hereinafter OCGs) to capitalise on their 'business' skills, regardless of the commodity being traded. Moreover, the activity of OCGs in the rural space worldwide exacerbates the existing stressors that farmers face daily.

The multitude of stressors compounded by criminality arguably creates challenges to food security not experienced since post-World War II, and these challenges, in turn, lead to unforeseen negative implications for achieving the United Nations

Sustainable Development Goals (hereinafter SDGs) by 2030. The 2023 SDG Report has already indicated that progress towards these goals is weak and insufficient (United Nations, 2023). It is now crucial to focus on rural criminality, the impact of OCGs in rural areas, and the broader implications this has across various SDGs. This chapter provides commentary on how OCG activities affect agriculture and global food security, exploring the potential impact of criminality on achieving goals relating to poverty, hunger, gender equality, and reduced inequalities among others.

2   Rural Criminology and Food Security

Crime in the rural space, particularly within agriculture, is often overlooked or perceived as less problematic compared to urban crime. This perception is largely driven by the persistent myth of the 'rural idyll', the belief that rural areas are safe and devoid of crime – a concept rooted in the idea of gemeinschaft (Smith & Byrne, 2018; Tönnies, 1887/1955). In the United Kingdom (UK), rural areas are often romanticised as places of green rolling hills, peaceful pastures, and a slower pace of life (Mingay, 1989). While this may hold true for some rural areas, rural life can be challenging, isolated, and demanding. With inadequate service provision, limited transport infrastructure, and few recreational opportunities, rural life diverges significantly from the idealised portrayals seen in media and entertainment (Glendinning et al., 2003; Pateman, 2011).

2.1   Defining Rural Crime

While crime is deeply entrenched within rural areas in the UK and globally (Qi, 2022; Smith, 2019), defining rural crime proves surprisingly challenging. In the UK, there is no nationally agreed-upon definition of rural crime, which complicates the interpretation and analysis of any generated data. A National Rural Crime Unit was established in April 2023 in the UK (Bovingdon, 2023), however, its impact on the definition and policing of rural crime will require time to assess. The absence of a clear definition of rural crime contributes to a lack of coordination and cooperation in policing across different police forces, and even within individual forces where frontline officers may define rural crime differently from the overarching force strategy (Smith, 2018).

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Furthermore, similar issues arise when considering the non-police data available in the UK, where many rely on a geographic definition – crime occurring in rural areas – rather than defining it by crime type. Two examples are the National Rural Crime Survey (National Rural Crime Network, 2015, 2018) and the NFU Mutual Annual Rural Crime Report (NFU Mutual, 2023). The National Rural Crime Survey, conducted by the National Rural Crime Network (NRCN), was administered nationally to rural residents and workers in 2015 and repeated in 2018. While these surveys indicated that crime in rural areas costs up to £800 million (National Rural Crime Network, 2015), they included offences such as speeding, littering, and drunk driving-arguably not exclusively rural crimes.

Similar issues exist in the NFU Mutual Rural Crime Report (2023), which illustrates the costs of rural crime in the UK over several years (see Figure 1). While these costs are significant, they do not provide a comprehensive picture. The costs presented by NFU Mutual relate specifically to insurance claims. However, research indicates that many farmers (60%) do not report crimes to their insurers (Smith & Byrne, 2017). Given that NFU Mutual insures approximately 75% of farmers across the UK, it becomes evident how these figures can inflate the costs presented.
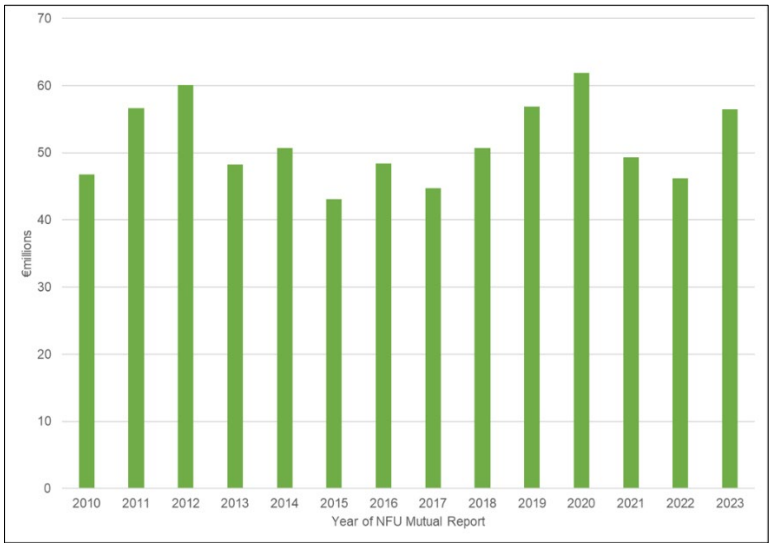
Figure 1: Insurance Claims Costs Due to Rural Crime as Reported by NFU Mutual, 2010–2023
Source: NFU Mutual (2010–2023).

In this chapter, we adopt a focused definition of rural crime, specifically exploring agricultural crime- incidents that impact the functionality of pastoral, agricultural, and aquaculture industries (IREC, 2019). A wide range of crimes directly affects the agricultural sector, each with implications for the viability and continuity of the farming business (Smith, 2014).

Figure 2 provides an overview of crimes affecting the agricultural sector, thereby influencing the potential food security of the UK and beyond. These crimes encompass traditional rural crimes such as livestock and tractor theft (Victim Support, n.d). However, the UK agricultural sector is increasingly targeted by various other criminal activities, including fraud, cybercrime, labour exploitation, and threats or acts of violence (Bernik et al., 2022; Byrne & Smith, 2016; Cross, 2020; Smith, 2020).

Figure 2: Agricultural Crimes that Affect Food Security

Despite the rural space being perceived as a crime-free idyll, criminals have identified these areas as easy targets due to low levels of crime prevention, poor guardianship, low police presence, and high-value targets. These conditions make rural areas

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attractive to criminals, as illustrated through routine activity theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979).

2.2   Implications of Agricultural Crime

Farmers in the UK are increasingly facing agricultural crime and its first-order consequences (see Figure 3). In addition to balancing other stressors identified in past research – such as weather, finance, government bureaucracy, lack of time, and machinery breakdown (Kearney et al., 2014; Olson & Schellenberg, 1986; Walker et al., 1986) – UK farmers are also grappling with the aftermath of the UK leaving the European Union. This includes the end of the free movement of people, increased trade barriers, and the conclusion of Common Agricultural Policy subsidies (Hubbard et al., 2018). Brexit may have contributed to a reduction in the number of farms from 217,000 in June 2017 to 191,000 holdings in June 2022, and a decrease of 0.7% in the agricultural workforce, despite a 3.4% increase in productivity in the farming sector (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2023a), a balance that cannot be sustained indefinitely. When agricultural crime is added to the mix of stressors in the rural space, the resilience of the farming community is likely pushed to its limits. This issue is further exacerbated by global crises such as the Ukraine War, global inflation, and the associated cost of living crisis, which pose significant challenges for farmers while simultaneously creating opportunities for criminal activity.

As noted, farmers contend with a wide array of daily stressors, many of which are routine and ongoing aspects of farming that become normalised within the farming community – such as weather, finance, and time pressures. These factors contribute to the ontological security of farmers; the ability to balance competing pressures to maintain a stable mental state due to the predictability of life events (Giddens, 1991). This sense of ontological security enables farmers to sustain business continuity despite these challenges. However, introducing an unexpected and acute stressor like crime can upset this balance of ontological security, potentially leading to unforeseen impacts on business continuity. Studies by Smith (2020, 2022) have consistently shown that agricultural crime significantly affects farmers' mental health. Given this, the mental health implications of crime for farmers can have far-reaching effects on food security.

Victimisation has a much broader impact on farmers and productivity than the initial act of criminality and its immediate repercussions (Smith, 2020). As depicted in Figure 3, the second and third-order effects of crime for farmers extend beyond the immediate consequences, causing both short-term and long-term issues. These subsequent effects create an environment where farmers struggle to manage their work, make decisions, and fulfil contracts. While victimisation itself is traumatic, it is the actions and their consequences in the months following (i.e., long-term) that can severely affect farming businesses to the extent that farmers contemplate leaving the sector altogether.

As a result of victimisation, farmers experience issues directly related to their mental health: lack of sleep, flashbacks of the incident, change in alcohol use, paranoia, and suicidal tendencies (Smith, 2020). The consequences of such an assault on mental health can lead to broader issues that directly affect farm business continuity and, therefore, food security. These effects may include poor decision-making regarding crime prevention, contract compliance, and health and safety. If farmers do not seek help or guidance on crime prevention, they could be re-victimised, multiplying the effects of the initial criminal experience. Neglecting the issues arising from victimisation exacerbates challenges to farmers' ontological security, significantly impacting their mental equilibrium and potentially prompting them to leave the sector or, in extreme cases, leading to suicide (Booth et al., 2000; Jones et al., 2018). The direct impact of victimisation on farmers can greatly reduce the agricultural workforce, thereby jeopardising the UK farming community's ability to produce sufficient food to maintain food security.

Furthermore, the policing of crime in rural areas in the UK is not strategically uniform across the country (Farming Online, 2019). Many rural police forces simply lack the funding to adequately resource policing in rural areas compared to urban areas, despite national organisations calling on the UK Government to provide equitable funding for forces dealing with rural demands (National Rural Crime Network, 2016). This directly impacts the level of confidence rural communities have in the police's ability to address rural crime, thereby affecting the likelihood of crimes being reported. This sets off a vicious cycle where underreporting prevents police awareness of issues in rural communities, leading to inadequate allocation of resources (Smith, 2019).

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1st Order Effects (immediate consequences)

Financial loss
Insurance Claims
Police Report
Replace Stolen Item(s)

Initial contact with community re victimisation

2nd Order Effects (short-term consequences)

Acute Psychological Impact
Loss of control impacts traditional rural masculinity leading to secondary issues (e.g. IPV, substance abuse)
Reduced Business Productivity
Loss of Contracts
Short-term financial uncertainty exacerbates financial losses

Farmer re-victimised as criminals target farms again due to replaced items

Effect on confidence in police dependent upon their response to the police report

Lack of services available locally to help farmer

3rd Order Effects (long-term consequences)

Help not sought/available to address crime-related stress leads to chronic psychological impact, possible development/exacerbation of physical illness

Reduced ability to make effective and efficient decisions leads to potential reduced resilience both personally and business

Feeling like second-class citizen dependent on police response leads to feelings of fatalism relating to agricultural crime

Potential threat to business continuity and therefore food security

Farmers leaving the sector due to threats to ontological security of farmers

Action

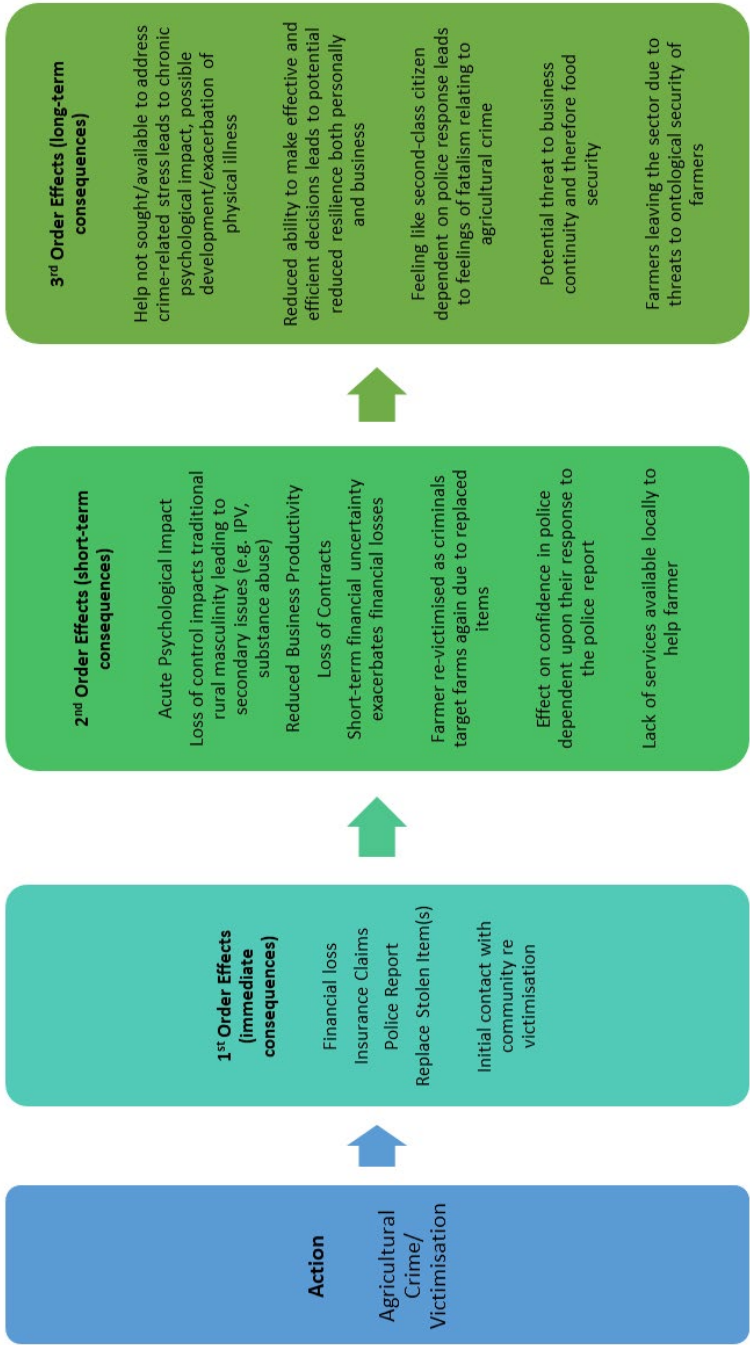Agricultural Crime/ Victimisation

Figure 3: Second- and Third-Order Effects of Agricultural Crime

3   Organised Criminal Groups, Rural Space, and Food Security

As demonstrated in the previous section, the impact of crime on the farming community is significant. However, this potential crisis is further exacerbated by the incursion of various criminal elements into rural areas. Historically, crimes affecting farming have been opportunistic (Main, 2001; Quinn, 2015). However, contemporary rural crime is increasingly orchestrated and perpetrated by OCGs, who are determined to achieve their goals at almost any cost.

When people think of organised criminals, they typically envision images of the mafia and their exploits. However, it was through agriculture that the mafia initially established their enterprises (Lerner & Past, 2020). According to the United Nations (2023) Sustainable Development Goals Report, global financial markets often impose interest rates on Global South countries that are up to eight times higher than those countries in the Global North. This disparity may facilitate the expansion of OCGs into the agricultural sector, enabling them to control food production and distribution. This mirrors the historical emergence of the Sicilian mafia in regional Italy during the 1870s. At that time, substantial profits from citrus fruits, coupled with weak governance in Italian principalities, widespread local poverty, and low levels of trust, led producers to hire the mafia for private protection and as intermediaries between suppliers, exporters, and buyers (Dimico et al., 2017). From these origins, the "Agromafie" have entrenched themselves in the broader farm-to-fork supply chain in Italy, as noted by Eurispes (2019), illustrating how criminal enterprises can effectively integrate into the food industry.

This situation extends far beyond the origins of the mafia and now spans globally, with many OCGs operating within the food chain sector (Rizzuti, 2022). OCGs are increasingly penetrating the rural space, identifying business opportunities across the countryside. No longer limited to racketeering, they are expanding their operations internationally into the supply of new and used tractors and tractor parts, machinery and tools, livestock or meat, agrochemicals, rural cybercrime, and labour exploitation in the farming sector (Bernik et al., 2022; Byrne & Smith, 2016; Cross, 2020; Smith, 2020). Essentially, if there is a market gap, they exploit it due to the agile nature of their operations and their adaptability (Wilson, 2020), becoming the 'invisible hand' (Mittermaier, 2020) of criminal enterprise, thriving on the dynamic changes in global supply and demand to maximise their collective utility.

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These criminals are acutely aware of the impact that global events can have on commodity prices. The war in Ukraine has created challenges for global food security, including the cessation of Ukrainian exports, labour shortages in the agricultural sector, restrictions on fertilisers, and uncertainty about future harvests (Hassen & El Bilali, 2022). While cooperation between Russian and Ukrainian OCGs has become strained due to the war (Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime, 2023), it is arguable that this situation has opened up new opportunities for other criminal enterprises to capitalise on the vacuum left behind.

While organised crime has long been present in the agri-food chain at a global level through food adulteration, mislabelling of goods, and exploitation of labour (Rizzuti, 2022), the impact of their activities can be felt much wider, particularly at the farm level. The actions of these criminals affect farmers both directly and indirectly across their entire business. Directly, farmers become the victim of criminality through these offenders targeting their farms for tractors, livestock, machinery and tools – anything that there is a market for elsewhere. It is sometimes the case that those on the ground will be provided with a 'shopping list' of items that are in demand from the 'customers' that exist elsewhere in the world (Cann, 2014).

Furthermore, farmers are impacted by the theft and counterfeiting of agrochemicals, including fertilisers influenced by OCG activity, alongside the current issue of GPS theft occurring in the UK (NFU Mutual, 2023). All these criminal activities have indirect impacts on farmers beyond the initial act. As depicted in Figure 3, crime significantly influences farmers in terms of their mental health and how they manage victimisation. This, in turn, affects the way that farmers make decisions about their business. Studies by FeldmanHall et al. (2015) and Porcelli and Delgado (2017) demonstrate that decision-making under stress reduces effectiveness and increases risk-taking. When a farmer's ontological security is challenged by acute shocks such as crime, their ability to make efficient and effective decisions about their business can be compromised. This can have devastating effects on the wider farming community, leading to farm businesses failing, farmers leaving the sector, and even suicides, especially at a time when food security is a key priority for the UK government. Therefore, the disruption caused by OCG activity in rural areas to domestic food production and its impact on food security cannot be underestimated.

It is essential to globally recognise the inextricable link between farming, food security, and organised criminality, and to provide support to farmers from key stakeholders such as governments, police, the legal system, insurers, and mental health service providers to ensure the sector's future. Without this support, progress towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals could be delayed or even entirely undermined by the direct actions of OCGs in rural areas.

4   Organised Criminal Groups and the Challenge to Sustainable Development Goals

Until the mid-1980s, many political leaders and public opinion across Europe, with the exception of Italy, felt that they did not have a problem with organised criminal activity (Paoli & Fijnaut, 2006). Gottschalk (2010) argued that OCGs should be considered in the same way as other non-criminal organisations and that their influence has been growing over the past few decades, as has their influence on legal enterprises (Bell, 1999). Indeed, as far back as 1975, it was recognised that organised crime was: "the extension of legitimate market activities into areas normally...beyond existing limits of law – for the pursuit of profit in response to a latent illicit demand" (Smith, 1975).

This quote reflects the business model of current organised criminal groups, as they operate effectively within the traditional economic paradigm of supply and demand (Gale, 1955). If there is a shortage of a particular commodity and sufficient demand for it, the price will increase. This is often where OCGs come into play, providing a marketplace for the commodity in demand, whether it be agrochemicals, animal feed, vegetables, or even people. Given the challenges posed by climate change, this illegal entrepreneurship could extend to the supply of items such as solar panels, wildfire protection, standing timber, and even water. Considering this, the nexus between organised agricultural crime, food security, and SDGs becomes clear when one considers the impact OCGs can have on food production and farm continuity through market control and direct criminal activities (Figure 4).

Much of the focus on farming, food security, and the SDGs tends to centre around SDG2 (Zero Hunger) (Giller et al., 2021; United Nations, n.d.). However, it is arguable that the impact of OCGs on farming and food security extends beyond consideration of zero hunger. Undoubtedly, commodity price rises threaten to push

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people into hunger and poverty (Hassen & El Bilali, 2022). This global issue also creates increased opportunities for OCGs to expand their operations into rural areas. Of the seventeen SDGs established by the United Nations, there is an argument that OCGs may impact at least nine through their criminal activities within the agricultural sector (Figure 5).
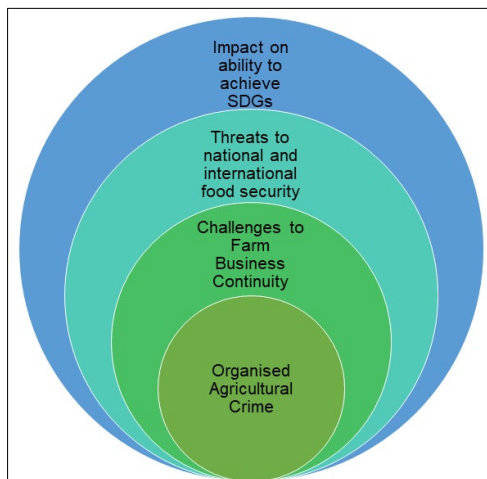

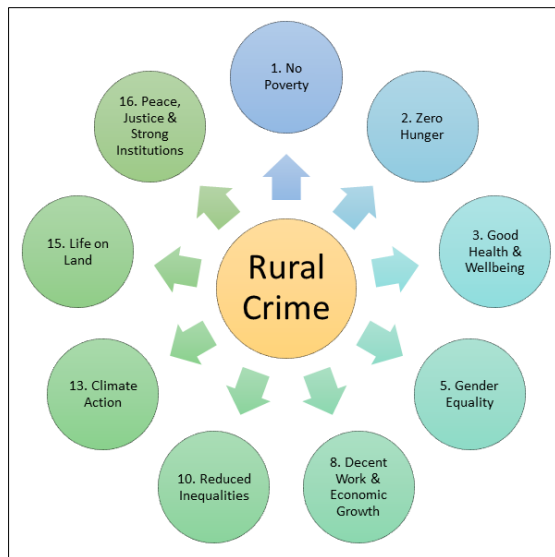**Figure 4: Organised Agricultural Crime-Food Security – SDG Challenge**

Figure 5: SDGs Impacted by Rural Crime

Whether it's through controlling the supply of agricultural commodities, stealing tractors, livestock, agrochemicals, exploiting labour, or other critical assets, the impact of organised crime on the farming community is profound. To illustrate the effects on the SDGs as noted in Figure 5 above, the following scenarios highlight the often overlapping impacts that OCGs can have on the agricultural sector, global food security, and the ability to achieve the SDGs.

4.1   Sustainable Development Goal 1: No Poverty

Being a victim of crime often forces farmers to spend money they may not have readily available to replace damaged or stolen items, thereby reducing their business income. This financial strain is exacerbated by the global decline in prices of commodities such as rice and maize, further diminishing farmers' incomes and potentially compelling them to leave the sector (van den Ban, 2002). Additionally, OCG activities influence the prices of agricultural inputs, leading to increased costs for essential items like agrochemicals and animal feed, adding to financial pressures.

While increasing productivity is recognised to alleviate poverty (Hussain & Hanjra, 2004), the theft of key assets critical to agricultural productivity poses a significant hurdle for victimised farmers in achieving this goal in the short term. Moreover, the longer-term repercussions of such criminal activity, as depicted in Figure 3, may diminish farmers' resilience to boost productivity even after replacing stolen assets. Furthermore, prolonged productivity losses could adversely affect farm labourers, potentially leading to job losses and increasing rural poverty among agricultural workers in the area. Rural poverty is not solely confined to the Global South; it is also a stark reality in the UK, as recently underscored by Shucksmith et al. (2023).

When considering SDG1, it is evident that crime can lead to farmers being unable to maintain their land tenure, forcing them to relinquish their property. This financial strain on UK farmers is compounded by changes in government subsidies. Following the UK's departure from the European Union (EU), the offer of government payments of up to £100,000 (€116,523) to assist farmers seeking to exit the industry may be appealing to those struggling to recover after victimisation (UK Government, 2022).

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4.2 Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero Hunger

Achieving SDG2 relies heavily on ensuring food security and improved nutrition through sustainable agriculture. However, OCGs targeting the farming community directly challenge this goal by disrupting food production and continuity through theft of essential equipment or agricultural inputs. The impact of criminality, compounded by second- and third-order effects of victimisation (Figure 3), may force farmers to alter their operation, struggling with psychological repercussions, or even leave the farming sector entirely. Consequently, there could be fewer farmers, potentially replaced by larger operators reducing competition and consumer choice. This scenario arguably diminishes sectoral resilience and often leads to price increases, contributing to food insecurity as people may struggle to afford produce.

All of this contributes to a decrease in food production and unfulfilled contracts. If criminal activities drive either a reduction in farm outputs or a decrease in the number of farmers, it results in a shortfall of fresh, nutritious food available for national and international distribution. This reduction in the production of fruits, vegetables, cereals, grains, and meat has multifaceted implications for dietary nutrition. It ranges from a lack of availability of nutritious food globally to an increased dependence on ultra-processed foods that lack the essential nutritional quality needed for a healthy diet.

4.3 Sustainable Development Goal 3: Good Health and Wellbeing

The reduction in food availability from farmers leads to worsening global dietary outcomes, impacting SDG2. Additionally, there are broader health implications for the global population indirectly affected by the actions of OCGs in the rural space. A decrease in the global farming community diminishes the availability of high-quality, nutritious, fresh food. Given that good food is essential to good health (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022; James et al., 1997), and good health is crucial for sustainable development (United Nations Development Programme, n.d.), any disruption in the availability of nutritious food due to lower agricultural outputs challenges the goal of promoting good health.

Furthermore, the impact of crime on farmers' mental health has been well-documented (Smith, 2020, 2022). While SDG 3.4 aims to promote mental health and well-being, achieving this goal becomes challenging when farmers are repeatedly targeted by OCGs. Arguably, the increasing victimisation of farming communities by OCGs could lead more farmers to leave the sector due to the adverse impact on farmer's mental health and well-being. Without seeking help, the potential for chronic poor mental health to develop among these farmers is compounded.

The link between poor mental health and physical health has long been recognised (Aarons et al., 2008; Vaillant, 1979). This suggests that farmers struggling with crime-related mental health issues may experience additional physical symptoms if they do not seek help. Furthermore, research indicates that chronic mental and physical ill-health can render households more vulnerable to food insecurity (Tarasuk et al., 2013), implying that farming families may face a direct risk of food insecurity due to the indirect effects of criminal activity.

4.4   Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality

Globally, women farmers are more likely to be subsistence farmers (those farming crops or animals for their own use) or smallholders (small-scale farmers), carrying out their household roles in addition to their farming responsibilities. Criminal victimisation leaves them unable to feed their families due to the inability to harvest crops or the theft of livestock. These women farmers have reduced access to finances and markets to recover from victimisation, are less likely to own land or livestock, and less likely to access extension advice (Odiwuor, 2022). These factors combine to make female farmers less likely to recover from criminal activity.

This situation affects female farmers in both the Global South and the Global North (Duckett, n.d.), but it is magnified in the Global South, where almost 80 per cent of food produced in Asia and Africa comes from smallholder farms (Odiwuor, 2022). For example, Smith (2020) reported that women farmers in the UK are more likely than their male counterparts to experience mental health issues following victimisation, such as feelings of being watched, flashbacks, loss of confidence, and nightmares.

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4.5   Sustainable Development Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Human trafficking and labour exploitation within the agricultural sector are widespread and pervasive issues, recognised not only in the Global South but also in the Global North, including Europe (Byrne & Smith, 2016, 2023; Howard & Forin, 2019; Scaturro, 2021). In fact, some researchers state that slavery and forced labour are more prevalent today than at any point in the past (Shilling et al., 2021).

The reliance of the agricultural sector in Europe on seasonal workers has enabled OCGs to focus much of their criminal activity on providing labour within the European agri-horticultural sector. Those exploited are often vulnerable with no alternative options or may be duped into working in agriculture under the promise of different employment (Byrne & Smith, 2016).

4.6   Sustainable Development Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities

Victimisation leaves some farmers, especially smallholders, unable to recover from the crime event due to a lack of access to financing or insufficient support from advisors. As noted above with SDG5, these barriers to farming can also be barriers to recovery. This situation tends to create further inequalities in communities between the poor and wealthy, particularly in the Global South, where many farms may be subsistence-based only (Debere, 2023). In addition, criminality in rural locations can exacerbate existing issues of social and geographic isolation within rural spaces because of the wider impacts that these criminal groups have on their victims.

4.7   Sustainable Development Goal 13: Climate Action

Due to the economic implications of victimisation, farmers with reduced access to financial support may have to replace stolen tractor with older, more affordable vehicles. While this approach aligns with the replace and reuse ideal, such older tractors may well be less environmentally friendly due to their emissions and may lack the equipment for precision farming without additional costly systems (Higgins et al., 2023). This would impact the efficient targeting of inputs, increasing surface run-off, erosion, and potential watercourse contamination (Soane & van Ouwerkerk,

1995). Criminality may also lead some farmers to change the way they work where possible (Neubacher et al., 2024). For example, they may reduce lone working or keep all equipment in one place to better guard their property or due to the effects of crime on mental health and feelings of being watched (Smith, 2020).

4.8   Sustainable Development Goal 15: Life on Land

Farmers are the custodians of the land (Wilson et al., 2013), and they aim to leave it in a better state than they initially received it. The effects of criminality are wide-reaching and can significantly impact this key tenet of farming. As noted, stress affects effective and efficient decision-making (FeldmanHall, et al., 2015; Porcelli & Delgado, 2017), with crime being recognised as a key stressor both in the short-term and the long-term. Considering the impact that crime can have on farmers' ontological security and their capacity to manage various daily stressors and acute shocks, the ability of farmers to make quality decisions related to environmental land management may be reduced through victimisation.

This is despite the best efforts of national governments to encourage and support farmers to engage with various environmental schemes. For example, in the UK, the Environmental Land Management schemes developed by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2023b) encourage sustainable farming and biodiverse habitat creation. Without farmers making effective decisions on the management of their land and the biodiversity it supports, ecosystems and biodiversity globally will be severely reduced. This may also lead to a change in the rural landscape through land-use change from farming towards increased rewilding, tree-planting, or development.

4.9   Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

The effect of crime, particularly that of OCGs, significantly impacts access to justice within the farming community. Confidence in the police is consistently low in rural areas, affecting the likelihood of future crimes being reported (Smith, 2019). Farmers often feel like second-class citizens regarding how the police address crime in rural areas (Smith, 2018).

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Police forces in the UK have made some efforts to address this issue by creating Rural Crime Teams (Lee, 2023). However, these teams do not exist in every police force with rural areas within their jurisdiction, and their staffing is often insufficient to police large rural areas effectively. This inadequacy is primarily due to issues related to the allocation of police funding from the central government, with rural forces fighting for a fair share (Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner David Sidwick, n.d.). The response farmers receive when reporting crimes often leads them to feel they have limited access to justice (Finnerty, 2017). Moreover, farmers experience ongoing inequality in how crime is considered, tackled, and acknowledged across the wider legal system between rural and urban communities.

5   Conclusion

This exploration of the impact that OCGs have on farming and food security highlights some of the key issues faced by the global farming community, particularly the ease with which OCGs infiltrate rural spaces. Farmers manage their daily occupational stressors to grow the food required both nationally and internationally, making strides towards achieving SDG2: Zero Hunger.

However, the actions of these criminal groups can have far-reaching and devastating effects on farmers worldwide. These impacts go beyond what is initially apparent, challenging the viability of farm businesses and threatening national and international food security, thereby hindering the achievement of the SDGs. This chapter argues that the influence of OCGs on the agricultural sector extends across many more SDGs than initially thought, affecting gender equality, climate action, good health and well-being, access to justice, and more.

