VICTIMS AND OPINIONS

I.

National Institute of Criminology

OKRI

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VICTIMS AND OPINIONS II.

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Introduction

In the first half of the twentieth century criminologists tried to provide explanations primarily for the acts of offenders. The results of these efforts are nearly a dozen theories and surveys carried out on huge samples. However, in the past two decades the actual and the potential victims have come to the foreground. The change of direction was neither easy nor free of contradictions. The perpetrator of the crime was "at hand" in each survey. This was not true of the victims, who are often not known to the law enforcement authorities. In some cases the general public does not know of them either. This "deficiency" was gaining in importance as the approach focusing on the prevention of crimes first of all, rather than on the punishment of the offenders, was spreading.

Victimological surveys soon led to the observation that crime could be reduced not only by changing the offenders (e.g. by resocialising them or through the cathartic effect of punishment) but also by preparing people in the correct ways of defence, especially those who are most often exposed to attack. In order to do this we need more information not only about those who were declared victims in the legal procedure, but about those who are endangered and about those victims the authorities do not know of. The so-called victim surveys tried to satisfy this demand, which is made now not only by experts of the criminal sciences but by politicians, as well.

Research in this field became intensive at the beginning of the 90s and became standard practice in many countries in the second half of the decade. This process was accelerated as the UN indicated in the so-called Vienna declaration[1] that in order to form an authentic crime prevention concept it is not enough to rely on police data only but the actual number and the characteristics of the victims have to be known as well. The first survey in Hungary that was suitable for international comparison was carried out in the 1980s, by László Korinek. In the second half of the 1990s – mainly on the request of the Ministry of the Interior – many of the researchers of the National Institute of Criminology took part in such research projects or directed them. Some of these were carried out with international cooperation.

The first victim survey on a huge sample was made possible by a grant. Its results will be published in the following. *Volume One* of the report summarizes the results of comprehensive, methodological and general

1 Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century. A/CONF.187/4/Rev.3. April 2000

writings. *Volume Two* presents the characteristics of the different victim groups, grouping them partly by the different types of crimes. Looking at the list of the authors, we can see that most of the researchers of the National Institute of Criminology made a contribution under the direction of the project leader. These contributions range from the phrasing of the viewpoints of the tender through the discussion of the techniques of interviewing to the writing of studies. Although all the papers follow the same scheme, which was developed in agreement and cooperation, here the researchers' knowledge, ambition, creativity and methodological skills are manifested in individual achievements.

The reader obviously feels that several things are missing. One of these is especially worth mentioning. None of the studies in the two volumes deal with regional distribution. It is no accident that this very important aspect is neglected. In a future volume – expected to be published around the middle of next year – we would like to focus our attention on this issue. We had to omit the studies describing the role of counties, regions and cities owing to the wealth of content and not because the interviewing was superficial.

Besides the authors whose names are specifically mentioned, several other experts took part in the work. Among the renowned professionals of the expert panel we should specifically mention László Korinek, Imre Kertész, who has unfortunately passed away since then, leaving a void behind him that cannot be filled in this field, and Sándor Erdősi. Among the researchers of the Institute Géza Finszter is to be mentioned in the first place, together with Iván Münnich and Katalin Tamásné Rózsa, both of whom also performed important tasks in several stages of the project. Anna Giricz, Andrea Takács and Eszter Rubicsekné Bene gave vital assistance in shaping the material.

Special thanks are due to the leaders of the Head Prosecution Office, who supervised the technical aspects of the research, including the conformity of the tendering process to the rules and the order of the financial procedures and accounting. Without their active contribution it would not have been possible to implement the programme within the set deadline.

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The *first study*[2] of **Volume One** deals with the preparation for the research and within this the methods of interviewing. Interest on the part of the researchers and lack of information and comparability with similar Hungarian foreign research projects constituted one dimension while the time and the money available constituted the other. Our starting point concerning the size

2 József Kó: The Methodological Results of the Research

of the sample was the data from "official" criminal statistics (UPPCS), according to which about 30,000 natural persons are victimised each year in Hungary. Considering the size of the population, this means a 3% involvement rate. Unregistered crimes, that is, latency, definitely increase this figure. The examination we planned was to provide information concerning the rate of this increase. Based on earlier examinations, we supposed that the total number of crimes would very probably not be more than two or three times as much as the number of registered crimes. According to our calculations, if we refer the questions to a one-year period we can expect about 10% rate of involvement. This means 1,000 people with a sample of 10,000, which is a quantity that can be examined well.

It was a separate task to decide which crimes were to be examined and which topics were to be analysed. We also had to decide according to what variables we could regard the sample as representative. The most important limit here was the age of 18. Victims younger than that were not included in our sample – and consequently in our conclusions, either.

The Hungarian Gallup Institute received the commission to carry out the data collection tasks of the public survey for the National Institute of Criminology through a public procurement tender. Altogether 450 questioners took part in the survey, together with 26 instructors. During and after the fieldwork the inspection tasks were performed by the Gallup Institute but we monitored the whole procedure and cooperated with the staff of the Institute. The interviewing complied with the previously established representation criteria. The composition of the interviewees never differed significantly from the planned values.

We can mention the perhaps most marked result at the outset: the population reported twice as many crimes in the survey as they had reported to the authorities.

In order to clarify the insecurity factors (reliability, validity) related to the interviewing, a validity examination took place in the summer of 2004.

An important realisation of the last decade was that it is not enough to deal with victimisation only because *fear and anxiety* of crime is an important part of the sense of security (or rather the lack of security) on the part of the population. It is inconceivable to protect effectively against crimes if the sense of security on the part of the persons and groups exposed to danger is higher than the desirable and also if the unrealistically high level of anxiety makes the people concerned behave in the wrong way. The *second study*[3] examines the theoretical issues of this topic. The first important statement in

3 József Kó: Fear of Crime

the study is that crime is to be interpreted as a function of the control mechanism of society, which includes the laws, the willingness of the population to report crimes to the police, the success of crime detection and law enforcement and the practice of the administration of justice. The norms of criminal justice change in the course of time and follow the public demand with a shorter or longer time delay. Therefore crime can always be interpreted in the context of a given social reality only and there is no absolute concept of crime. At the same time, society cannot be regarded as a uniform entity: it consists of different groups and stratums, which have their independent systems of interests and values and their own systems of norms. Although the root of crime is the violation of the norms of criminal law, the different members and groups of society do not necessarily agree in their judgement of it and they certainly have different opinions.

The exploration of the knowledge the population has on crime can take the analysis closer to understanding how people see crime. First, we tried to clarify the situation of the individuals among social problems.

By using open-ended questions we gave an opportunity for the interviewees to freely name the problems they are concerned about the most. We wanted to know to what extent the issue of crime is present in the spontaneous answers. Issues concerning livelihood and the economy were mentioned – in different wording – among the first five most often mentioned problems of Hungary at present. *Crime and the situation of public security* were only in sixth place. Examining the problem in the personal sphere, we got a similar picture, although the issue of public security came out in third place. The answers given to the not guided, open-ended questions testify *that at present, the primary problem for the Hungarian population is not crime.* This is partly due to the fact that people do not have enough information: almost half of them have no idea about how many crimes were committed in Hungary. In comparison with the research projects we had earlier, we can see that the proportion of "I don't know" answers among the population increased rather than decreased over the years. There are many people among the population who have mistaken ideas of the most frequent crimes. *On the whole,* we can conclude that the population has a quite different picture of the frequency of each type of crime than what we can find in the official criminal statistics. This may be due partly, but only partly, to the supposedly high number of latent crimes. However, it is clearly also due to the influence of the media, especially in the case of violent crimes.

According to international statistics, Hungary is one of the safest countries on the basis of the number of crimes per 10,000 inhabitants: it is on the lower third of the list among European countries. Most people do not think so and

put Hungary among the ten countries with the worst public security. At the same time, they think that their own neighbourhood is safer than the other parts of the municipality or the country. It seems that this mechanism through which they mentally keep crime away from them is even stronger than personal experience. Even the people who have been victimised think that they live in a safe place, at least in a place that is safer than other areas. Considering this, it seems probable that this view cannot be changed simply by campaigns that provide information for the public. If we want people who live in areas that are more affected with crime to pay more attention to their personal security and prevention, we should find the right methods that basically do not rely on a greater sense of danger.

In view of the above, special attention must be paid to the part of the research about public security and the police. The *third study*[4] deals with this connection.

It is a well-known fact that the police are under pressure from two directions: they are pressed by the expectations of the public on the one hand, and they are hamstrung by the existing organisational conditions on the other. This situation, which is not at all easy, is made even more difficult by a regrettable approach that measures public security through criminal statistics. From rising or declining statistics it draws conclusions concerning the worsening or the improvement of the situation. Our earlier surveys have already pointed out that this view is mistaken. We also proved that the concept of security that the public authorities can handle is not the same as the totality of the security factors that are important in human life. The activity of the public authorities may result in a high level of security in the legal sense, but it cannot produce security in society and real freedom from dangers. We would like to avoid the pitfall of an oversimplified analysis of the "crime has increased = public security decreased = the police did not work well" type, *so we continue to consider crime to be the "failure" of society and not law enforcement.*

The opinion of the man in the street, however, does not reflect the official view, which insists that according to police statistics public security is improving. The public's view of police activity aimed at improving public security corresponds to the situation of public security; where people are more satisfied with public security, they have a more favourable judgement of the police. However, their judgement is somewhere around the middle on the whole, with a slight trend in the unfavourable direction.

4 Szilveszter Dunavölgyi: A Public Survey on Public Security and on the Police

The present survey, as it consisted of interviews examining latency, defined the activity of the police only as a *secondary object of the examination*. The question enquiring about the extent to which the Hungarian police can guarantee public security was preceded by topics concerning the state of affairs in the country in general and therefore we expected relatively objective and spontaneous answers that were not suggested by the questions. The performance of the police was found to be average, which was the same result as that of other surveys, and can be supported by international tendencies as well. Likewise, the interviewees thought that the primary task of the police was the protection of public security, as expected. It is worth mentioning, however, that although a high proportion of people would like to see more police, when talking about the deficiencies they think that inadequate police action and undetected crimes are more important problems than the lack of staff. Thus, the public has an increasing tendency to accept policing as a profession, although in this case they noted the professional deficiencies. There is another characteristic feature of the answers we discussed, namely that the public does not think at all that stricter punishment could lead to significant improvement. Other surveys also prove claims that repressive criminal policy fills public demand are false.

The analysis also makes it obvious that public surveys are suitable only to measure a material concept of public security that can be identified with the security of life and property. This material concept is also characterised by the volume of crime. Interviewing the victims does not help us to know the actual performance of policing administration or the effectiveness of policing and the legality of its measures more precisely, the rate of efficiency and the tasks that the modernisation of policing is faced with.