This work highlights the essential need for the United Nations and national governments globally to address the actions of OCGs within the agricultural sector. This should be achieved by undermining their business strategies through ensuring that rural spaces are adequately policed, that police forces recognise the increasingly organised nature of agricultural and rural crime, and that organised criminal activities are disrupted through effective intelligence sharing. Additionally, a participatory approach should be taken to tackle the impact of OCGs on food security through increased engagement with farming communities, academia, and policymakers. Such an approach would enable parties at all levels to have a clear understanding of the

crime affecting rural areas, its impact on farm business viability, and the danger it poses to global food security.

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Exploiting White-Collar Criminals' Know-How: Towards a New Way of Punishment

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White-collar criminality is the epitome of modern-era criminality, affecting several sustainable development goals such as the promotion of access to justice and the contrast to organised crime, the provision of essential services, and the reduction of economic inequalities and vulnerabilities. For this reason, it is essential to envision a strategy that would effectively tackle white-collar crimes. This chapter argues that the enforcement of the laws for white-collar crimes should rely on a customised punishment system that combines the traditional prison sentence with community services carried out in the same context in which the white-collar crime was committed. Such a solution would guarantee at least two beneficial effects: individuals would be deterred from repeating the offence by public visibility, peers would be deterred from committing a white-collar crime, and the community would be "compensated" by a virtuous use of those skills (know-how) once improperly used by white-collar criminals.

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IZKORIŠČANJE ZNANJA IN IZKUŠENJ STORILCEV BELOOVRATNIŠKE KRIMINALITETE: NOVEMU NAČINU KAZNOVANJA NAPROTI

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Beloovratniška kriminaliteta je utelešenje kriminalitete sodobne dobe, ki vpliva na več ciljev trajnostnega razvoja, kot so spodbujanje dostopa do pravnega varstva in boja proti organizirani kriminaliteti, zagotavljanje osnovnih storitev ter zmanjšanje ekonomskih neenakosti in ranljivosti. Posledično je nujno oblikovati strategijo, ki bi se učinkovito spopadla z beloovratniško kriminaliteto. V poglavju izpostavimo, da bi moralo izvrševanje zakonov za kazniva dejanja beloovratniške kriminalitete temeljiti na prilagojenem sistemu kaznovanja, ki združuje tradicionalno zaporno kazen s skupnostnimi sankcijami, ki se izvajajo v istem kontekstu, v katerem je bilo storjeno kaznivo dejanje. Takšna rešitev bi imela vsaj dva pozitivna učinka: z vidnostjo v javnosti bi odvrnili posameznike od ponovitve kaznivega dejanja, vrstnike od storitve kaznivega dejanja beloovratniške kriminalitete in skupnost bi prejela "kompenzacijo" s krepostno uporabo veščin (*know-how*), ki so jih uporabili storilci beloovratniške kriminalitete.

1 Introduction

In September 2015, over 150 international leaders gathered at the United Nations to contribute to global development, promote human well-being, and protect the environment. As a result, the community of states endorsed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 sub-goals aimed at ending poverty, fighting inequality, promoting social and economic development, addressing climate change, and building peaceful societies. In this context, curbing criminality represents a pivotal task because illegal activities inherently hinder the pursuit of sustainable goals. Specifically, due to its scale, reach, and capacity to multiply, white-collar criminality impacts sustainable goals both directly and indirectly. On the one hand, white-collar crimes directly hinder the promotion of access to justice and the establishment of effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels (SDG 16).

On the other hand, white-collar criminality represents a pervasive phenomenon that generates collateral consequences in critical areas. For example, corruption (SGD 16.5) distorts resource allocation, significantly undermining the provision of essential services such as health care (SDG 3) and education (SDG 4), while jeopardising access to justice when it involves judges and law enforcement officers (SDG 16.3). Furthermore, corruption (SDG 16.5) exacerbates economic inequalities (SDG 1 and 3) and vulnerabilities (SDG 10). Similarly, financial fraud poses a significant threat to people's well-being, as it involves the loss of individuals' invested assets, which is often difficult to recover. In this regard, financial fraud presents a major challenge to improving the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions (SDG 10.5). Finally, money laundering, which involves concealing the illegal origins of money, serves as a primary tool to perpetuate other forms of criminality, such as drug trafficking and terrorism, thereby undermining efforts to reduce illicit financial flows and combat organised crime (SDG 16.4).

Financial scandals, such as Enron, WorldCom (Brickey, 2003), Conseco, Lehman Brothers (Mensah Mawutor, 2014), General Motors (Guo et al., 2023), Wells Fargo (Schichor & Heeren, 2020), Chrysler, Cirio, and Parmalat (DeMattè, 2004), have shaken the world, creating chasms in which private and taxpayer money, jobs, and trust in companies and political institutions have declined. Dangerous criminal opportunities lurk behind the reassuring appearance of white-collar workers, turning

into critical variables in the global market and democracies. Considering these disastrous events, governments have recognised the seriousness of such peculiar criminality and related phenomena.

Unlike traditional crimes such as robbery or assault, white-collar crimes do not involve force or violence. Instead, they are non-violent and rely on deception, suggestion, or manipulation, resulting in delayed and often intangible consequences. Additionally, while those who commit conventional crimes are often motivated by a need for immediate gratification, white-collar criminals are driven by long-term financial gain. Indeed, white-collar crimes typically manifest in business through activities such as false financial reporting, stock market manipulation, insider trading, bribery (both public and private), false advertising, fraud, tax evasion, embezzlement, misappropriation of funds, and bankruptcy fraud. Because of these differences, white-collar criminals are often perceived as acting "out of character" compared to traditional offenders (Perri, 2011), and as a result, they frequently avoid detection by law enforcement.

The emergence of such crimes, as silent as they are disastrous in their consequences, has forced governments to question the appropriateness of preventive and countering measures set in place. However, designing an effective law enforcement strategy for such a broad crime category faces preliminary hurdles including: 1) defining the criminal phenomenon, 2) measuring its incidence, and 3) estimating the resulting costs to society.

In this chapter, after briefly examining the phenomenon of white-collar crime and the critical issues involved in defining and framing its scope and magnitude, I critically address how governments have chosen to deal with this form of crime by opting for increasingly severe prison sentences. These sentences not only reflect the seriousness of the crime but are also intended to deter potential white-collar criminals (deterrent effect). However, an analysis of available statistical data on the number of convictions in the United States and Italy suggests that severe prison sentences are ineffective in deterring white-collar crime. Based on these findings, I argue that a viable response would be the creation of a system that combines traditional punitive tools with restorative alternatives – interventions that meet community needs on both a material and symbolic level, requiring the offender to actively and supportively commit to repairing the harm caused. This solution would

have at least three advantages. First, it would involve the re-education of the offender by publicly showcasing their specific skills and professional privileges. Second, the community would be "compensated" through the constructive use of these skills (know-how), which were previously misused by white-collar criminals. Third, the community receive constant reminders about the consequences of misusing their skills and professional positions.

2   White-Collar Crimes

2.1   Defining White-Collar Crimes

The first challenge pertains to defining white-collar criminality and who white-collar criminals are. In 1939, Edwin H. Sutherland first outlined a portrait of businessmen with experience, refinement, culture, excellent reputation, and standing in business and society, whose criminal conduct would not be criminally prosecuted but only administratively segregated (Sutherland, 1940). However, since Sutherland's primary goal was to include within the scope of criminal conduct those who were previously not perceived as criminals at the time, he pointed out a series of criteria to detect offenders. However, he did not provide a comprehensive definition, and his criteria did not encompass, for example, all illegal conduct made outside the occupational context (such as income tax evasions) or those undertaken by low-level employees. For this reason, the debate on the definition of white-collar crimes has been a pivotal open question in criminology, engaging scholars in finding a more comprehensive notion that would include factors like motivations, means, technique, setting of the criminal behaviour, and social responses (Perri, 2019). Consequently, a wide variety of terms have been used, such as "elite deviance", "power crime" (Michel et al., 2014; Ruggiero & Welch 2009), "crimes of the powerful" (Friedrichs & Rothe, 2012; Rothe & Kauzlarich, 2022), and "economic crime," which gained significant popularity within Europe (Korsell, 2001).

Considering such an overabundance of definitions, some have attempted to clarify the state of the art through the so-called "typological approach" (Faria, 2018; Friedrichs, 2019). Specifically, to facilitate both the explanation and response to crime, scholars have proposed organising patterns of crime and criminal behaviour into coherent or homogeneous categories. Considering this approach, some scholars have considered the nature of the employment when creating typology (Clinard et

al., 1993). While corporate crime benefits the offending company, occupational crime only benefits the perpetrator (Clinard & Yeager, 2006; Tolkina, 2020). In addition, other scholars started to distinguish white-collar crimes as business and professional crimes, occupational crimes, and individual frauds (Wellford & Ingraham, 1994), while others have classified offences based on the "opportunity" emerging within the occupational context (Green, 1990).

Unfortunately, extensive typological classifications have proven insufficient because they often appear too narrow or conceptually unclear. As a result, law enforcement bodies have adopted a somewhat different approach, considering white-collar crimes neither a legal category nor a specific offence per se. Instead, police officers consider white-collar crimes as a set of crimes with similar features, such as being committed through the breach of fiduciary duty, deception, omission, concealment, misappropriation, and abuse of public trust, despite often having non-violent consequences (Brody & Kiehl, 2010; Simpson, 2011). In other words, the "nonviolent" nature of the crime becomes the main criterion for distinguishing white-collar criminality from traditional crime (Simpson & Benson, 2009). Alongside this approach, some scholars have ended up defining white-collar crimes simply in negative terms: those illegal or harmful activities that are neither street crimes nor conventional crimes that involve physical force or the threat of physical force to commit the crime (Aubert, 1952).

White-collar criminality is a complex area to conceptualize, resulting in several problems in the research field regarding definition and analyses. However, even though the aspiration for a single, coherent, and universally accepted definition of white-collar crime might appear a vain undertaking, the term itself still represents an "umbrella" formula (Mifflin, 2011) that deserves to be retained because it signals, at least, that generally legitimate and seemingly reputable institutions or individuals committed a crime violating private or public trust to gain a financial advantage or maintain and extend their powers and privileges (Friedrichs, 2019).

2.2   Measuring White-Collar Crimes

Defining white-collar crimes is not only a theoretical problem but also a practical one. Indeed, the broad-encompassing formula of white-collar crimes leads to biases in statistical sources because how we define white-collar criminality influences how

we research and measure it (Johnson & Leo, 1993). Nevertheless, crimes such as fraud, bribery, data breaches, and insider trading have become a topic of almost daily news (Salinger, 2013). Still, an accurate portrayal of white-collar crimes is unavailable due to the lack of reliable statistical data. In other words, without consensus on the definition, there can be no consensus on the measurement standard (Cohen, 2016).

Moreover, one cannot ignore that "the 'dark figure' of white-collar crime is undoubtedly much larger than it is for other forms of crime" (Benson et al., 2016). Specifically, the dark figure refers to the undisclosed or hidden aspects of crimes that go unreported or are not officially documented. Corruption and money laundering exemplify this issue. By its nature, corruption is secretive, involving collusion between two or more people who enter a secret agreement for an illegal purpose. In contrast, money laundering typically does not directly harm individuals who might report the crime, which increases the likelihood of it going undisclosed. Furthermore, money laundering often occurs within the financial sector, crossing multiple jurisdictions and creating a disconnect between the criminal launderers and their victim(s) (Young, 2015).

However, the need for well-grounded statistical results impacts both the research field and, most importantly, the political arena. Estimating the extent of white-collar crimes is indeed a significant part of designing criminal sanctions (Cohen, 2016) and appropriate preventive policies, which primarily rely on the criterion of harm caused by the crime at stake (Anderson, 2012). In this context, statistical methods based on police reports are insufficient because they reflect only a fraction of the crimes that occur (Shulman, 1966), mainly because white-collar victims might be unaware of their status and thus do not report the crime to the police (Albanese, 1995). Such difficulties are exacerbated within legal systems where prosecution is discretionary, and several entities handle these crimes. For instance, in the United States, various regulatory agencies – criminal, civil, or administrative (Croall, 2007) – handle white-collar crimes, requiring a monetary threshold to determine whether a case must be pursued (Simpson, 2011). Not to mention those cases in which connections between white-collar executives, politicians, and the judiciary are possible and often so close as to allow the former to manipulate the legislative and court systems in their favour.

2.3   Costs of White-Collar Crimes

In the absence of longitudinal data and consistent methods to count white-collar arrests and prosecutions, it is burdensome to determine the incidence of such crimes, which can lead to the misleading conclusion that white-collar crimes are not as severe as conventional ones (Albanese, 1995). However, even imperfect and partial data prove that white-collar criminality affects society much more than traditional crimes because they result in more massive financial, emotional, and even physical distress to victims than traditional crimes (Croall, 2007; Kane & Wall, 2006), not to mention social, economic and political drawbacks. For instance, several studies have pointed out that many cases of depression and suicide involve victims of financial fraud (Saxby & Anil, 2012). Furthermore, where white-collar crimes are pervasive and often tolerated, young people can view criminality as a gate to a better life, while adults will feel delegitimisation towards political and economic leaders (Conktin, 1977; Dearden, 2016; Shapiro, 1987). Lastly, white-collar crimes contribute to lower social conditions by reducing available resources, as governments may allocate funding to deter, detect, and prosecute them instead of granting social programs (McFayden, 2010), not to mention the monetary losses to employees and stockholders, which total hundreds of billions of dollars (Public Citizen, 2002), ranging between 300 and 600 billion dollars per year (Huff et al., 2010).

White-collar criminality massively impacts society and the economy, and there is room to suspect the effects might increase in the future (Cliff & Wall-Parker, 2017). On the one hand, white-collar crimes generally require significantly high levels of education or specialised technical skills, which are becoming progressively more available in our society with an increase in literacy rates, computer use, and educational attainment (UNESCO, 2016). On the other hand, opportunities to commit white-collar crimes are increasing. For instance, about half of the workforce nowadays has realistic access to corporate information. It might be able to sell trade secrets, embezzle funds, or commit other traditional white-collar crimes (U.S. Department of Justice – Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2015). Furthermore, one should consider that nowadays, things of value are frequently intangible and more exposed to attacks (Cliff & Wall-Parker, 2017), such as online banking fraud (Apte et al., 2008). Advanced information and communication devices make white-collar crimes easier and less costly to commit than before (Zickuhr & Smith, 2012). Finally, there may be an overlap between white-collar crime and cybercrimes, not

only because all significant business transactions are carried out with computers (Pontell, 2005), but also because white-collar and informational crime share several similarities. Both crimes typically occur in contexts different from those in which traditional street crimes occur, and often, cybercrimes can fall into the category of "professional crime". This can occur when, for example, a white-collar professional engages in hacking or an employee steals computer passwords and sells them for personal gain (Payne, 2018).

3 Traditional Approaches to Countering White-Collar Crime

3.1 Deterrence and Overcriminalisation

The theoretical and operational obstacles outlined above, along with the need to curb white-collar crimes, resulted in policies that provide increasingly harsh sentencing practices for white-collar cases. Such an approach is based on the idea that potential offenders will comply with criminal law, given the awareness that disobedience will result in severe penalties (Nicholson, 2007). This belief is rooted in the theoretical explanation of Professor Becker's deterrence theory, wherein Bentham's "felicific calculus" is translated into economic terms and applied to criminal law (Becker, 1974). More specifically, it is believed that humans tend to maximise their well-being by rationally weighing pleasure and pain (Bentham, 2007). The resulting economic model of criminal behaviour states that a criminal act is preferred and chosen if the expected benefits from committing a crime exceed the expected costs, including any foregone legal alternatives (Becker, 1968). Consequently, increasing the probability and severity of punishment should reduce the crime rate because it is supposed to minimise the gains people expect from crime in terms of future well-being (Mungan, 2012).

Considering this idea, white-collar crimes are considered to fit well with deterrence theory because of their inherent profit-oriented and risk-averse attitude, especially when the risks and losses result in freedom deprivation due to a criminal conviction (Arnulf & Gottschalk, 2012; Chambliss, 1967). In other words, more than other offenders, white-collar offenders are supposed to process the available information on alternative courses of action and rank the possible outcomes in order of expected utility (Braithwaite & Geis, 1982), adjusting their behaviour based on a simple question: does the benefit of money outweigh the risk of punishment if caught and

convicted? Such reasoning is known as the "risk equation", whereby subjects weigh how much they would gain from the crime, considering the actual or perceived risk of being caught and convicted.

The primary justification for imposing a prison term is to control the defendant while discouraging others from committing the same offence, achieving both a specific and a general deterrent effect (Frase, 2008). However, how much relevant is deterrence in sentencing white-collar offenders? To what extent would harsh prison sentences prevent offenders from reoffending and others from committing the same white-collar crime?

White-collar criminals are typically educated adults with no significant history of prior convictions or incarcerations (Strader, 1999). Their crimes are predominantly nonviolent, yet they wield significant victimising power and have far-reaching consequences (Green, 2007). However, sentencing white-collar criminals is challenging, especially when the conduct involved does not immediately appear criminal (Brown, 2012) and poses little risk of recidivism, particularly in cases of one-shot violations (Weissmann & Block, 2007) or when offenders cooperate fully. Furthermore, there is little need to protect society by isolating white-collar offenders due to their minimal physical threat to the public. Given these factors, imposing lengthy sentences on white-collar criminals can lead to two polarised scenarios.

On the one hand, the recidivism risk is relatively low since white-collar criminals are unlikely to return to jobs like those held before conviction, especially if they previously held high-management positions in public institutions (Weissmann & Block, 2007). Conversely, white-collar criminals are not typically "one-shot" offenders if socio-environmental conditions conducive to illegal conduct persist (Edelhertz & Overcast, 1982; Wheeler & Kenneth, 1988). Research has shown that nearly 40% of those convicted of bribery, bank embezzlement, income tax evasion, false claims, and mail fraud had at least one prior arrest (Weisburd et al., 2006). In a nutshell, like street criminals who tend to re-commit crimes when they perceive there is little to lose, recidivism in white-collar offenders may be more likely when prestige and status are lost (Mann, 1992; Pollack & Smith, 1984). Ultimately, harsher sentences do not seem as effective as expected in deterring potential white-collar criminals. Consequently, determining the appropriate punishment for such a peculiar

criminal category is pivotal to guarantee a proportionate treatment capable of instilling responsible and honest behaviour among white collars.

Considering these premises, I attempted to identify a correlation between the increased severity of sentences and actual decreases in convictions to understand whether harsher sentences translate into fewer white-collar crimes. For this purpose, I examined statistical data on convictions for certain white-collar crimes in two countries: Italy and the United States. While the United States and Italy belong to two different geographical realities with distinct legal and economic cultures, both countries implemented hyper-criminalisation policies against white-collar crime in the early 2000s due to scandals involving financial fraud, tax evasion, false accounting, and corruption. One of the secondary objectives is to understand whether, based on the available data, the effectiveness of hyper-criminalisation policies for white-collar crimes may vary depending on the states in which they are implemented.

On the one hand, the United States has a long history of white-collar criminality as it is home to many of the largest multinational corporations and is, therefore, central to the global economy and finance. It is no coincidence that the most significant financial scandals originated in the United States. On the other hand, Italy, like most European countries, bases its economy on small and medium-sized enterprises and records most white-collar cases in the public administration. Additionally, a peculiarity of Italy is that it represents a country in the European landscape that tends to address social emergencies with a significant use of criminal law, engaging in reforms aimed at toughening penalties.

As anticipated, both countries have progressively toughened their penalties for white-collar crimes. Specifically, in 2002, the United States introduced the American Sarbanes-Oxley Act (Thomsen & Norman, 2009), which provides imprisonment for those who, among other things, destroy fraudulent corporate documents (maximum 20 years) and defraud shareholders of publicly traded companies (maximum 25 years). On the other hand, the Italian legal system has gradually increased the penalties for tax evasion, false accounting, and corruption (Balbi, 2012; Dolcini & Viganò, 2013; Mucciarelli, 2015; Viganò, 2013). Since 2000, Italy has increased penalties for tax evasion by up to six years and for false accounting by up to eight

years (2015). Regarding bribery, penalties have increased from a maximum of five years of imprisonment in 2012 to ten years in 2015.

Tables 1 and 2 display data on crimes affected by the criminalisation cycles (left column) and the number of white-collar offenders convicted for the decade 2007-2017. This timeframe was chosen due to the availability of aggregate secondary data and because this decade represents the period closest to the beginning of the waves of criminalisation that occurred in Italy and the United States, but far enough to assess their impact. Despite this penal tightening, an analysis of secondary data obtained from the U.S. Annual Report of Federal Sentencing Statistics and the Italian National Institute of Statistics revealed that there has not been an appreciable decrease in convictions despite the gradual increase in penalties. Specifically, Tables 1 and 2 and Figure 1 show that severity has not increased, even though the new laws raised the severity of sentences; on the contrary, the trend in sentencing has remained relatively constant over the ten years. This suggests that increased sentences are not a sufficient deterrent to committing white-collar crimes.

Table 1: Number of Convictions Per Year Reported for Crimes that Received Increased Sentences in Italy

Italy	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Corruption	311	338	347	272	265	258	289	60	293	313	291
Corporate crimes	5,653	5,654	5,524	4,269	4,221	4,159	4,360	3,855	4,416	4,767	4,904
Tax crime	2,022	2,446	2,978	3,714	5,080	6,110	6,729	7,015	6,539	4,023	3,222

Source: Istituto Nazionale di Statistica (n.d.)

Table 2: Number of Convictions Per Year Reported for Crimes that Received Increased Sentences in United States of America

USA	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Fraud	7,550	7,041	7,566	8,032	8,300	8,551	7,789	7,607	7,414	6,516	6,027
% of total convictions	10.7	9.8	9.5	9.7	9.8	10.5	9.8	10.0	10.5	9.6	9.0

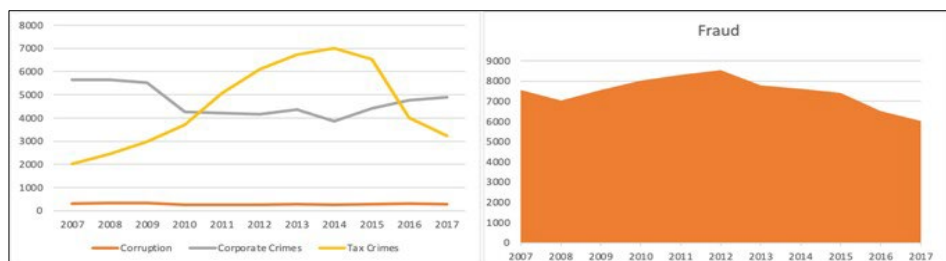Source: United States Sentencing Commission (n.d.)

Figure 1: Conviction Trends in Italy and United States of America in the Period 2007–2017
Source: Istituto Nazionale di Statistica (n.d.), United States Sentencing Commission (n.d.).

3.2   Over-Criminalisation and Criminal Diversions: A Collateral Effect

Increasing penalties by the laws in the two countries may have created an even greater incentive to perpetuate the link between over-criminalisation and plea bargaining (Beale, 2005). On this point, as early as 1970, the United States Supreme Court stated that plea bargaining serves those who seek a minor benefit in return for conserving judicial and prosecutorial resources in clear cases of guilt.

To date, it has been recorded that about 97 per cent of convictions in the federal system result from a guilty plea (Dervan, 2013). Similarly, Italian scholars have pointed out that the Italian form of plea bargaining – the so-called patteggiamento – represents a waiving of the right to criminal cross-examination and to be judged beyond all reasonable doubt, to deflect the time and expenses required by the judicial trial (Pierro, 2011). Consequently, increasing criminal penalties may reinforce the trend of resorting to negotiated punishment (Romero, 2003). For example, six out of ten corruption cases submitted to Italian criminal courts end in a plea-bargained sentence (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, n.d.). Such a trend leads to two questionable outcomes: either innocent individuals accept the negotiated conviction to prevent the distress deriving from the trial (Dervan, 2013; Palmer, 1999) or guilty individuals eventually bargain for lower penalties than they deserve by law (Dooley & Radke, 2010). This latter circumstance would represent the greatest failure of "get tough on crime" policies and prove the gap between theory and practice because, in the long run, offenders would still enjoy disproportionately lenient punishments that do not match their wrongdoing (Russel, 1988).

3.3 Tightening of Sentences and Neutralisation Processes

Our analyses showed that statutory harshening of penalties for white-collar criminals in Italy and the United States may not have the presumed deterrent impact. Several reasons may explain such an effect. Scholars have noted that the marginal utility of long prison sentences decreases with time spent in prison (Coffee, 1980) because they do not provide a marginal effect beyond the experience of prosecution, conviction, and sentencing (Benson, 1982). In other words, a ten-year sentence is not ten times more punitive than a one-year sentence (Coffee, 1980). Therefore, research has shown that any specific deterrence achieved by added prison sentences may already be produced with penalty imposition (Benson & Moore, 1992). On the other hand, the prison experience might also be meaningless because white-collar criminals, especially senior executives, are better able to become "model prisoners" (Benson & Cullen, 1988) and be treated kinder by prison officials (Frankel, 2006). Finally, although the media massively covers white-collar criminal cases, once trials are over, the stigma eventually fades for the offender, and the public tends to promptly forget the message of shame that was addressed (Nicholson, 2007).

Although the above reasons significantly weaken the hoped-for effect of increased penalties, the main point of criticism lies upstream, namely in the belief that purely rational processes lead to white-collar illegal conduct. On the contrary, the cost-benefit calculation may not be the only reason people are tempted to commit white-collar crimes. When the stakes are high, the penalties imposed are not significant enough to produce the desired deterrent effect (Coffee, 1981). Such a counterintuitive circumstance is motivated by the fact that white-collar offenders are driven by subjective features pertaining to a behavioural spectrum: ranging from potential criminals who are less inclined to think about the consequences of their actions to those who are so confident in their abilities that they cannot appreciate the risk involved (Robinson & Darley, 2004). Furthermore, especially among middle-class offenders, the "good soldier" phenomenon can occur (Barnard, 2005), whereby employees collude with upper management because they feel like "cogs in the wheel" and hardly perceive the consequences of their actions (Lobel, 2009). In other words, if there is a rationalisation process, it does not address whether it is beneficial to commit the crime but rather whether the crime can be somehow "hidden" or "justified" (Sutherland, 1949). Such reasoning is called "neutralisation" and allows white-collar offenders to maintain a sense of dignity by invalidating the criminal label

of their conduct (Benson, 1985b). In this vein, apologetic narratives of white-collar criminals can range from denial of criminal intent and harm (Benson, 1985a) to claims of fulfilling economic goals (Aguilera & Vadera, 2008; Coleman, 1987; Heath, 2008).

Furthermore, the law itself may sometimes generate this effect due to its general construction or content (Sandeep, 2010), leading individuals to believe that their conduct is within legal bounds. For example, in the United States, the same conduct might lead to civil penalties and criminal prosecution, resulting in unexpected changes in how the law is applied, and potential offenders may give themselves the benefit of the doubt that their conduct is not entirely criminal (Henning, 2015). Finally, individuals may not perceive the extent of their criminal behaviour for at least two reasons: first, many white-collar crimes do not elicit the moral opprobrium that street crimes do (Green, 2006); second, the likelihood of misestimating criminal behaviour increases when the violation involves technical rules (Henning, 2015). In such cases, offenders are not fully aware of the unlawfulness of their conduct, making strategies based on deterrence seem futile.

4 Novel and Alternative Approaches to Countering White-Collar Crime

4.1 The Addition of a Restorative Intervention

The current response to white-collar criminality would benefit from adding restorative options in the justice process, namely interventions that meet the community's needs on both material and symbolic levels, requiring the offender to take an active and solidarity commitment to repair the offence caused (Walgrave, 2000). In other words, it would be desirable to have a measure that, while maintaining a fair afflictive degree, succeeds in preventing white-collar offenders from justifying or, worse, incentivising criminal conduct. Matching criminal responses with restorative measures would provide a more comprehensive approach that considers pivotal factors such as the offender's social surroundings (Darley, 2005) along with the role of victims (van Ness, 2003). Combining traditional criminal responses with restorative tools enhances the understanding that crime is more than lawbreaking and, therefore, requires a reaction that goes beyond criminal punishment (Bazemore, 2000). Importantly, this approach prevents the perception

of justice operating in a summary fashion to prove sufficiently severe and swift (Resta & Bianconi, 2012; Volpi, 2015).

Studies have found that informal sanctions have a substantial deterrent effect (Anderson et al., 1977; Heitkamp & Mowen, 2023). For instance, disapproval from specific social environments appears to influence the decision to commit such crimes. This phenomenon is a variation of the so-called "reintegrative shaming" theory, where shame is crucial in reinforcing normative behaviours within the business community (Barnard, 1999; Kostelnik, 2012). This is particularly relevant for white-collar criminals, given that the population of top corporate executives can be characterised as residing in an exclusive social environment (Paternoster & Simpson, 1996). In other words, shame, along with social censure, loss of respect, and moral consideration, seems to weigh more heavily than rational cost-benefit calculations (Paternoster & Simpson, 1996).

Ultimately, the desirable reform involves tempering punishments based on the active participation of the offender in the restoration processes. It is not a matter of conceiving alternatives to existing justice tools and mechanisms, but rather implementing complementary punishment that could better fit specific forms of criminality, thereby preventing future crimes and motivating to repair of unlawfully committed acts. Only when the restoration is not possible should imprisonment be the remaining recourse. Such a perspective aligns with the idea that criminal punishment should be a "last resort", with imprisonment reserved for crimes that violate not-restorable goods or values, such as life or sexual integrity (Donini, 2015).

4.2   Making Community Service Part of The Punishment

Community service can be a viable addition to traditional criminal punishment. A community sentence requires convicted individuals to perform community work for free – the "community service" – to repay society for the crime committed (Yukhnenko et al., 2019). Community service orders began in England and Wales in 1973 on an experimental basis (Mcivor, 1992), and Italy has a history of dealing with community sentences (Scalfati, 2023). Several reasons justify the spread of community sentences among nations. First, community service is cost-saving because it eases prison crowding by allowing convicted offenders to complete a corrections program. Second, it increases social welfare through the unpaid work

performed by offenders for the public benefit (Kantorowicz-Reznichenko, 2013). Lastly, some studies have shown that recidivism rates after first-time community service are lower than after imprisonment (Bol & Overwater, 1986), with nearly half as many reconvictions over an eight-year follow-up period (Wermink et al., 2010).

Alternative measures are effective in fighting white-collar criminality if four objectives are met: ensuring an adequate deterrent effect for both convicted and potential white-collar offenders, providing some form of restoration for the harm caused by white-collar crime, reducing the cost of imprisonment, and ensuring greater economic benefits. Matching prison sentences with community sentences appears to achieve these objectives in at least two ways. On the one hand, the prosecutorial process would generate traditional deterrent effects through status degradation, public stigma, and shame (Mann, 1985; Wheeler & Kenneth, 1988). On the other hand, remaining visible in the public domain would make offenders sensitive to the community's loss of reputation and respect. In other words, while restitutions and reintegration compensate individual victims, community sentence restores systemic consequences (Posner, 1980).

To be effective, community service for white-collar offenders must efficiently redress the harm caused by their crimes. Some have suggested relying on the "moral distress" caused by community service: for instance, convicted coal executives might work in mines to experience what their workers must endure; convicted pharmaceutical executives might serve in rehabilitation centres; and convicted auto executives might work in emergency rooms to witness the daily reality of humans injured or killed in car accidents (Mokhiber, 1988).

However, such solutions appear to be less punitive alternatives to purely vindictive options like incarceration. What kind of conscience can we expect a white-collar offender to develop in an environment that is physiologically hostile to them? What benefit does society gain from solely humiliating the convicted white-collar offender in the spotlight? Moreover, and most importantly, white-collar offenders may develop a sense of outrage at the state and the justice system, becoming more likely to break the law again because they are not persuaded by the value of legality. Additionally, the public might perceive that the state is more interested in shaming than in re-educating offenders. Therefore, it is evident that the solution for aligning community service with white-collar criminals needs to be different.

Community service should align with the cognitive-technical profile of the white-collar offenders, considering their highly specialised and unique know-how; which was misused to commit the crime. Essentially, community service reallocates these skills by engaging offenders in activities like those that led to crime, but this time, carrying out these activities in a virtuous way and for righteous purposes. To achieve this, the convicted must perform community service in a work environment like the one where they committed white-collar crimes. This solution would generate a dual effect. On the one hand, white-collar offenders would be re-educated by developing a deeper awareness of the proper use of specific skills and job privileges. On the other hand, it would serve as a daily reminder for workplace employees about the consequences of misusing their skills and job positions. Consequently, community service in white-collar workplaces would decrease the likelihood that potential offenders would be unaware of the effects of their actions. Finally, one must consider the economic benefit of reemploying highly specialised skills.

One could argue that letting convicted white-collar offenders in an environment like the one where they committed the crime would increase the odds of recidivism. However, community service is designed as a form of punishment in which convicted white-collar offenders lose the power they had in their previous positions. In the end, doing this type of community service can be just as punitive, if not more, spending time in jail or paying a fine or restitution, because it can leave a mark of shame on the offender (Supernor, 2017). Well-crafted shaming sanctions, especially as applied to top-level corporate executives, can effectively influence individual and corporate behaviour (Barnard, 1999; Kostelnik, 2012).

Indeed, an individual convicted of corruption could hold compliance and integrity training courses that many governments have made mandatory for public administrations or companies. Who is better than someone who has circumvented anti-corruption systems to know how to make them work? Likewise, an individual convicted of international bribery could help growing companies set the right strategies for expanding into international markets. It is assumed that a person capable of establishing corrupt dealings in other countries has a thorough knowledge of the socio-cultural context and economic substrate of foreign countries, which would help expand companies with limited resources to hire a marketing consultant. Similarly, a person convicted of embezzlement, tax offences, or bankruptcy could work in the accounting department of a company or institution. Additionally,

perpetrators of computer fraud may be hired by the same company they have harmed, or companies with similar features, to work as white-hat hackers, using their knowledge to improve the firm's internal security systems. Finally, those convicted of money laundering could cooperate with judiciary offices, contributing to the investigations by fully disclosing money laundering schemes. Money laundering can be challenging to detect because it is often part of a more extensive criminal activity involving multiple markets and jurisdictions.

Yet, it is essential to design alternative options that prevent white-collar offenders from engaging in manipulative behaviours while doing community service or, at worst, relapse into white-collar criminality. A viable solution would be appointing a monitor to supervise the white-collar community service. Monitors should be neutral third parties who are qualified and knowledgeable. They should be appointed through a selection process that is transparent, merit-based, free from conflicts of interest, and subjected to judicial scrutiny to ensure the fairness and effectiveness of the entire procedure.

5   Conclusion

White-collar criminality has become a worldwide endemic occurrence, often causing damage beyond the criminals' expectations. Governments have traditionally focused on toughening penalties to deter individuals deemed particularly sensitive to the consequences provided by criminal law (e.g., Balbi, 2012; Dolcini & Viganò, 2013; Mucciarelli, 2015; Thomsen & Norman, 2009; Viganò, 2013). However, our data analyses show that such a strategy has questionable results regarding general and specific deterrence of white-collar criminals. Reading the newspapers is enough to realise that crimes such as bribery, bankruptcy, false accounting, and tax fraud are still common. Moreover, there are many reasons to fear that these crimes will not decrease. Their devastating effects will continue to impact individual victims, the well-being of society, the smooth functioning of markets, the efficiency of the bureaucracy, and the credibility of democratic institutions and the services they provide. Therefore, it is time to consider these punitive measures insufficient to curb white-collar crimes and to encourage the exploration of innovative solutions.

In conclusion, I aim to demonstrate how providing a punishment designed for white-collar crimes can address economic deviance while also impacting their

systemic social and cultural consequences. Specifically, punishing white-collar criminals by combining imprisonment with specific community services allows offenders to engage in activities similar to those involved in their crimes but for the common good. In this context, punishment transcends the criminal law's punitive power. It becomes an opportunity to generate a virtuous circle of individual re-education, general deterrence, and restitution to the socio-economic system. Ultimately, such a strategy would enable the reintroduction of "cleaned up" qualified resources and highly specialised know-how in the market, while also reinforcing confidence in the justice system by avoiding disproportionate, unreasonable, or emotional responses.

From a global perspective, a justice system that can respond radically and systemically to the crime it addresses plays a crucial role in pursuing sustainable development goals. This includes promoting an accessible and equal justice system (SDG 16.3), reducing forms of criminality such as bribery (SDG 16.5) and organised criminal activities benefiting from illicit financial flows (SDG 16.4), and creating conditions for policies to operate in an environment less hampered by illegal activities. In doing so, it would also contribute to addressing the collateral effects of white-collar crimes, which exacerbate economic inequalities (SDG 1.3) and vulnerabilities (SDG 10), particularly when they affect the allocation of essential services such as healthcare (SDG 3) and education (SDG 4), as well as public and private investments and the proper functioning of financial institutions (SDG 10.5).

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CURBING OF ILLEGAL CONSTRUCTION OF FACILITIES IN SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

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The subject of research is environmental endangerment by unsustainable space management. The aim is to point out the harmful consequences of the irrational consumption of natural resources due to the overdimensioning of construction areas. The research results show that Montenegro has been unsuccessful in fighting the problem of illegal construction and legalisation of these buildings for over thirty years. Official data from state institutions report approximately 100,000 illicit buildings in Montenegro. To protect the environment, the state has prescribed three new criminal offences, such as construction of an object without registration and construction documentation, construction of a complex engineering object without a construction permit and illegal connection to the infrastructure. The Law on the Regulation of Informal Buildings and the Criminal Code are not implemented in a legally valid manner, and the penal policy does not act as a disincentive while the level of devastation of space increases.

Omejevanje nezakonite gradnje objektov v trajnostnih mestih in skupnostih

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Predmet raziskovanja je ogrožanje okolja z netrajnostnim ravnanjem z okoljem. Namen poglavja je opozoriti na škodljive posledice neracionalne porabe naravnih virov zaradi predimenzioniranosti gradbenih območij. Rezultati študije kažejo, da se Črna gora že več kot trideset let neuspešno bori s problemom nedovoljenih gradenj in legalizacije teh objektov. Uradni podatki državnih institucij kažejo, da je v Črni gori približno 100.000 nedovoljenih gradenj. Država je zaradi varstva okolja uvedla tri nova kazniva dejanja, in sicer gradnja objekta brez registracije in gradbene dokumentacije, gradnja zahtevnejšega inženirskega objekta brez gradbenega dovoljenja in nelegalna priključitev na infrastrukturo. Zakon o ureditvi neformalnih gradenj in Kazenski zakonik se ne izvajata pravno veljavno, hkrati pa kaznovalna politika ne deluje destimulativno ob povečevanju opustošenosti okolja.

1   Introduction

The concept of sustainable development is a complex phenomenon that encompasses various aspects of state and social development without harming the environment. The United Nations defines sustainable development as development that meets the needs of today's society without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (United Nations General Assembly, 1987). Earth's development should be based on the preservation of natural capital, such as water, air, and land, ensuring a balance between human activity and nature's ability to renew itself. To sustain human life today and in the future, every effort must be made to protect the environment and preserve natural resources. Addressing global warming is also essential (United Nations General Assembly, 1987). In addressing the issue of sustainable development, any piecemeal approach is inadequate; instead, an integral approach is necessary to sustain it. This entails economic, social, technological, and cultural development aligned with environmental protection needs and improvements, enabling current and future generations to meet their needs and enhance their quality of life (Adams, 2006). The capabilities of nature are finite, and it can only satisfy some of the needs of a consumer society. This is evident in environmental degradation and resource overexploitation. These detrimental processes will not contribute to improved quality of life or human health. Hence, the need to strike a balance between ecology and economic development has long been emphasised to alleviate environmental pressure and create more humane living conditions (United Nations General Assembly, 1987).

At the end of the last century, significant international bodies such as the United Nations adopted numerous conventions, declarations, and resolutions to protect the environment and promote sustainable development. These include the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (United Nations General Assembly, 1992) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (United Nations, 1992). Sustainable development is overseen and directed at the global level by the United Nations, with national subsystems implementing sustainable practices through effective regional and global cooperation. Human activity has led to a destructive attitude toward nature, deforming the climate and environment. Excessive pollution of land, flora, fauna, air, and water has seriously threatened the environment. Some authors rightly point out that humans are the cause of all

environmental threats and that they alone can solve the problems of pollution and environmental damage (Barbier & Burgess, 2017).

The uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources accelerated technological development, and the pursuit of profit during the 20th century have harmed the environment. Consequently, environmental protection has become one of the most important aspects of development, and preserving the environment has become the hallmark of states that are concerned about future generations (Šekarić & Kostić, 2011).

ISO 14001 is an internationally accepted standard that enables the implementation of environmental management systems in organisations. This standard was created to establish a balance between maintaining profitability and reducing negative impacts on the environment. Successful experiences of organisations show that implementing an environmental management system can reduce waste management costs, negative environmental impacts, and ecological incidents. Establishing legal certainty, i.e., compliance with environmental regulations, and raising social-ecological awareness are also essential (Janković, 2011). In an age of heightened environmental consciousness and increasing global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion, organisations have a pivotal role to play. ISO 14001 offers a structured approach for businesses to address these pressing concerns. By adopting this standard, organisations signal a commitment not only to regulatory compliance but also to ongoing environmental improvement. This proactive approach to environmental management can result in tangible benefits such as reduced waste, energy conservation, and cost savings. The organisation shall determine external and internal issues that are relevant to its purpose and that affect its ability to achieve the intended outcomes of its environmental management system. Such issues shall include environmental conditions being affected by or capable of affecting the organisation (International Standard, 2015).

Human activities that injure, destroy, damage, pollute, or endanger the environment result from the conscious omission or non-application of rules, technical instructions, and standards in handling numerous dangerous sources of energy and raw materials. This includes the handling or otherwise dealing with destructive devices that create conditions for the risk of accidents of various types, scopes, and dimensions, affecting a particular space and everything in it, within the zone of the

danger's effect. Such activities, whether by individuals, groups, or entire countries, constitute illegal, prohibited, and punishable behaviour or torts (Jovašević, 2017). Because all aspects of unlawful behaviour in the arrangement, preservation, improvement, and protection of human living and working environments, both broadly and narrowly, can be considered environmental crimes.

Green criminology (Lynch, 2020; Lynch et al., 2019) focuses on analysing environmental crime based on criminal charges and judgements. Despite the growing interest in environmental and green crimes, little is known about these offences and how environmental offenders are punished in criminal cases. Much of what is known about the punishment of environmental offenders comes from studies that are now more than 25 years old. Furthermore, many studies rely on aggregated data from the United States Environmental Protection Agency, which provides information about these cases nationally but does not address potential variability in the punishment of environmental criminals in any state (Lynch, 2021). For thousands of years, humans have done things to the environment that have fundamentally transformed local landscapes and regional biodiversities. From bringing plants and animals from one region to new parts of the world to polluting rivers and seas with industrial outfall, filling land and soils with human refuse, and intentionally burning fires in particular local biospheres, ecological change has been part and parcel of how humans have interacted with each other and with nature for millennia. Not all such activities have been viewed as harmful, nor has the transformation of local environments always been seen as a negative (White & Heckenberg, 2014).

For mainstream criminology, restrictive notions of police and policing by state institutions and of crime as being solely determined by criminal law dominate. Yet Lynch and Stretesky (2014) highlight that environmental harm constitutes a major threat to human survival, and that green crimes such as pollution constitute a substantial threat to human life yet are often ignored by mainstream justice systems. Accordingly, green criminology extends beyond the focus on street and interpersonal crimes to encompass consideration of "the destructive effects of human activities on local and global ecosystems" (South & Beirne, 1998, p. 147). In doing so, green criminology considers not just questions of crime as defined by a strict legalist or criminal law conception (Situ & Emmons, 2000), but also examines questions concerning rights, justice, morals, victimisation, criminality, and the use of

administrative, civil, and regulatory justice systems. Green criminology also examines the actions of non-state criminal justice actors such as non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations and the role of the state as a major contributor to environmental harm.

Green Criminology also examines mechanisms for disrupting and preventing environmental crime and reducing harm to non-human animals and the environment (Nurse, 2015; Wellsmith, 2010, 2011). Traditional reactive policing models of detection, apprehension, and punishment (Bright, 1993) risk being inadequate in the case of environmental harm, where irreparable environmental damage or loss of animal life may already have occurred.

The rising global scarcity of natural resources is increasingly attracting transnational criminal organisations. Organised crime syndicates are diversifying into the lucrative business of tropical timber, endangered species, and natural minerals, alongside their traditional activities (van Uhm & Nijman, 2020). The developing interconnectedness between environmental crime and other serious crimes shows that traditional lines of separation are no longer appropriate for understanding and dealing with the increasing complexities of organised crime (van Uhm & Nijman, 2020). Depending on the scope and intensity of the ecological consequences, the activity undertaken, the characteristics of the perpetrator, and the prescriptions of specific behaviours in the laws and other general by-laws, as well as the types of prescribed sanctions, several environmental offences will be discussed in the rest of the paper.

In the last few decades, there has been a significant expansion in the construction industry in Montenegro, accompanied by numerous abuses, prompting the state to resort to criminal legal protection as a final means of protecting the environment. The Criminal Code (2020) became the primary legal framework in this area. Illegal construction has long been a major state problem, with illicit activities of destruction and environmental damage often accompanied by other forms of criminality, such as money laundering.

2   Illegal Construction of Buildings in Comparative Legislation

There are not many countries that have prescribed one or more criminal offences against spatial planning in their criminal legislation. In this part of the chapter, we will address a few countries that incorporate criminal offences against spatial

planning into their legal systems. The countries of the former Yugoslavia were chosen due to their shared legal tradition, which is logical and justified. The legislation of these countries is harmonised with that of the European Union.

In the group of criminal offences against property, the Criminal Code of Serbia (2019) prescribes two criminal offences in this area. The first criminal offence is construction without a building permit, as defined in Article 219a of the Criminal Code of Serbia (2019). The first form of this crime is committed by a person who is a contractor on a building being built or who performs work on the reconstruction of an existing building without a building permit. Another form of this criminal offence is committed by a person who is an investor in a building without a building permit (Criminal Code of Serbia, 2019). The third form of this criminal offence is committed by a person who continues the work when the decision to suspend the work was issued. The fourth form of this crime is committed by a person who, as a responsible designer or person performing technical control, contrary to the notes, signed the final report on the performed control, which states that there are no objections to the main project, or contrary to the regulations put a seal on the main project that the project is accepted, or contrary to the rules gave a statement confirming that the location permit completed the main project (Criminal Code of Serbia, 2019). Another criminal offence recognised by Serbian criminal legislation is connecting a building without a permit. This criminal offence is committed by a person who connects a facility or a responsible person in a legal entity who allows the connection of a facility, which is being built or has been built without a building permit, to the electric power, thermal energy, or telecommunications network, water supply, and sewerage (Criminal Code of Serbia, 2019).

Chapter 30 of the Criminal Code of Slovenia (2012) provides for the criminal offence of causing danger in construction activities. There are four forms of this criminal act. The primary form sanctions a person who is responsible for planning or controlling plans for the creation or management of masonry or construction works who acts contrary to regulations and generally recognised technical standards and thus causes danger to human life or property of great value. This form of criminal offence is punishable by up to three years in prison. Paragraph 2 provides for a less serious form of this crime, specifically if the basic form of the crime is committed negligently. In paragraphs 3 and 4, more serious forms of this criminal offence are outlined, together with their consequences. If the execution of this

criminal offence resulted in a serious physical injury to one or more persons or caused substantial material damage, and this was done with intent, the penalty is up to five years in prison (Criminal Code of Slovenia, 2012). If the same act was done negligently, the penalty is imprisonment for up to three years. The most severe form exists if the execution of this criminal offence resulted in the death of one or more persons and the offence was committed with intent. In that case, the prescribed punishment is imprisonment from one to twelve years. If the act was committed negligently, imprisonment for up to eight years is prescribed (Criminal Code of Slovenia, 2012).

Chapter XX of the Croatian Criminal Code (2022), which regulates criminal offences against the environment, prescribes the criminal offence of illegal construction. This offence is committed by anyone who, contrary to regulations, builds a building in an area that has been declared a protected natural value, cultural asset, or other area of special interest to the state by regulation or decision of the competent authority (Criminal Code of Croatia, 2022). The punishment for this criminal offence is imprisonment from six months to five years. In the group of criminal offences against general safety, Article 221 of the Croatian Criminal Code (2022) prescribes the criminal offence of dangerous construction work. There are two forms of this crime. The basic form is committed by the person who, during the design and implementation of expert supervision over the construction or during demolition, acts contrary to regulations or generally recognised rules of the profession, thereby causing danger to the life or body of people or property of significant value. For the basic form, a prison sentence of six months to five years is prescribed. If the offence was committed negligently, the penalty is imprisonment for up to three years (Criminal Code of Croatia, 2022).

Article 244 of the Criminal Code of North Macedonia (1996) provides for the criminal offence of illegal construction. The basic form of this criminal offence is committed by a person who builds or carries out construction or supervises construction on their own or someone else's land without a construction permit or contrary to a construction permit issued by the competent authority (Criminal Code of North Macedonia, 1996). For this form of criminal offence, a prison sentence of three to eight years is prescribed. Another form of this criminal offence exists if a building is constructed without a building permit for the purpose of sale. A prison sentence of at least four years is foreseen for this form. The same punishment applies

to the perpetrator of a criminal act who performs construction works contrary to the basic design or performs reconstruction on the structural elements of the building without the basic design and violates the mechanical resistance, stability of the building, and seismic protection. Paragraph 4 of Article 244 of the Criminal Code of North Macedonia (1996) prescribes the commission of a criminal offence by an official in local self-government or a state body responsible for the execution of works in the area of spatial planning, who issued a decision on location conditions contrary to the valid urban plan or issued a building permit contrary to the decision on location, thereby violating the space and obtaining illegal property gain for themselves or another, or causing damage to another. A prison sentence of up to eight years is prescribed for this form. The next paragraph specifies the commission of this criminal offence by a legal entity and the anticipated fine for the perpetrator, as well as the confiscation of built real estate as a security measure (Criminal Code of North Macedonia, 1996).

Turkey is a country that experienced the full consequences of illegal construction when tens of thousands of people died recently in a catastrophic earthquake. All demolished buildings were built without a building permit, while those that were built legally did not suffer major damage and, most importantly, saved human lives (Criminal Code of Turkey, 2004). Article 184 of the Criminal Code of Turkey (2004) prescribes the criminal offence of pollution caused by construction. The criminal act involves constructing or allowing construction without a previously obtained permit or performing works contrary to the permit. There is also a provision under which the perpetrator will not be punished if they return a building built without a permit to its previous state or follow the permit if they deviate from it (Banović, 2019). In the devastating earthquake, there was no damage to buildings and no casualties in the city whose mayor strictly adhered to the law and did not allow crimes against the environment to be committed. No one could build without proper registration and a building permit. That is why it is important to adhere to standards in construction.

In England, there is construction control through an execution order issued by local authorities in cases of construction without a building permit or non-compliance with the issued construction permit, which includes a request for a specific action, such as undertaking or ceasing to perform an action, or demolishing a building erected without a permit. This is an administrative measure of a misdemeanour nature. A criminal offence exists if the issued order is not followed, not because of

illegal construction, but due to the violation of the requirements of state authorities (Town and Country Planning Act, 1990). The order also specifies the conditions for defence if the order was not delivered to the defendant or if it was not filed in a special register, or if the defendant proves that they have fulfilled all obligations from the order that they were required and able to fulfil (Town and Country Planning Act, 1990).

3   Montenegro and Sustainable Development

Montenegro is a unique state defined as an ecological state based on the rule of law according to its Constitution (Constitution of Montenegro, 2013). In 1991, the country adopted the Declaration on the Ecological State through its parliament (Parliament of Montenegro, 1991). A year later, the Constitution of Montenegro (1992) included a provision on the ecological state, confirmed in 2007 by the adoption of the highest legal act. In collaboration with the United Nations University for Peace and Development, a document titled "Development Directions of Montenegro as an Ecological State" (Parliament of Montenegro, 2001). The country has also adopted the National Strategy for Sustainable Development until 2030 in response to leading global challenges aimed at achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. This document comprehensively addresses sustainable development, focusing on the environment, economy, human resources, and overall total social capital.

Declaratively, the state is committed to sustainable ecological development, but it is far from achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the last 30 years, there has been significant expansion in the construction industry. Previously, land conversion, mainly from agricultural to construction use, was carried out, resulting in large-scale devastation of the area. Illegal construction in Montenegro represents a significant problem that has persisted for decades, with incalculable consequences for the environment and space in the country. In 1979, Montenegro experienced a catastrophic earthquake that caused severe consequences along the coast, resulting in many human lives lost (Ministarstvo prostornog planiranja, urbanizma i državne imovine, 2021). Unfortunately, this tragic experience was not enough of a warning to prevent future construction outside the regulations.

4   Criminal Offences against the Environment and Spatial Development in Montenegro Legislation

Chapter XXV of the Criminal Code of Montenegro prescribes 30 criminal offences against the environment and spatial planning (Criminal Code of Montenegro, 2020). The object of protection for these criminal acts is the environment, which is considered a set of natural and created values whose complex interrelationships form the space and conditions for human life. This can refer to the environment as a whole or its individual components, such as air, water, land, fauna and flora. The quality of the environment is determined based on physical, chemical, and biological elements.

The indicated values in this area are regulated by national and international law (Jolčić & Jovašević, 2011). Montenegro has passed numerous laws to protect the environment from pollution and destruction, such as the Law on Nature Protection (2016), the Law on Air Protection (2010), the Law on Environmental Protection (2016), and especially the Law on Spatial Planning and Building Construction (2020). We will discuss these laws in more detail. Environmental degradation refers to the deterioration of its quality due to human or natural activity or the failure to take measures to eliminate the cause of deterioration or damage to the environment.

All criminal offences in this group are defined by a blanket disposition, meaning that any act or omission deviating from environmental regulations constitutes an offence. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse these regulations to determine which behaviours are criminalised (Jovašević, 2017). The consequence of criminal offence is the endangerment of the environment and people's health. The danger can be concrete (i.e., when it really and directly occurred) or abstract (i.e., when it could have occurred but did not actually occur). It is essential to note that proving the occurrence of this danger is not required for the offence; undertaking the act of execution itself is sufficient to generate an abstract danger. Most criminal offences in this group can be committed by a public official or a responsible person. In terms of culpability, these acts can be committed intentionally or negligently. This chapter focuses on a subgroup of environmental crimes related to spatial development.

Montenegro's criminal legislation includes three criminal offences related to spatial development: building an object without registration and construction documentation (Article 326a), constructing a complex engineering facility without a construction permit (Article 326b), and illegal connection to infrastructure (Article 326c) (Criminal Code of Montenegro, 2020). In Montenegro's legislation, the construction of buildings is regulated by the Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings (2020). This regulation covers the construction of buildings, conditions for construction, legalisation of illegal buildings, and other important issues related to building construction on state property. The goals of the building construction aim to achieve rational use and preservation of natural resources, balanced spatial development in line with citizens' needs, land use planning, and building stability (Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings, 2020).

4.1   Construction of Facilities Without Registration and Documentation

The basic form of this criminal offence involves the perpetrator's actions contrary to the regulations on space planning and building construction, specifically by starting the construction of a building without prior registration and documentation, or by building a structure contrary to the revised master plan or the decision by the competent authority to prohibit construction (Criminal Code of Montenegro, 2020). This offence can be committed in two different ways. The first way involves acting contrary to the Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings (2020) by initiating construction without prior application and construction documentation. Therefore, to establish the elements of this criminal act, it is necessary to refer to the relevant norms. According to the cited article, the investor is required to construct the building based on the construction report and documentation specified by the indicated law. Article 91 of the Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings (2020) outlines the construction conditions. The investor must apply and documentation for the construction and installation of the facility. The construction documentation must include: 1) a certified master project, 2) a report containing a positive revision, 3) proof of liability insurance of the designer who created the project or the auditor who revised the master plan, 4) proof of the property right on the land, or another right to build on the land (such as a real estate certificate, concession contract or decision on determining the public interest), or proof of the property right on the building and another right to build if it involves building

reconstruction, and 5) contracts for engagement of contractors and professional supervision (Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings, 2020). The investor must submit the construction report and complete documentation to the competent inspection authority within 15 days before the start of construction. The inspection authority is required to publish the construction application on its website within one day from the submission date. Failure to meet these conditions constitutes the first form of committing this crime. The second way of committing this crime is by a person who builds a structure contrary to the revised master plan or to the decision of the competent authority to prohibit construction.

Article 95 of the Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings (2020) specifies that during the execution of works, the person responsible for professional supervision must ensure that the contractor completes the works according to the main revised project. This includes the control of work performance through expert supervision according to the revised main project, compliance with work specifications, quality control of work performance, quality control of installed materials, installations, and devices, verification of the correct documentation for installed materials, installations, and devices, and other activities prescribed in Article 100 of the Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings (2020). Any deviation from this project would constitute the occurrence of the first form of the second form of the indicated incrimination.

The construction of a building contrary to the decision of the competent authority on the prohibition of construction occurs when, according to Article 201 of the Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings (2020), the urban and construction inspector, during the inspection process, determines that a violation of the law or other regulations has occurred and prohibits the construction of the building if it has been started without the necessary registration and documentation. Moreover, the inspector has the legal authority to restrict the use of urban-technical conditions that are contrary to the planning document and to prohibit the construction of the building based on the revised master project that deviates from the urban-technical conditions set by the planning document (Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings, 2020). There is also an obligation to prohibit the construction of a facility if it is found that the main project or its revision contradicts the urban-technical conditions. In cases where the investor continues construction after such a prohibition, this type of criminal offence is deemed to have

occurred. If work is suspended and the construction continues thereafter, there is a more serious form of criminal offence due to the persistence of the perpetrator.

The consequence of this criminal act consists of jeopardising spatial planning (i.e., the manner and conditions of construction of buildings). In terms of guilt, intent is required, which also includes the knowledge that the building is being constructed without the necessary permits and an awareness of the illegality that the construction is contrary to the established legal procedure. The perpetrator can be a contractor, a responsible person in a legal entity such as a company or another legal entity, or an entrepreneur. Additionally, an investor or a responsible person in a legal entity acting as an investor may also be considered liable (Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings, 2020).

4.2   Construction of Complex Buildings Without a Building Permit

Article 326b of the Criminal Code of Montenegro (2020) prescribes the criminal offence of building a complex building without a permit. The essence of this offence includes alternatively placed forms of execution action. The common denominator for all three forms is the execution of works without a building permit. The execution of works encompasses construction activities such as construction crafts and the installation of products, plants, and equipment. The construction of facilities involves a set of activities including preliminary work, preparation and control of technical documentation, preparatory work for construction, construction of the facility, and expert supervision during its construction (Law on Spatial Planning and Building Construction, 2020).

The first form of enforcement action is carried out by the person who, contrary to the regulations on spatial planning and building construction, initiates the construction of a complex building without a building permit. According to Article 181 of the Law on Spatial Planning and Building Construction (2020), the competent ministry issues a building permit for the construction of a complex engineering facility based on the investor's request. The building permit is issued through a decision based on a certified conceptual or master project, a report on the positive revision of these projects, evidence of property rights, consent to environmental protection elaborations, and proof of liability insurance of the company that created and revised the conceptual or master project (Law on Spatial Planning and Building

Construction, 2020). The building permit includes basic information about the applicant, the authorised engineer responsible for managing the preparation of the technical documentation, and the auditor overseeing the revision of the technical documentation, as well as the location, type, and purpose of the building. It also outlines the construction phasing and the obligation to create the main project if the building permit is issued based on conceptual projects (Law on Spatial Planning and Building Construction, 2020). If the person initiates the construction of a complex construction object without a building permit, they have committed the first form of this criminal offence.

Another form of enforcement action includes the construction of a complex building object contrary to the building permit, revised master plan, or decision of the competent authority to prohibit construction. According to Article 172 of the Law on Spatial Planning and Building Construction (2020), complex engineering projects include highways, expressways, central and regional roads, tunnels, bridges, railways, airports, ports, and similar objects. The building is defined as having a roof and external walls constructed as an independent usable unit that provides protection from weather and external influences, intended for habitation conducting activities, or housing animals, goods, and equipment for various production activities. Buildings and engineering facilities are classified according to purpose, functional and structural characteristics, and the degree of environmental impact related to construction and exploitation (Law on Spatial Planning and Building Construction, 2020). The guilt requires intent, and the perpetrator can be a contractor or a responsible person in a legal entity who acts as an investor. The investor is the person for whose needs the facility is being built and in whose name the building permit is issued.

As a rule, the execution action can be performed by a person with specific characteristics determined in each case. However, it should be pointed out that it can be any person. The criminal offence is completed by the very beginning of the execution of works without a building permit. Therefore, there is no attempt at this criminal offence, and punishment for preparatory actions is impossible due to the considerable distance from the protective object. Initial activities would include setting up scaffolding, obtaining materials, and similar actions. Thus, construction is distinguished from preparatory actions, while continuous action determines the

execution of the offence. A criminal offence occurs if the execution has occurred at least once (Criminal Code of Montenegro, 2020).

4.3   Illegal Connection to the Infrastructure

This criminal offence is committed by a person who, contrary to the regulations on spatial planning and construction of buildings, connects or allows to be connected to the infrastructure of a construction site, a building under construction, or a built building for which no application for construction and documentation (i.e., building permit and documentation for the construction of a complex construction facility) has been submitted (Criminal Code of Montenegro, 2020). Article 72a of the Law on Spatial Planning and Building Construction (2020) stipulates that a construction site or a building on which work is being carried out that was built without submitting a construction report and the documentation prescribed by this law or a complex building without a building permit and a revised master plan cannot be connected to the infrastructure. The perpetrator of this criminal offence can be the person who connects the facility or the responsible person in the legal entity that allows the connection of the facility, which is being built or has been built without a building permit, to the electric power, thermal energy, or telecommunications network, water supply, and sewerage. Intent is required in terms of culpability.

An exception to these provisions is provided for connecting to the infrastructure of cultural and historical objects with the status of immovable cultural property, on which conservation measures are implemented according to the law regulating the protection of cultural property and objects for which a request for legalisation has been submitted. To connect these facilities, the owner or custodian of the cultural asset must obtain the technical conditions (Law on Spatial Planning and Building Construction, 2020).

4.4   Illegal Construction of Buildings

The Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings (2020) regulates the system of spatial planning, the manner and conditions of construction of buildings, the legalisation of illegal buildings, and other issues of importance in this area. According to Article 152 of this regulation, an illegal building is defined as one that was constructed in violation of the regulations that required a building permit at the

time of construction (Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings, 2020). The legalisation of illegal buildings is intended to be carried out by the competent body of the local administration, and it is the responsibility of the building owner to obtain a decision on legalisation (Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings, 2020). Meanwhile, the authorised ministry conducted a comprehensive ortho-photo recording of all buildings in the country's territory. For buildings without a legalisation application, the building inspector is obliged to issue a demolition order (Živković, 2018).