Besides the activities of the authorities, the attention of the research and the researchers focused partly on the victimisation predispositions of the individuals and partly on the exploration of the opportunities for prevention. The *fourth study*[5] contributes to this endeavour.

The study confirms the well-known fact that the more highly educated people are, the more probable it is that they can defend themselves against the unfavourable impacts of economic and social changes and can capitalise on the advantages. The data indicate that in the occupation categories that are connected to a higher level of schooling there is also a similarly higher proportion of people who generally feel better about the way things are and a lower proportion of people who generally feel worse about

5 Klára Kerezsi: The Presence of the Different Dimensions of Crime Prevention in the Examination of Attitudes

things. At the same time, we cannot help noticing that the proportion of those who feel that their situation has not changed is nearly 50% in the group of unskilled workers and semi-skilled workers. In the other groups – although to a lesser extent – the proportion of those reporting such sentiments is lower.

Based on the results of the survey we can conclude that the interviewees regarded social problems as problems on the national level many times more often than the political or economic problems or general problems that have no special concrete aspects. It would not be difficult to come to the conclusion that those people mention social problems as serious trouble affecting all of society and the whole nation whose situation has worsened in recent years. However, it is not true. The refutation of this is reinforced by the comparison of the change in how people feel in general on the one hand and the types of nationwide problems on the other. The social problems receive special attention as both those whose situation improved and those whose situation worsened considered this issue as the most serious national problem.

We can find an interesting difference in what *problems were considered nationwide* if we examine the date according to the age of the interviewees. We can see that the people above fifty mainly use a political definition of the problems and it is especially typical of the generation above sixty. It is also more characteristic of them that they talk of the issues related to public security as national problems. People under fifty tend to think the most important problems of the country are social, economic or general problems – in about the same proportions.

If we make a list according to how frequently problems are mentioned, the problems related to work and employment receive the most emphasis among *local problems*. This may mean that lack of job opportunities is really an important problem among the local problems but it may as well be that the interviewees project their own personal problems as local problems. Still, this raises the question why local governments, which are the greatest employers and play a significant role in local employment policy anyway, are not seen as such by the local residents. The answers do not reflect the existence of effective regional development programmes, while a lot effort in the governmental and non-governmental sphere has been directed at addressing this problem for several years. The lack of these answers in our opinion strongly justifies the intention of the EU, to connect the social subsidies that can be applied for in the EU to the "job issue" and that they try to address the social problems by creating financial stability for the people through the creation of jobs for them.

The remedy for the lack of the sense of security is active crime prevention. In our interpretation, this treatment can be passive and active as well. Resignation and shifting the responsibility onto others indicate passive crime prevention. Active crime prevention tries to do something before crimes take place to prevent them. We examined the data specifically to see how the interviewees *strengthen their security*. We expected that the more frequent use of defensive instruments would be manifested in some way: the interviewees would feel either better or worse in general. However, there seems to be no significant difference in the application of the different defensive instruments between the groups who feel better or worse on the whole.

According to the results of the research the local residents' sense of security is influenced basically by two groups: motorists and the Romany. The spread of driving habits that disregard even the most essential traffic rules can explain the former, while cultural differences can explain the latter. We should also note that there is a connection between the change in how people feel in general and the picture they have of the security of the neighbourhood. No matter what kind of neighbourhood we have to deal with, the interviewees who feel much worse than five years ago give significantly worse marks for the security of their neighbourhood.

In the process of transition, the weakening of the institutions within society that exercise formal control was not followed by a strengthening of the informal control exercised by small communities in society. Cooperation between the citizens on the local level and involvement in programs has received little emphasis so far. In order to strengthen security we have to find the fine balance between the exercise of informal and formal control of the society. Therefore we examined those *resources in the neighbourhood* that can either strengthen or weaken the interviewees' security or sense of security. The data we collected here must radically change the stereotypes of "people estranged from each other" "residents who don't understand each other and fight about every small thing" and "alienated society". The message of these figures can only be that despite all the rumour to the contrary, Hungarian society has not lost the intention to cooperate altogether. People have not been alienated from each other and the basic tone in relationships in the neighbourhood is not enmity. This inner need, however, remains hidden and does not come to the surface and the loose relationships do not join together to form a proud web of solidarity of local identity. It is the huge responsibility of politicians and the government not to waste this real potential within society and to provide incentives – through practically any possible means – for local people to find each other in a local community.

Earlier research projects clearly proved that victims play a significant role in whether perpetrators reach their goals or whether their plans will be frustrated. The different categories set up for victims are no novelties either and – with some extensions – they contain statements that are valid for the victims of crimes committed out of negligence. The *fifth study*[6] concentrates on the role of actual and potential victims.

The first thing that became clear was that the number of undetected crimes was really high in Hungary, too. In the year 2002, concerning which people's memory is not so selective yet, the interviewees made mention of being the victims of 2,276 crimes, out of which only 739 (32%) were reported. This proportion of the answers was similar for a period of five and a half years as well and shows about 60% *latency* in the case of 10,000 interviewees (which means that only 30% of the cases were reported). This seems to be an unacceptable proportion even if we can suppose that not all of them would actually prove crimes, some of them could be minor offences or cases that are under the jurisdiction of the Civil Code. Concerning latency our assumption that the cases that people do not report to the police are mainly minor cases proved true, where the disadvantage that goes together with reporting them far exceeds the benefits of the police procedure. In contrast with it, in the cases where certain events are dependent on the case being reported (so, for example, the compensation the insurance company pays in the case of car thefts), the proportion of the cases that are reported is very high and latency is small. We also asked the victims why they did not report the incident. The most common answer was that they did not trust the police or were not satisfied with them (43%), which was followed by answers like there was only minor damage or "there was no damage", which still represented a significant proportion (28%).

This means that in our research we managed to get a picture of a wide spectrum of the persons victimised in Hungary. 3,326 people out of the 10,000 interviewees were victimised once or more than once during the five and a half years the study covered. By coming to know the characteristic qualities of the victims, we can draw conclusions on the characteristic traits of victimisation in Hungary. In order to do so, we examined the *age, the gender and other important qualities* of the victims. This showed that victimisation, in contrast to official statistics, does not show a significant difference between men and women. However, younger people (between 18 and 39) are more often victimised, which obviously has primarily to do with their being more active. The victims had a higher than average level of schooling and a higher

6 Tünde Barabás: General Victimology, Latency

than average proportion of them had secondary school or university qualifications. There were no differences between the victims and those who were not victimised concerning their marital status and their place of residence, but there were a higher proportion of those who were in active employment among the victims. This may be partly related to the fact that there was a difference in the financial situation: there were more people in a better or even in an exceptionally good situation among the victims than among those who were not victimised. This, of course, may be related to the fact that according to both the official statistics and the results of the present survey most of the crimes the victims were involved in were crimes against property (above 80%).

Among the *deviances* we examined the issue of alcoholism first, where we found no greater tendency for victimisation. On the other hand, we got very interesting results among the victims concerning whether they had been suspected or convicted in connection with crimes earlier. On the basis of the answers we found a somewhat surprising fact, namely that among the victims there were twice as many people who had been suspected in another procedure and there was also a higher percentage of people who had been convicted among the victims than among the people who had not been victimised.

Finally we dealt with the sense of security, the anxieties and the fears among the interviewees, especially those who had been victimised. We found that our hypothesis proved true concerning *the sense of security of the victims,* which, similarly to earlier results, seems worse than in the case of those who have not been victimised. The answers they gave about their opinion on local security and their assessment on the amount of crime also indicated that. In view of this it is interesting to note that *the people who had not been victimised* tended to stay at home after dark in a higher proportion than the victims. One explanation of this may be that the victims came to terms with the idea of crime being around while another may be that they belong to the younger generation, which goes out more often at night. Examining *anxieties,* we found that most of *the people who had not been victimised* were not especially influenced by crime while the *victims* were influenced in a higher proportion.

A crime does not only cause concrete material and non-material damage but causes hurts that influence the victim's life in the future. Therefore we asked the victims about their emotions after the crime. It turned out that recalling the incident stirs up intense emotions even after a few years' time so the interviewees often feel fear, anger, fury, nervousness, defencelessness, anxiety and helplessness.

In view of this it seemed to be interesting to find out what the interviewees in general and especially the victims among them did in order to increase their security. It turned out that instead of the active ways to increase their security the interviewees preferred the passive forms of defence or the ones that involved some change in their behaviour.

The first study of **Volume Two**[7] is about relationships concerning the crimes that involve the highest number of people. The characteristics of those in danger of victimisation can be summarised as follows:
  – The danger of victimisation is highest in the age group between 18 and 29.
  – The proportion of the genders is the same as in the whole population.
  – The proportion of those with a degree in higher education is exceptionally high.
  – The employment rate in the active generations is above the average; there is a relatively high number of self-employed entrepreneurs.
  – Mostly they live in a detached house in towns or villages or in a flat in a prefab block, as owners.
  – They tend to have settled down in one place of residence.
  – Their financial situation is better than average; more than the average have one or more cars.
  – They cherish the values and traditions of Hungarian culture, they are not religious and they are not characterised by deviant behaviour.
  – They have similar opinions to the other interviewees on security, on its present state and on its expected future. There is one exception only: those who have been victims of crimes against property earlier are afraid that they can become victims of crimes against property again: based on their negative experience they think it possible that their home will be burgled, their car, their purse or their other belongings will be stolen or they will be cheated in a shop andmade to pay more than they should.

Violence and aggressive attitudes and behaviour in public life are among the most common topics of discussions these days. We saw that there are many people who think that the crimes in this category pose the greatest danger to public security. *The second study*[8] deals with the comparison of reality and the picture people form of it. The most important relationships are the following:
  – The victims of violent crimes have specific characteristics compared to other victims in several respects. They belong to a younger age group; still they have been the victims of crimes more often in their lifetime. They have

7 Mariann Kránitz: Victims of Crimes Against Property
8 László Tibor Nagy: Violent Crime

a lower level of schooling; a smaller proportion of them live together with a spouse or with a partner and a higher proportion do not seek employment because of their studies. There is a higher proportion of people among them with a non-Hungarian identity. A higher proportion of them have been suspects in police cases or have been involved in drink-driving, which suggests that they are less law-abiding. They report sexual attacks to the authorities most rarely, while latency is the smallest in the case of robberies.

– The victims in this category of crime feel worse in general than the majority, they are more dissatisfied with their financial situation, the security of the country and their neighbourhood and do not trust the police so much. They do not like to live in their present place of residence, they find the level of security worse there, a higher proportion of them think that more crimes are committed there than in the other parts of the country. They consider gypsies, bored youngsters hanging around and drunkards in their neighbourhood more of a problem than the other victims.

– Unlike the majority, they feel crime is a quite serious problem, influencing their everyday lives more strongly, and they more often think about the possibility of becoming victims of crime. A higher proportion of them take part in self-defence courses, more of them have a dog to guard the house and more of them take some self-defence instrument with them as a precaution when going out.

– They know their neighbours well, often they are in a friendly relationship with them, yet compared to the other victims, fewer of them think they can rely on the neighbours if they need help and they find it less probable that they could join hands in some matter that is a common concern for them.

– Thus, basically, the victims of violent crimes consider crime as a more serious problem, but at the same time they have more often been involved in unlawful activities themselves, they do not like their neighbourhood so much, they feel worse in general and their subjective sense of security is worse, too. They are more dissatisfied, more anxious and more sceptical.

The crimes discussed above were committed mostly in public places, in full view of the public and the authorities. Some of the other crimes — especially violent crimes — are committed in a place closed from the eyes of the public, in the sphere of private life. These are the sins that are debated as being crimes at all in different cultures and we have only conjectures and no exact knowledge about their volume. Obviously, in our research we tried to find out more about these crimes committed in the private or even in the intimate sphere as well. The next two studies give a picture about the results.

The *third study*[9] deals with the so-called crimes against sexual ethics, and especially the violent sexual attacks and abuses among them. In many respects these incidents have a special position among the crimes punished by criminal law. This is reflected by some the characteristics of sexual crimes that are different from those of other crimes in general (the age and the gender of the victims, the relationship between the victim and the offender, the changes in the trends of the number of crimes, etc.) as well as by the opinions on and the attitudes toward these incidents and the people involved. The most important lessons to be learned are the following:

– This survey confirmed that instruments of this kind and the questioning that may take place this way are not really suitable to measure sexual victimisation. (In view of this and the low number of cases, we did not analyse the questions concerning sexual victimisation.)

– The retrospective questions about child abuse in the questionnaire to be filled by the interviewees themselves proved useful. On the basis of them it seems that the percentage of adults who were abused in their childhood is significant, it is around 2%. The percentage of those who were regularly and brutally beaten in their childhood is the same and there were six times as many people who were severely beaten occasionally. This means more than a hundred thousand people in the present Hungarian adult population who were sexually abused and around a million people who were physically abused. Most of the abuses are committed by relatives and acquaintances.

– The data confirm that the sexual abuse of children often goes undetected: less than a half of those abused talked about it at that time and they reported it only in eight cases out of a hundred.

– Girls are abused sexually at a higher proportion than boys. The percentage of boys abused is also significant (1.2%) and it is worth noting that the number of cases when they did not talk about the abuse is much higher and the percentage of cases that they reported to the police is much smaller.

– The severely traumatic effect of child abuse is shown by the fact that percentage of those committing suicide and those receiving psychiatric treatment is many times as high among those were abused than among those were not. Being abused also influences fears concerning the future. This is shown through increased anxiety about the possibility of the same thing — sexual abuse or violence — happening again and about becoming

9 György Virág: Sexual Abuse

a victim of some not concretely specified crime. The latter can be the indicator of a kind of diffuse anxiety.

The *fourth study*[10] actually supplements the previous one when it concentrates on child abuse. The most important lessons are the following:

- The research clearly shows that if the parents received help for more effective, non-violent solutions they would presumably use them instead of spanking, which they themselves do not approve of most of the time. It also follows from this that it would be useful and necessary to change the legislation and prohibit spanking altogether and also to teach parenting skills as well as good means and methods of disciplining and educating; to operate parents' clubs, self-help groups, parents' schools and other forms of helping the parents.
- Professional literature and experience both confirm that emotional support and bonds have the greatest role in the healthy development of a child. Still, in Hungary even professionals whose job it would be to inform and help the parents and to protect children fail to recognise the different forms of emotional abuse. Corporal punishment is taken lightly provided it does not go beyond a limit of brutality, which, however, is not defined.
- In the case of the corporal punishment and physical abuse of children the overall picture is more complex, as on the one hand it is mostly something visible, tangible in contrast to emotional abuse but it is supported very strongly, or at least condoned by society — and unfortunately by the organs of the administration of justice as well. It is especially true because of the acceptance of the "necessary" slap on the face or the "home discipline right", which has been introduced into practice by the courts although it is not defined clearly and is not mentioned in the law. From a legal point of view, it is especially problematic how those applying the law can interpret those undefined acts that are punishable according to the current laws — for example, the Child Protection Law — or a new law in preparation concerning acts within the family.

Each of the last two studies of the second part guides the reader to a special area of deviance. The *fifth study*[11] collects information about an area of life, which a lot of people characterise by saying that everyone can be a victim of these crimes and everyone except those who cannot drive a car can be an offender. Experts have known it for a long time that things are not so simple. In view of the fact that in this area there have been no empirical surveys in Hungary for a quarter of a century — except for one survey covering only one

10 Mária Herczog: Corporal Punishment and Physical Abuse in Childhood and the Means of Disciplining the People Concerned Possess
11 Ferenc Irk: Opinions on Traffic Deviance

county —, moreover, as we have had no knowledge so far, our expectations were quite high. The most important relations are the following:

- About 0.7% of the adult population (about 56 thousand people) are injured annually in accidents involving personal injury. In contrast to it, about 20 thousand injuries are registered in the official statistics.
- Every year about 640 thousand people are involved in minor accidents, bumps. We have had no information available about it so far.
- Among the people involved in accidents there are more than three times as many people who were under a criminal procedure and were fined, more than twice as many people who were under a criminal procedure and were not fined than people who did not take part in such procedure.
- We can find the closest relationship between a past with accidents and a past free of accidents on the one hand and being victims of other crimes on the other.
- The survey proves through many facts that being victimised is not something accidental but it is the consequence of a many-sided predisposition concerning partly one's way life, partly one's behaviour. This is manifested more or less in inadequate behaviour compared to the concrete expectations of society and to one's own abilities. People with a victimisation predisposition can comply with the expectations of the world around them to a smaller extent than the majority. Therefore they become involved more often than the average man not only in intentional crimes but also in crimes committed out of negligence, which are part of everyday life and even in their so-called preliminary acts. *The real dividing line in traffic is not between the person who causes an accident and the victim but between the persons who get involved in accidents and those on the road who are not involved in accidents.*
- The so-called invulnerability myth, which is one of the main dangers leading to victimisation, makes one third of the total Hungarian population unable to defend themselves against unexpected road accidents.
- The people involved in accidents have a higher level of intolerance and anxiety towards their environment than those not involved in accidents. This is projected not only on the past and the present but also on the future expectations.

The *sixth study*[12] discusses a group of special regional issues. In harmony with the approach of similar Western-European research projects it examines what regularities and relationships can be observed between being part of the

12 Szilveszter Póczik: Romany Minority Opinions and Aspects in the 2003 National Victimological Data Collection

majority or a minority in Hungary on the one hand and being victimised on the other. The most important lessons to be learned can be summarised in the following:

— According to the data and the analyses, if we compare the financial conditions and the hard preconditions of these conditions regarding the whole sample of the survey (WSS) and the sample consisting of gypsy victims (SGV) we get an overall picture of the unfavourable situation of the SGV. At the same time, we can also see that those with a gypsy background constitute a social group that is strongly differentiated and stratified both in the social and the cultural sense.

— The distribution according to age in the SGV shows a much more favourable picture than the whole sample since the interviewed group with a gypsy background had far *more young people* and far fewer elderly people. The very opposite was true concerning schooling where the gypsy sample had much lower indicators of schooling. Around one third of the part of the sample consisting of gypsies lives in a large family, in a household consisting of many people. In the active age groups two-thirds of the gypsies are not in employment. Considering all those not in employment in all the age groups, one third of the gypsies are unemployed, which means that their rate of unemployment is three times as much as the rate in the whole population.

— Concerning the average size of homes and the number of rooms the gypsies are only a little behind the others but their situation is still much worse, as their families are bigger. Although in both of the part-samples the homes are mostly owned by the residents, the proportion of gypsies living in rental units owned by the local government is twice as high. The main difference is in the market value of the homes: nearly half of the homes owned by gypsies represent only a small market value. Although the proportion of car owners in comparison to the whole sample is similar, two-thirds of the cars owned by gypsies are older than 10 years and represent little, if any, market value. Nearly three-fourths of the gypsy households the net monthly income is below 100 thousand HUF (about 400 euro). Looking at the proportions of the whole sample from the opposite side, fewer than half of the gypsies have relatively balanced or better living conditions and the rest live mostly among very lowly circumstances. Most of them cannot make a living out of their income even if they look for extra sources in the grey or black economy and accumulate debts. The whole of the gypsy sample is about 15-30% below the whole sample in social respects.

— The estimated proportion of those who have permanently landed in the periphery of society is 10% in the WSS and 25% in the SGV. At the same

time, there is a smaller group in both samples that has outstanding financial and other social indicators and has been able to improve its situation definitely in the past few years. The proportion of this group within the whole sample is around 15-18% and around 8-10% among the gypsies.

— The proportion of those who have been treated in hospitals and in psychiatric wards, who have tried to commit suicide and the alcoholics in the SGV, is clearly higher than in the WSS. These differences would be even more conspicuous if we referred our data to the whole sample of interviewees.

— The proportion of those who were abused regularly and/or severely as well as the proportion of those who accept corporal punishment and use it in disciplining their own children is much higher among the gypsy interviewees than in the WSS although it is quite high in the latter as well.

— *There is a conspicuous overrepresentation of the gypsy minority among those who have been convicted definitively, who have been suspects, who have been under a procedure for minor offences and who have been fined in the procedure.*

— There is a high degree of similarity together with several differences of degree between the whole sample and the sample with a gypsy background in their opinions on the general situation, the future prospects and the security of the country and their place of residence. How they feel in general mainly depends on how satisfied they are with the material goods they possess; dissatisfaction with the financial situation pulls down the indicators of the general feelings among those with a gypsy background. At the same time, it seems that the deterioration of the financial situation results in a smaller degree of deterioration in the general feelings, and an improvement of the financial situation results in a higher degree of improvement in the general feelings. Most of the people in both groups expect positive developments and an improvement of the general feelings.

— The factors influencing the individual lives have an outstanding role in the perception of problems. The factors related to employment, making money and making a living enjoy priority in the answers given about both nationwide and local problems, especially among those with a gypsy background who live among humble circumstances. The factors related to infrastructure and public security also have a special importance in the perception of local problems. The picture of the security situation nationwide is darker than what would be justified by the local experiences and this is probably due to the effect of the media. However, about two-thirds of the interviewees are satisfied with the public security of the country and the work of the police and they expect a significant improvement in the

public security both nationwide and locally in the next few years, owing partly to Hungary's accession to the EU.

– While the media paints the picture of a highly alienated society in which people feel bad in general, our research showed that in contrast to it, the overwhelming majority of the interviewees love the place where they live, have a good relationship with their neighbours, can rely on their help and even those with a gypsy background are not dissociated sharply from the majority. We can see, however, that the neighbourhoods of those with a gypsy background show a worse picture than the average of the whole sample concerning both infrastructure and the problems of society: they are more infected with crime and with pollution and there is a higher proportion of delinquents and people hanging around with nothing to do.