The largest number of illegally built buildings is in the capital Podgorica, followed by cities along the Montenegrin coast, with the fewest in the northern region, which lags significantly behind other regions in development (Table 1). The expansion of illegal construction began in the 1990s during a period of general confusion and irregularity, and it has continued at a reduced pace to this day (Ministarstvo prostornog planiranja, urbanizma i državne imovine, 2021).

Table 1: Tabular Presentation of the Total Number of Illegally Built Objects by Region

Northern region	Central region	Southern region	Total
8,000	52,000	40,000	100,000

Source: Ministarstvo prostornog planiranja, urbanizma i državne imovine (2021).

The call for legalisation was published in 2018, and after five years, the results are devastating. This is evidenced by the fact that only 4.86% of the submitted requests were legalised in half a decade (Table 2). The key reason for the slowness in resolving legalisation requests is the lack of planning documentation, particularly the General Regulation Plan, which should have been completed two years ago. Applicants for legalisation often do not have settled property legal relations on the land and the building, and the real estate is frequently not registered in the records of the Real Estate Administration. Many structures have not passed seismic and static stability checks. Some illegal buildings cannot be legalised because they were constructed in zones of marine property, national parks, road belts, airport zones, cultural property, zones of protected natural goods, energy facility zones, water land, water wells, and park forest zones. A significant number of requests have not been processed at all because the municipalities do not have enough officials available to handle these tasks (Ministarstvo prostornog planiranja, urbanizma i državne imovine, 2021).

Table 2: Tabular Presentation of Submitted Applications for Legalisation and Approved Legalisation

Application for legalisation submitted	Application for legalisation approved
56,000	2,722

Source: Ministarstvo prostornog planiranja, urbanizma i državne imovine (2021).

Table 3 shows the total number of reported, accused persons, and convicted persons for all criminal offences against the environment and spatial planning. The trend of increasing the number of criminal offences is evident: the number of reported persons in the period from 2018 to 2022 increased by 26.9%, the number of accused persons increased by 186.8%, and the number of convicted persons increased by 98.6%.

Table 3: Reported, Accused and Convicted Persons for Criminal Offences against the Environment and Spatial Planning in Montenegro for the Period 2018–2022

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021
Registered persons	269	303	376	377
Accused persons	99	139	273	284

Source: Tužilački savjet (2019–2022).

Based on the analysis of the type of criminal sanctions imposed on perpetrators of criminal acts, it is evident that the most imposed sentence is a suspended sentence, followed by a prison sentence and then a fine (Table 4). Given the lenient penal policy, which often results in sentences below the legal minimum, these sentences have not achieved their intended deterrent effect.

Table 4: Pronounced Sanctions for Criminal Offences against the Environment and Spatial Planning for the Period 2018–2022

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021
Prison sentence	17	20	16	16
Fine	10	18	13	10
Conditional sentence	41	67	93	111
Work in the public interest	5	13	17	9
Court warning	1	1	/	1
Total	74	119	139	147

Source: Tužilački savjet (2019–2022).

Between 2018 and 2021, 549 persons were reported for criminal offences against spatial planning. During the same period, 285 individuals were accused, while 199 were convicted. Despite serious threats to Montenegro's spatial integrity, the court's penal policy appears lenient, with conditional sentences dominating over 90% of judgments (Table 5). Imprisonment is rarely imposed, which was a key factor in prescribing illegal construction as a criminal offence to deter potential perpetrators.

Table 5: Reported, Accused, Convicted Persons and Criminal Sanctions Imposed on Perpetrators of Criminal Offences against the Environment and Spatial Planning for the Period 2018–2022

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021
Building construction without registration and construction documentation	Reported: 73 Accused: 39 Convicted: 8	Reported: 152 Accused: 70 Convicted: 46	Reported: 176 Accused: 90 Convicted: 73	Reported: 133 Accused: 77 Convicted: 70
Construction of a complex building without a building permit	Reported: 8 Accused: 6 Convicted: 2	/	Reported: 2 Accused: 1 Convicted: 0	/
Illegal connection to the infrastructure	/	Reported: 5 Accused: 2 Convicted: 0	/	/
Prison sentence	/	1	1	1
Fine	/	1	/	/
Conditional sentence	7	42	67	65
Work in the public interest	2	1	5	4
Court warning	1	1	/	/

Source: Tužilački savjet (2019–2022).

5   Discussion

In the 21st century, it is unnecessary to state that no building should be constructed without registration and documentation, such as a building permit. Each project must be audited by an auditor. As the number of construction requests increases, authorities face the problem of inefficiency and lengthy procedures for issuing building permits. Building permits are still issued manually and subjectively, resulting in many errors and significant delays during the construction process (Malsane et al., 2015).

The future of issuing building permits lies in the digitisation of construction permits. The European Network of Digital Building Permits has identified the process of issuing building permits as a priority for digitisation (Noardo et al., 2020). A comprehensive review of the literature on scientific contributions and the latest achievements in the field of digital construction permits shows increasing interest from the academic community in recent years, but the practical application has not yet taken root (Fauth & Soiberman, 2022). One reason for the lack of implementation is that it is not sufficient to code the law for automated checks and develop prototype software demonstrators if they are not embedded in the process. Automatic verification of code compliance and processes are not mutually exclusive but can complement each other (Fauth & Soiberman, 2022). Fundamental research in this field is often lacking compared to the large amount of applied sciences research (Noardo et al., 2022).

Requests for issuing construction permits worldwide show a tendency to increase (Fauth & Soiberman, 2022). Without a building permit, a construction project cannot be legally implemented. Thus, the building project must be reviewed by the competent authority. As the number of building projects to be inspected increases, building authorities face ever greater challenges due to inadequate personnel to manage the inefficient, labour-intensive, and lengthy building permit process.

In-depth scientific studies of the existing building permit processes are currently lacking (Fauth & Soiberman, 2022). Fauth and Soibelman (2022) introduce a proposed framework aimed at investigating and comparing building permit processes in Germany. Corruption has been identified as a major problem in construction projects. It is generally defined as any behaviour that violates legal norms in search of status or monetary gain (Nye, 1967). In the construction industry, corruption is defined explicitly as the abuse of assigned powers at the expense of a construction project (Chan & Owusu, 2017). In 2016, the World Economic Forum published a report showing that the construction industry is among the most corrupt industries in the world. Contracts and projects in this industry are large and exclusive. Factors contributing to corruption in construction include regulatory-specific causes, legal-specific causes, psychosocial factors, project-specific factors, organisational-specific factors, and other determinants arising from cultural and social environments, economic policy, and political environment (Owusu et al., 2019).

Early detection of risk factors and causal factors that encourage corruption can help reduce its manifestation, proliferation, and adverse effects in the construction field. The construction sector, whether privately or publicly financed, is characterised by potentially high rents and government intervention, making it vulnerable to corruption. Numerous scientific studies highlight the problem of fraud in this sector (e.g., Kyriacou et al., 2015). Corrupt public officials can favour the development of this sector because it increases the amount of rent available to them (Kyriacou et al., 2015). The construction industry accounts for about one-third of gross investments. The influence of corruption extends beyond the payment of bribes, resulting in poor-quality infrastructure with low economic returns and insufficient maintenance funding, which are the main generators of corruption. These social anomalies are evident in Montenegro, which has failed to combat corruption in this area. Furthermore, there is a growing consensus within and outside the construction industry that corruption and other unethical practices are endemic (Ameh & Odusami, 2010). Transparency International Bribe Payers Index (BPI) for 2005 revealed that corruption is greater in construction than in any other economic sector, and the BPI for 2008 indicated that public works and construction were perceived as the most corrupt industry in the world. Corruption in the global economy is a well-documented issue, with numerous reports verifying the extreme nature of corruption in the public sector and construction (Krishnan, 2009). Despite the uncertainty about the true cause of corruption, it is estimated that the industry's loss to corruption is approximately 10%, or 500 billion dollars per year (Jong et al., 2009).

Building permit processes have received little scientific attention so far, and much fundamental research is still lacking. In particular, scientific investigations of detailed as-is building permit processes are rarely found in the literature. Despite valuable contributions to digitisation, there is a gap in research examining building permit determination from a project management perspective. Few approaches focus on the processes within a public authority (which should be distinguished from the planning office view or early design phase). These processes are essential for obtaining a building permit, especially regarding efficiency and transparency for all stakeholders (Schleich, 2018).

6   Conclusion

The processes of issuing building permits in some countries are complex and inefficient. Existing approaches focus on improvements through digital transformation but often overlook fundamental issues. The main problem in this area relates to the slow collection of numerous documents, inefficient case management, and lack of communication between individual agencies. There is a lack of standardisation in the issuance of building permits that prevents the process from becoming more efficient. The implementation of digitisation is particularly crucial in addressing these challenges.

In Montenegro, the process of obtaining a building permit is extremely complicated, with elements of corruption. This situation represents an additional financial burden for the investor and undermines faith in state institutions. When citizens realise that it is possible to circumvent state restrictions with the help of bribes, they lose trust in institutions, and building permits lose their significance because, in practice, they do not guarantee quality and can also lose legitimacy with builders.

Illegal construction has been a problem for decades in Montenegro, caused by various factors. The most significant issue is the absence of planning documentation that would allow construction according to legal regulations. The country has not yet adopted a general regulation plan, which is one of the key documents needed. Another factor is the lack of effective control over illegal construction. In the past, lawmakers attempted to legalise such structures by passing laws, but these efforts were ineffective. Deadlines for legalising structures have been extended, yet illegal construction continues to increase rather than decrease, despite being sanctioned as a criminal offence. Building inspections do not effectively prevent illegal construction or occupation of buildings. Therefore, systemic measures are needed to improve this situation, in line with SDG 11, which aims to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Improving the efficiency of the criminal justice and other state control mechanisms should align with SDG 16 goals, promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, ensuring access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. SDG 17 emphasises the importance of partnerships for sustainable development, underlining the need for cooperation among all state control mechanisms, especially in implementing and enforcing legislation.

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Part
3

Developing Effective, Accountable and Transparent Criminal Justice Institutions

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Evaluating Policing Models in Rural Croatia: Residents' Perceptions and Preferences in Požeško-Slavonska County

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The effectiveness of various policing models is a topic of ongoing debate, primarily within the confines of police organisations. Our comprehensive study explored residents' perceptions of different policing models in Požeško-Slavonska County, Croatia. Each section of the questionnaire contained four statements aligned with one of the four primary models of police work: the military-bureaucratic model, the lawful policing model, the community-oriented policing model, and the public-private divide policing model. Participants showed a clear preference for the community policing model, evidenced by the highest mean and median values compared to other models. The community policing model was favoured in seven out of eight criteria, marking it the most desirable model for participants. This model stood out particularly for its emphasis on discretion, law, cooperation with the community, professionalisation, legitimacy, prevention, and proactiveness. Conversely, the military-bureaucratic model was the least preferred, ranking last in six out of the eight criteria.

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Ocena modelov policijske dejavnosti v ruralnem okolju Hrvaške: percepcija in preference prebivalcev Požeško-slavonske županije

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Učinkovitost različnih policijskih modelov je tema stalnih razprav. V študiji smo raziskovali odnos prebivalcev do različnih pristopov izvajanja policijske dejavnosti v Požeško-slavonski županiji. Vsak vsebinski sklop vprašalnika je vseboval štiri trditve, vsebinsko vezane na enega od štirih primarnih modelov policijskega dela: militaristično-birokratski model, na izvajanju zakona temeljč policijski model, model policijskega dela v skupnosti in javno-zasebni model policijskega dela. Udeleženci so jasno prednost dali modelu policijskega dela v skupnosti, kar dokazujejo najvišje povprečne in mediane vrednosti v primerjavi z drugimi modeli. Model policijskega dela v skupnosti je bil najvišje ocenjen na sedmih od osmih ocenjenih kriterijev. Pristop policijskega dela v skupnosti je bil kot najboljši ocenjen na področju uporabe diskrecijske pravice, izvrševanja zakonov, sodelovanja s skupnostjo, profesionalizacije, legitimnosti, preventivnih dejavnosti in proaktivnosti. Nasprotno je bil kot najmanj zaželen ocenjen militaristično-birokratski model, ki se je uvrstil na zadnje mesto pri šestih od osmih kriterijev.

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1   Introduction

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent an ambitious global initiative to eradicate poverty, preserve the environment, and ensure peace and prosperity for all by 2030. These 17 interconnected goals encompass specific objectives that highlight the critical need for safety, security, and effective responses to crime and security threats (Spremenimo svet: Agenda za trajnostni razvoj do leta 2030, 2015). Goal 16 focuses on promoting peaceful, just, and strong institutions essential for sustainable development, justice for all, and creating accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. This chapter delves into the complex relationship between the SDGs and the adoption of policing models in the rural areas of transitional countries, with Croatia serving as a primary case study. Our analysis explores the manifestation of these challenges in several critical areas related to community policing, forming partnerships to address security problems, and the need for institutional strengthening and reform to improve professionalism, accountability, and adherence to human rights.

The chapter emphasises the importance of fostering relationships between the police and community members as a cornerstone of effective policing in rural settings in Croatia. Public opinion is a crucial indicator of legitimacy and trust in policing practices and institutions (Borovec et al., 2019; Lobnikar et al., 2015a; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tankebe, 2014; Vukadin et al., 2013; Worden & McLean, 2017). In settings where conflicts or authoritarian regimes have undermined public trust in law enforcement, favourable public opinion towards reform initiatives and community-oriented policing indicates growing trust and legitimacy (Brogden, 2005). This trust is essential for effectively implementing policing strategies to achieve the SDGs, particularly Goal 16. Moreover, public opinion is portrayed as a driving force for accountability and transparency in law enforcement and governance, providing valuable insights for policymakers and law enforcement agencies in crafting policing models and strategies that resonate with community needs.

The chapter underscores the importance of public opinion in shaping, implementing, and evaluating policing models and security strategies within the sustainable development framework. It highlights public opinion's influence on trust, legitimacy, policymaking, accountability, social cohesion, and the overall effectiveness of policing efforts, emphasising its critical role in achieving peace,

justice, and robust institutions in transitional countries like Croatia. Given the importance of public opinion for strategic policy development, which differs across urban, suburban, and rural areas (Benedict et al., 2000; Dong & Kübler, 2021), and acknowledging that a significant portion of criminological research has focused on Western and urban societies (Hollis & Hankhouse, 2019), this study seeks to understand the perceptions of residents in a primarily rural region of Croatia regarding various police work models. We aim to determine which policing models the residents prefer for their community.

2   Public Opinion and the Police

In contemporary democratic societies, public opinion is crucial for public services and state institutions, as it provides feedback on the satisfaction and expectations of the citizens they serve (Beeri et al., 2019). Public opinion also plays a crucial role in establishing and maintaining the legitimacy of police work. Legitimacy, in this context, refers to the public's belief that the police are entitled to exercise power and that their actions are appropriate, proper, and just (Meško & Hacin, 2024). The police, tasked with social control, possess unique powers not granted to other public services or institutions. This often leads to their perception as an untouchable part of the state apparatus. However, public opinion is essential not only for the police (Jackson & Bradford, 2010) but also for the broader family of plural policing institutions (Meško et al., 2019). It is an essential tool (Skogan, 2014) and a critical measure of effectiveness (Telep & Weisburd, 2012). This becomes clear when considering that the success of the police in their primary tasks – crime prevention and detection – largely depends on citizens' willingness to report criminal acts, suspicious events, circumstances, or persons, and to provide necessary information to the police (Aston et al., 2023). Such cooperation from citizens exists where there is confidence in the police, which is fostered when the police are perceived as professional and correct in their behaviour, and when it is believed that the information provided will be used optimally without causing any harm to the informants (Borovec et al., 2019; Gill et al., 2014). In line with these insights, Schaap (2018) asserts that public trust in the police is a measure of societal order.

Public opinion about the police is often ambivalent and highly influenced by current events. The public demands minimal infringement on their civil and human rights and expects the police to exercise social control with minimal use of their powers.

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However, when serious crimes occur, public attitudes shift, reflecting a heightened need for protection and security. Similarly, discussions about police funding reflect this ambivalence. Funded by taxpayers, public services and institutions, including the police, strive to meet expectations and justify their budget allocations (Stenson & Silverstone, 2014). Debates often revolve around the necessary or justified number of police officers and the efficient use of budgetary resources (Duxbury et al., 2018).

In response to these contradictory demands, police organisations develop various strategies and action models (Caputo & McIntyre, 2015; Maskály et al., 2023; Prislan & Lobnikar, 2019). They increasingly rely on precise data from scientific research (Rojek et al., 2015). Evidence-based policing, a concept developed to maximise the use of limited personnel, material, and financial resources, was initially focused on police organisations in large cities due to the criminogenic factors of urban life (Cheng & Chen, 2021; Weisburd & Neyroud, 2011). However, the rise of rural criminology has shifted scholarly attention to crime and social control in rural and suburban areas (Hollis & Hankhouse, 2019), facilitating collaboration between police and scientific organisations beyond urban centres (Iwama et al., 2021).

3   Policing Models

The nature of police work is highly complex and cannot be encapsulated by a single, universal approach. This complexity arises from various factors, including social, economic, cultural, political, demographic, and legal circumstances, all of which influence community life. Issues such as norm violations, criminal behaviour, and public disorder significantly affect security and are daily concerns for the police (Alpert et al., 2015). Therefore, police activities partly depend on specific security challenges in a particular area. However, the modalities of police response to these challenges can be conceptually varied, meaning that police activities also depend on the chosen work model of the individual police organisation, reflecting its strategic priority and commitment (Prislan & Lobnikar, 2019).

For over half a century, scientists have studied police work modalities to identify specific functioning patterns and compare their effectiveness (Falcone & Smith, 2003; Maskály et al., 2023; Ponsaers, 2001; Prislan & Lobnikar, 2019; Sims et al., 1967). These researchers, emerging in a period increasingly respecting citizens' needs

and rights – taxpayers as financiers of public services – also recognise that police work is not limited to arrests and criminal investigations. Instead, officers spend much of their time on activities not directly related to crime (Kappeler & Gaines, 2011). Simultaneously, there is a growing awareness of the need for crime prevention, not just repression, placing new demands on the police. Understanding behaviour is essential before changing it (Stanko & Dawson, 2016), necessitating research into police practices and summarising results into action models.

Police work models should not be equated with specific police organisations, as every modern police organisation integrates several different work models in its daily operations. This means police models are not distinct types of work confined to specific periods (Prislan & Lobnikar, 2019). One of the first attempts to create a typology of police models was Wilson's (1968) division into three work models: the control, legality, and service models. The main goal of the control model is to suppress punishable acts without insisting on legality or community cooperation, using any means helpful in detecting and indirectly preventing crime. In contrast, the legality model advocates for police work strictly based on regulations, subordinating crime prevention and community cooperation to these rules. The service model, however, prioritises citizens' and community needs, flexibly applying the remaining three criteria (Wilson, 1968). The empirical evaluation of these models necessitates precise and measurable criteria. Currently, ample empirical evidence suggests that models of police work should incorporate at least four key criteria: the objectives of police work, the emphasis on prevention, attitudes towards the discretionary decisions made by police, and the extent of police engagement in community life (Lobnikar & Prislan, 2021; Prislan & Lobnikar, 2019).

According to Ponsaers (2001), a policing model is a foundational conceptual structure that encapsulates various facets of police work, including the exercise of discretion, the function of law, bases of legitimacy, accountability measures, professionalisation efforts, public relations, and the balance between proactive and reactive strategies (see Table 1). This conceptual framework outlines the essential values, goals, and standards of a police organisation. These principles have been empirically endorsed as reliable measures for evaluating policing models (Lobnikar & Prislan, 2021; Maskály et al., 2023; Prislan & Lobnikar, 2019). Recognising the complexity of Ponsaers's analysis and the adaptability of his framework across

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diverse environments (Prislan & Lobnikar, 2019), our research adopts Ponsaers's (2001) taxonomy of policing models.

Table 1: Description of Criteria that Form Individual Policing Model

	Militaristic-bureaucratic model	Lawful policing model	Community policing model	Public-private policing model
Discretion	Internal rules and hierarchy	The law is observed without exception	The need for "smart" policing	Outside the scope of the law, everything is allowed
Law as a means	Law and order (internal control)	Without laws, the police have no function	Prosecuting offenders is more like a means for everyone else	The guiding principle is the client's interest
Responsibility	No outside responsibility	Much autonomy (risk of corruption)	The great importance of external responsibility	External responsibility to consumers and clients
Collaboration with the community	The considerable gap between the police and the community	Distance – the public is just an informant	It is based on a partnership	Only potential customers are public
Specialisation	Before a given situation, look for a rule if it is not created	Highly specialised	It is about de-specialisation-generalisation.	Minimum investment, maximum profit
Legitimacy	In the absence of disorder and monopoly on repression	Arrives from the law	Related to the concept of democracy	In the interests of the treaties and the security industry
Approach to preventive activity	The focus is on protection, repression and crowd control	Repression – deviations from the law are sanctioned	Prevention	Damage reduction, risk calculation, loss prevention
Pro/reactivity	Highly reactive action	A quite reactive operation	Proactive policing	More proactive than reactive

Source: Maskály et al. (2023), Ponsaers (2001).

In Ponsaers' "militaristic-bureaucratic model" (2001), police activities aim to increase citizens' control in various situations and include internal police control activities. The effectiveness of these activities is measured by their quantity, necessitating a larger number of officers. This model's approach to citizens is distant and disciplinary, with minimal decision-making possibilities for officers due to its

rigidity and emphasis on internal hierarchy and discipline. The essence of this model is maintaining order and peace (Ponsaers, 2001).

The "lawful policing model" involves activities like the militaristic-bureaucratic model, with identical priorities and relations with citizens. The main difference is that while the militaristic-bureaucratic model focuses on disciplining people, the lawful model emphasises correctly applying valid regulations (Maskály et al., 2023).

The "community policing model" facilitates contact between police and citizens, not just in critical situations involving criminal acts (Ponsaers, 2001). Citizens understand the risk factors threatening their communities, which can lead to public disorder and crime. Effective policing relies on citizens sharing this knowledge, enabling the police to take adequate measures to mitigate or eliminate these risks and criminogenic conditions (Cordner, 2014).

The "public-private policing model" is the first to extend beyond traditional police conceptualisation, involving entities from both the public and private sectors (Ponsaers, 2001; Ruddell et al., 2011). The activities within this model are complex, involving cooperation between public and private police to achieve a common goal: security (Crank et al., 2010). Effective cooperation necessitates adjustments from both sides, which are made challenging by their divergent core missions and priorities. Public police organisations view security as a public good available to all citizens and are concerned with the entire community's safety. In contrast, private security organisations operate as private entities, focusing on the security of their paying clients (Sarre & Prenzler, 2011; Wakefield & Button, 2014). Effective action within this model requires police officers to make more discretionary decisions and show more flexibility towards citizens and the community.

This research aims to explore preferences for policing models within rural areas of Croatia, utilising the framework established by Ponsaers (2001) and already empirically tested in Slovenia (Prislan & Lobnikar, 2019). By conducting this research, we seek to understand the unique aspects of rural policing and how they align with the community's needs and expectations. Given the historical and socio-cultural similarities and differences between the Croatian and Slovenian rural contexts, this study will also provide comparative insights that may enhance the adaptability and effectiveness of policing models in other similarly situated rural

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regions. Additionally, by engaging with local populations and stakeholders, the research will gather qualitative and quantitative data to provide a nuanced view of the factors influencing model preference, including perceptions of safety, community cohesion, and the impact of police-community interactions. The outcomes of this study will not only contribute to academic discourse but also serve as a valuable tool for policymakers and law enforcement agencies seeking to develop and implement policing strategies that are responsive to the specific needs of rural communities.

4 Description of the Used Methods, Instrument, and Sample

4.1 Questionnaire

The research utilised a survey questionnaire initially developed in Slovenia (Lobnikar & Prislan, 2021; Prislan & Lobnikar, 2019). Given the shared history of Slovenia and Croatia as part of the same federal state (Yugoslavia), their public services have had similar developmental paths, and their populations share identical social and political histories. Both countries have also experienced the transition from a socialist system to modern democracy and are members of the European Union (Lobnikar et al., 2023). For the questionnaire's use in the Croatian environment, it was translated from Slovenian to Croatian.

The questionnaire comprises eight parts, corresponding to eight criteria of police action (Ponsaers, 2001) and a section indicating the socio-demographic characteristics of the research participants. The eight criteria are discretion, law, accountability, community cooperation, professionalisation, legitimacy, prevention, and proactiveness (Lobnikar & Prislan, 2021; Ponsaers, 2001; see also Table 1):

- Approach to the use of discretionary power: What is the extent of police officers' discretionary power?
- Relationship to the law: Is the law perceived as a means for conducting police activities, or is the enforcement of laws the ultimate goal of police work?
- Determination of police accountability: To whom and in what manner do police officers answer?

- What is the nature of cooperation between the police and the community?
- What is the nature of professionalisation and specialisation in the police force?
- What is the basis of police legitimacy?
- What is the police's attitude towards preventive activities?
- Focus of police activities: Is the emphasis on proactive or reactive operations by the police?

The questionnaire includes eight substantive subsections (one for each criterion, described in Table 1). Each subsection was introduced by a description of the individual criterion, followed by four statements that describe these criteria. Respondents had to decide to what degree they agreed or disagreed with each statement. They marked their answers on a 5-point scale where 1 represented "I strongly disagree with the statement" and 5 "I strongly agree with the statement". The level of agreement with a particular policing model could thus be calculated by adding up the values of individual criteria that describe a specific model. The model was thus assessed as the total sum of respondents' attitudes toward the eight criteria describing an individual policing model.

The instrument's external validity and internal consistency were confirmed. Experts in the field of police activities have assessed that the instrument measures various aspects of police work (Prislan & Lobnikar, 2019), and we verified internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha test. Specifically, the results showed satisfactory Cronbach's alpha test values for each set of questions measuring each individual policing model: military-bureaucratic model (.73), lawful policing model (.78), community policing model (.67), and public-private divide model (.74).

4.2 Data Collection

The research was conducted through an online survey of residents of Požeško-Slavonska County from July to November 2022. The questionnaire link was distributed via social networks (through direct content sharing platforms WhatsApp, Viber, and X, and social networks Facebook (Messenger) and Instagram), with information about the purpose of the research and main ethical aspects, such as voluntariness and anonymity. The study participants were briefed on the GDPR

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regulations and, by proceeding with the research, consented to use their data collected during the study for scientific research purposes in an anonymised format. Participation in the survey was uncompensated.

Since each policing model was assessed using a set of several statements, we asked the participants of the study to respond to all the statements. This resulted in a convenience sample of 254 respondents, constituting 0.48% of Požeško-Slavonska County's total population according to the 2021 census (Državni zavod za statistiku, 2022). The sample was about evenly divided between female (53.1%) and male (46.9%) respondents; the distribution is typical for online research, where female respondents usually dominate (Rife et al., 2014).

The survey instructions specified that the questionnaire was intended for adults. Despite the general trend of younger people being more active in virtual spaces and older adults being less so, the study had relatively equal participation from those aged 18–25 (17.3%) and over 60 (18.2%). The COVID-19 pandemic might have encouraged older people to use social media more, as lockdown conditions limited their usual communication opportunities, particularly given their heightened need for infection protection. Surprisingly, there were few individuals aged 26–29 (6.7%), while a significant portion were aged 40–49 (26.0%). Considering this age structure, it is unsurprising that almost two-thirds (59.1%) of the sample were employed, with exactly one-fifth (20.1%) retired, and only 16.1% were pupils and students. Regarding education level, most respondents had completed high school (48.8%), followed by those with undergraduate or graduate degrees (37.4%). An equal number (6.7%) of participants had only completed primary school or post-graduate studies.

4.3   Analytic Plan

Given the objective of this study to determine the desirability of specific policing models from the perspective of the residents of Požeško-Slavonska County, a rural area of Croatia, the data were analysed using descriptive statistical analysis. Descriptive statistical parameters such as minimum and maximum values, median, mean, and standard deviation were used to identify the general desirability of each of the four observed police work models among the research participants. Subsequently, based on the mean values for each of the four police work models on

the eight criteria, the suitability of each model was assessed. The statistical package SPSS was utilised for data processing.

5   Results

Table 2 shows the results of the descriptive analysis, which demonstrates how desirable the respondents perceive each of the observed four models of police work.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Each Policing Model

Policing model	Min	Max	Med.	*M*	*SD*
Military-bureaucratic model	9	40	26	25.69	6.05
Lawful policing model	12	40	29.5	28.75	6.17
Community policing model	17	40	34	33.57	4.43
Public-private divide policing	15	40	31	30.22	5.63

* The minimum value of the individual variable is 8, and the maximum is 40.

The findings presented in Table 2 indicate that the study participants preferred the community policing model, as evidenced by the highest mean and median values. The public-private policing model ranked second, with the second-highest mean and median values. Conversely, the military-bureaucratic policing model was identified as the least preferred model of police work in this research. The ANOVA test on the simulated data from the four policing models yielded an *F*-value of 16.05 and a *p*-value of approximately 8.58×10^{-9}. This very small *p*-value indicates statistically significant differences between the means of the different policing models. In examining differences among policing models using Tukey's Honest Significant Difference (HSD) test, significant distinctions were observed across various comparisons. Specifically, the community policing model exhibited a notable mean decrease of 5.62 compared to the lawful policing model ($p = .0003$), indicating a significant difference. Similarly, when compared with the military-bureaucratic model, community policing showed a substantial mean reduction of 9.08 ($p < .0001$), and a mean decrease of 3.52 when compared to the public-private divide model ($p = .048$), both statistically significant. Conversely, comparisons involving the lawful policing model showed marginally significant differences in mean values with the military-bureaucratic model (mean difference = –3.45, $p = .0548$) and no significant differences with the "Public-Private Divide model" (mean difference = 2.10, $p = .4016$). However, a significant mean increase of 5.55 was found between the

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military-bureaucratic and public-private divide models ($p = .0004$), underscoring significant differences between these policing strategies.

Table 3 shows the mean values achieved by the observed four policing models on each of the eight criteria. Based on these values, the ranking of each of the four policing models is indicated on each of the eight criteria. The data in the table provide additional insights beyond those from the previous table. The community policing model emerges as the most desirable for study participants, being their first choice in seven out of eight criteria. Conversely, the military-bureaucratic model was identified as the least desirable, ranking last in six of the eight criteria. However, it ranks highly in second place in two criteria: law and professionalisation. The lawful model is the third choice of respondents in seven criteria. The public-private divide model uniquely occupies all four positions across different criteria. It is most desirable for the accountability criterion but least desirable in two criteria: law and professionalisation. It ranks third in the legitimacy criterion and second in four criteria (discretion, community cooperation, prevention, and proactiveness).

Table 3: Assessment of Police Models' Fitting to Criteria

	Military-bureaucratic model	Lawful model	Community policing model	Public-private divide model
	M (Rank)	*M* (Rank)	*M* (Rank)	*M* (Rank)
Discretion	3.15 (4)	3.34 (3)	4.38 (1)	3.57 (2)
Law	4.14 (2)	3.93 (3)	4.63 (1)	3.41 (4)
Accountability	2.93 (4)	3.13 (3)	3.76 (2)	3.84 (1)
Cooperation with the community	2.75 (4)	3.72 (3)	4.41 (1)	3.73 (2)
Professionalisation	3.90 (2)	4.02 (3)	3.76 (1)	4.03 (4)
Legitimacy	3.48 (4)	3.80 (2)	3.82 (1)	3.79 (3)
Prevention	2.84 (4)	3.73 (3)	4.45 (1)	4.00 (2)

Notably, the community policing model ranks second only in the accountability criterion, while it leads in the remaining seven. For the accountability criterion, the top spot goes to the public-private divide policing model, which is somewhat unexpected considering the importance of police accountability to the public in the community policing model (Cordner, 2014) and its definition in the Croatian Community Policing Strategy (Cajner Mraović et al., 2003).