– The interviewees – in conformity to criminal statistics – estimate the frequency of crimes against property to be the highest and they worry about them the most when they consider the possibility of victimisation concerning themselves or the members of their family. Fears of victimisation related to violent crimes are the stronger among those with a gypsy background. Still, crime does not influence people's everyday life in either of the groups; only a few percent of the interviewees entertain thoughts of becoming victims. However, a higher percentage of those with a gypsy background consider this possibility, especially the thought of family members becoming victims provokes intense emotional reactions among them. The measures taken by the interviewees to protect their property and themselves are within traditional, defensive, rational limits and only an insignificant proportion of them resort to offensive means. Concerning the use of technology in the protection of property, those with a gypsy background are behind the rest again.

– Nearly half of both part-samples have never been victims of crimes and we found no answers from the collected data about the offence-specific victimisation of those with a gypsy background. We received results that can be interpreted to some extent only regarding sexual abuse in the childhood. In this area there is an overrepresentation of women with a gypsy background and there is considerable latency in both groups.

The views we presented above based on the studies of the authors give, of course, only a small taste of each topic. In order to understand the deeper connections, the comparisons with other research projects and the proofs it is necessary to get familiarised with the studies more thoroughly.

Among research reports published in Hungary it is not unique any more, although not typical either, that the results are published in a foreign language besides (or instead of) the national language. We have a case like

that now: the whole text is published in English about the time of the publication of the Hungarian version. The importance of the topic – research of a similar magnitude counts as an exception in Europe – justifies this together with the fact that the conclusions of Hungarian research are the same or similar to the conclusions made in other countries of the Central-Eastern European region – as has been proved by several research projects earlier. (Hereby I would like to express my thanks to the translators of the text.)

The research – owing to its pioneering nature as well – should inspire the decision-makers in Hungary to carry out surveys of victims regularly in the future, in conformity to the expectations of the specialised organisations of the European Union and the UN and to the declared intentions of the Hungarian government. (This survey financed from government funds put out for tender can be interpreted as a preliminary of future research.) Only this can make it possible to monitor the dynamics of the change in how the public feels about crime and the changes in latency so that interventions suited to the problems can take place, relying on the knowledge thus acquired.

July, 2004, Budapest

Dr. Ferenc Irk
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JÓZSEF KÓ

The Methodological Results of the Research

Introduction

In its Vienna Declaration[1] the UN clearly stated that when forming an effective crime prevention concept it is not enough to rely on data provided by the police only but it is also important to know the actual number victims and their characteristics as well. Victimological investigations were named as the means to acquire this information.

In conjunction with this several decrees and recommendations by the UN and the Council of Europe expressed the need for the findings of victimological surveys in order to have effective crime prevention and law enforcement.

The examination of victims in the fields dealing with crime started after the Second World War. The science of victimology started to develop in the 1950s as a result of a realisation that both legislators and those applying the law were forced to make by the middle of the 20th century. They had to realise that the different trends of criminology, which sought to determine the causes of crime and to find a solution for the tensions generated in the society by the increase of crime and which concentrated mainly on the person of the offender, brought practically no results. Crime was on the increase, no matter what the theories were.

As a consequence, the trend of victimology, which had already existed at that time, gained in strength and the role of the victims was increasingly coming into the foreground. This was because coming to know the circumstances of victimisation, the person of the victim and his or her role in the crime can help to prevent the people concerned from becoming victims and to address the problem of crime.

The first victimisation survey on a really huge sample was conducted in the USA in 1966 and since 1972 the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) has been carried out every year, which is validated through smaller supplementary surveys. It covers 60,000 households and around 100,000 people[2].

Since the 1980s there have been regular victimological surveys in the member states of the European Union and now in most of them these surveys are carried out every year or in every second year. The results are used not

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1 Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenged of Twenty-first Century 2000.
2 F. E. Hagan: Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology. New York, 1989, pp. 312–341.

only in designing crime prevention programmes but they form an integral part of the assessment of the criminal situation and the law enforcement activities. Now that Hungary has joined the European Union it is under the requirement to provide a certain amount of information on crime, which is not possible without professional victimological examinations.

The Hungarian government recognised the importance of examining this area of criminology and in 2003 in a government decree[3] it commissioned the Minister of the Interior to have annual victimilogical research projects carried out to disclose latent crimes.

Before that in Hungary there had been no national victimological survey performed on a large sample to provide reliable data. There had been smaller local surveys but no reliable, national survey.

There were some precedents of the research we have done. Local surveys have already been performed on a smaller scale. Pál Déri, Imre Kertész and László Korinek,[4] as well as József Kó[5] all did pioneering work in this field. As all the earlier surveys were made on a relatively small sample, they provided relevant data only on a certain area or municipality.

The Central Statistical Office also carried out a survey on a large sample concerning this area within the framework of the Household Panel project but it did not bring suitable results owing mainly to methodological problems.

Therefore we laid special emphasis on providing the methodological foundation for the research, namely that

– the data we received should be comparable to the findings of international surveys,

– and that the methods that proved good abroad should be well adapted to the Hungarian circumstances.

The difficulties of victimological research are well-known from the international literature on the subject and from our earlier experiences. In the countries where these kinds of surveys have a history going back to decades, several methods have been worked out to solve the problems that can arise and we tried to draw on that experience[6].

3 1002/2003. government decree

4 Déri P.: Doktori értekezés (Doctoral Thesis). Manuscript, 2001; Ugljesa, Zvekic – Kertész, Imre: Bűn-cselekmények áldozatai a rendszerváltás országaiban. Nemzetközi vizsgálat eredményei (Victims of Crimes in the Countries of Transition. The Results of an International Survey). UNICRI–BM Kiadó, Ró-ma–Budapest, 2000; Korinek, L.: Rejtett bűnözés (Hidden Crime). KJK, Budapest, 1988

5 Kó, J.: Vélemények a bűnözésről. Egy közvélemény-kutatás tanulságai (Opinions On Crime. The Lessons of a Public Survey). Kriminológiai és Kriminalisztikai Tanulmányok, 35. OKKrI, Budapest, 1998, pp. 127–201.

6 P. J. Lavraks: Methods for sampling and interviewing in telephone surveys. In: Leonard Bickman – Debra J. Rog (eds.): Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods. Thousand Oaks, 1998, pp. 429–472.; A. S. Linsky: Stimulating responses to mailed questionnaires. Public Opinion Quarterly, no. 39., 1975, pp. 82–101.

As it was a public survey and the primary source of data was people memories, we had to take the characteristic operation of human memory into consideration throughout the methodological preparation of the research. The first and obvious question to be asked about such surveys is why the questions have to be asked on a large sample.

We also planned a sample of 10,000. The reason for having such a large sample is the special nature of this field of research. The number of detected crimes in Hungary in the last five years has been around 4-500,000 per year. Let us take this as a starting point. Some of the victims of these crimes (60%) were natural persons, while others (40%) were legal entities, enterprises or other organisations. The number of disclosed crimes committed against natural persons and the number of the victims has been around 300,000 per year in the past five years.

This means that considering the proportions within the population and excluding the foreign victims we get a 3% rate for involvement. Therefore if we ask 1,000 people and the sample was really taken at random then we can expect 30 people (plus or minus the confidence interval) to say yes to the question if they have been victims of crimes in the last year. These thirty people are too few to be analysed through statistical means. If we increase the number of people in the sample to 10,000 we can expect around 300 people who were victimised. This somewhat better for our purposes but if we are to examine the victims further according to some other aspects the number will soon drop under the threshold where it can still be analysed.

The simplest way to increase the data available is to increase the length of the time we wish to examine and to ask questions about not only the events of the past few years but for a longer period. The length of time, however, is one of the most neuralgic points of victimological research. Human memory works in a peculiar way: we remember some events that happened a long time ago as if they had happened today while we forget some other not so significant events. Thus, if we increase the length of time, the reliability of the data is decreasing. Events that occurred outside the given period may be remembered while others that happened in that time may be forgotten. Several methods have been developed to deal with this problem in the countries where regular surveys are taken. One is to limit the questions to the shortest possible time frame. There are countries where only a three months' interval is examined. This, however, drastically reduces the size of the sample, so it is not an option for us.

Preparation for the Research

Owing to the pioneering nature of the work we had to cope with several difficulties and had to decide on a lot of questions during the preparation for the research. In order to make our work more effective we set up a team that was to decide on the main issues of the research. The members of the team were Sándor Erdősi[7], Ilona Görgényi, Imre Kertész, László Korinek, József Kó, Iván Münnich, Gábor Papp, József Stauber, György Vágvölgyi. We had to answer the following questions:

Is it a suitable method to have questioners call on the interviewees personally to have the questionnaires filled?

At our first meeting the use of other methods was also proposed (e.g. telephone interviews, partly or wholly; or maybe telephone interviews to select the interviewees).

Based on earlier experience abroad and in Hungary relying on questionnaires filled by questioners (the face to face method) can be regarded as an established method in these types of surveys. This method has been used in several countries to conduct surveys so the data we have collected can be compared to the findings of earlier Hungarian and international surveys, such as the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), the Nations Survey of Crime Trends projects organised and coordinated by the UN and the ICVS surveys carried out by the Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute.

We hired a firm that had the experience and the right references to but we also took part in preparing the questioners for the job and checking the collection of data and we monitored the whole process.

We were not in favour of sending questionnaires to have them filled in and sent back by individuals as their reliability is very low and there are also a lot of problems about how representative they are[8].

There are a lot of methodological problems of telephone interviews as well[9]. These are not impossible to solve but in view of the telephone situation in Hungary choosing the sample is definitely problematic if we opt for this method. The analysis of cost efficiency also indicated that this method should not be applied.

7 Special thanks to Sándor Erdősi for his help far exceeding work in committee.
8 A. S. Linsky: op. cit.
9 P. J. Lavraks: op. cit.

Should there be questions about individuals or families?
(and if about families who should we address the question to?)

Separating victimisation on an individual level on the one hand and on the family level, affecting the immediate members of the family, on the other, is a crucial point in victimological research. It is especially difficult and not always unambiguous to identify the victims in the cases of crimes against property.

There are surveys that concern families, combined surveys and surveys that focus on individual victimisation only. Most of the international surveys, however, operate with an individual framework and questionnaires aimed at individuals. The earlier surveys conducted in Hungary also belong to this category. Therefore there is a much wider scope for international comparison if we opt for individual interviews and the findings can be compared to the earlier Hungarian surveys only in this case. That is why we decided to ask individual questions and we took into consideration the problems concerning this method by defining the scope of victims more precisely and by phrasing the questions accordingly.

If the items that were stolen were valuable and were in common ownership and use, each member of the family can be considered to be a victim, while if ownership and use is individual only the actual owner is considered to be the victim (e.g. in the case of a burglary both the wife and the husband are considered to be victims independently of who the actual owner is in the legal sense). However, if the husband is interviewed and the wife's wallet was stolen on the bus, the husband is not considered to be a victim even if the common family budget was affected. We registered this kind of incident only if we were interviewing the wife.

What groups within the population should be included in the survey?

In the present survey it was worth thinking only in terms of groups within the population as the victims that are not natural persons are worth examining and, of course, should be examined through other methods. Examining crimes against business enterprises and other organisations and against the state are outside the scope of our research (with the exception of certain cases of tax fraud, VAT fraud and social security fraud that we specifically asked the interviewees about).

In the original plan a national sample from the population was included that was representative of the adult population according to age, gender and the type (size) of the municipality in which they had their place of residence.

At the meeting it was suggested that it could be a good idea to lower the minimal age requirement and to interview minors as well. Finally the team

decided that victimisation among teenagers is a special phenomenon and it would be worth examining it more thoroughly but owing to its special nature it is different from the characteristic cases among the adult population. Therefore it is not sure that the same methods can be used to examine this phenomenon. The questionnaire designed for adults probably would not be suitable for secondary school students. Surveys aimed at teenagers apply different methods. For example, the European surveys on alcohol and drug abuse among secondary school students (ESPAD)[10] showed that in the case of young people the interview situation and the person of the questioner has much more importance than in the case of adult examinations[11]. We had the opinion that a different questionnaire and a different method are needed for the victimological research among young people if we are to receive suitable results.

In the case of children the methodological problems of asking questions would become even more significant and this target group requires different techniques of asking questions and collecting data.

The experts finally agreed that within the framework of the survey it is better to concentrate on the adult population only and to form the suitable methods.

What length of time should the detailed questions refer to?

A problem of the victimisation surveys that cannot be evaded is the issue of the length of the time to be examined and the reliability of the data we have received. The characteristics of the workings of human memory must be taken into consideration throughout the survey. The shorter the period the questions refer to the higher the probability that the persons involved in the survey remember well what actually happened and the longer the period the questions refer to the more unreliable the memories become. Therefore the questions should refer to a period as short as possible. According to international surveys the highest reliability can be achieved by questions referring to a few months' period or at most half a year. By increasing the length of time the data received will be increasingly unreliable. By determining life prevalence, for example, the frequency indicators will become almost completely unreliable. Only the fact of victimisation can be ascertained with more or less certainty[12].

10 Pompidou Group: Population survey in epidemiological research on drug use in Europe: Core Items and methodological aspects. 1995, pp. 86–105.; B. Hibell – B. Anderson – T. Bjarnasson – A. Kokkevi – M. Morgan – A. Narusk: The 1999 ESPAD Report, 2000, pp. 25–35.

11 Paksi, B.: A drogjelenség magyarországi kutatásának módszertani problémái (The methodological problems of the research on drug abuse in Hungary). L'Harmattan, Budapest, 1997, pp. 209–235.

12 F. E. Hagan: op. cit.; H. M. Eigenberg: The National Crime Survey and Rape: The cases of the missing question. Justice Quarterly, 7/1990.

On the other hand, the shorter the period the questions about victimisation refer to the fewer positive answers we can expect and the fewer results we will have. Therefore those who conduct victimological surveys always face a difficult choice: greater reliability requires as short a period as possible but the simplest and least expensive solution to increase the number of cases that can be analysed is to ask questions about a longer period. It is difficult to find the balance between reliability and a sufficient number of cases.

Looking at the Hungarian circumstances, according to the "official" criminal statistics, the Unified Police and Prosecution Crime Statistics (UPPCS) – as we have mentioned above – every year about 300,000 natural persons are victimised in Hungary. This means 3% of the population. The crimes that are not registered, that is, latent crime, definitely increases this number although at the time of the discussions we did not yet know by how much. Determining the proportion of latent crimes was one of the results expected from the planned survey. Based on earlier surveys we supposed that the total number of crimes would very probably not be higher than 2 or 3 times as much as the registered crimes. In our calculations for questions referring to a year's period we expected 10% of the sample to have had victimisation experiences. This meant 1,000 people for the planned sample of 10,000, which means a quantity that can be examined well.

If we do not want to analyse the data about the totality of crimes but about the different kinds of crimes separately the situation is not so promising. 75-80% of the detected crimes are crime against property. On the basis of international experience we can suppose that the proportions of actual crimes are also near this value. In our case it means that there will be about 200-250 victims for the all the other crimes except crimes against property. If we break this down to smaller groups of crimes soon we will reach the point where we can no longer analyse the data.

In the case of questions referring to a period shorter than a year these numbers will decrease significantly. In the case of six months we can expect around 500 victims, about 100 of them victims of crimes against property. It would not have been worth undertaking this kind of research for a shorter period than this, owing to considerations of cost efficiency.

According to the team a one-year period is the optimal in the case of questions referring to detailed categories of crimes and it is worth choosing longer periods like 5 years or the whole lifetime so far, if we ask questions about the totality of crimes.

How to define the period we would like to explore?

Besides determining the length of time precisely, defining the period we would like to examine also influences the reliability of the data we received significantly. Defining the time accurately increases the reliability of the answers. There are several methods in international practice to address this problem. A common feature of all these methods is that the period we would like to examine must be started from an easily definable reference point that is clear for every person included in the survey and it must be ended at another clearly defined time. The methods differ in the way they choose these times. One of the methods that can operate well is to call on the interviewees more than once with the examined time being the period between the two visits. Unfortunately, if we choose the one-year long period we cannot choose this option. We can try to refer the questions to calendar years and to record only the events that happened in 2002 in the interview or we must find some other clear points of time-reference.

Owing to the limitations of available grants, the interviews were conducted in the spring of 2003.

Which types of crimes shall we ask about in detail?

According to the preliminary plans we wanted to extend the research to the following topics:
1) General victimology,
2) Crimes against property,
    – theft;
    – car theft;
    – burglary;
3) Violence within the family,
4) Sexual crimes,
5) Violence in public places,
6) Traffic offences,
7) Drug offences,
8) Tax offences, bribery,
9) Crimes concerning minorities.

The list contains our wishes rather than the actual opportunities. In view of those we had to narrow the list of the offences we actually wanted to examine in detail while some other offences were added to the list. The list only served as a basis for discussions during the talks. Finally, the examination of offences related to taxation and bribery were not included as a separate topic but crime prevention was added to the topics to be examined.

What other topics should be covered by the survey?

At the first meeting several members of the team mentioned that it would be worth going beyond examining only victimisation directly throughout the research. Several topics were mentioned and a lot of them would be worth examining but our opportunities were limited. The most important factor was the restriction on available time. A too long questionnaire causes problems in the collection of data and decreases the reliability of the data significantly. Finally, besides the topic of crime prevention mentioned earlier, attitudes concerning crime, fear of crime, public opinion on the work of the organs responsible for the administration of justice, the relationship between the authorities and the victims as well as the relationship between the offenders and the victims were included among the topics to be examined.

What methods of validating did we apply?

In the preliminary research plan we planned a supplementary examination for this purpose, in which we randomly selected 5-600 people out of the 10,000 people interviewed and a questioner prepared and trained for this task called on each of them to conduct a detailed and structured in-depth interview about the topics examined in the questionnaire. After that we compared the results of the in-depth interviews and the survey conducted through the questionnaires. This method made it possible to check the validity and the reliability of the answers given to the questionnaires. Furthermore, it gave us the opportunity to assess the suitability of the method we applied and to collect information beyond the scope of the original survey.

The validity examination was administered in June of 2004 and the data are still being processed at the time of writing this, so the results of the examination are not included in the present volume.
The technical characteristics of the survey can be summarised in the following:
    – Collection of data with the help of questionnaires performed by questioners.
    – Individual sample and interviewing.
    – The framework of the sample covers Hungarian citizens above the age of 18 with a permanent residence.
    – The detailed victimological questions concerning the past six months and the last year.
    – The limits of the examined periods: from the time of the interview until the beginning of the year and the 2002 calendar year.

The interpretation of the findings of the research
(what the survey is suitable for and what it is not suitable for?)

The purpose of the examination

The purpose of the examination: to determine in an exact time frame (1 year) that how many natural persons are victimised in Hungary.

Defining the target group

We had to restrict our original objectives to some extent before starting the survey already because the method we chose set limits on our opportunities. As in international surveys, we did not look for victims among the whole population but only among the adult population over the age of 18. In this way, we did not examine victimisation among minors. We had to set limits on the age group that we examined because according to experience the *survey*-type examinations are not suitable for the examination of minors. The team of experts set up in the course of preparation for the research also thought that minors should be examined with other methods (suited for the age group) and separately. Problems concerning data protection and human rights[13] also arose and they also supplied a reason for including only adults in the examination.

Only adults who had a registered place of residence in Hungary on 1 January were included in the sample. It means that the homeless, who have no permanent place of residence, were left out of the survey. This will probably improve the results of the survey because other international surveys[14] highlight the fact that the people in those groups within the society that are in a marginal position are exposed to victimisation risks to a higher extent than the average. However, we could not include these groups in the survey partly because we do not have reliable information on the number of people who do not have permanent residence and partly because finding these people would require another examination specifically aimed at this purpose.

Thus, the target group of the survey consisted of the totality of adult Hungarian citizens with a registered permanent place of residence.

The opportunity of comparing the number of victims in criminal statistics and in the findings of the survey

One of the most important expectations regarding research in victimology is that the number of cases published in the official statistics should be comparable to the cases disclosed in the survey, making it possible to determine the extent of latency. These kinds of examinations, however, cannot meet this expectation for objective reasons. Comparison is made difficult by a lot of factors. The most important is the *principle of victimological uncertainty*.

The principle of victimological uncertainty says that the number of victims and the fact of the crimes cannot be exactly established at the same time. It is not the deficiencies of criminal statistics or victimological surveys that hinder this but it is theoretically impossible since if we want to establish the fact of the crimes we lose some of the cases but if we want to determine the number of crimes as exactly as possible we will have uncertainties about identifying and establishing the crimes themselves.

In Hungary there are two kinds of criminal statistics. One of them is the Unified Police and Prosecution Crime Statistics, UPPCS in short, and the other is the court statistics.

Court statistics contain the data of cases that are closed with an effective ruling. It means, of course, that the cases in which the offenders were not identified cannot be included in the statistics. This statistical system contains only some of the cases even among those that became known to the authorities, which is — considering the proportions of detection and the number of cases that ended in indictment[15] — only less than a third of the cases. This system provides only inadequate amount of data about the victims as well, so it is not suitable to compare the data in it to the findings of surveys including the particulars of all the victims. But in the cases in the court statistics we can be fully persuaded[16] that a crime took place although we cannot exactly determine who the victims concerned in it were.