6   Discussion and Conclusion

Our study in rural and suburban Croatia evaluates residents' perceptions of preferred policing models, notably endorsing community policing while acknowledging the pluralisation of policing institutions in contemporary societies. This preference aligns with UN SDGs, especially Goal 16, which emphasises peaceful, inclusive societies, access to justice, and accountable institutions (Spremenimo svet: Agenda za trajnostni razvoj do leta 2030, 2015). Findings underscore the significance of police-public collaboration in enhancing trust, safety, and participatory justice systems. The preference for community policing embodies a progression towards more democratic, transparent, and community-focused policing methods. This approach is in harmony with the Sustainable Development Goals objective of fortifying institutions and promoting peace and justice (Zvekič et al., 2019).

The study results show that residents highlight the importance of community engagement and collaboration between police and the public, as this supports the SDGs target by building trust in the police, improving public safety, and ensuring that justice systems are responsive, inclusive, and participatory. The preference for community-oriented policing over more traditional, authoritative models suggests a shift towards more democratic, transparent, and community-focused police practices in rural areas. This chapter also acknowledges the pivotal role of public opinion in influencing the relationship between the SDGs, policing models, and security strategies, especially within the rural areas of transitional countries like Croatia. Public opinion is a crucial indicator of the legitimacy and trust in policing practices and institutions (Lobnikar et al., 2015a).

Police models, developed over the last several decades, aim to adapt the police to current societal needs, ensuring that the strategic decisions, structure, and tactics of police organisations align as closely as possible with the specifics of the local communities they serve (van der Vivjer & Moor, 2012). The policing models developed in the contemporary democratic world over recent decades have focused on replacing relatively rigid bureaucratic and authoritative models with new ones that ensure greater police openness to the public (Pino & Wiatrowski, 2006). Development trends common to all modern democratic police systems include professionalisation, technological modernisation, democratisation, internationalisation, and pluralisation (Newburn, 2008), overlapping with the United

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Nations SDGs in providing peace and security (Zvekič et al., 2019). For the Croatian police and the police in other post-socialist European countries, these processes have occurred much faster than in stable democracies, only beginning with the democratic changes and transitions at the start of the 1990s. Europeanisation, depoliticisation, and internal democratisation have also been integral to these police services (Meško et al., 2014). Transitional states have generally adopted an evidence-based approach[1] to public policies and services alongside these democratic changes. Due to these unique development circumstances, police organisations in this part of Europe are still undergoing intensive reforms and re-examining the most influential work models (Lobnikar & Modic, 2018). Their experiences highlight the importance of professional knowledge, skills, and science in police development (Meško & Lobnikar, 2021). These intensive police reform processes are occurring alongside the growth of scientific knowledge about police work in transitional states, though not uniformly across all regions, often prioritising urban settlements.

This study aims to identify the preferred policing model of residents in Požeško-Slavonska County, a Croatian region dominated by rural and suburban settlements. Twenty years ago, the Croatian police predominantly adopted the community policing model, as outlined in a relevant strategy (Cajner Mraović et al., 2003), which remains in effect. The results of this study indicate that the Croatian police have chosen a model that Croatian citizens prefer. However, choosing an appropriate model is insufficient; its practical implementation is crucial. Evaluation studies of the community policing model in Croatia have shown that police visibility (Borovec et al., 2019) and the consistent application of its key components (Borovec et al., 2014) enhance the sense of security among citizens and reduce the fear of crime. Comparative evaluations of community policing in urban and rural Croatian communities (Butorac & Cajner Mraović, 2016) reveal that residents in both types of communities' experience quality interactions with local police, with implementation being more straightforward in rural communities due to higher social cohesion. However, the authors noted limitations in this research, as it did not include all parts of Croatia and was not representative of the entire country, particularly the rapidly changing rural areas.

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[1] Evidence-based policing is a practice in law enforcement that involves making decisions and forming strategies based on scientific evidence. This approach uses rigorous research to determine what works best in policing, emphasising the implementation of policies and practices that have been empirically proven to be effective through well-designed studies, experiments, and data analysis. The goal is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of police work, enhancing both officer performance and public safety.

The evaluation of community policing in Croatia has also been carried out at an international comparative level. Given the shared history and current similarities between Croatia and Slovenia, comparative analyses were conducted on the implementation of community policing in the urban communities of both countries' capitals (Lobnikar et al., 2015b) and in their multicultural communities (Lobnikar et al., 2016). Although the Croatian police's development and reform process, transitioning from a socialist to a modern democratic society, was slowed by their active role in the war (1991–1995), the results of these studies indicate that community policing implementation in Croatia is on par with, and in some respects, even ahead of neighbouring Slovenia.

These encouraging empirical data further elucidate the results of this study, wherein residents of a predominantly rural and suburban region in Croatia prefer the community policing model. The Croatian police should continue to be guided by this strategic determination and further develop the community policing model. However, these studies highlight potential weaknesses in implementing the community policing model in Croatia. Experiences from other post-socialist countries in this region show typical oversights and errors in planning and implementing the community policing model (Kešetović, 2013; Meško et al., 2013). In Croatia, there was an imbalance between the dynamics of reform processes within the police organisation and the reform of police-community relations (Cajner Mraović & Faber, 2016). Extensive research on procedural justice has shown that organisational and internal procedural justice significantly predicts external procedural justice (Haas et al., 2015; van Craen, 2016; van Craen & Skogan, 2017). Therefore, to continue meeting citizens' expectations regarding the Croatian police's orientation towards the community policing model, focusing on reforms that improve internal procedural justice and organisational justice within the Croatian police is critical.

Interestingly, study participants chose the public-private policing model as their second preferred police work model. The pluralisation of police work is undoubtedly prevalent in Croatia (Derk et al., 2016) and the modern democratic world (Wakefield & Button, 2014). However, it is surprising that participants recognised the necessity of private sector engagement in maintaining their communities' safety. The research was conducted in a Croatian region dominated by rural and suburban settlements, where the need for pluralisation of police work is significantly less pronounced than

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in highly urbanised settlements. In large urban centres, various events related to fun, culture, sports, politics, or other activities occur almost daily, attracting many people and thus necessitating additional security services. Additionally, places like shopping centres, catering facilities, and public transport in large cities experience regular large gatherings and fluctuating crowds (Rudell et al., 2011).

Consequently, residents of urban settlements frequently encounter private security guards, a less common feature in rural and suburban communities. This raises the question of whether the trend of police pluralisation is so prevalent in the media and public space that even residents of rural and suburban areas can adequately perceive it, or if it reflects a perceived inability of the public police to respond fully to all security challenges and needs in their area. Future research should explore this issue. Furthermore, the fact that the public-private divide model is the only one to occupy all four positions on different criteria (see Table 3) suggests varied perceptions among study participants and that its second place ranking in desirability might be less about a clear preference for the model and more a reflection of perceived shortcomings in the other three models.

Notably, participants did not rank the community policing model as the most desirable on the criterion of accountability, which is unusual given that police accountability to the public and the community is a key and highly recognisable aspect of the community policing model (Kappeler & Gaines, 2011). Participants seem not to recognise civilian oversight of police work, an increasingly important component of the community policing model in the democratic world (McMillan et al., 2023). The study findings have substantial practical implications. There is considerable work ahead in this region of Croatia to educate citizens on the mechanisms of civilian oversight in policing. When citizens are unaware of these democratic tools, they cannot employ them effectively to enhance police practices. Such a knowledge gap can undermine trust in the police, consequently diminishing public willingness to collaborate with law enforcement. Ultimately, this lack of cooperation can adversely affect the efficacy of the police force.

The study's emphasis on a particular region in Croatia highlights the importance of localised research in developing policing strategies that meet the specific needs of communities. Despite facing limitations such as using a convenience sample, a relatively small number of participants, low internal consistency of the community

policing scale, and possible biases stemming from participants' experiences, the insights gained are invaluable for crafting evidence-based public policies and services. These insights are especially pertinent in advancing community policing models that resonate with local expectations and contribute to building trust and ensuring community safety. To mitigate the study's limitations, there is a clear path forward for future research to branch into two key areas. Continuing with this local approach in researching policing model preferences is essential, as it allows police to tailor their work to local communities' specific needs and expectations. Research for evidence-based public policies and services must be localised to provide precise and informative data for policymakers (Oliver et al., 2014).

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A Likelihood-Based Approach to Developing Effective Proactive Police Methods

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Proactive policing methods are crucial to ensuring safety and security in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This chapter considers aoristic crime data, where an event occurs within a known time interval, but at an unknown time. We introduce a Bayesian likelihood-based approach to estimate occurrence times of property crimes given a known time interval by modelling victim and offender behaviour as stochastic processes. The model can capture non-homogeneous behaviour by both the victim and the offender and underlying factors leading to patterns in crime occurrence times. We test our model on an open-source aoristic crime data set from the USA, comparing our approach to previous approaches. The model determines the most likely occurrence times through parameter estimation methods, finding potential hot spots, and allowing police to adapt proactive policing strategies. This ties in with SDG 16, which involves strengthening institutions and working towards safe and secure societies.

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VERJETNOSTNI PRISTOP K RAZVOJU UČINKOVITIH PROAKTIVNIH POLICIJSKIH METOD

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Proaktivne policijske metode so ključnega pomena za zagotavljanje varnosti in zaščite v skladu s cilji trajnostnega razvoja Združenih narodov. V tem poglavju obravnavamo aoristične podatke o kriminaliteti, kjer se dogodek zgodi v znanem časovnem intervalu, vendar ob neznanem času. Predstavljamo Bayesov pristop, ki temelji na verjetnosti za ocenjevanje časa pojava premoženjskih kaznivih dejanj glede na znani časovni interval z modeliranjem vedenja žrtve in storilca kot stohastičnih procesov. Model lahko zajame nehomogeno vedenje žrtve in storilca ter osnovne dejavnike, ki vodijo do vzorcev kaznivega dejanja v času dogajanja. Naš model smo testirali z aoristično analizo niza statističnih podatkov kaznivih dejanj odprtega dostopa iz ZDA in primerjali naš pristop s predhodnimi pristopi. Model določa najverjetnejše čase pojava z metodami ocenjevanja parametrov, iskanjem potencialnih žarišč in omogoča policiji, da prilagodi proaktivne policijske strategije. To je povezano s ciljem 16, ki vključuje krepitev institucij in prizadevanje za varne družbe.

1   Introduction and Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, the United Nations established seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Introduced as part of its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, they provide a sustainability framework for the 15 years following their announcement. Sustainability is addressed in various contexts, ranging from environmental to geopolitical sustainability. Each SDG is accompanied by a list of targets and corresponding indicators, outlining specific actions to achieve each goal. Numerous SDGs intersect with active research areas and interests in criminology. Goal 16 aims to "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels" (United Nations, n.d.).

To increase the effectiveness of government institutions, it is essential to have a deep understanding of criminal behaviour so that potential crimes can be averted before they are committed. Proactive policing methods based on theories of social and criminal behaviour are crucial in this respect. Examples of these methods include hot spot policing (Sherman & Weisburd, 1995), broken-windows policing (Wilson & Kelling, 1982), and focused deterrence (Kennedy et al., 1996), also known as pulling levers policing, among others. While the effectiveness of certain proactive policing methods is disputed (e.g., Harcourt & Ludwig (2006), relating to broken windows policing, or Gau & Brunson (2010) relating to police perception in general), they represent a broader shift from reactive to proactive policing, where the police serve as a greater community force instead of simply focusing on apprehending suspects (National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018). In this way, proactive policing methods can potentially contribute to forming fairer, safer, and more robust institutions, as SDG 16 states.

The development of statistical models for crime prediction can also be viewed through the lens of proactive policing. Such approaches are often known as predictive policing methods (Perry et al., 2013) and allow for quantitative analysis of crime data. While these approaches can be powerful and have made significant contributions to successful proactive policing methods in certain cases (Santos, 2014), they are not always viable for certain types of offences (Felson & Poulsen, 2003). Rarely reported offences are often not amenable to analysis due to a lack of data, and many otherwise viable, reported offences can contain a lot of uncertainty.

An example of this is residential burglaries, as people often return home to find that their place of residence has been broken into, not knowing the actual time of occurrence. Though it may be of little consolation to the victim to know an approximate time of occurrence, it may be of great interest to the police and assist victims in preparing for future burglaries.

While these factors severely limit the effectiveness of analysing imperfect data, criminologists have developed methods to address such issues. Many criminologists noticed limitations in purely spatial analysis of crimes and sought to focus more on temporal data (Ashby & Bowers, 2013; Briz-Redón, 2023; Helms, 2008; Ratcliffe, 2002; Ratcliffe & McCullagh, 1998). To deal with temporal uncertainty, they developed a scheme by which incomplete, censored crime data could be analysed temporally. This class of crimes is known as "aoristic", a word derived from the Ancient Greek root aóristos, meaning "without defined occurrence in time". Similarly, the aorist tense, which is present in languages such as Greek, describes a singular event occurring at an indeterminate time in the past. Aoristic crime data analysis falls under the subcategory of predictive policing methods within the broader field of proactive policing methods. Knowing the most likely time of occurrence allows police to draft proactive policing strategies around the most likely occurrence times. These analyses could, therefore, assist police in implementing proactive policing methods that contribute to strengthening institutions and ensuring safe and secure communities, one of the aims of the United Nations' sixteenth SDG.

2   Review of Theories on Criminal Behaviour

In 1979, Lawrence E. Cohen and Marcus Felson published the work "Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach", describing the effect that routine activities have on crime patterns. Using criminological data, they argued that shifting trends in human behaviour led to an increase in the crime rate in the USA in the 1970s, which initially seemed paradoxical (Cohen & Felson, 1979). The higher crime rate was surprising, as the USA was experiencing increasing prosperity and significant social change, factors that were generally understood to lead to a decrease in crime.

This work, among others of its kind, led to a shift away from focusing on the characteristics and psychology of criminals and towards social disorganisation theory (Bursik, 1988). This theory suggests that places of residence and general spatial factors play a significant role in shaping the distribution of crime in a city, perhaps even more so than the psychology of an individual (Gaines & Miller, 2003; Shaw & McKay, 1942). Hawley's human ecological theory of community structure provides intuition in this respect, asserting that time and location dependence underlie community structure itself and are crucial in organising a community (Hawley, 1950). Social disorganisation theory has waxed and waned in popularity through the years (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003), especially since testing the theory empirically has been difficult (Heitgerd & Bursik, 1987). Additionally, Bursik (1988) noted that many perceived flaws in social disorganisation theory might arise from the misapplication of the theory or the difficulty in measuring social disorganisation. Nevertheless, Sampson and Groves (1989) found support for the idea that "social-disorganisation theory has vitality and renewed relevance for explaining macro-level variations in crime rates". The idea that time, place, and community structure are relevant factors for criminal activity, instead of solely focusing on delinquent individuals, is well substantiated (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003). These ideas can be considered as building blocks from which the statistical model outlined later in this chapter takes inspiration.

Taking routines into account, as well as the effects they have on crime, is often known as the routine activity approach (Cohen & Felson, 1979). For example, people living in neighbourhoods tend to build mental maps of their immediate surroundings, helping them avoid places that may be susceptible to crime (Nasar & Fisher, 1993). This leads to a concentration of crimes in certain regions of cities where crime is "easy, safe, and profitable" (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995). Resulting from this shift in philosophy within criminology is the realisation that spatiotemporal analysis can potentially provide important insight into the field, as these methods aid in modelling neighbourhoods and community structures. Together with the ideas from the social disorganisation theory outlined in the previous paragraph, this provides a basis upon which a model can be built.

As a result of the move towards spatiotemporal analysis, research within criminology has focused on determining the most probable locations of crimes (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995; Felson & Poulsen, 2003; Wilcox, 1973). However, research has

yet to be focused on temporal interdependence to the same extent, even though the routine activity approach may also inform patterns in temporal variation (Ashby & Bowers, 2013; Cohen & Felson, 1979; Ratcliffe & McCullagh, 1998). Hawley wrote about three temporal factors of community structure: rhythm, tempo, and timing. Rhythm refers to the periodicity of event occurrences, tempo to the number of events per unit time, and timing to the coordination of activities between members in a community (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Hawley, 1950). Due to several factors, such as women's increased participation in the workforce and an abundance of cars, more activities began to take place away from places of residence starting in the 1960s and 1970s, a trend that has continued to the present day (Felson & Poulsen, 2003). As a result, there was a shift in the times of the day at which residential crimes were more likely to be committed (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Felson, 1998; Felson & Cohen, 1980), especially for crimes that are opportunistic in nature (Cohn & Rotton, 2003; Felson, 2006). Consequently, it seems implausible to assume that crimes are equally likely to occur at any given time, an assumption often made in aoristic crime modelling methods. These methods, introduced by Ratcliffe and McCullagh (1998) and extended by Ratcliffe (2002), and Ashby and Bowers (2013) allow for the estimation of occurrence times in a temporal crime dataset when only a time interval is known. This is often the case for crimes such as burglary or arson (Ratcliffe & McCullagh, 1998).

Additionally, inspired partially by Hawley's three temporal factors of community structure (Hawley, 1950), it seems plausible that crimes in each neighbourhood are influenced by each other. If the police decide to crack down on crimes at certain hours, crimes may start occurring at different times due to heightened police presence. Furthermore, in neighbourhoods where houses or apartments have similar layouts, a successful burglary may lead to an increase in crime in that neighbourhood due to the near-repeat effect (Bernasco, 2009; Short et al., 2009). Therefore, it may be erroneous to assume that burglary times and frequencies remain constant over time.

In this chapter, we introduce a model that accounts for differences in crime frequency over time, considering the behaviour of both the victim and the offender. This is possible due to the non-homogeneous nature of the model. This parametric model works with interval-censored crime data, better known as aoristic crime data, and aims to estimate the most likely occurrence time. The model is Bayesian in

nature and works with likelihoods, departing from methods described in Ashby and Bowers (2013). These factors lend the quantitative analysis performed in this chapter relevance within the context of what is known in the field. This will hopefully lead to safer and more secure communities, in line with Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3   Proactive and Reactive Policing Methods

There is a key difference in philosophy between proactive policing methods, where the work presented in this chapter falls, and reactive policing methods. In the past, the police were often seen primarily as a reactive force, apprehending alleged offenders and responding to requests from citizens (Reiss, 1992). Throughout the 20th century, police departments pushed to modernise and professionalise, with an increased understanding that the police's role includes serving and protecting the community. Along with this came the idea of proactive policing, preventing crime before it even occurs (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018).

In this work, we will mainly focus on hot spot policing, developed in 1995 by Sherman and Weisburd in the Minneapolis Hot Spots Patrol Experiment. The idea is to concentrate on specific geographic regions where crime incidents are or have been empirically shown to be more likely than in other regions (Eck & Weisburd, 1995; Sherman & Weisburd, 1995). This strategy effectively reduces crime in the identified hot spot without spreading to adjacent areas (Sherman & Eck, 2002). While there are certain drawbacks to this strategy, chief among them being its limited lasting effectiveness and narrow use (Rosenbaum, 2006), the National Research Council (2004) summarised that there is strong evidence for the efficacy of hot spot policing.

The model outlined in the following section of this chapter works with the idea that hot spots occur not only in place but also in time, a concept supported by significant evidence. It is informed by theories such as the near-repeat effect (Bernasco, 2009; Short et al., 2009), the routine activities approach (Cohen & Felson, 1979), and other insights mentioned previously (e.g., Cohn & Rotton, 2003; Nasar & Fisher, 1993). While this is a predictive policing method, relying on the use of statistical models and data to estimate occurrences within time windows, it assumes an inherent

difference in likelihood between different times of the day, drawing inspiration from hot spot-related methods. The model will now be introduced in more detail.

4   Methodology

Typically, aoristic crime data consist of a time interval in which an event occurred, with uncertainty regarding the exact event time. For example, imagine that a woman leaves her house for work at 08:00, and returns at 17:00 (see Figure 1). Upon returning, she realises that her place of residence has been burgled. She subsequently calls the police to report the crime but is unable to provide a more precise estimate of the occurrence time than the entire time interval during which she was working. This time interval is then recorded.
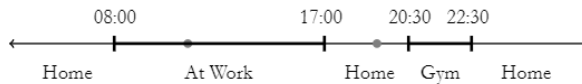

Figure 1: Example of the Schedule of a Potential Victim
Note: The bold intervals denote times when the victim is away from home.

When performing the analysis, one would like to find the most likely time the crime occurred for every time interval in each dataset. Alternatively, one might want to know the entire distribution of occurrence times. Introducing some simple mathematical notation, represent the data set by $D = \{[a1, a1 + l1], [a2, a2 + l2], ..., [an, an + ln]\}$ where a refers to the start of the time interval in which a crime occurred, and l refers to the length of this time interval. The notation $[a, b]$ represents a time interval starting at time a and ending at time b, including the endpoints. We assume that there are n crimes. Let t_i denote the estimated time of occurrence for the ith crime in the data set so that t_i is in $[ai, ai + li]$.

4.1   Methods Based on Summary Statistics

A naive approach might be to simply take the midpoint of each time interval as an estimate. For example, in Figure 1, the midpoint of the time interval (08:00, 17:00) would be 12:30. This time would then be recorded as the time of occurrence (Helms, 2008). Possible advantages of this method include that it is easy to calculate for large data sets and that for small enough intervals, the exact estimate of the time becomes

less important. However, the major disadvantage of this approach is that it is entirely arbitrary. Based on what is known about property crimes, there is no good reason why this value should be chosen over others.

Similar methods, such as arbitrarily picking the start or end points of the interval, have been described (Ashby & Bowers, 2013; Ratcliffe & McCullagh, 1998). Ashby and Bowers (2013) also suggested picking a completely random point within the interval with uniform probability. These methods all suffer from the same issue as the midpoint method – arbitrary time selection. Possible interactions between occurrence times are ignored, and the assumption that all occurrence times are equally likely within a given interval is still implicitly present when occurrence times are selected in this manner.

4.2   Statistical Approaches

Some more advanced methods have been developed to perform data analysis on aoristic crime data sets. Consider a weight function over t (Ratcliffe, 2002; Ratcliffe & McCullagh, 1998). Here, for a given value of t over the union of the data set D.

$$W(t) \ = \ \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n}\frac{1\{a_i \ \leq \ t \ \leq \ a_i + l_i\}}{l_i}$$

Note that 1 is the indicator function, meaning that 1 is returned if t is contained in the interval $[a_i, a_i + l_i]$ and 0 otherwise. Using this method, a length-weighted sum is returned for a given point in time. This denotes the likelihood of a crime occurring at time t. To make this clearer, consider the following example where $D = \{[0.1, 0.5], [0.2, 0.4], [0.3, 0.6]\}$. The union of this set is $[0.1, 0.6]$. Evaluating W at $t = 0.2$ results in

$$W(0.2) \ = \ \frac{1}{3}\left[\frac{1}{0.4} + \frac{1}{0.2} + \frac{0}{0.3}\right] \ = \ 2.5$$

The weight function $W(t)$ can be evaluated for discretely many values of t in the observation window. In practice, one would generate many potential values of t, evenly spaced out across the observation window, and apply this function. As this is

a probability mass function, one can sample from this distribution, picking random points based on how likely it is that points follow this pattern. Figure 2 shows the value of this function with the intervals overlain. One can see that the value of *W(t)* is highest in the intersection of the three intervals. While this method does add some complexity and considers multiple time intervals at once, occurrence times within a certain interval are biased towards time ranges within which multiple intervals intersect. It may be erroneous to assume that criminal activity always clusters in this way.
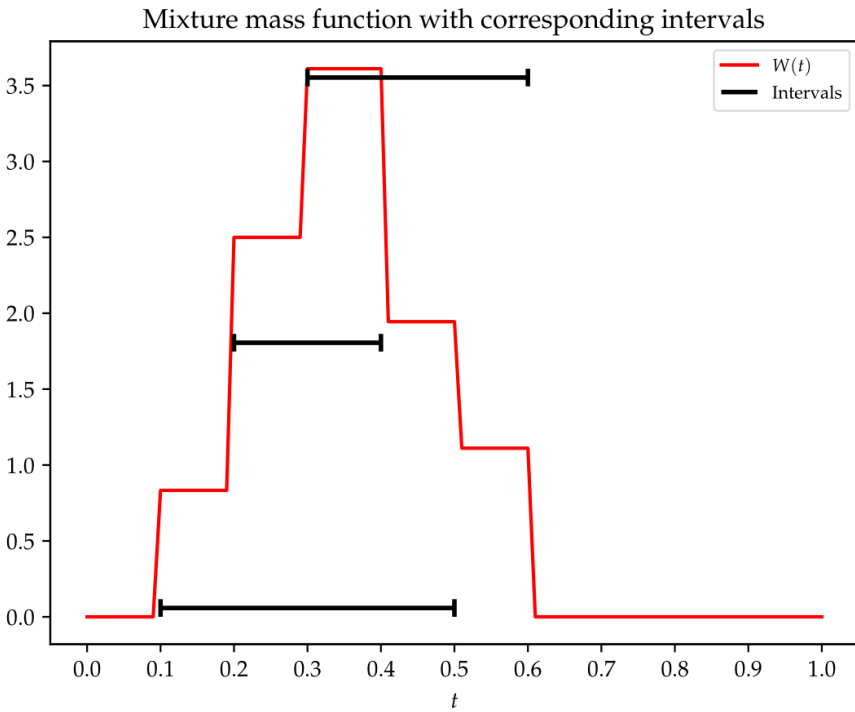
Figure 2: Example D = {[0.1, 0.5], [0.2, 0.4], [0.3, 0.6]} Plotted Together with the Values of *W(t)* for t Between 0 and 1

4.3   Bayesian Approach

While the methods outlined earlier can have relative success in certain cases, they fail to model interaction in the data, which inherently affects the timing of events. For example, people are less likely to be home during work hours, meaning that a criminal would encounter less resistance when trying to break in at this time. Such

behaviour patterns create a dynamic environment in which criminals operate. It would be advantageous to implement an interaction model, which could result in a more accurate estimation of break-in times. A model well-suited to handle this type of data is a likelihood-based model, which utilises methods from point process theory and Bayesian statistics to model interval-censored data (van Lieshout & Markwitz, 2023), making it suitable for aoristic crime analysis as well. The main advantage of this specific model is that potential occurrence times are not considered as separate data points but are part of an underlying distribution that partially overlaps with the intervals within which they range. This approach allows for more complex behaviours to be included in the model.

To facilitate such analyses, the model considers two processes: the burglar process, which contains the occurrence times, and the victim process, which contains the time intervals within which crimes occurred. In the burglar process, the model considers that occurrence times may exhibit clustering, regular, or random behaviour. The model estimates the likelihood of each of these scenarios. Clustered behaviour refers to occurrence times being close to each other, whereas regular behaviour refers to points being spread out across the observation window. Random behaviour refers to no discernible pattern in occurrence times. In the victim process, parameters are estimated regarding the length and starting point of the intervals in the data set. This allows the model to generate test data sets using these parameters, on which likelihood calculations can be performed. The model also allows for intervals of length zero, which models cases where the exact time of occurrence is known. This might correspond to situations where a security camera captures footage of a burglar breaking in, or when someone is home when the crime is committed. The two processes are later combined, and a Monte Carlo algorithm subsequently determines the most likely location of the points within their respective intervals (Meyn & Tweedie, 2009; Møller & Waagepetersen, 2004).

However, this model does come with some drawbacks. Potential interactions between points may lead to certain regions in the intersection of intervals being less favoured by the Monte Carlo algorithm during estimation (van Lieshout & Markwitz, 2023). More pressingly, absent this behaviour, it is inherently assumed that events are equally likely to occur in time. In other words, the underlying probability of occurrence remains the same across the observation window, without accounting for factors such as night or time of year. This may be a serious drawback

since routine activities theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979) suggests that this is very likely not the case.

Table 1: Qualitative Analysis of Aoristic Crime Analysis Methods Discussed in the Text

Method	Non-arbitrary selection	Interaction modelled	Accounts for time
Midpoint	No	No	No
Start/End	No	No	No
Random selection	No	No	No
Weight function	Yes	Partially	No
Initial Bayesian model	Yes	Yes	No
Updated Bayesian model	Yes	Yes	Yes

Since then, a new Bayesian model has been developed (van Lieshout & Markwitz, 2024). In the initial Bayesian model, it is assumed that the duration of time that victims are away from their places of residence follows a distribution that is entirely independent of the time of day. It is also assumed that victims have an equal probability of leaving their places of residence at all times of the day, which may not be the case based on routine activities theory. In the burglar process, it is assumed that burglars are equally likely to strike at all times of the day. All these assumptions allow for easier estimation of model parameters but make the model less capable of modelling the criminological situation, leading to the results being of questionable validity when performing analysis on real-life datasets. Since the updated model can take these factors into account, the underlying behaviour can be modelled more accurately. See Table 1 for a qualitative overview of the methods discussed in this section and their benefits and drawbacks.

The statistical theory behind the updated model is very similar to the previous Bayesian model. Regarding the burglar process, we assume that occurrence times follow some sort of initial distribution, based on either clustered, regular, or random behaviour within the recorded time range. However, it is not assumed that burglars are equally likely to break in at all times of the day. By allowing this probability to vary over the observation window (see parameter(s) β in Table 2), the modelling of "peak" or "down" times is facilitated. A function describes the distribution of these points, with the values of parameters deciding which of the three behaviours manifest themselves. We solve the inverse problem - given a data set, which parameter values are most likely?

The same approach is taken in the victim process. We assume that the intervals are generated by two distributions - one for the starting point and another for the length of the interval. However, in the updated Bayesian model, these distributions are time-dependent (see parameter(s) a and δ in Table 2). This results in the generation of more accurate test data sets, which play a crucial role in likelihood calculations. Given the data set, we then use a maximum likelihood approach to find the most likely combination of occurrence times within their respective intervals. Alternatively, summary statistics such as the mean time of occurrence or even the entire distribution of possible burglary times across all intervals can be calculated by using the same Monte Carlo methods mentioned previously (van Lieshout & Markwitz, 2024).

Table 2: Description of Parameters in the Model

Parameters	Description	Typical ranges/Examples
a	Denotes the scale of the length of intervals. If all intervals are relatively long, the estimated value of a will be higher.	$0 < a < 3$
K	Denotes the shape of the length distribution. If there are very few long intervals and very many short ones, the value of k will be lower, and vice versa.	$0 < k < 2$
$\delta_i, A_i, J*$	Splits the observation window into J separate time ranges, $A_1, \ldots, A_J$. The parameter δ_i denotes the likelihood of an interval starting in the time range A_i.	$J = 2, A_1 = [0, 0.4], A_2 = [0.4, 1]. \delta_1 = 0.5, \delta_2 = 0.3.$
$\beta_i, B_i, K*$	In the burglar process, β_i denotes the likelihood of a crime occurring in the range B_i where $B_1, \ldots, B_K$ are K separate time ranges. In most cases, β_i will be close to the number of actual burglaries in the range B_i.	$K = 2, B_1 = [0, 0.2], B_2 = [0.2, 1]. \beta_1 = 20, \beta_2 = 5.$
γ	In the burglar process, γ determines which kind of behaviour, clustered, regular or random, is exhibited. $\gamma < 1$ denotes regular, $\gamma = 1$ random, and $\gamma > 1$ clustered behaviour.	$\gamma = 1.5$ would imply crimes occurring close to each other in time.