The number of crimes that became known in the UPPCS is the same as the total of the crimes, in the case of which in the course of the procedure the

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13 In the case of minors the written permission of the parents or the guardians would have been necessary in order for them to be able to take part in the survey. But even if we had the parents' permission it would have been difficult to ensure the standard circumstances for contacting and interviewing minors.

14 R. T. Trotter: Ethnography and network analysis: The study of social context in cultures and society. Sage, London, 2000, pp. 210–229.; J. van Maanen: Notes on the production of ethnograpic data in an American police agency. Academic Press, New York, 2002, pp. 87–93.

15 The efficiency ratio of investigations was 51.15% in 2002 according to the UPPCS. The number of cases ending in indictment was 186,998, including the cases in which legal entities were wronged. In: Tájékoztató a bűnözésről 2002 (Information on Crime, the year 2002). BM Központi Adatfeldolgozó, Nyilvántartó és Választási Hivatal–Legfőbb Ügyészség Számítástechnika-alkalmazási és Információs Főosztály.

16 Apart from the occasional faulty judgements.

termination of the investigation was proposed or achieved at the investigating authorities on the grounds of:

- indictment,
- a motion for confiscation,
- a motion for confiscation with reprimand,
- forgoing indictment,
- proposing a penal procedure,
- forgoing investigation,
- postponing indictment,
- denying investigation,
- terminating investigation,
- denying that the act is dangerous to society,
- reprimand,
- agreement,
- suing the chief prosecutor at foreign authorities,
- covered detective,
- the crime was not committed by the suspect,
- the offender cannot be identified,
- it cannot be established that the suspect committed the crime.

The forms belonging to the records of the UPPCS are filled at the end of the investigation stage and after they are filled and the data are recorded it is no longer possible to modify the data. For example, in cases that end in indictment even if the court acquits the accused on the ground of an absence of crime, the data that are already recorded are not modified. This means that the UPPCS contains a few cases in which the court ruled effectively that no crime took place. If no crime took place there is no victim in the case either. In the cases that ended in indictment the number of cases that are actually qualified as crimes can be determined but if the case ends in a different way this analysis cannot be performed. At the same time, we must be right in supposing that if the cases that go to courts are sometimes mistakenly classified, it can also happen to cases that have different outcomes, although the number of such cases cannot be established. In the UPPCS the definition of crimes is more uncertain than in the cases heard in courts but the UPPCS registers much more cases and victims than the court statistics. In the case of latent crimes, which the authorities do not know about, the fact that a crime actually happened cannot be established in an exact way. It is not possible to collect data in a way to ensure that only those crimes are included where in a legal sense it can be proved clearly that a crime was committed. In empirical surveys based on interviews conducted among the population the numbers are supposedly are closer to the actual

number of crimes but in the case of crimes detected in this way we lose the exactness of legal definitions and we have to accept more uncertain classifications based on the subjective statements made by the interviewees.

This uncertainty about the numbers and the classifications, however, is not due to the deficiencies of either criminal statistics or the empirical data collection. It is simply the result of the principle of uncertainty in victimological surveys. We must accept the fact that in no countries is it possible to determine with the same exactness the fact that crimes considered or classified as such were committed and the number of these crimes. There will be some degree of uncertainty either in the numbers or in the classification, which changes in inverse proportion.

Thus we cannot be sure that all the crimes that the interviewees in our survey said they were the victims of would be qualified as such by the courts but we still think that this system gives the best estimate for the number of crimes committed and the number of victims in the given period. Besides, the values we detected using this method are closer to the reality than the values in criminal statistics. At the same time, the subjective judgements of the interviewees are surely different from the legal classifications sometimes. As people considered these events as crimes, experienced and remembered them as such, even those cases cannot be ignored that would not stand the test of the test of criminal law in a strict sense. At the same time, the uncertainties of the classifications must be taken into consideration both in the case of comparisons with criminal statistics and in the interpretation of data.

The difficulties of comparing the UPPCS and the findings of the survey. What do we measure?

In conformity to international practice we chose the detection of crimes committed against natural persons as our target so in the interpretation of the findings that is what we have to take into consideration. Therefore crimes that have no victims who are natural persons are outside the scope of our survey. Typical examples of such crimes are e.g. tax and social security fraud, bribery, receiving and selling stolen goods, fraud of public and private documents, drug abuse, infringement of customs regulations...

The survey did not include crimes committed against legal entities, which make up around 40% of the total registered crimes, so these cases were ignored at the collection of data in theory. The distinction between natural persons and legal entities is completely clear in the legal sense but when it comes to interpreting the findings of the survey this distinction is not so clear. Using a simple example: if a car used by a family was purchased by some business enterprise owned by a member of the family – which has been quite

common practice in recent years owing to the tax regulations – and if this car gets stolen, official statistics will have the business enterprise as the victim. However, the members of the family will feel rightly they are victims and probably they will answer the questions in the interview accordingly. Similar situations may arise in the case of private homes used and registered as offices and the furnishings in these homes; so it depends on the kind of insurance scheme who the officially reported victim will be. If the insurance premium is paid from the current account of the enterprise, it will be reported as the victim, while in other cases the bearer of the insurance bond will be reported. These problems arise in connection with crimes against property. There are no such complications in the case of crimes against persons where natural persons and business enterprises can be clearly distinguished. Therefore, in the case of crimes against persons we can expect figures that are comparable to the UPPCS. In the case of crimes against property we tried to assess the extent of the differences resulting from the above mentioned identification of natural persons and legal entities through the validity examination. After the validity examination probably we can give a good estimate for the extent of the difference.

It may still be worth making a comparison concerning the crimes committed against natural persons because this is the information that is closest to the group of victims included in the survey.

We are faced with another significant problem concerning the crimes committed against natural persons when we try to compare the UPPCS data with the figures measured in the survey. The root of the problem lies in the peculiar nature of the UPPCS system because on the form, which is the basis of the provision of statistical data, only one victim can be shown to belong to one crime. It is not possible to mention more than one victim. The idea of "one crime – one victim" is not even tenable in the logical sense since we can mention a lot of crimes when committing one crime offends several people. For example, in a bus accident, where the bus drivers committed a road offence and many people were injured or when one offender hurt several people or when stealing one item of property caused a loss for several people.

Thus the UPPCS registers fewer victims than the actual number, indicating only one victim for each crime according to the method they are applying now. It is quite sure that more people become the victims of crimes than that. The problem is that we do not know how much more. It is not easy to determine the number of victims in a burglary, for example. The number of those who feel victimised depends on how many people live in the flat or in the house. There is no difference in the case of people who live alone but in bigger families

each member can regard themselves as victims rightly. Consequently one burglary may have two, three, four or even more victims. Similar situations may arise in the case of other crimes against property as well.

In the public survey if there are several victims, together they have a higher chance to be included among the interviewees, so more victims will be registered than in the UPPCS. We cannot estimate, however, how much more. In order to have an estimate we should know the size of the families where the crimes against property we mentioned were committed and in the case of crimes against persons we should know the number of the victims. However, the UPPCS does not contain information about it so we know only that we will find somewhat more cases in the course of the survey but we do not know the size of the difference. As a consequence, we cannot determine latency simply by comparing the number of registered cases in the UPPCS with the number of victims measured in the survey. We could only get an approximate value for the number of crimes that remain hidden by comparing the two figures. So it is better to choose another way and not comparing the data we have received in the survey with the data of criminal statistics. It was a separate question in the interview whether the victim reported the crime at the police so the independent interpretation of the findings of the research provides a basis to determine the extent of latency but we can receive realistic data only by examining the number of cases we detected. Comparison with the criminal statistics can lead us astray, therefore when examining the data concerning latency we will estimate the proportion of crimes that have remained hidden relying only on the data detected in the survey.

Although the collection of data does not make comparison with criminal statistics possible but as a separate indicator it is suitable to measure the level of crime and involvement in crime. Comparison with the figures of criminal statistics is possible only along the development of tendencies. If the data of the two indicators: criminal statistics and the victimology data collection move in the same directions, we can say that the criminal situation has changed in the given direction. It is worth looking into the causes of changes in the opposite direction and interpreting them in the case of each instance of data collection. Thus, at present we can draw no well-founded conclusions about the differences in criminal statistics and the data we have measured, we can only say that we have to allow for a significant amount of latency but we can only make an approximate estimation for the amount of latency. If we have the results of several data collections we can make relevant conclusions about the tendencies of the criminal situation through examining the changes.

Field work

Taking the sample

In the first stage with simple random selection – according to their actual weight – we selected districts of Budapest, cities with a county status, towns and villages according to the size of the sample (Primary Sampling Unit; PSU). We distributed the PSUs in the proportion determined by the hierarchy of municipalities within the county, which can ensure the correct regional representation of the sample, even at the level of the counties, at least with regard to the structure of the municipalities. Categorising the municipalities according to size was necessary because according to the UPPCS data municipalities of different sizes and population have very different crime rates. Further criteria for the categories were the age groups according to gender and age because earlier victimological examinations indicated significantly different indicators for involvement according to these aspects as well.

In the second stage the Central Office for Data Processing, Records and Elections (CODPRE) selected the persons on the basis of a sample framework designed in advance. The public opinion poll company that carried out the field work received the necessary number of names and addresses, which constituted the sample of the survey, from the CODPRE in this case.

In order to replace the potential interviewees who were not found or who could not be interviewed for some reasons we asked the CODPRE for another sample of three times 10,000 supplementary addresses, selected in the same municipalities, joined to the main sample.

The sample prepared by CODPRE at the county level took the following into consideration:

— the proportion of genders,
— the age groups,
— the categories of municipalities,
— and the proportion of the population of the counties in the total population of the country.

Therefore, it exactly corresponds the composition of the adult Hungarian population according to the above aspects.

The most recent data of municipality and population statistics by the Central Statistical Office served as a basis for the categories in the sample.

The sample prepared in this way is a random sample therefore it is faultless in theory. However, the "faultlessness" of the sample depends on how accurate and up-to-date the records that we take the sample from are. According to our experience the sample prepared in this way contains a

small percentage of addresses that are no longer accurate (e.g. the person has moved or perhaps died or the address is only a permanent address but actually he or she lives somewhere else, etc.). The percentage of these wrong addresses is usually not higher than 1-2%.

The sample had a list of 400 main address lists. This means that the sample contained this number of primary sampling units. 25 people had to be asked on each list of addresses (see Table 1.). Only one person could be asked among those living at the same address (in the same home or household), the one who was on the list.