Note: The number of ranges J and K, along with the corresponding ranges A_i and B_i are determined beforehand by visual inspection, and not estimated.

4.4   Data and Correctness

To ensure that the parameter estimation mentioned in the previous section is performed correctly, simulated data conforming to known parameter values is generated. This data is then fed back into the model to verify that the estimated parameter values correspond to the known parameter values. This process ensures

that when the actual crime data is analysed, the estimated parameters take on plausible values. This is crucial, as these values are subsequently used to simulate the most likely occurrence times of crimes within the corresponding intervals.

To facilitate comparison, a standard crime data set was used for model fitting. We chose the Washington D.C. burglaries dataset (Open Data DC, n.d.) because it includes precise start and end times for burglaries within a small enough spatial area and provides enough data points to facilitate comparison (though this is still not optimal, see discussion for details). The dataset, named "Crime Incidents in 2016", records all reported crimes within the city limits of Washington D.C. in that year, containing 37,189 records, with 2,121 of them being burglaries. The model was applied to a subset of this dataset, specifically focusing on burglaries where the end times fell in February. Only burglaries with defined start and end dates were selected, and other crimes have been filtered out for this analysis. The model's application was restricted to a subset of the data due to computational constraints. While the frequency of crimes likely varies by time of day and season, the model can account for this in both the victim and burglar processes by choosing time ranges A_i and B_i respectively (see Table 2 for more details).

The updated Bayesian model is run on the data. Upon visual inspection of the data, it appears that fewer victims report crimes in the last few days of the month. Based on this observation, the time range A_1 is set to $[−0.2, 0.9]$, and $A_2 = [0.9, 1]$ (see Table 2 for interpretations). In these sets, the value 0 refers to midnight on the 1st of February, and the value 1 represents midnight on the 1st of March. Choosing a negative value in $A1$ ensures that crimes occurring before the 1st of February but ending within the month are also included. Therefore, the values of δ_1 and δ_2, corresponding to these time ranges, need to be estimated. We set $K = 1$, indicating that only one β needs to be calculated.

5   Results and Discussion

Figure 3 shows the time intervals and corresponding estimated occurrence times for the last week of February. As there were 120 reported burglaries in February 2016, plotting the entire month would lead to a less visually appealing graphic. See Table 3 for the exact occurrence times estimated by the model.

Table 3: Start Times, End Times and Estimated Times of the Burglaries in the Washington D.C. Dataset, Which Have Non-zero Interval Lengths

Start time	End time	Estimated time
2016-02-24 12:33:42	2016-02-24 14:57:56	2016-02-24 14:20:31
2016-02-24 19:19:06	2016-02-24 19:50:11	2016-02-24 19:29:24
2016-02-28 21:57:38	2016-02-29 02:58:04	2016-02-28 23:47:12
2016-02-28 22:57:47	2016-02-29 11:58:53	2016-02-29 04:09:10
2016-02-24 15:18:58	2016-02-24 21:49:32	2016-02-24 20:52:49
2016-02-25 10:51:39	2016-02-25 12:30:48	2016-02-25 11:16:54
2016-02-29 13:59:05	2016-02-29 21:52:47	2016-02-29 17:39:41
2016-02-25 16:51:11	2016-02-25 20:40:31	2016-02-25 18:35:16
2016-02-25 13:20:44	2016-02-25 23:26:38	2016-02-25 22:05:17
2016-02-25 17:36:05	2016-02-26 00:21:40	2016-02-25 22:09:38
2016-02-26 05:02:09	2016-02-26 06:37:17	2016-02-26 05:19:53
2016-02-26 13:52:58	2016-02-26 16:08:10	2016-02-26 15:23:10
2016-02-26 08:41:32	2016-02-26 19:30:27	2016-02-26 11:45:55
2016-02-26 13:23:02	2016-02-26 21:13:43	2016-02-26 20:12:42
2016-02-27 01:28:44	2016-02-27 02:53:50	2016-02-27 02:45:38
2016-02-26 14:53:04	2016-02-27 03:09:08	2016-02-26 18:57:18
2016-02-27 21:38:32	2016-02-27 23:54:42	2016-02-27 21:39:30

The model estimated the following parameters: $\delta_1 = 0.8$, $\delta_2 = 0.5$, $\beta = 115.06$ and $\gamma \approx 0$. The fact that δ_1 does not equal δ_2 shows that there does seem to be an inherent difference in the likelihood of crime occurrence in the last few days of February. The parameter β can be seen to be approximately equal to the number of crimes that one would expect in this configuration. As γ is much smaller than 1, this implies that crimes do not seem to cluster and instead occur further apart from each other in time. A possible explanation for this could be that there were "only" 120 crimes in 28 days, meaning that certain intervals may not overlap. For non-overlapping crimes, no assumptions can be made regarding other crimes, leading to less information being fed to the model. While the estimation procedure for γ can still be carried out, as less information is available, the exact value may be somewhat imprecise. One might expect greater clustering since it is known empirically that crimes do not occur at an equal rate across time. However, it may be the case that the spaced-out nature of the estimated occurrence times is the model considering the inherent periodicity of the data. As more likely times are followed by less likely times in roughly equal measure, points may be clustered in more likely regions but are spread out across the entire data set due to this phenomenon.

The parameters α and k take the values 2.2 and 0.3 respectively, indicating intervals are relatively long compared to the length scale, but that there are comparatively more "short" intervals than "long" intervals. In other words, people tended to be away for a relatively long time, but there were very few instances where people were away from their properties for significantly longer periods compared to other victims. Though this can be determined in different ways, such as visual inspection or gathering summary statistics, it shows that the model accounts for this behaviour during estimation.

The original burglary dataset is aoristic, meaning that only time intervals are provided. While potential hot spots can be detected using approaches such as the mixture mass function (Ratcliffe, 2002; Ratcliffe & McCullagh, 1998; also see Figure 2), this method ignores other factors that are almost undoubtedly present for residential burglaries and bias potential occurrence times towards intersections of time intervals. It has been shown that hot spot policing, and proactive policing methods in general, can effectively reduce crime (Sherman & Eck, 2002). By examining the most likely occurrence times generated by the updated Bayesian model, potential hidden hot spots in time can be detected, leading to the implementation of proactive policing methods based on this model. Detecting hot spots that are obscured by the censured or aoristic nature of the data allows for more efficient policing by implementing effective strategies during times when crime is more likely to occur. Additionally, the non-homogeneous parametrisation method for time intervals used in the estimation process allows for the generation of more accurate test datasets. This may assist both future researchers who wish to implement different occurrence time estimation methods to validate their models, and police departments wanting to perform data analysis. Data-driven analysis of aoristic crime data, along with the actions taken based on relevant findings, has the potential to make our communities safer and more secure. To achieve SDG 16, the focus must be on developing efficient and effective policing methods.

The model introduced in this chapter rectifies many issues present in estimating occurrence times for aoristic crime data, but some shortcomings should also be mentioned. Firstly, no spatial information is considered, which undoubtedly limits the effectiveness of the model. A more powerful model might make use of spatial covariates to inform crime rates at specific locations, since it is known that location affects crime rate (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995; Sherman & Weisburd, 1995).

Secondly, this model assumes that the burglar and victim processes are independent. Relaxing this assumption would lead to greater difficulty in applying a model of this type, but it may also be more accurate in describing the actual behaviour of criminals and victims.
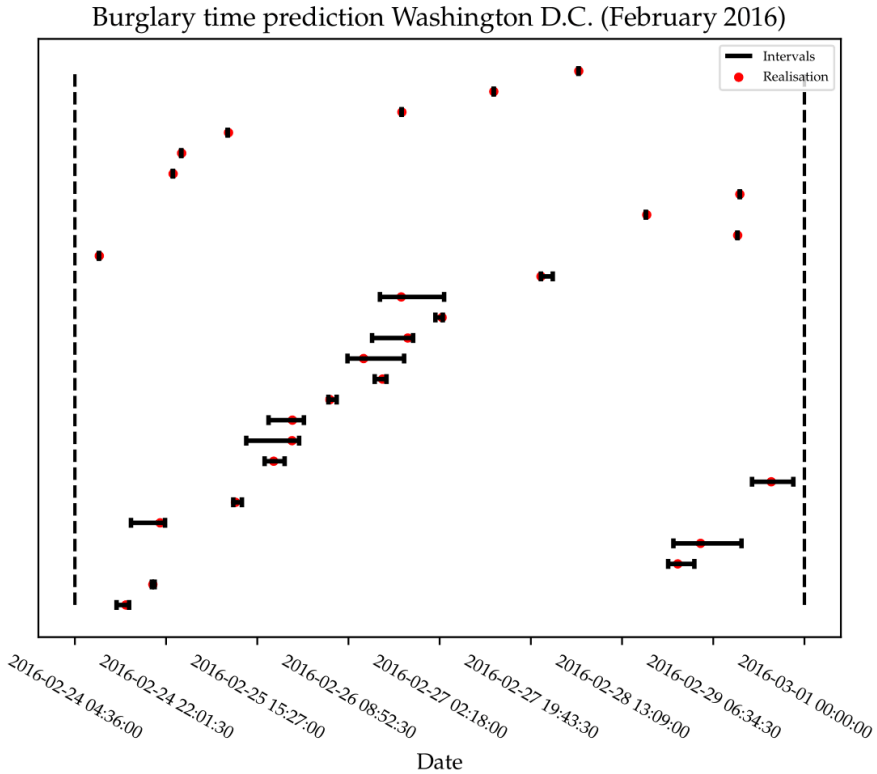
Figure 3: Simulation of the Occurrence Time of Crimes from the Washington D.C. Aoristic Crime Dataset

Note: Estimated burglary times are marked by a red point, the intervals in black.

6   Conclusion

The United Nations specifies 17 SDGs introduced to encourage global cooperation and sustainability worldwide. Goal 16, named "Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions" aims to promote peace, sustainable development, and effective institutions (United Nations, n.d.). Proactive policing methods play a role in reducing crime when applied effectively (National Academies of Science, Engineering, and

Medicine, 2018; Rosenbaum, 2006), which in turn help to build strong and accountable institutions at all levels. Based on sociological and criminological theories such as routine activity theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979) and temporal factors of community structure (Brantingham & Brantingham; 1995; Hawley, 1950), proactive policing methods such as pulling levers policing (Kennedy et al., 1996) and hot spot policing (Sherman & Weisburd, 1995) have been developed to improve police effectiveness and strengthen institutions. Predictive policing methods, particularly those related to hot spot policing, have gained significant traction (National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018). In this chapter, a model has been introduced to perform predictive modelling of aoristic crime data, which is data collected for specific types of crimes where the time of occurrence is not exactly known (Ratcliffe & McCullagh, 1998).

Aoristic crime data have been modelled in numerous ways over the years, with approaches ranging from easily calculable summary statistics methods to sampling from probability mass functions. We introduce a Bayesian likelihood model that models the burglar and the victim separately, does not assume that crimes are equally likely to occur at all times of the day, and takes into account that victims might be away from their places of residence for varying lengths of time depending on when they leave. The model also allows for data sets to be interconnected, as crimes taking place in the same neighbourhood are likely related. The model is applied to a data set of residential burglaries occurring in Washington, D.C., in February 2016. A table of most likely burglary times has been provided, along with a visualisation in the form of a graphic showing intervals and estimated times. Using these estimated occurrence times, potential hot spots can be identified, allowing police to adapt existing proactive policing methods accordingly. Taking such findings into account is crucial for meeting sustainability goals, such as the SDGs introduced by the United Nations in 2015.

Acknowledgement

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GENDER EQUALITY FROM THE POLICE RECRUITS' PERSPECTIVE: DOES THEIR GENDER MAKE THE DIFFERENCE?

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United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 16 focus on gender equality, peace, justice, and strong institutions. One of these institutions is the police. Police work includes many opportunities to protect and promote gender equality. This study aims to find whether differences in attitudes towards gender equality between male and female police recruits before and after basic police training exist. The results reveal that the difference between male and female recruits is statistically significant both at the beginning and at the end of their basic police education. A statistically significant difference concerning the gender of the recruit was determined concerning the combination of three dependent variables that measured attitudes about gender equality, as well as about each individual variable. Furthermore, the research found that the influence of gender on differences in attitudes towards gender equality was stronger after education than before education for the police profession.

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ENAKOST SPOLOV Z VIDIKA KANDIDATOV ZA POLICISTE: ALI JE SPOL POMEMBEN?

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Peti in šestnajsti cilj trajnostnega razvoja Združenih narodov se osredotočata na enakost spolov ter na mir, pravičnost in močne institucije. Ena od teh institucij je policija. Policijsko delo vključuje številne priložnosti za zaščito in spodbujanje enakosti spolov. Študija se osredotoča na vprašanje, ali obstajajo razlike v odnosu do enakosti spolov med policijskimi kandidati in kandidatkami pred osnovnim policijskim usposabljanjem in po njem. Rezultati kažejo, da je razlika med kandidati in kandidatkami statistično značilna tako na začetku kot na koncu osnovnega policijskega izobraževanja. Statistično značilno razliko glede na spol kandidatov smo ugotavljali tako glede na kombinacijo treh odvisnih spremenljivk, ki so merile stališča do enakosti spolov, kot tudi glede na vsako posamezno spremenljivko. Poleg tega so ugotovitve pokazale, da je bil vpliv spola na razlike v odnosu do enakosti spolov močnejši po izobraževanju kot pred izobraževanjem za policijski poklic.

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1   Introduction

Gender equality and equal opportunities for women in all life segments are key principles of the European Union acquis and fundamental human rights in a modern society based on social equality (Balgač, 2017; England et al., 2020). Political decisions addressing gender equality have their origins in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948) and the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 1979). These decisions are followed by other important documents such as the Beijing Declaration (United Nations, 1995), the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (United Nations, 2000), the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (United Nations Security Council, 2000), the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2009), the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) (Council of Europe, 2011), the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy for the period 2018-2023 (Council of Europe, 2018), and the European Union Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025 (European Commission, 2020). One of the latest documents addressing gender equality and equal opportunities for women is the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015). Out of 17 goals, 10 have gender-specific indicators, and one goal (Goal 5) is specifically dedicated to achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. Considering the main roles and duties of the police in a democratic society – protection and respect for individuals' fundamental rights and freedoms (Murdoch & Roche, 2013), as well as ensuring the equal treatment of all citizens regardless of their individual characteristics – the police is one of the institutions that should ensure the building of a peaceful and inclusive society (Goal 16).

Regardless of the comprehensive legislation in the area of gender equality, experience and research show that discrimination against women and unequal treatment are still very present in society (Davis, 2005; Gauci et al., 2022; Holt & Lewis, 2011; Yang, 2016; Yu & Lee, 2020). The latest available Progress Report on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 indicates that the world is not on track to achieve gender equality by 2030. At the current rate of progress, it may take another 286 years to remove discriminatory laws and close prevailing gaps in legal

protections for women and girls (UN Women, 2022). Considering the wide scope of police tasks and duties in a democratic society, the police are the most visible manifestation of government authority (Murdoch & Roche, 2013), and in the majority of cases, respect and protection of human rights are ensured by the police (Gjenero et al., 2002).

This study aims to determine the effects of gender on the attitudes of police recruits towards gender equality, violence against women, and the role and position of women in the police. Research on the influence of police education on police recruits' attitudes toward human rights and gender equality has never been conducted in Croatia. Police education in Croatia has a long tradition and provides recruits with a review of fundamental human rights (Balgač & Borovec, 2022). Basic police education in Croatia is conducted in mixed-gender classes. In addition to classroom teaching on human rights, recruits jointly participate in practical exercises dedicated to human rights, including gender equality. The purpose of our study is to assess the effects of gender on police recruits' attitudes toward gender equality.

2   Literature Review

2.1   Police Organisations, Police Officers, and Gender Equality

Police organisations around the world are still described as strongly male-dominated environments (Balgač, 2017; Chu, 2013; Davis, 2005; Novak et al., 2011; van der Lippe et al., 2004; Yu & Lee, 2020; Zveržhanovski & Balon, 2012). In the last few decades, police organisations have implemented numerous reforms and changes (Bloksgaard et al., 2020; Brown & Silvestri, 2020), and introduced new policing models to meet the needs of all citizens and fully implement human rights and gender equality legislation. Additionally, police organisations around the world have started to recruit and employ more women (Ward & Prenzler, 2016). Research suggests that higher representation of women in police organisations considerably improves public trust and confidence, as well as legitimacy and public support for the police (Bergman et al., 2016; Schuck et al., 2021; Silvestri et al., 2013). Similar reform processes have also been present in the Croatian police, and for the past three decades, the overall transition towards a democratic social order has been ongoing.

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New policing models and reforms require police officers to refrain from any form of discrimination and to be impartial in their behaviour towards all citizens, regardless of personal characteristics. Their attitudes toward diverse groups can influence their decision-making (van Ewijk, 2011), behaviour, and actions toward women in society (Chu, 2013; Davis, 2005; Miles-Johnson, 2021; Montgomery, 2012). Additionally, new skills and knowledge are required of police officers, such as communication skills, non-violent conflict resolution, empathy, openness to cooperation, and partnership with all community members (Borovec et al., 2019; Haarr, 2001). Research indicates that these competencies and skills are most often attributed to female police officers (Balgač, 2017; Chu, 2013; Wagner et al., 2017). Indeed, studies show that women police officers are less likely to use force in resolving problems and that increased participation of women in policing reduces misconduct and the number of citizen complaints (Boateng et al., 2021; Corsianos, 2011; Prenzler & Sinclair, 2013; Prenzler et al., 2023; Rabe-Hemp, 2008). Consequently, numerous advocates of police reform have recommended the recruitment of female officers as both a source of more responsible conduct and a disruptive influence on male corruption networks (Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2016). However, recent studies (Kutnjak Ivković et al., 2023a, 2023b) suggest further exploration of the origin of such findings in different social contexts.

The new policing philosophy and diverse communities seek to increase the number of women police officers. A review of the existing literature shows that the attitudes of police officers towards women and gender equality in police organisations are frequently researched (Bloksgaard et al., 2020; Chu, 2013; Davis, 2005; Holland, 2020; Kakar, 2002; Miles-Johnson, 2021; Montgomery, 2012; Muftić & Collins, 2014; van Ewijk, 2011). However, few of these studies focus on the attitudes of police officers in Croatia (Balgač, 2017; Delač Fabris & Borovec, 2019; Southeast Police Chiefs Association – SEPCA, 2010).

According to Kutnjak Ivković et al. (2023a, 2023b), early research on gender differences in police work focused on the role and position of women in the male-dominated profession of policing and the resistance to female entry by their male counterparts. Research has shown that the attitudes of male police officers are the most significant obstacle to the full integration of women into police organisations (Davis, 2005). Female respondents were found to be more positive toward policewomen than males, and overt attitudes toward policewomen correlated

positively with general attitudes toward working women (Koenig, 1978). Over time, male police officers have come to believe that women have a place in the police, although they still believe that men and women cannot perform all police work equally well (Bloksgaard et al., 2020; Davis, 2005; Holland, 2020; Hussain et al., 2022; Kakar, 2002; Muftić & Collins, 2014). More recent studies revealed that, although male police officers doubted the abilities and effectiveness of female officers, they felt that equal treatment was necessary (Chu, 2013).

Although considerable improvement has been noted regarding the status of women in police organisations (Chu et al., 2020; Nielson et al., 2020) and in the process of police education, many female police officers have had negative experiences related to their promotion and harassment at work (Spasić et al., 2015). Female police officers face numerous challenges and barriers to full integration into the police force daily (Nielson et al., 2020; Shelley et al., 2011) and they are still significantly underrepresented, despite the scientifically proven benefits they bring to the organisation and the fact that they can perform police work just as successfully as men (Kakar, 2002; Sims et al., 2003). While female police officers still face significant disapproval from male colleagues, citizens show greater acceptance of women in the police organisation and greater confidence in their abilities (Leger, 1997).

2.2   Police Recruits and Gender Equality

Every police organisation seeks tools to predict police officers' behaviour and change their attitudes and behaviour when necessary. Police education on human rights, including gender equality, is the first and most important step towards shaping more effective and professional policing (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2013). Therefore, the basic police education of future police officers is of utmost importance and an essential element of global efforts to promote and protect human rights in every country. Such education should ensure that police officers are familiar with national and international human rights standards and that they are taught how to perform their daily work in line with those standards (Jankuloski et al., 2002; UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2000).

A review of the existing literature shows that there are few studies on police recruits' attitudes toward diversity, minorities, and vulnerable groups (Miles-Johnson & Pickering, 2018; Viduoliene & Ruibyte, 2020). Research on police recruits' attitudes

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toward gender equality is even rarer (Chu & Tsao, 2014; Kim & Gerber, 2019). According to Platz et al. (2017), the Values Education Program did not improve recruits' attitudes toward diversity in the workplace but did prevent the decline in support for diversity associated with the standard recruit training experience. Examining the impact of training at the Midwest Police Academy in terms of training atmosphere, curriculum, and classroom interaction, Schlosser (2011) determined that there were no significant changes in the racial attitudes and beliefs of the recruits. In additional research, Schlosser (2013) found that the negative attitudes of police recruits about equality do not decrease after attending training at the academy, and a possible explanation was found in the duration of the training. Zimny (2012) also confirmed the results of Schlosser's study and concluded that more significant changes in the curriculum are necessary. Additionally, Zimny (2015) proposed that the best way to improve police-minority relations is not to send officers to multicultural or implicit bias training but rather to engage them in activities that bring them into close contact with average citizens in neighbourhoods populated by members of minority groups.

Female police recruits have more positive attitudes toward gender integration than male recruits do, and they assess their competence in performing police work more positively (Chu & Tsao, 2014; Kim & Gerber, 2019). Although male recruits think that women cannot do all police tasks as well as they can, they still believe that women should be represented in the police (Chu & Tsao, 2014; Kim & Gerber, 2019). Some studies on police recruits (Andreescu et al., 2012; Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2021) indicate that female recruits, compared to their male colleagues, view police misconduct as a more serious problem and are therefore more willing to report such behaviour, which also represents a positive contribution to the police organisation. The only Croatian survey on the attitudes of future police officers toward gender and minority rights (Balgač, 2020) also confirmed that recruits generally have positive attitudes toward gender equality and minority and vulnerable groups.

Only a few research studies have been conducted on the attitudes of police recruits toward gender equality during or after their education (Chu & Tsao, 2014; Kim & Gerber, 2019). Chu and Tsao (2014) demonstrated that although male recruits had reservations about women's ability and physical strength in performing certain aspects of police work, they supported women being assigned equal or similar duties

to men upon entering the police force. Compared to male recruits, female recruits were more likely to perceive women as competent as men and, therefore, adequate for police work. Inconsistent with previous studies, Kim and Gerber (2019) found no significant difference in attitudes toward gender integration between male and female recruits, and cluster analysis results indicate that only a small portion of police recruits support giving women specialised assignments.

3   Methods

3.1   Data Collection

The research was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Police College, Police Academy, and was conducted with the consent of the Croatian Ministry of the Interior. Before the survey, respondents were informed by their teachers that participation was voluntary and anonymous and that only aggregate data obtained from the survey would be used. All teachers were familiar with the survey method to provide uniform instructions to the participants. In addition, detailed instructions were provided in an introductory letter to the survey questionnaire, which contained information about the voluntary and anonymous nature of the survey, assured participants that participation posed no risk, and clarified that participants would not receive any benefits from participating in the survey.

The research was conducted at two different points in time. The first wave of the survey was conducted at the beginning of the education process (November 2020), while the second wave was conducted at the end of the education process (September 2021). Conducting measurements at two different points in time enabled monitoring changes in the researched areas under the influence of education and the work environment in which the participants performed their internship. Due to the global pandemic and the uncertainty of holding face-to-face activities, it was decided that the research would be conducted online. Both surveys were conducted online via a Google Forms link provided to respondents through the e-learning platform.

During the first survey, the Police School respondents attended classes face-to-face. In contrast, during the second survey, they attended classes online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Between the two surveys, the respondents completed nine months of theoretical education at the Police School and two months of professional

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internship. During the nine-month theoretical education, future police officers were taught about gender equality and violence against women from legal, criminal, and psychological perspectives covered in subjects such as: The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, European Union law and human rights; Police powers and their application; Basics of Misdemeanour and Criminal Law; Basics of Criminology and Criminal Investigation, and Psychology. In addition to theory, future police officers performed case study analyses and problem-solving exercises related to gender equality and violence against women as part of each mentioned subject. This education program represents an intervention through which changes in the respondents' attitudes in the researched areas are measured.

3.2   Sample

Participants in the research were police recruits enrolled in the Adult Education Program for the Profession of a Police Officer, and participation was offered to all 732 enrolled police recruits. In the first wave, all 732 police recruits voluntarily joined the survey, so the sample of the first survey consisted of 732 respondents. The high response rate, in this case, a hundred per cent, can be explained by the fact that the survey was conducted during school hours and at the beginning of the educational process. A similar high response rate was recorded in other surveys conducted by the Croatian police, especially those conducted during working hours of police officers (Balgač, 2017; Kutnjak Ivković et al., 2023a, 2023b). In the second wave, 706 respondents also voluntarily participated in the survey. Out of the 732 students enrolled, five dropped out, while 21 students did not respond to the second survey. The characteristics of the convenience samples (1st and 2nd wave) are presented in Table 1.

In both samples, slightly more than 72% are male recruits, and the rest are female recruits. All respondents are between the ages of 18 and 28, with the largest number of respondents being under 20 years of age (51%) in the first wave and from 21 to 25 years (45%) in the second wave. The minimum requirement for entering the education program is completion of a three-year high school. Most of the respondents completed a four-year high school (77% and 79%, respectively). The vast majority of respondents (79% and 77%) have an average living standard.

Table 1: Sample

		First wave of survey		Second wave of survey	
		n	*%*	*n*	*%*
Gender	male	528	72.10%	513	72.70%
	female	204	27.90%	193	27.30%
Age	up to 20 years old	376	51.30%	294	41.60%
	from 21 to 25 years old	282	38.50%	316	44.80%
	more than 25 years old	74	10.20%	96	13.60%
Level of education	three-year high school	106	14.50%	88	12.50%
	four-year high school	564	77.00%	561	79.40%
	higher education	62	8.50%	57	8.10%
Size of residence	village	332	45.50%	57	8.10%
	smaller city	177	24.20%	82	11.60%
	medium-size city	71	9.70%	92	13.00%
	bigger city	80	10.90%	203	28.80%
	City of Zagreb	71	9.70%	272	38.50%
Life standard	significantly lower than average	5	0.70%	5	0.70%
	slightly lower than average	48	6,60%	52	7.40%
	average	575	78.60%	541	76.60%
	slightly higher than average	95	13.00%	97	13.70%
	significantly higher than average	9	1.20%	11	1.60%

3.3   Research Instrument

The questionnaire used for data collection in this research was created by the research team of the Police Academy in Zagreb. Besides socio-demographic variables that describe the sample, the questionnaire contains six scales: "Components of professional identity", "Reasons for choosing a police profession", "Position of Women in the Police", "Attitudes towards Gender Equality", "Attitudes towards vulnerable groups – LGBT population, migrants, and asylum seekers", and "National exclusivism, social distance, national identity, and attitudes towards national minorities". Ultimately, the questionnaire contained 61 closed-ended questions, with answers given on Likert-type scales.

This chapter presents the results of research related to the area of gender equality and the position and role of women in the police, which were measured using two scales: "Attitudes toward the position of women in the police" and "Attitudes toward gender equality". The scale "Position of women in the police" was operationalised using four items/claims:

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- Women have no place in the police. (Factor loadings [FL] = −.643)
- Women in the police can only do professional work in administrative duties. (FL = −.687)
- Women in the police can do all the work just like their male colleagues. (FL = −.867)
- Equality between male and female police officers is important. (FL = −.810)

Items featured a 4-point Likert-type response ranging from "1 – absolutely agree" to "4 – absolutely disagree", as a measure of agreement. "Position of women in the Police" was a summated scale that exhibited an adequate level of internal consistency (*a* =.80, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy [KMO] was .862) and was coded so that lower values corresponded to greater levels of perceived positive attitudes of future police officers.

The scale "Attitudes towards gender equality" was operationalised using two sub-scales, each containing four items/claims. The first sub-scale "Attitudes towards gender equality" contained the following items/claims:

- The most important role of a woman is to take care of the household and cook for her family. (FL = .598)
- A man should have the last word on decisions at home. (FL = .765)
- Most household chores are more suited to women. (FL = .850)
- It is good that there is equality between husband and wife in marriage, but the husband should have the last word. (FL = .819)

All items in the questionnaire are oriented equally so that a lower score represents more positive attitudes of the respondents about the examined areas.

The second sub-scale "Attitudes towards violence against women" contained the following items/claims:

- A woman should tolerate violence to keep the family together. (FL = .880)
- A woman should be the one to take care of not getting pregnant. (FL = .782)

- When a woman is raped, it usually means that she did something careless or got herself into such a situation. (FL = .893)
- In some rape cases, women wanted it to happen. (FL = .623)

Items featured a 4-point Likert-type response ranging from "1 – absolutely agree" to "4 – absolutely disagree". The scale "Attitudes towards gender equality" was a summated scale that exhibited an adequate level of internal consistency (a = .84, KMO = .862) and was coded so that lower values corresponded to greater levels of perceived positive attitudes of future police officers.

3.4   Analytic Plan

The data collected by the survey were processed in the statistical program SPSS. For the purposes of this study, items (12) related to gender equality and the role of women in the police were subjected to Principal Components Analysis (PCA) using orthogonal (Varimax) rotation, and three components were extracted: "Role and position of women in the Police", "Attitudes towards violence against women", and "Attitudes towards gender equality". These components represent dependent variables in the conducted discriminant analysis. For Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), the sample was divided into male and female respondents from the first and second waves of the survey. Furthermore, a MANOVA was conducted to determine the differences in the set of dependent variables between men and women at the beginning of the education program and the differences between men and women at the end of the educational process. In addition to multivariate analysis of variance, univariate analysis was also conducted for individual components of gender equality.

4   Results

In this section, the results of the Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) will be presented, the purpose of which is to determine the differences in attitudes toward gender equality between women and men attending the Adult Education Program for the Profession of a Police Officer, before and after the education program at the Police Academy, measured at two points in time. Attitudes towards gender equality were measured through three composite variables (components):

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"Role and position of women in the Police", "Attitudes towards violence against women", and "Attitudes towards gender equality".

First, an analysis was conducted to determine whether there was a difference in the attitudes of women and men, police recruits, toward gender equality before the implementation of the educational program. Preliminary analyses were conducted to check the assumptions for the MANOVA analysis, and it was determined that the assumptions of multicollinearity and singularity were not violated. The results of the Pearson correlation coefficient show a small correlation between "Role and position of women in the Police" and "Attitudes towards violence against women" ($r = .262$), and a medium correlation between "Role and position of women in the Police" and "Attitudes towards gender equality" ($r = .352$); "Attitudes towards violence against women" and "Attitudes towards gender equality" ($r = .388$). The results of the mean on the components of gender equality for men and women, shown in Table 2, indicate that women have more positive attitudes about gender equality compared to men in both waves of the survey.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on Components of Gender Equality for Men and Women

Wave of survey		Male		Female	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
1st	Role and position of women in the Police	1.42	0.47	1.18	0.30
	Attitudes towards violence against women	1.25	0.34	1.12	0.23
	Attitudes towards gender equality	1.95	0.58	1.51	0.47
2nd	Role and position of women in the Police	1.81	0.63	1.25	0.38
	Attitudes towards violence against women	1.43	0.58	1.14	0.32
	Attitudes towards gender equality	1.97	0.64	1.42	0.51

Regarding the assumption related to the normality of the distribution, it should be noted that Multivariate Analysis of Variance is resistant to moderately impaired normality, and a large number of respondents in each sample ensures robustness. If the sample sizes are different, robustness cannot be assumed, especially if the Box test is significant at $p < .001$. However, Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) suggest that if larger samples produce larger variances and covariances, as is the case in this study, then multivariate test probability values will be conservative, so significant findings can be trusted. Multivariate analysis of variance was conducted at the level of three components, which are standardised variables whose distribution approaches a normal distribution.