Table 1.
The composition of a 10,000 strong sample from the adult population

	Budapest	county seats	other towns	villages
starting point	70	79	113	138
the number of interviews	1,751	1,983	2,815	3,451
the number of interviews by points	25	25	25	25
sistribution	18	20	28	35

In this method for taking samples the questioners had to go to certain addresses to interview certain persons. The random selection applied by CODPRE ensured that the selected population represented the Hungarian population concerning schooling as well, therefore we did not use a separate quota for this (which otherwise could have questioned the random character of the sample).

A weakness, which is characteristic of research in the social sciences, is the consequence of the method used for taking the sample: homeless people and people living social institutions, students' hostels garrisons, prisons and in closed gypsy estates not registered as a place of residence are not included among the interviewees. They are the ones who are always ignored in public opinion polls no matter who conducts the survey and with what method. Specially targeted supplementary examinations can provide information on these groups of the population.

Collection of data

The Hungarian Gallup Institute won the commission to perform the tasks related to the public survey through a public procurement procedure. We would like to give special thanks to Ágnes Illyés and Rita Regős of the Gallup Institute, whose valuable proposals helped to put the questionnaire into its final form.

The collection of data contained the following stages:
— the logistical organisation of field work,

– the training of instructors and questioners,

– carrying out the field work,

– checking the questionnaires received,

– coding and recording the questionnaires received,

– recording the list of addresses received,

– checking the work of the questioners and the instructors by telephone,

– logical inspection and cleaning of the data file.

Checking the questioners and the instructors

There were altogether 450 questioners working in the survey together with 26 instructors. During and after the field work, the tasks of checking were performed by the Gallup Institute but we also monitored the whole procedure and worked together with the staff of the Institute. Checking took place in 943 cases, when we phoned the interviewees and asked them if our questioners had conducted the interview with the person selected for this purpose. 89% of the questioners – 400 people – were checked at least at one address while the more problematic, not clear cases, were checked at more than one address.

Besides checking the questioners by phone we also checked the recorded data systematically. There was, for example, a questioner, who found people who have been victimised at all the addresses while there were others who were far behind the average or did not find victims of crimes at any of their addresses. We checked the questioners who produced such extreme results specifically.

The suspicion of cheating arose in the case of 27 questioners (6%) in the course of checking them. All the interviews of the questioners involved – altogether 251 – were conducted again by other questioners in the following places:

– in the whole of the 4th district in Budapest,

– in some parts of the 11th, 12th, 14th and 16th districts and

– in Gyál, Siófok and Szolnok.

We did not accept another 84 interviews because of the errors made when they were filled. These interviews were conducted again, so altogether 335 interviews were made.

The indicators of field work

Field work started later than planned: on June 14 instead of the end of May[17]. The delay in the beginning of the collection of data, however, created

17 The reason for the delay was that the public procurement procedure took longer than expected because we had to announce that the first round brought no results.

a useful opportunity for us not to examine involvement for a year's period only but to ask the interviewees if they had been victimised in another six months' period as well.

We took a sample with the help of a list of addresses. Three supplementary addresses belonged to one main address. The main address had to be visited at least twice. Still, if the interview could not be carried out it was possible to try with the first (then the second and the third) supplementary address. In smaller areas the questioners said they had tried four or five times with the main address before going on to the supplementary address.

The supplementary addresses were not near the main address but were selected randomly from the same district or municipality, which made the work of the questioners even more difficult. This significantly increased the time needed for the visits but in order to preserve the random character of the sample we kept this solution.

The distribution of the people we managed to contact on each list of addresses is shown by Table 2.

Table 2.

Distribution according to addresses

	the number of the people interviewed	in the percentage of all the people interviewed (%)
main address	4,235	42.3
1st supplementary address	2,136	21.3
2nd supplementary address	1,526	15.2
3rd supplementary address	1,351	13.5
address with a quota	772	7.7
total	10,020	100.0

10,020 interviews were made altogether: that was the number of questionnaires recorded and in the processing of data we worked with the data obtained from these questionnaires. Table 3. shows the reasons and the proportions of failures in contacting the people on the list.

Altogether 9248 interviews were made at the addresses included on the list, with the people selected in advance. In two places, in Budapest (5th and 11th district) and in Siófok the addresses on the lists were not enough so questions by quotas had to be used to replace the missing addresses. Questions by quotas amounted to 7.7% of all the interviews and they did not influence the representation criteria. The reasons for failing to make the interviews usually had to do with problems concerning the availability of the selected persons. The selected persons refused to answer in 14% of the cases, which can be considered as a very favourable proportion.

Table 3.
The result of the visits based on the list of addresses

	1st visit (list of addresses)	2nd visit (list of addresses)	all the visits from the list of addresses	quota	all the successful interviews
SUCCESFUL	8,021	1,227	9,248	772	10,020
UNSUCCESFUL	12,838	2,908	15,746		
at a later time	428	6	434		
refused to answer	2,932	318	3,250		
the person has moved	1,080	74	1,154		
the person was unable to answer	251	18	269		
no one was at home	5,170	1,988	7,158		
the person was unavailable all the time	1,248	229	1,477		
the person is unavailable at present	1,002	239	1,241		
wrong address	343	10	353		
other	384	26	410		
total valid unsuccessful	11,164	2,806	13,970		
total visits	20,859	4,135	24,994		
valid sample	19,185	4,033	23,218		
successful (%)	41.8	30.4	92.3	7.7	100.0
unsuccessful (%)	58.2	69.6	60.2		
refused to answer (%)	15.3	7.9	14.0		

The results of the interviews, the composition of the data file

The representation criteria
and the persons actually interviewed

The representation criteria were fulfilled throughout the interviews. The composition of the interviewees was never significantly different from the figures planned.
The composition according to age groups is shown in Table 4.

Table 4.
Composition according to age groups

the year of birth	sample framework (%)	datafile (%)
1900–1942	25.5	25.8
1943–1957	26.8	27.5
1958–1967	15.8	15.8
1968–1977	19.7	19.3
1978–1984	12.2	11.5
total	100.0	100.0

The difference between the proportion of the people planned to be interviewed and actually interviewed is below one percent in all the age groups.

This means that the composition of the interviewees according to age satisfies the representation criteria.

Table 5. shows the distribution according to the planned sample framework and according to the gender of the interviewees.

Table 5.
Distribution according to genders

	sample framework %	datafile (%)
men	46.7	46.4
women	53.2	53.6

Examining the distribution according to genders we can conclude that we managed to realise the representative composition defined in the sample. Practically there is no difference between the planned and the actual composition of the interviewees.

Another representation criterion was that the sample should reflect the proportions of the population of the counties. Table 6. shows the number of interviews planned and conducted in each county and the proportion of the difference.

Table 6.
The Distribution of Planned and Conducted Interviews

county	sample framework (number of people)	data file, the number of interviews conducted	difference in percentage of the sample framework
Bács-Kiskun county	539	536	-0.56
Baranya county	402	405	0.75
Békés county	393	394	0.25
Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county	720	736	2.22
Budapest	1,751	1,757	0.34
Csongrád county	423	422	-0.24
Fejér county	419	414	-1.19
Győr-Moson-Sopron county	433	430	-0.69
Hajdú-Bihar county	534	534	0.00
Heves county	324	324	0.00
Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county	409	417	1.96
Komárom-Esztergom county	310	310	0.00
Nógrád county	216	218	0.93
Pest county	1,063	1,058	-0.47
Somogy county	333	338	1.50
Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county	555	556	0.18
Tolna county	247	247	0.00
Vas county	266	266	0.00
Veszprém county	366	366	0.00
Zala county	297	292	-1.68
total	10,000	10,020	0.2

The differences between the sample framework and the number of people actually interviewed are the results of the allocation between the questioners of the different lists of addresses. In the final stage of the interviews more than one questioner received supplementary addresses and if some of them were successful a few more interviews could be made in that area. We kept these extra interviews and used them in our analyses as they did not influence the proportions of representation but they increased the number of units. In the counties where fewer interviews were made than planned we did not replace the missing interviews with interviews based on quotas after we ran out of the addresses on the lists because the number of such cases was so low that the four or five missing interviews did not influence the proportions of representation.

The structure of the questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of three parts that are physically separated as well.
- The first part is the main questionnaire, which contains the questions related to the socio-demographic data that are not directly related to victimisation as well as the victimological filter questions.
- The second part is the so-called crime block, which is filled if the interviewees have been victims of some kind of crime in the past one and a half years. It contains detailed questions concerning the given crime.
- The third part is the one that the interviewees had to fill themselves, answering the questions without the help of the questioner. After they answered the questions, the questionnaire was put in an envelope so its content was not known to the questioner.

The interview was considered successful if at least the main questionnaire was filled. We did not accept main questionnaires that were not filled completely but only partly. If the interview came to an end while the main questionnaire was being filled, the questioner had to try to make the interview at a supplementary address. This happened very rarely as most of the people who refused to answer (14% altogether) said that they did not wish to take part in the survey before the interview. Altogether 10,020 main questionnaires were filled in the course of the data collection. We marked the questions of the main questionnaire concerning crime with the letter "K" and a number. We referred to these questions by these in the detailed analysis and that is how they can be identified as questions belonging to the main questionnaire. There are altogether 80 questions concerning crime (K) and 26 questions concerning the socio-demographic data (Sz) in the main questionnaire. In these cases the

total number of interviewees was 10,020 and the proportion of answers in the percentage of the interviewees refer to this figure.

If the interviewee was the victim of a crime at least once in 2002 or in 2003, the answers of the crime block also had to be answered. In view of the international practice and the earlier examinations in Hungary we selected 15 important types of crimes, concerning which we asked the interviewees to fill the detailed questionnaire.

The selected types of crimes are the following:
- car theft,
- theft from cars,
- vandalism of cars,
- vandalism,
- bicycle theft,
- robbery,
- thefts by pickpockets,
- theft,
- burglary,
- assault, bodily harm,
- sexual harassment,
- sexual abuse,
- attack, threat,
- being deceived and cheated,
- traffic accidents with injury,
- other crimes.

If more than one kind of crime happened to somebody then a separate crime block had to be filled for each kind of selected kind of crime. If the person was the victim of a crime that was not included among the selected crimes we asked detailed questions about this crime. If somebody, for example, was the victim of a theft by a pickpocket and a burglary as well in the examined period, then they had to answer two sets of questions about these crimes.

If somebody was the victim of the same selected type of crime or another kind of crime more than once then they had to answer the questions of only one crime block and the answers had to refer to the last crime. This means that if somebody's car was stolen three times they had to answer the detailed questions only about the last theft.

The crime block was filled in the case of altogether 1,734 interviewees, which means that it was the number of people who considered themselves to have been victims of crimes at least once in the first half of 2003 or 2002. The number of the detailed questionnaires that were filled was higher than that because there were people who reported more than one kind of crime. The total number of filled crime blocks and the number of people who were victims of more than one crime are shown in Table 7.

2,035 crime blocks were filled in the case of altogether 1,074 crimes, which means that we have detailed data about 2,035 crimes.