The first multivariate analysis of variance examined the differences between male and female police recruits' attitudes toward gender equality at the beginning of the education process for the police profession. Three dependent variables were used in the analysis: "Role and position of women in the Police", "Attitudes towards violence against women", and "Attitudes towards gender equality". A statistically significant difference was found between male and female recruits regarding the combination of dependent variables; $F(3,732) = 35.404$, $p < .01$; $\lambda = 0.873$; $\eta^2 = .127$ (Table 3). The results indicate that gender explains 12.7% of the variance in attitudes towards gender equality.

Table 3: Results of Multivariate Test

Wave of survey	Effect	Pillai's Trace	Wilks' Lambda	F	df	p	Partial Eta Squared
1st	Gender	.127	.873	35.40	3	.000	.127

In addition to the Multivariate Analysis of Variance, a univariate analysis of individual variables was also performed. The results of the univariate analysis of variance for individual components, presented in Table 4, show that the differences in the first wave of the survey between men and women are statistically significant on all three variables, with the largest difference observed on the variable "Attitudes towards gender equality" and the smallest on the variable "Attitudes towards violence against women". The proportion of the variance in the variable "Attitudes towards gender equality" explained by gender is .114, indicating that gender explains 11.4% of the variance in these attitudes. Furthermore, gender explains 4.9% of the variance in attitudes toward the role and position of women in the police and 2.5% of the attitude towards violence against women. According to the results shown in Table 2 (mean and standard deviation), it is evident that in all three areas, the attitudes of female recruits are more positive than those of male recruits.

Table 4: Results of Univariant Analysis of Variance (1st Wave of Survey)

Dependent variable	F	df	p	Partial Eta Squared
Role and position of women in the Police	37.52	1	.000	.049
Attitudes towards violence against women	18.61	1	.000	.025
Attitudes towards gender equality	93.72	1	.000	.114

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The second Multivariate Analysis of Variance was conducted to determine the differences between men and women at the end of their education. MANOVA was again performed for three variables of attitudes towards gender equality. In the second wave of the survey, a statistically significant difference was found between male and female recruits with the combination of dependent variables; $F(3,706) = 55.26$; $p < .01$; $\lambda = 0.805$; $\eta^2 = .195$ (Table 5). Gender explains a total of 19.5% of the variance of the dependent variables, indicating a stronger influence of gender on the difference in male and female recruits' attitudes towards gender equality after education compared to before.

Table 5: Results of Multivariate Test

Wave of survey	Effect	Pillai's Trace	Wilks' Lambda	F	df	p	Partial Eta Squared
2nd	Gender	.195	.805	55.26	3	.000	.195

After the multivariate analysis of variance, a one-factor analysis of variance was again performed, the results of which are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Results of Univariant Analysis of Variance (2nd Wave of Survey)

Dependent variable	F	df	p	Partial Eta Squared
Role and position of women in the Police	115.36	1	.000	.149
Attitudes towards violence against women	35.13	1	.000	.047
Attitudes towards gender equality	84.37	1	.000	.130

In the second wave of the survey, conducted at the end of the educational process, statistically significant differences were again found on all three composite variables. However, the largest difference between men and women was observed on the variable "Role and position of women in the Police" ($F(1) = 115.36$; $p < .01$; $\eta^2 = .149$), followed by "Attitudes towards gender equality" ($F(1) = 84.37$; $p < .01$; $\eta^2 = .130$), while the smallest difference, as in the first wave of the survey, was on the variable "Attitudes towards violence against women" ($F(1) = 35.13$; $p < .01$; $\eta^2 = .047$). These differences in attitudes in the second wave of the survey again show that, in all three areas, the attitudes of women are more positive than the attitudes of male police recruits.

The research confirms that after the eleven-month training as part of the Adult Education Program for the profession of a police officer, there were greater differences between men and women in attitudes towards gender equality than those that existed at the beginning of their education. The results show that women's attitudes are generally more positive than the attitudes of their male counterparts.

5   Discussion and Conclusion

This study showed some unexpected results. Differences in attitudes of male and female recruits towards gender equality increased after their basic police education, with the biggest change occurring in attitudes towards the role and position of women in the police organisation. Basic police training in Croatia is carried out in such a way that future police officers acquire the necessary knowledge in law enforcement and the use of force, and the education is strongly focused on physical fitness and strength, which are segments of police work characterised as exclusively male. Such education could cause future female police officers to feel more segregated and not to belong in the police organisation, thus creating a more negative image of their role and position in the police.

Differences can also be explained by narrowly focused education and socialisation in the police culture, which is characterised as male-dominated. Male police officers have been found to create a sexualised work environment to ensure the survival of male dominance (Shelley et al., 2011). The results of this study showed that the differences in male and female recruits' attitudes towards gender equality, which existed at the beginning, increased even more after the completion of the education process and all the activities and interactions that this process includes. It is not possible to determine precisely what caused the increase in differences the most: the process of education that included continuous stay (24/7) at the Police Academy, classroom education, practical exercises, peer interaction, interaction with teachers and instructors, and/or internship in police stations. To determine the separate connection between education and changes in the attitudes of police recruits, a research design should include experimental and control groups of recruits, which was not possible in this study due to a predefined, unique curriculum for all participants.

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When it comes to attitudes about violence against women, the research showed concerning results. The attitudes of male police recruits are slightly more negative than those of female police recruits. Although these differences are small, they are still statistically significant. Police officers around the world generally show conservative attitudes about domestic violence and violence against women (Ashlock, 2019; Gölge et al., 2016; Li et al., 2021; Serrano-Montilla et al., 2023). Research in Turkey has shown that police officers are more tolerant of physical and verbal violence toward women in the family than judicial officials and are less supportive of the idea of a woman leaving such a family. Similarly, research has shown that male police officers are more tolerant of violence against women than female police officers (Gölge et al., 2016). In fact, studies have shown that police officers' attitudes about violence against women and domestic violence are influenced by socialisation in the police culture (Fleming et al., 2021) as well as broader cultural and social stereotypes surrounding gender-based violence (Garza & Franklin, 2021). The fact that future police officers begin their socialisation into the police culture at the very beginning of their education and conduct two months of internship can explain the changed attitudes of male recruits, supported by the aforementioned evidence and research results.

Basic police education in Croatia aligns with the majority of international recommendations and best practices. In general, the attitudes of future police officers, both male and female, towards gender equality are positive. Practical training, working on projects, and solving problems of the most sensitive and vulnerable groups of citizens (e.g., victims of gender-based violence) can be integrated into the educational process. Additionally, the positive impact of sharing knowledge and experience on the importance of women's role in the police during education has been noted (Chu et al., 2020). This helps to increase their self-confidence and promotes full integration. On the other hand, when recruiting and selecting new candidates, special attention should be paid to minority representatives, including women, so that the police organisation becomes as close as possible to a "mirror" of the society in which it operates.

This research has several limitations. The first limitation could be connected to socially desirable answers. Miles-Johnson and Pickering (2018) suggest that research on police recruits' attitudes, such as this one, could be subject to providing socially desirable or acceptable answers because police recruits are focused on performing

well and motivated to achieve the best possible results. Additionally, it should be pointed out that the statements used to measure attitudes about gender equality are formulated negatively and can be considered a measure of gender inequality in a certain way.

Future research should explore the role of other socio-demographic variables of police recruits in shaping differences in attitudes on gender issues, as well as how further socialisation into police culture affects changes in attitudes on gender equality issues. This research should especially consider the immediate work environment and professional experience of police officers.

Police reforms and new policing models demand greater integration of women into the organisation. Such reforms require additional education of police officers, clear transmission of organisational values and new rules to all police officers, and consistent implementation of new policies, primarily by police leaders, and then by every individual officer. Considering that the expected changes imply new organisational values and policies, it is necessary to develop a new police culture that encourages the adoption of positive attitudes about gender equality. For police organisations, it is essential that new police officers have the right attitudes and values and behave according to organisational principles because they are crucial for the future of the police organisation (Karp & Stenmark, 2011). Therefore, the attitudes of future male and female police officers toward gender equality, violence against women, and the role of women in the police are exceptionally important.

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LEGAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ELEMENTS OF SECURITY IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS PERFORMED BY THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES

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This chapter aims to assess how security elements could be integrated into the context of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The study is based on a systematic interpretation of the applicable internal legal regulations of the Republic of Slovenia, international legal conventions of the United Nations and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and selected European Union regulations and directives in the current and future regulation of sustainable development. To achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in local communities, the issue of good governance and regional security will also need to be addressed. This can be achieved by applying Environmental, Social, and Governance criteria, which have been effective in corporate governance practices in detecting adverse impacts on the environment, employees, human rights, human health, etc., and through developing mechanisms for controlling non-financial risks, such as corruption, lack of integrity, unethical, or other unlawful practices.

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PRAVNA UREDITEV ELEMENTOV VARNOSTI V CILJIH TRAJNOSTNEGA RAZVOJA, KI JIH IZVAJAJO LOKALNE SKUPNOSTI

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Namen poglavja je oceniti, kako bi lahko varnostne elemente umestili v kontekst 17 ciljev trajnostnega razvoja Združenih narodov. Študija temelji na sistematični razlagi veljavnih notranjih pravnih predpisov Republike Slovenije, mednarodnih in pravnih konvencij Združenih narodov in Organizacije za gospodarsko sodelovanje in razvoj ter izbranih predpisov in direktiv Evropske unije v trenutni in prihodnji ureditvi trajnostnega razvoja. V kontekstu doseganja ciljev trajnostnega razvoja Združenih narodov v lokalnih skupnostih je treba obravnavati tudi vprašanje dobrega upravljanja in regionalne varnosti. To je mogoče doseči z uporabo okoljskih, socialnih in upravljavskih meril, ki so se v praksi upravljanja podjetij izkazala za učinkovite pri odkrivanju škodljivih vplivov na okolje, zaposlene, človekove pravice, zdravje ljudi itd., ter z razvojem mehanizmov za obvladovanje nefinančnih tveganj, kot so korupcija, pomanjkanje integritete in neetične ali druge nezakonite prakse.

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1   Introduction

The focal point of the present research is the analysis of the responsibilities of municipal officials in regulating and implementing security-related local sustainable development goals. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015. These goals are designed to promote sustainable development globally by 2030 (Tičar, 2024). In total, 17 SDGs cover various societal, economic, and environmental challenges. The SDGs are interlinked and essential for achieving a more sustainable, equitable, and balanced world for all people and for protecting planet Earth (United Nations, n.d.).

We rely on the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (hereinafter 2030 Agenda) (United Nations, n.d.), which states in paragraph 35: "Sustainable development cannot be realised without peace and security, and peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development." The 2030 Agenda recognizes the need to build peaceful, just, and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice, respect human rights (including the right to development), uphold the effective rule of law, and practice good governance at all levels through transparent, effective, and accountable institutions.

At a national level, the 2030 Agenda has established a medium-term strategic orientation for the development of society for the 195 member states that have ratified it (Tičar, 2024). The 2030 Agenda includes 17 goals, all related in one way or another to national and local security issues. This paper systematizes and groups the individual security aspects of the adopted sustainable goals and identifies the local officials responsible for their implementation (Tičar, 2019).

2   Environment, Society, and Governance Criteria for Systematising the Sustainable Development Goals

Based on the 2030 Agenda, 17 SDGs have been developed. However, regarding security, we will primarily highlight three criteria for assessing these goals. We will focus on the future impacts of local security-related SDGs on environmental protection, society, and the quality of governance. These are the Environmental, Social, and Governance criteria (hereinafter ESG) (United Nations, The Global Compact, 2004). The ESG criteria are a modern tool for measuring the impacts of

organisational activities on the environment and society. They were initially developed to measure the performance of for-profit organisations (Tičar, 2019). However, they have been applied to all types of organisations, including legal entities under public law, founded and managed by municipalities (Tičar, 2024).

In 1988, James S. Coleman published "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital" in the American Journal of Sociology. This article challenged the concept of "mere" profitability as the sole criterion for measuring corporate performance. It introduced the idea of "social capital" as an essential new criterion of corporate performance. Later, various organisations and financial institutions became conscious of their social responsibility and started to assess whether their activities aligned with ESG goals (Coleman, 1988, Tičar, 2024).

The acronym ESG was first used in the 2004 United Nations report, a joint initiative of financial institutions that the United Nations had invited to increase corporate social responsibility (United Nations, The Global Compact, 2004). In less than 20 years, the ESG movement has grown from a United Nations-launched corporate social responsibility initiative to a global phenomenon (Holder, 2019). One of the main concerns in the context of ESG is the disclosure of the risks generated by corporate activities. Previously, disclosing information using ESG metrics was paramount for socially conscious investors seeking to make informed investments (Tičar, 2024).

Environmental criteria show a company's commitment to safeguarding the environment and combating climate change. Social criteria scrutinize how a company manages its interactions with employees, suppliers, customers, and local communities and its adherence to human rights principles. The governance dimension unveils aspects of corporate governance, including the composition of corporate bodies, audit practices, internal controls, and shareholder rights.

Numerous studies have demonstrated the significant impact of ESG reporting on stakeholder decisions, particularly among investors. While quantifying ESG factors in monetary terms poses challenges, a wealth of research indicates their capacity to influence firm valuation and drive investment performance in financial markets (Chang et al., 2022). ESG includes security issues, particularly how new business investments may actually or potentially adversely affect air, land, water, ecosystems,

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and human health (Tičar, 2024). As ESG considerations become more prevalent in investment analysis and the calculation of corporate value, it will be necessary in the future to provide units of measurement for investment decisions on subjective issues such as the level of harm to workers and other stakeholders in the development and application of new and diverse activities and products (Association of British Insurers, 2001).

While some may use the terms ESG and Corporate Social Responsibility (hereinafter CSR) interchangeably (Gillian et al., 2021), it's essential to recognize CSR as a broader concept that governs corporations' role within society. Conversely, ESG metrics specifically gauge corporations' non-financial, sustainable performance and risk management practices. In light of uncertain global conditions, it's becoming increasingly evident that firms must integrate CSR principles into their strategies and measure them through comprehensive ESG analyses (Tičar, 2024). By improving their ESG performance, companies can proactively identify upcoming legislative initiatives and influence public opinion processes (Primec & Belak, 2022).

The EU has followed the United Nations' trend towards a sustainable transition of the economy and society with its legislative activity. This includes various regulations and directives adopted by European Union bodies. The most effective legal tool of the EU bodies is the EU regulations (Tičar, 2019), which ensure the straightforward unification of European law. Among the rules adopted in this area are the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation 2019/2088 and Regulation 2020/852, known as the Taxonomy Regulation, which amends Regulation 2019/2088. The Taxonomy Regulation establishes a framework to promote sustainable investments and is considered by some to be the most important one (Pacces, 2021). It sets the basis for the EU taxonomy by outlining four general conditions that economic activity must meet to qualify as environmentally sustainable (Tičar, 2024).

EU directives are an indirect means of harmonising European law through the adoption of European guidelines in the national laws of Member States. Regarding sustainability governance, the Commission has proposed two new directives: a proposal for a Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (European Commission, n.d.) and Directive (EU) 2022/2464 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022, amending Regulation (EU) No 537/2014, Directive 2004/109/EC, Directive 2006/43/EC, and Directive 2013/34/EU, as

regards corporate sustainability reporting (Text with EEA relevance) (2022) (hereinafter CSRD). The CSRD will replace the current Non-Financial Reporting Directive 2014/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014, which amended Directive 2013/34/EU regarding the disclosure of non-financial and diversity information by certain large undertakings and groups (Text with EEA relevance) (2014) (hereinafter NFRD). The NFRD introduced the obligation for certain large companies and groups (public interest entities) to disclose non-financial information as a statement of non-financial performance (Tičar, 2024).

While the NFRD applies to large companies, the CSRD proposal foresees a wider scope, encompassing all EU-based public companies listed on regulated markets. In addition to legislative acts, soft law documents of international organisations, such as the United Nations and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and self-regulatory acts, such as governance codes, play an essential normative role in sustainability governance. In Slovenia, state-owned entities are subject to the Corporate Governance Code for Companies with Capital Assets of the State (Slovenski državni holding, d.d., 2014). As we will explain below, these sustainability governance criteria are also becoming increasingly important in the context of public sector entities, including local communities.

3   Systematisation of the Security Elements in the Sustainable Development Goals

In the Republic of Slovenia, municipalities ensure the implementation of security components by enforcing state laws. In criminal law enforcement, municipalities cooperate with state authorities in pre-trial proceedings. Regarding road safety rules, municipalities exercise statutory powers that authorise specific legal actions, such as traffic control, and similarly in matters of public order. However, municipalities can also adopt ordinances under the law to further regulate stationary traffic or public order issues within their jurisdiction. Article 21 of the Local Self-Government Act (2007), which determines the original tasks of local public interest that may be defined by general municipal acts (municipal ordinances), is particularly relevant to the autonomy of municipalities in establishing local security. General local security mainly concerns the following fundamental municipal tasks (Local Self-Government Act, 2007, Article 20):

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- The municipality is responsible for the protection of air, soil, and water resources, protection against noise, the collection and disposal of waste, and other environmental protection activities;
- The municipality is responsible for ensuring primary care for children and families, persons at social risk, disabled persons, and older people;
- The municipality is responsible for ensuring the safe construction, safe maintenance, and safe management of local public roads, public paths, and recreational and other public spaces, and for the regulation of municipal traffic by the law;
- The municipality carries out the tasks of municipal warden services, organises the municipal utility and warden services, and ensures security and order;
- The municipality carries out security supervision at local events;
- The municipality is responsible for fire safety and organizes rescue services; and
- The municipality ensures the safe organisation of aid and rescue in the event of natural and other disasters.

In these areas, municipal officials can adopt and implement municipal ordinances that constitute the local de facto legal implementation of SDGs.

4 The Municipal Officials Responsible for Adopting and Implementing Municipal Sustainable Development Policies

In the Republic of Slovenia, two municipal-level officials effectively decide on a municipality's social, environmental, and governance development. Municipal officials include municipal or town councillors, mayors, and deputy mayors. The former are legislative or normative officials, while the latter are executive officials. Officials are individuals elected to office. While certain state officials can be appointed, municipal officials cannot be appointed. Instead, municipal officials are elected in public elections for a four-year mandate (Local Self-Government Act, 2007). Generally, officials are natural persons (i.e., physical persons) who exercise authority. Besides the officials, civil servants also partly exercise executive authority under the officials' instructions. However, employees of the municipal administration are not considered public officials.

Municipal councillors are important local officials responsible for adopting general municipal acts, especially municipal statutes and ordinances. These local regulations apply exclusively within the territory of a municipality and must align with national laws. Once adopted by municipal or town councils, they must be enforced or implemented. The mayor is the most critical executive officer of a municipality, responsible for proposing general acts to the councillors and executing or implementing them. The mayor is supported in their authority by deputy mayors. This role is a political function and a holder of public office. Members of the municipal administration staff are not political functionaries; they are civil servants according to Slovenian legal regulations (Public Sector Wage System Act, 2009). Political functionaries are defined as persons who execute public powers. Since some civil servants also execute public powers, Slovenian legislation provides a more specific definition, defining functionaries as persons who obtain a mandate to perform an office through general elections. In this context, a local political functionary may be defined as a person who holds powers in a local community body (such as mayors, vice mayors, and members of local councils). They do not work based on a classic employment relationship but on a mandate obtained through election to local community bodies. The central term in the public sector in Slovenia, besides political functionaries, is civil servant. The Civil Servants Act (2008) defines civil servants as natural persons employed in the public sector (Tičar & Tičar, 2024). Some of the key goals of the contemporary civil servant system arrangement include (Tičar & Tičar, 2024):

– To define the term "civil servant" and to establish uniform elements of the civil servant system for the entire public sector;
– Comprehensively regulate the system of civil servants in state bodies and local community administrations;
– To decentralise and simplify decision-making processes regarding personnel matters, and at the same time to centralize and strengthen oversight and establish accountability and sanctions for violations; and
– To ensure professional public administration independent of political changes.

The sustainable development strategy under the 2030 Agenda first obliges legislative local functionaries (local councillors) to adopt such general local acts, which constitute the implementation of the outlined sustainability strategies. Further, it

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obliges executive functionaries (mayors and deputy mayors) to consider sustainability goals when implementing these acts. In our analyses, we will primarily highlight three SDG criteria for assessing these security-related goals: 1) environmental protection, 2) societal impacts, and 3) the quality of governance (United Nations, The Global Compact, 2004).

5 The Element of Application and the Future Use of Codes of Good Governance for Local Legal Entities Under Public Law in Slovenia

In the Republic of Slovenia, municipalities are part of the public sector. Effective governance is crucial for building trust in public sector entities (Tičar, 2019). However, legislation alone is insufficient for effective governance, especially in the softer area of the SDGs. Therefore, in the context of the ESG criteria, it makes sense to introduce codes of good governance in local public sector governance as well. Codes of governance generally provide a framework of best governance practices. They enable public sector entities to implement the highest standards in this area, thereby raising the quality of governance and improving long-term performance in the interests of all stakeholders.

There have yet to be governance codes applicable to local government in Slovenia. Nevertheless, there are three codes of governance in Slovenia that can serve as a reference:

- Slovenian Corporate Governance Code for Listed Companies, adopted by the Ljubljana Stock Exchange and the Slovenian Directors' Association (Ljubljanska Borza, 2021),
- Corporate Governance Code for Companies with Capital Assets of the State for State-Owned Enterprises (Slovenski državni holding, d.d., 2014, 2021), and
- Corporate Governance Code for Non-Public Companies, adopted by The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, The Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, and the Slovenian Directors' Association (2016).

In Slovenia, the Companies Act (2009) stipulates that companies required to perform audits must include a corporate governance statement in their business report. They may use the reference code applicable to them or adopt their code. While applying the code is not mandatory for the non-public sector, disclosure of its use or non-use and the non-use of a particular code provision is compulsory and must be further explained and justified by the company (Companies Act, 2009).

Although no code in Slovenia comprehensively regulates entities' corporate governance under public law, a code does apply to the public sector. This is the Corporate Governance Code for "Public" Companies (hereinafter the Code), specifically for companies with capital assets of the state (Slovenski državni holding, d.d., 2014, 2021). The purpose of the Code is to set governance and control standards in companies with state capital investment and establish a transparent and comprehensible system of corporate governance in those companies. The Code aims to improve the quality of corporate governance in state-invested enterprises and in SDH to enhance the long-term performance of these companies in the interests of all their stakeholders (Slovenski državni holding, d.d., 2021). However, no such regulation has yet been passed for legal entities founded by municipalities.

6 Comparative Analysis of Legal Regulation of Codes of Good Governance in Some Other Countries

Although private sector governance has received much more attention in the literature than public sector governance, in the last thirty years, several documents have focused on managing entities under public law, particularly in Commonwealth countries. The following countries have established governance codes for the public sector (Spanhove & Verhoest, 2007): the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, the Netherlands, and Denmark. Generally, countries use governance codes to establish the framework for all entities under public law (e.g., government bodies, agencies) of both market and non-market nature.

In the UK, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) issued The Public Sector Corporate Governance Framework in 1995, considered one of the first public sector corporate governance frameworks. The Institute drew on the Cadbury Code in drafting the framework, retaining the three fundamental

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principles of openness, integrity, and accountability, which were adapted to reflect the characteristics of the public sector (Ryan & Ng, 2000).

The CIPFA Framework emphasizes the importance of diversity among stakeholders in the public sector, as well as the need for integrity, honesty, high standards of propriety, and innovation in the stewardship of public funds and activities. The 1995 Nolan Report added the principle of leadership to the existing framework of recommendations. Leadership is an essential element of public sector governance, as it effectively reflects performance—a more critical component of public sector corporate governance than conformance, which plays a more significant role in the private sector (Ryan & Ng, 2000).

The public sector corporate governance code developed by CIPFA (2006) addresses three key areas:

– Organisational processes and structure (compliance with the law, accountability for public money, communication with stakeholders, roles, and responsibilities of individual bodies and persons);
– control and financial reporting (annual reports, internal control (risk management, internal audits), audit committees, external audits); and
– standards of conduct for directors (leadership, codes of conduct, selflessness, impartiality, and fairness).

The development of corporate governance in the United Kingdom extended beyond the national level to include the local level. In 2001, in conjunction with SOLACE and key local community organisations, CIPFA combined the principles set out by Cadbury, Nolan, and the UK's former Department of the Environment, Transport, and the Regions into a single good governance framework for local communities entitled "Corporate Governance in Local Government – A Keystone for Community Governance". The framework recommended that local authorities review their current governance systems against several fundamental principles and report annually on their effectiveness in practice, encouraging them to apply the best governance standards in this area. The framework was revised in 2006 and 2007 (CIPFA, 2006).

Ireland is another country that has adopted its own public-sector corporate governance code. The first guidelines on the corporate governance of entities under public law, entitled the State Bodies Guidelines, were published by the Department of Finance in March 1992 (The Committee on the Financial Aspects of Corporate Governance, 1992). The guidelines were updated in 2001 and 2009. In 2016, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform upgraded these guidelines to the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies to account for governance developments, public sector reform initiatives, and stakeholder consultations. Although the Code originally refers to state bodies, the term should be interpreted more broadly, as "commercial state bodies", as the Code calls them, are either "nationalised" corporations (state-owned companies, author's note) or "public utilities", and as such are an essential component of the Irish economy (Walsh, 1987). Walsh (1987) refers to them as "state corporations" and lists the main ones (Irish Telecom, Irish Broadcasting, the Post Office, etc.) as "state-owned" corporations.

The Irish Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, 2022) applies the principles of the Cadbury approach (comply or explain) to demonstrate compliance. In addition to the areas covered by the United Kingdom Code, it regulates:

- relations with Parliament, the Minister, and the competent Department (the oversight role of the competent Department, acquisition procedures, acquisition of assets and disposal of surplus assets, appraisal of capital investments, etc.);
- remuneration and superannuation (salaries and other benefits of chairpersons and management board members, travel, and official entertainment); and
- quality customer service.

The Code provides a framework for applying best corporate governance practices for commercial and non-commercial entities under public law (Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, 2019).

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7   Discussion and Conclusion

In conclusion, achieving the SDGs requires addressing the issue of good governance, including at the local security level. This can be accomplished by applying ESG criteria, which have been effective in corporate governance practices in detecting adverse impacts on the environment, employees, human rights, and human health, among others, and by developing mechanisms for controlling non-financial risks such as corruption, lack of integrity, and unethical practices. Drawing from the positive experience of using self-regulatory documents like governance codes to improve corporate governance practices, it would be reasonable to consider similar measures at the local governance level, if not across the entire public sector (Primec, 2021). It is crucial to emphasize that just as reporting on non-financial information enhances corporate transparency and provides essential information to stakeholders, the same applies to local communities. Municipal officials should consider the risks associated with security in their communities and the achievement of sustainability goals. By doing so, they can anticipate and adopt appropriate security measures to effectively manage uncertain future situations, which unfortunately are prevalent in today's world (e.g., climate change, the energy crisis, and the war in Ukraine).

As good practice recommendations, governance codes should therefore be seen primarily as an aid to municipal officials in managing security-related risks in the local community, in conjunction with achieving sustainability goals, rather than as an additional obligation.

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Aggressive War against Ukraine: Rural and Urban Safety in the Context of National and Global Security

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The chapter is devoted to reviewing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in connection with the aggressive war against Ukraine, launched by Russia in 2022. This war in the heart of Europe affects global and national security, as well as rural and urban security. The threat to security is apparent not only in connection with the threat of expansion of the war to NATO countries but also because of the blocking of trade cooperation and routes that made it possible to provide regions of the world with food and clean water. Thus, the connection between Russia's aggressive war against Ukraine and national, public, economic, ecological and other types of safety and security issues is obvious. All demonstrated examples highlight war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide; because of this, international, national, and foreign law enforcement bodies, courts (tribunals), and non-governmental organisations are involved in collecting, checking and evaluating evidence.

AGRESIVNA VOJNA PROTI UKRAJINI: VARNOST PODEŽELJA IN MEST V KONTEKSTU NACIONALNE IN GLOBALNE VARNOSTI

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Poglavje se osredotoča na cilje trajnostnega razvoja Združenih narodov v povezavi z agresivno vojno proti Ukrajini, ki jo je sprožila Rusija leta 2022. Vojna v osrčju Evrope vpliva na globalno in nacionalno varnost ter varnost podeželja in mest. Ogroženost varnosti je jasna ne le v povezavi z grožnjo širitve vojne na države NATO, temveč tudi zaradi blokiranja trgovinskega sodelovanja in poti, ki so omogočale oskrbo posameznih regij sveta s hrano in čisto vodo. Povezava agresivne vojne Rusije zoper Ukrajino z nacionalnimi, javnimi, gospodarskimi, ekološkimi in drugimi vrstami varnostnih vprašanj je očitna. Prikazani primeri so izpostavili vojne zločine, zločine proti človeštvu in genocid. Posledično so v zbiranje, preverjanje in vrednotenje dokazov vključeni mednarodni, nacionalni in tuji organi pregona, sodišča (tribunali) ter nevladne organizacije.

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1 Introduction

On February 24, 2022, the Russian army began an aggressive full-scale invasion of Ukraine (United Nations General Assembly, 2022). As a result of this war, thousands of war crimes have been committed against the civilian population, the Ukrainian military, and prisoners of war. There has also been significant destruction of military and civilian infrastructure, cultural heritage, ecological systems, and agricultural fields. These war crimes and crimes against humanity were primarily associated with the occupation of certain Ukrainian regions. Only de-occupation and bringing the perpetrators to justice can reduce the risk of such crimes being committed again by the Russian army. Due to the war's devastation, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2023) has become impossible both in Ukraine and in the region (SDG 2 – Zero hunger; SDG 3 – Good health and well-being; SDG 7 – Affordable and clean energy; SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth; SDG 9 – Industry, innovation and infrastructure; SDG 15 – Life on land; SDG 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions).

According to the online map of military operations as of August 22, 2023 (Deepstate Map, 2023), Ukraine managed to de-occupy 41,663 km² of territories in Kyiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Kherson and Mykolaiv regions (see Figure 1), or about 6.9% of Ukraine's territory. This area is comparable in size to Denmark or the Netherlands. Approximately 66 km² (0.01% of the territory of Ukraine) was de-occupied during the summer counteroffensive 2023. Parts of the Kharkiv, Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson regions as well as Crimea – totalling about 106,563 km² or 17.7% of all Ukrainian territory – remain occupied by Russia at the time of writing. The size of these occupied territories is comparable to the size of Bulgaria or Iceland.

The result of the Russian aggression was not only the occupation of territories, lands, cities, and villages, and the killing and wounding of civilians and soldiers, but also significant damage to infrastructure and a vast number of refugees fleeing from the atrocities of the Russian army. In 2023, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2023) registered 5,901,000 refugees from Ukraine in Europe. The Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine also registered 4,900,000 internally displaced persons due to the war (Ministerstvo sotsilnoi polityky Ukrainy, 2023).

These figures demonstrate the extent of the danger posed by the war to Ukrainians and the potential risk to the population of European countries, who could hypothetically become victims of Russian aggression if Ukraine loses this war.
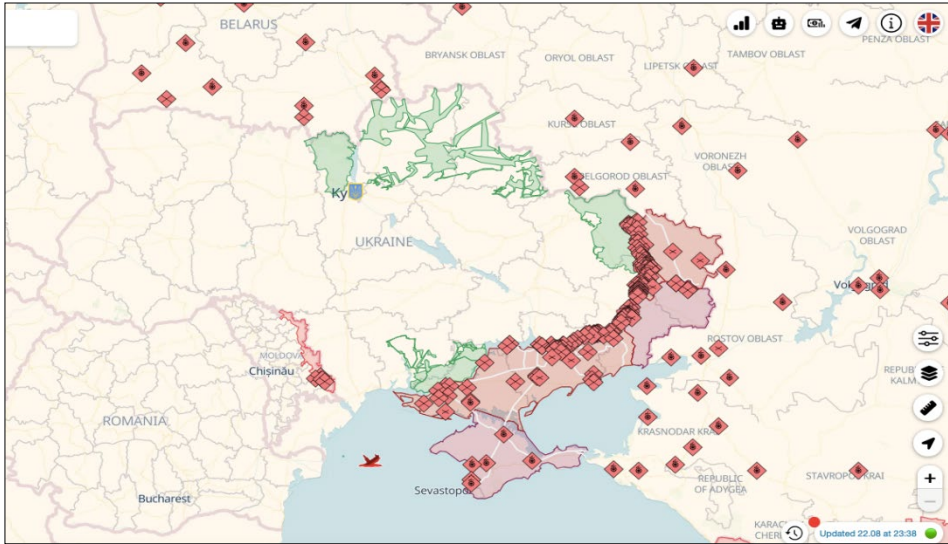

Figure 1: Map of Occupied and De-occupied Territories of Ukraine, August 22, 2023.
Source: https://deepstatemap.live/#6/49.438/32.053.

Many agricultural lands, rivers, seas, cities, and territories have become occupied or have been the site of heavy and exhausting fighting in 2022 and 2023. The Russian army's main goal appears to be the capture of the industrially developed Donetsk and Luhansk regions, the industrially and scientifically developed Kyiv and Kharkiv regions, industrially and agriculturally developed Zaporizhzhia and Zhytomyr regions, and the agriculturally developed Kherson, Chernihiv, and Sumy regions. The occupation of the Chernobyl and Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plants, the occupation and subsequent demolition of the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant with the dam on the Dnieper River, and the flight of missiles over other nuclear power plants pose a danger not only to Ukraine but also to Europe and the world.

"The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future" (United Nations, 2023). At its heart, the 17 SDGs are an urgent call for action by all developed and developing countries

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in a global partnership. The war in Ukraine has cast doubt on the possibility of achieving these goals in Ukraine, the region, and probably the world. This conclusion is echoed by the United Nations, which has expressed doubts about achieving the SDGs in its report. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, also noted that: "the COVID-19 pandemic and the triple crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution are having a devastating and lasting impact. This has been amplified by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has driven increases in the prices of food and energy and the cost of access to finance, creating a global cost-of-living crisis affecting billions of people" (United Nations, 2023).

This chapter plays an important role in demonstrating the seriousness of the challenges the world faces in stopping Russia's aggressive war against Ukraine. The impact of this military aggression on food security and hunger (SDG 2), economic growth (SDG 8), healthy lives (SDG 3), and the environment (SDG 15) is extraordinary. These aggressive actions by Russia can undermine the very possibility of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals both at the regional and global levels. Global efforts are critical not only in stopping aggression and de-occupying Ukrainian territories but also in supporting national and international criminal justice bodies in bringing war criminals to justice. This will help restore a peaceful society (SDG 16), prevent such aggressive actions in the future, and make the world more stable and safer.

2   The Effects of the War on Food Security and Hunger (SDG 2)

The SDG 2 stipulates that the United Nations should strive to "end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture" (2023). A large-scale Russian military aggression against Ukraine has significantly disrupted both rural and urban safety, as well as national and global security. However, the most pressing concerns include the Russian army's blockade of the Ukrainian seas and rivers (North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 2022), the alleged commission of ecocide on Ukrainian territory as an aggressive environmental weapon (Ofis Generalnogo prokurora, 2023), and the occupation of Ukrainian nuclear power plants (International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA], 2022). These factors have global implications, potentially leading to regional trade disruption, famine both in Ukraine and countries relying on Ukrainian grain and food supplies, ecological devastation, and threats to Europe's security, including the risk of nuclear

incidents at Ukrainian plants. Throughout the conflict, Russian soldiers have blocked riverbeds such as the Dnieper and Siverskyi Donets, using explosives on dammed reservoirs to deny access to clean water to Ukrainians.

One of the clear objectives of Russian aggression against Ukraine was to north Ukraine's access to the Black and Azov Seas, a goal partially accomplished through the occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea since 2014, along with the partial capture of certain southern regions of Ukraine and Snake Island in 2022. Additionally, the Russian fleet's patrols and shelling along the Ukrainian coast and sea routes have effectively hindered trade, including humanitarian shipments.

The United Nations Initiative on the Safe Transportation of Grain and Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports (United Nations, 2022) – known as "Grain from Ukraine" and signed in Istanbul – succeeded in reopening maritime trade routes in the Black Sea, stabilising food prices on global markets, and preventing famine for millions worldwide. Consequently, Ukraine has shipped 15.5 million tonnes of agricultural products to 38 countries (Interfax, 2022). By the end of 2022, Ukraine independently dispatched three ships to Ethiopia and Somalia to mitigate the risk of famine. Additionally, Ukraine planned to send an additional 60 ships to Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Congo, Kenya, Yemen, and other nations in 2022 (Voice of America, 2022). This grain and other foodstuffs were cultivated on Ukraine's fertile fields during the aggressive war, despite Russian soldiers violating the rules and customs of warfare by destroying city and village infrastructure and bombing and mining rural fields.

It is noteworthy that the United Nations Initiative on the Safe Transportation of Grain and Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports (United Nations, 2022) was signed and extended multiple times during the war. However, the document permits the use of Ukrainian ports such as Odesa, Chornomorsk, and Pivdennyi for transporting food and Russian ammonia, shifting the initiative from purely humanitarian to a more commercial agreement. In this context, the Ukrainian government allocated only 10 million euros last year for providing humanitarian aid to Ethiopia and Somalia (Zharikova, 2022).

An additional confirmation of the brutal nature of Russian aggression was the missile strikes on grain, oil, and other food storage facilities in July-August 2023 aimed at undermining the United Nations Initiative on the Safe Transportation of Grain and

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Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports (United Nations, 2022) and creating a humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. This aggression potentially led to famine not only in Ukraine but also in other countries of the world, while increasing Russia's appeal as a trading partner for some countries. Dmytro Lubinets, the ombudsman for human rights in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, condemned the intensified shelling by Russian occupiers at Ukrainian ports and grain warehouses following the Russian Federation's withdrawal statement on July 17 (Interfax Ukraine, 2023a).

3   The Effects of the War on Economic Growth (SDG 8)

The blockade of the Black and Azov seas poses a navigation hazard in these waters and on the Danube and the Dnieper rivers. This approach renders civilised trade impossible, moving the Russian blockade closer to acts resembling piracy in the region. In late July 2022, Russia, in defiance of the United Nations Initiative on the Safe Transportation of Grain and Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports (United Nations, 2022), threatened civilian ships bound for Ukrainian ports. A Russian warship explicitly warned: "I caution against movement towards Ukrainian ports. Additionally, any cargo transport to Ukraine is deemed potential military cargo. The nation whose flag the vessel bears will be considered involved in the Ukraine conflict" (Sitnikova, 2023). Such aggressive actions at sea warrant holding those responsible for the aggression accountable through legal prosecution.

4   The Effects of the War on the Promotion of Peaceful Societies and Justice for All (SDG 16)

Russian aggression has had a profound impact on the lives of people both within the conflict zones and those residing in occupied or unoccupied territories of Ukraine. Ongoing hostilities, rocket attacks by the aggressor, and the initial lack of safe havens in Ukraine at the onset of the invasion resulted in a significant number of casualties among civilians and military personnel. Attacks on critical infrastructure (SDG 9) have precipitated a humanitarian crisis, with widespread displacement of refugees within Ukraine and beyond, and shortages of food, clean water, heating, electricity, gas, fuel, and other essentials (SDG 7). Addressing these challenges necessitates not only halting the aggression through the de-occupation of Ukraine but also ensuring accountability for war criminals and perpetrators of crimes against

humanity through national and international criminal justice mechanisms. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) could also play a pivotal role in this regard.

In times of war, justice plays a crucial role in documenting evidence of war and other international crimes, laying the groundwork for holding guilty individuals accountable. In our view, achieving justice under these circumstances is only feasible through the application of the rules and customs of international humanitarian law, encompassing instruments such as the Geneva Conventions, The Hague Conventions for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, and rules of customary international humanitarian law compiled by the International Committee of the Red Cross, among others. The establishment of justice mechanisms has historically been shaped significantly by institutions like the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals, and the adopted Geneva Conventions of 1949 (Campbell, 2000). Special role in formation of international humanitarian law also played International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (United Nations International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, n.d.) and International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, n.d.) as tribunals founded by United Nations for prosecution genocide (Rwanda) and war crimes (former Yugoslavia) have played pivotal roles in shaping international humanitarian law. These tribunals, established by the United Nations, have focused on prosecuting genocide (Rwanda) and war crimes (former Yugoslavia), experiences that culminated in the establishment of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the inclusion of definitions of war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and crimes of aggression in national Criminal and Penal Codes.

International and national law enforcement bodies and courts, including tribunals, are actively engaged in gathering, documenting, and assessing evidence related to war crimes, crimes against humanity, crimes of aggression, and genocide committed since the onset of Russian aggression and invasion in Ukraine. On March 2, 2022, following the commencement of a full-scale invasion into Ukraine, Karim A.A. Khan, the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, announced the initiation of an investigation into allegations of war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide occurring on any part of Ukrainian territory since November 21, 2013. This decision came in response to a recommendation from 40 states, later joined by

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an additional four countries, urging the International Criminal Court to undertake such an investigation (International Criminal Court, 2022).

NGOs have played a crucial role, not only in directly assisting witnesses and victims of war but also in supporting the administration of justice. Their strategic support for state and international institutions is pivotal, encompassing financial aid for judicial and law enforcement activities and providing essential tools. For instance, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia developed specialised mechanisms to support victims and witnesses, ensuring their safety and comfort during testimony. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia established a separate Victims and Witnesses Section (VWS), as an independent body that provided logistical, psychological, and protective measures (United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, n.d.). NGOs can utilise such frameworks to offer technical assistance, including forensic tools and specialised training, crucial for combating crime. Their role in documenting war crimes in Ukraine is paramount, facilitating pre-trial investigations domestically and providing vital evidence for international courts, including the International Criminal Court (Truth Hounds, 2024).

The coalition "Ukraine. 5 am" exemplifies such initiatives (Ukraine 5 AM coalition, n.d.). Comprising 16 Ukrainian human rights organisations, this coalition focuses on documenting war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious human rights violations. "Sunflowers Project" (2023) adopts a comparable approach to documenting war crimes in Ukraine. The project aims to complement the efforts of state authorities or any international courts established to prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, aggression, or other serious human rights violations linked to the recent Russian invasion of Ukraine (Project Sunflowers, 2023).

From the onset of the full-scale invasion on February 24, 2022, to August 28, 2023, the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine registered numerous violations of the laws and customs of war, along with related crimes. Charges were also prepared in 2022 and the first part of 2023 (January-July 2023; Criminal Code, 2017; Ofis generalnogo prokurora, 2023) (Table 1). This data illustrates the challenges faced by

law enforcement agencies during this period and underscores the significant pressures they encountered in 2022–2023.

Table 1: Number of Violations of the Laws and Customs of War and Other Related Crimes in Ukraine in Connection with Prepared Charges (Accusations) (2022–2023)

Name of crime	Article in Criminal Code of Ukraine	Number of violations in the period from February 24, 2022 to August 28, 2023	Number of prepared charges (accusations) in 2022	Number of prepared charges (accusations) in January-July 2023
Violations of the laws and customs of war	Article 438 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine	102,005	135 (47)	32 (9)
Planning, preparing for or starting and waging an aggressive war	Article 437 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine	78	6 (0)	6 (0)
Propaganda of war	Article 436 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine	61	21 (16)	15 (15)
Other crimes of aggression or war crimes	–	2,958	–	–

Ecocide in the Criminal Code of Ukraine (2017, article 441) is defined as a "mass destruction of flora and fauna, poisoning of air or water resources, and also any other actions that may cause an environmental disaster". In 2022, Ukraine registered 15 cases of ecocide, with no suspicions reported (accusation – 0), and 22 cases of genocide, with four suspicions reported (accusation – 4). In 2023, a similar trend continued with five registered cases of ecocide, no suspicions reported (accusations – 0), and eight cases of genocide, with one suspicion reported (accusations – 1) (Ofis generalnogo prokurora, 2023).

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According to the Unified State Register of Court Decisions, only 37 verdicts under Article 438 of the Criminal Code (2017) could be analysed: 34 guilty verdicts and three verdicts prohibited from publication (one of them partially). This indicates that approximately 0.04% of the criminal proceedings registered in 2022 and January-July 2023 resulted in a court verdict (or one for every 2,770 recorded criminal proceedings). Such statistics raise concerns about the effectiveness of national criminal justice in Ukraine during the war period. During this time, 51 individuals received prison sentences ranging from 8 to 15 years, while two individuals received life imprisonment (Table 2).

Table 2: The Analysis of 37 Verdicts Under Article 438 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine with Number of Punished Persons in Connection of Terms of Imprisonment Penalties

Imprisonment penalties	Number of punished persons
8 years	1 person (1.9%)
8 years and 6 months	2 persons (3.8%)
9 years	4 persons (7.5%)
10 years	8 persons (15%)
11 years	22 persons (41.5%)
11 years and 6 months	1 person (1.9%)
12 years	12 persons (22.6%)
15 years	1 person (1.9%)
life imprisonment	2 persons (3.8%)

The analysis of the available 35 verdicts made it possible to establish that the commission of crimes provided for in Article 438 of the Criminal Code (2017) was carried out in most cases after a large-scale invasion. Only four cases related to 2015 (2 guilty persons) and 2015-2021 (2 guilty persons). Forms of the subsequent violation of the laws and customs of war were different (European data, 2022). However, this analysis could give information about the aggressiveness and brutality of guilty persons (Table 3).

The following actions of the Russian army in Ukraine, which are elements of separate war crimes and aggression, pose a particular danger for the region and the world: 1) blockade of Ukrainian seas and rivers (discussed separately and related to SDG 2); 2) Russian occupation of Ukrainian nuclear power plants; and 3) crimes of ecocide committed in Ukraine.

Table 3: Types and Numbers of the Subsequent Violation of the Laws and Customs of War in Ukraine

Types of the subsequent violation of the laws and customs of war	Number of violations
Culpable homicide	2 (2.1%)
Destruction of civilian and critical infrastructure (including residential buildings, shelling from a tank, missile launchers or other weapon)	7 (7.4%)
Aerial bombardment of civil and critical infrastructure	1 (1.1%)
Theft of property	17 (17.9%)
Injuries	27 (28.4%)
Illegal imprisonment	24 (25.3%)
Tortures (including deprivation of food and water, torture with electricity, the beating of the civil population with usage of different objects, cutting off fingers, handcuffing, putting a bag on the head)	8 (8.4%)
Threat of physical and sexual violence	1 (1.1%)
Sexual violence	1 (1.1%)
Undressing (including the cold season)	4 (4.2%)
Forced conscription of the civilian population	2 (2.1%)
Propaganda of army service	1 (1.1%)

5   The Effects of the War on the Healthy Lives (SDG 3)

The potential consequence of a nuclear explosion resulting from the occupation of nuclear power plants by the Russian army poses a significant threat to Ukraine, Europe, and the world, leading to long-term health, climate, and ecological impacts. The heightened risks and the inability to effectively manage national and global health risks will have enduring consequences for many countries in Europe and beyond. The immediate and most critical impact of a nuclear explosion at these plants would be a rapid increase in deaths and illnesses due to hazardous radioactive materials and environmental contamination from pollutants in air, water, and soil. This could render achieving real targets under SDG 3 before 2030 impossible: significantly reducing deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and pollutants in air, water, and soil (3.9), and strengthening the capacity of all countries, especially developing ones, for early warning, risk reduction, and management of national and global health risks (3.d) (United Nations, 2023).

Since the onset of the war, Ukraine's focus has been on nuclear security (IAEA, 2023). Beginning from the war's outset, the nuclear reactor of the Kharkiv Physical and Technical Institute has been repeatedly shelled; Russian soldiers fired at the "Neutron Source" nuclear reactor in Kharkiv 74 times between March and

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September 2022 (Interfax Ukraine, 2023b). The damage inflicted on this renowned scientific research institute, where atomic fission was first achieved, is estimated at approximately 800 million Euros, with an additional estimated environmental damage of 400 million Euros (Interfax Ukraine, 2023b). Furthermore, the Russian army occupied the Chernobyl nuclear power plant (which was returned under Ukrainian control after the looting, February–April 2022) and has continued to hold the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant as a military stronghold since March 2022. Other nuclear power plants were also at risk due to rocket attacks targeting power facilities during the winter aimed at disrupting electricity supply. Russian strikes on other infrastructure facilities have heightened concerns about potential nuclear incidents to the maximum level.

On March 3, 2022, the IAEA issued a call to the Russian Federation to immediately cease all actions directed against or occurring at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant or any other nuclear facilities in Ukraine. The purpose was to enable Ukrainian authorities to maintain or regain complete control over all nuclear reactors within Ukraine's internationally recognised borders, ensuring their safe and reliable operation. Despite this call, the Russian Federation disregarded it and continued to occupy these nuclear power plants, deploying troops and military equipment on their premises or nearby. This occupation included detaining plant workers under constant threat of accidents involving radioactive materials (IAEA, 2022).

The further occupation of the Chernobyl and the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plants had varying consequences. Interestingly, the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, located near Kyiv, was both de-occupied and looted. On March 31, 2022, "Energoatom" announced that Russian National Guard troops had withdrawn from the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, completing an act of transferring plant security back to personnel (2022). The de-occupation of Chernobyl coincided with the liberation of the Kyiv, Chernihiv, and Sumy regions of Ukraine (MIHR, 2023). Yevgen Kramarenko, head of the State Agency of Ukraine on Exclusion Zone Management, later reported that 95–98% of the exclusion zone is mined, and 40 million euros is needed to restore the Chernobyl nuclear power plant to its pre-war state (Ukrinform, 2023a, 2023b). Another issue arising from the Chernobyl plant's occupation is the spread of radioactive dust within the exclusion zone. While attacking Kyiv, the Russian army's military operations raised radioactive dust,

affecting soldiers forced to occupy the exclusion zone. This has resulted in health and severe environmental damage (Greenpeace, 2022).

The Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant remains occupied as of March 2024. It has been converted into a military base by the Russian army, where military equipment and ammunition are stored and used for operations within Ukrainian territory (IAEA, 2023). The plant's staff, operating at great personal risk, are effectively trapped there (Murakami & Geddie, 2024). The situation worsened after the Russian army detonated the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant, which supplied water for cooling the nuclear reactors of the Zaporizhzhia (IAEA, 2023). These actions exemplify nuclear terrorism, occurring at Europe's largest nuclear power plant under occupation. Such nuclear risks at power plants make achieving SDG targets in Ukraine impossible and significantly jeopardize these goals in Europe and globally in the long term.

6   The Effects of the War on the Environment (SDG 15)

The Ukrainian Criminal Code (2017, Article 441) identifies ecocide as a separate criminal offence against peace, human security, and international legal order. However, including ecocide as a criminal offence in criminal codes is not typical; it is recognised as a criminal offence only in certain countries (Ecocide law, n.d.), such as Armenia (Article 394), Ecuador (Article 245), France (Article 231-3), Georgia (Article 409), Kazakhstan (Article 169), Moldova (Article 136), Uzbekistan (Articles 196, 198), Vietnam (Article 242-244). The term "ecocide" is associated with war crimes and chemical attacks by the United States in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Similarly, "ecocide" is associated with "genocide" since the ecological consequences of its commission can lead to the destruction of specific population groups (Moribe et al., 2023).

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998), in its definition of war crimes, addresses damage to the natural environment. Specifically, Article 8 (2) (b) (iv) contains the following definition: "Intentionally launching an attack in the knowledge that such attack will cause incidental loss of life or injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects or widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment which would be excessive about the concrete and direct overall military advantage anticipated". While Ukraine has not ratified or implemented the Rome

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Statute, it recognised the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court in 2014 over the situation in Crimea and parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and again in 2022 after large-scale aggression. This recognition allows for the investigation of severe environmental damage not only within national jurisdiction (Article 441 of the Criminal Code, 2017) but also within international jurisdiction (according to Article 8 of the Rome Statute) (International Criminal Court, 1998).

In 2022 and January-July 2023 alone, the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine registered 23 crimes of ecocide, as defined in Article 441 of Criminal Code (2017). Fighting along the riverbed of the Dnieper, Oskil and Siverskyi Donets, the detonation of the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant, and the flooding of coal mines in the occupied territories can all be classified as ecocide during the Russian aggression. The Prosecutor General of Ukraine, Andriy Kostin, also noted that 30% of Ukraine's territory (174,000 km²) is contaminated with explosive objects, and 24,000 km² of forests are damaged or destroyed. According to him, Ukraine is the first country to prosecute environmental war crimes on such a scale (Radio Svoboda, 2023).

Nikolaychuk emphasised that understanding the impact of such crimes on regions allows for the anticipation of environmental consequences, which, in turn, can lead to economic repercussions, often referred to as externalities (Nikolaychuk, 2023). In this context, the most horrific crime against the environment is exemplified by the ecocide in Ukraine when the Russian army detonated the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant on June 6, 2023, during the retreat from the right bank of the Dnieper to the left (Deepstate Map, 2023). The demolition of the power plant resulted in the flooding of towns and villages downstream of the Dnieper, the destruction of crops, animals, and fish in this area, the deprivation of clean water for people above and below the power plant, the impossibility of irrigating agricultural fields, and climate changes in these regions. Additionally, a massive wave from the blown-up Kakhovskaya hydroelectric power plant dam polluted the Dnieper riverbed and the Black Sea.

Deputy Minister of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine, Vitaly Holovnia, noted that: "94% of irrigation systems in Kherson region, 74% in the Zaporizhzhia region, and 30% in the Dnieper region were left without water after the demolition of the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant" (Kravchenko, 2023). According to the State

Agency of Land Reclamation and Fisheries of Ukraine, almost 30,000 fish died in the first days after the Russian attack. The Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine predicts that 95,000 fish could die because of the explosion at the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant (Derzhrybagenstvo, 2023). Preliminary calculations estimate that losses from the death of all biological resources may amount to 250 million euros (Kravchenko, 2023).

The aggressive actions of the Russian army in Ukraine affect not only the environment in Ukraine and Europe but also prevent the use of terrestrial ecosystems, lead to land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss (SDG 15). Additionally, these serious losses in the region directly result in a lack of clean water, quality food, and other resources, not only in the region but globally (SDG 2), due to the destruction of fields where agricultural crops can be grown and sold. In this context, the threat of hunger and compromised food security becomes a weapon of the Russian army against Ukraine and the world.

7   Conclusion

The research on rural and urban safety in the context of national and global security in Ukraine highlights various problems that have arisen since the beginning of the Russian invasion. Since 2022, it has been impossible to achieve 17 SDGs declared by the United Nations for various reasons. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has resulted in the destruction of ecological systems and trade routes, the blockade of seas and rivers, and the provocation of famine, humanitarian crises, nuclear security crises, and a global cost-of-living crisis affecting billions of people. The Russian aggressive war has made it impossible to achieve SDGs related to food security and hunger (SDG 2), economic growth (SDG 8), healthy lives (SDG 3), access to energy (SDG 7), infrastructure (SDG 9), and the environment (SDG 15) in the region and has made it much more difficult in other regions and the world.

The main factor that increased security, complicated trade, limited access to food and water, and reduced agricultural land was Russian aggression against Ukraine and the ongoing war. The biggest threat to the world stemmed from the activities of the Russian army, including the blockade of Ukrainian seas and rivers, the occupation of Ukrainian nuclear power plants, and acts of ecocide. The danger is amplified by

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the one hundred thousand alleged war crimes registered and investigated in Ukraine following the large-scale Russian invasion.

It becomes obvious that there is a need to stop the invasion and convict those guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity within the framework of national and international jurisdictions to maintain global and national security, as well as rural and urban safety. The documentation, investigation, and conviction of those guilty of war crimes and other atrocities can also be carried out by the International Criminal Court. The participation of non-governmental international organisations in this procedure could help collect evidence, document it, and send it to the competent authorities. Such actions can yield positive results in ensuring security at various levels, stopping aggression, and achieving the goals declared by the United Nations.

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Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, n.d.)

- Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
- Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
- Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
- Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than $1.25 a day.

1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.

1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.

1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.

1.5 By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.

1.a Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions.

1.b Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions.

Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons.

2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.

2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.

2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed.

2.a Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries.

2.b Correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, including through the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round.

2.c Adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility.

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

3.1 By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births.

3.2 By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under 5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births.

3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water borne diseases and other communicable diseases.

3.4 By 2030, reduce by one-third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and wellbeing.

3.5 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.

3.6 By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents.

3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes.

3.8 Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.

3.9 By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.

3.a Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate.

3.b Support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and non-communicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries, provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines, in accordance with the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, which affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full the provisions in the Agreement on TradeJRelated Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights regarding flexibilities to protect public health, and, in particular, provide access to medicines for all.

3.c Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States.

3.d Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks.

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.

4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.

4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.

4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.

4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries.

4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States.

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.

5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.

5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.

5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

6.1 By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.

6.2 By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.

6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.

6.4 By 2030, substantially increase water use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.

6.5 By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate.

6.6 By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes.

6.a By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies.

6.b Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.

Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services.

7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.

7.a By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology.

7.b By 2030, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their respective programmes of support.

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries.

8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors.

8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead.

8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.

8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all.

8.a Increase Aid for Trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries.

8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization.

Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human wellbeing, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.

9.2 Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries.

9.3 Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.

9.4 By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities.

9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending.

9.a Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support to African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

9.b Support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries, including by ensuring a conducive policy environment for, inter alia, industrial diversification and value addition to commodities.

9.c Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020.

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

10.1 By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average

10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.

10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.

10.5 Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations.

10.6 Ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions.

10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

10.a Implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in accordance with World Trade Organization agreements.

10.b Encourage official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to States where the need is greatest, in particular least developed countries, African countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their national plans and programmes.

10.c By 2030, reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent.

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.

11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.

11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.

11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.

11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.

11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.

11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

11.a Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, periurban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.

11.b By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015J2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels.

11.c Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials.

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

12.1 Implement the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries.

12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.

12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.

12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.

12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.

12.6 Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.

12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities.

12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.

12.a Support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

12.b Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

12.c Rationalize inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption by removing market distortions, in accordance with national circumstances, including by restructuring taxation and phasing out those harmful subsidies, where they exist, to reflect their environmental impacts, taking fully into account the specific needs and conditions of developing countries and minimizing the possible adverse impacts on their development in a manner that protects the poor and the affected communities.

Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.

13.3 Improve education, awareness raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by developed country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly $100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible.

13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities.

Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.

14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.

14.3 Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels.

14.4 By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics.

14.5 By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information.

14.6 By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation.

14.7 By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.

14.a Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries.

14.b Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.

14.c Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of "The future we want".

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements.

15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.

15.3 By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation neutral world.

15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.

15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.

15.6 Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed.

15.7 Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products.

15.8 By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species.

15.9 By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts.

15.a Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems.

15.b Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation.

15.c Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities.

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.

16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime.

16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.

16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

16.8 Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance.

16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.

16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.

16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.

16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Finance

17.1 Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection.

17.2 Developed countries to implement fully their official development assistance commitments, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA/GNI) to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries; ODA providers are encouraged to consider setting a target to provide at least 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries.

17.3 Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources.

17.4 Assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief and debt

restructuring, as appropriate, and address the external debt of highly indebted poor countries to reduce debt distress.

17.5 Adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for least developed countries.

Technology

17.6 Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism.

17.7 Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed.

17.8 Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology.

Capacity building

17.9 Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the Sustainable Development Goals, including through NorthJSouth, SouthJSouth and triangular cooperation.

Trade

17.10 Promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization, including through the conclusion of negotiations under its Doha Development Agenda.

17.11 Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries' share of global exports by 2020.

17.12 Realize timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all least developed countries, consistent with World Trade Organization decisions, including by ensuring that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from least developed countries are transparent and simple, and contribute to facilitating market access.

Systemic issues

Policy and institutional coherence

17.13 Enhance global macroeconomic stability, including through policy coordination and policy coherence.

17.14 Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development.

17.15 Respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Multistakeholder/partnership

17.16 Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.

17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.

Data, monitoring and accountability

17.18 By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by

income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.

17.19 By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries.

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THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND PROVISION OF SECURITY, RESPONSES TO CRIME AND SECURITY THREATS, AND FAIR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS

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The book comprises 14 peer-reviewed chapters based on research on crime and security threats in relation to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The book represents a multidisciplinary work that combines different views of safety and security provision in local environments, at the national level, as well as in the international environment. The chapters include findings of a literature review, empirical research on crime and victimisation of individuals, case studies, specific forms of crime, institutional and civil society responses to security threats, as well as legal and police and policing perspectives in relation to safety and security provision in modern society.

University of Maribor Press

Cilji trajnostnega razvoja Združenih narodov in zagotavljanje varnosti, odzivi na kriminaliteto in varnostne grožnje ter pravični kazenskopravni sistemi

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Knjiga obsega 14 recenziranih poglavij, ki se osredotočajo na raziskovanje kriminalitete in varnostnih pojavov v povezavi s Cilji trajnostnega razvoja Združenih narodov. Knjiga predstavlja multidisciplinarno delo, ki združuje različne poglede zagotavljanja varnosti v lokalnem okolju, na nacionalni ravni, kot tudi v mednarodnem okolju. V poglavjih so predstavljene ugotovitve pregledov literature, empiričnega raziskovanja kriminalitete in viktimiziranosti posameznikov, študije primerov, specifične oblike kriminalitete in odzivi institucij in civilne družbe na varnostne pojave, pravne in perspektive policijske dejavnosti pri zagotavljanju varnosti v sodobni družbi.

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This outstanding book significantly contributes to the knowledge of criminology, security studies, and criminal justice. In a thoughtful, scholarly manner, it combines theoretical perspectives with studies in European countries, helping readers understand specific perspectives of UN Sustainable Development Goals and responses to crime and security threats and fairness in the criminal justice systems.

Prof. dr. **Helmut Kury,** Retired researcher, Max Planck Institute for the Study of Crime, Security and Law, Freiburg

This book provides an alternative view and provides us with rich insights from the contexts studied. The cases represent research and scholarship of the highest quality, reflecting the dedicated work of the contributors to the field, and the craft of the editors in structuring and organising such an impressive anthology.

Dr. **Matt Bowden,** Technological University Dublin, Ireland