Table 7.
The accumulation of crimes

the number of crimes	the number of victims
1	1,734
2	228
3	52
4	11
5	3
6	3
7	3
8	1
total	2,035

The interviewees reported about being the victims of a slightly higher number of crimes in the examined one a half years' period because in the case of the same kind of crimes only one question block had to be filled.

Before handing over the questionnaires that had to be filled by the interviewees themselves we asked for a written consent of the interviewees to the use of these data in the research, as these questionnaires had questions about sensitive data[18] as well. Only the interviewees who gave their written consent were asked to answer the questions of the questionnaire to be filled by the interviewees themselves. Altogether 5,792 people answered the questions of this questionnaire. These questions were marked with the letter "O" and the number of people interviewed for these questions was 5,792. We have no information concerning these questions about the 4228 people who did not give their written consent. The distribution of the interviewees answering and not answering the questions of the questionnaire to be filled by themselves is shown by Table 8.

Table 8.

The distribution of those answering the questions on the questionnaire to be filled by themselves according to genders

gender	the questions in the form to be filled by the interviewees themselves	
	were answered %	were not answered %
men	46.4	46.5
women	53.6	53.5

There is no difference in the distribution according to gender between the two groups, which means that men and women agreed to answer these questions in the same proportion.

Looking at the distribution according to age groups we can see that there are no significant differences between those who answered and those who did not answer the questions. This is shown by Table 9.

18 Certain data about the interviewee's nationality, racial and ethnical background, private life, views, past history, about what social organisations and societies they belong to and about their physical and mental condition, etc. are classified as so-called special data in international practice and receive increased legal protection. Equal opportunities and equality before the law and equal respect can be ensured for everybody if we leave the individuals the full right for independent decisions regarding the data they decide to give about themselves if these data can be disadvantageous or can be used for negative discrimination. "Data that are otherwise not special but which can lead to conclusions about some special data of the person concerned can only be handled with the restrictions concerning special data" – goes the explanation of the 2nd paragraph of the LXIII law of the year 1992 on the protection of personal data and on the publicity of data pertaining to the general interest. In the same place it says that "the handling of data covers all the operations conceivable that can be carried out on data" and furthermore the consent of the person concerned must be acquired at the time of acquiring the data or before forwarding it already. Questions no. 01, 02, (04), 03, 05, 06, 07, 08, (09), 010, (011), 016B, (017), 018, 019, (020), 021, 022, 023, 024 in the questionnaire to be filled by the interviewees themselves and the answers to these questions are definitely qualified as sensitive data according to section 2 of paragraph 2 of the LXIII law of the year 1992 on the protection of personal data and on the publicity of data pertaining to the general interest.

Table 9.

Those willing and not willing to give interviews according to age groups

year of birth	answered %	did not answer %
1900–1942	23.9	28.4
1943–1957	28.0	26.9
1958–1967	16.1	15.5
1968–1977	19.6	18.7
1978–1984	12.3	10.4
total	100.0	100.0

The biggest difference can be found in the age groups of the oldest people: by 4.5% fewer of them agreed to fill the questionnaire but according to the reports of the questioners this was due not so much to the difficulties of the questions as to those of writing and reading.

There composition of the people answering the questions to be filled by themselves according to gender and age group was not significantly different from the composition of the whole sample.

Examining the interviewees according to the type of municipalities, however, we can find significant differences between the two groups, as shown by Table 10.

Table 10.

The success of the interviews according to the types of municipalities

type of municipality	the questions in the form to be filled by the interviewees themselves	
	were answered %	were not answered %
Budapest	13.3	23.4
cities with a county status	20.2	19.9
other towns	29.4	22.8
villages, farms	37.1	34.0
total	100.0	100.0

As for the people answering these questions, the proportion of those living in cities with a county status was the same, the proportion of those living in towns and villages was somewhat higher, while the proportion of those living in Budapest was significantly lower. This means that if we examine the people living in different municipalities, the survey loses its representative character to some extent. The questions cannot be considered representative concerning the citizens of Budapest. This means that these answers reflect the opinions of the people living in the rest of the country more emphatically.

The interpretation of the victimisation data

The proportion of the victims within the population

We examined victimisation concerning four time intervals.

a) The first, most general level referred to life prevalence. Question K80: "How many times have you been the victim of a crime so *far in your life?*"
255 people answered this question and 5,701 interviewees (56.9%) said that they had never been victims and 4,064 (41.6%) reported at least one crime they had been the victims of. The frequency of victimisation is shown by Table 11.

Table 11.
The frequency of victimisation

the times of victimisation	number of people	in the percentage of the interviewees
once	2,320	23.2
2 or 3 times	1,065	10.6
more than 3 times	679	6.9
never	5,701	56.9
did not answer	255	2.5
total	10,020	100.1

The questions about victimisation concerning such a long period are quite unreliable since it is not sure that the interviewees can recall a minor crime that happened e.g. 8 or 10 years ago, as people tend to forget these cases quite easily. In this way, we cannot say with full assurance that the 5,701 people who said "never" had never actually been victims of crimes. Theoretical calculations, which rely only on criminal statistics, show a higher degree of involvement but those who do not remember incidents that happened a long time ago probably did not have such a traumatic experience that would affect their present way of life and thinking[19], therefore we can consider them for the purposes of our further analysis as if they had never been victimised. However, we can be sure that 4,064 people remember being the victim of a crime. Concerning the crimes we cannot say anything more about this group of victims because according to standard international practice we did not ask them about the crimes.

b) The *past five years* constituted the next level of examination. We asked the interviewees about the events that happened during this period in detail. Although it is still a longer period than what the interviewees can reliably

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19 We do not examine the effects of the events that people suppress and banish to the subconscious because they belong to the competence of another discipline.

remember we decided to include this period in our examination because it gave the interviewees an opportunity to collect their thoughts and memories so the questions referring to shorter periods could work better. In the course of interviewing, the questioners had to ask questions about all the selected important crimes and they finished with the other crimes or with the crimes that were left out before. We will examine the answers given in the case of certain selected crimes and crime groups (crimes against property, violent crimes, sexual crimes, traffic offences) in separate studies and now we clarify only the meaning of aggregate data including all the crimes.
Altogether 3326 people said they had been the victims of at least one crime in the past five years. In these cases besides the fact and the frequency of the crime, we were also able to detect its type. Projecting the cases in the past five years on each of the years we get 665 victims annually.

c) As the data were collected at the end of June and the beginning of July in 2003, we had the opportunity to ask the questions concerning the *past six months* as well, using the time of the interviews and the beginning of the year as natural points of reference for the examined period. One of the most important problems of collecting victimological data is the exact distinction of the examined period in a way that is clear to all the interviewees in order to prevent or minimise a "telescoping effect"[20]. If the examined period is too far from the time of the interviews, this effect can become very strong and this will have a very adverse effect on the reliability of the results.
In our case the interviews were conducted at the ideal time, at the end of the first six months of the year so the events after the examined period could not impair reliability. The beginning of the year is also a good reference point, which is clear for everyone. Because people usually attach greater importance to the events at the end of the year (Christmas, New Year's Eve) and remember the things that happen there more vividly, this reference point at the beginning of the examined period was also clear. We collected data about the year 2002 for all types of crimes besides the data of the past six months because the smaller number of cases in this period would have made further analyses more difficult. With the help of this method we had the opportunity to compare the possible results of the collection of data for the six months' period and the whole year's period.
Let us look at the data about the whole year of 2002 first (Table 12.).
1,205 of the interviewees were the victims of crimes in 2002.
Knowing the annual data we have a strong temptation to compare the data obtained in the course of the examination with the data of criminal statistics

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20 The interviewees remember events that happened before or after the examined period as if they had happened in that period.

Table 12.
The proportion of those victimised in 2002

times of victimisation in 2002	number of people	in the percentage of the interviewees
once	1,012	10.0
twice	142	1.4
more than twice	51	0.6
not in 2002	8,815	88.0
total	10,020	100.0

(UPPCS) but we must resist this temptation because the results of the two data collection methods cannot be compared. There can be further difficulties besides the problems mentioned earlier (the principle of victimological uncertainty, the distinction between legal entities and natural persons as victims). The most serious problem is *the distinction between crimes and minor offences*. Owing to the special characteristics of Hungarian criminal law minor offences have to be treated quite separately from crimes. Criminal statistics do not contain data about minor offences. Although crimes and minor offences cannot always be clearly distinguished and determining the threshold values is haphazard and fraught with subjective elements they have completely different consequences – at least for the offender. This distinction is not so clear from the perspective of the victim as in criminal law. Often the victims are not even aware of this distinction and are faced with it only when they see the reaction of the authorities. From the cases where the crime block was filled we could give an approximate estimate for the proportion of offences because in these cases we registered the value of the damage as estimated by the victims. However, this estimate would be probably quite inaccurate because we have no guarantee that the value of the damage as estimated by the victim would be the same as an estimate by the authorities. An approximate estimate would not take us nearer to the desired comparison with criminal statistics anyway, because the other circumstances that make it difficult would still prevail and the distinction would not affect the subjective judgement of the victims, who do not assess the wrong they suffered depending on whether it was a minor offence or a crime but according to the extent of the damage it caused to them. Besides, our final aim is to disclose the characteristics of the victims and it is not certain that the victims of crimes and minor offences have different characteristics according to the value of the damage they suffered.

We can give an estimate on latency not through the comparison of the results of the two methods of data collection but relying on the results of the

study within the framework of the research. The already mentioned 1,205 victims in the year 2002 were victimised in altogether 1,537 cases but they turned to the authorities to report the crimes in only 810 cases. Practically this means that the authorities could only come to know of every second crime on the whole. This average has a high deviation according to the different types of crimes. There are some types of crimes that are reported much more rarely and others types in the case of which nearly every crime is reported. Although it is not useful to compare the detected number of victims with the data of criminal statistics, this comparison is more justified in the case of crimes reported to the police. In theory every official report to the police has to appear in the criminal statistics but we can see that although the victims reported crimes in 810 cases, which means about 800,000 cases projected to the national level, criminal statistics register only about 300,000 cases. The significant difference may partly be due to the fact that as we have already mentioned the victims do not distinguish between minor offences and crimes but criminal statistics do not contain the minor offences reported. The difference resulting from this probably does not explain the whole difference of more than twice as many cases. There have to be other mechanisms that divert the cases from the way to become criminal statistics. One such mechanism may be if the police have the opportunity to classify the cases they come to know about depending on whether they find it appropriate to investigate it or not and to reduce their workload by filtering out the cases not worth dealing with, thereby reducing the number of cases included in the official criminal statistics[21]. Another explanation is that the citizens interpret the idea of reporting the crime to the police in a different way than the authorities. While the victims may think that by simply making a telephone call they reported the crime officially, the authorities do not consider a call as an official report so these cases are not registered. Besides the ones already mentioned there are other crimes that the authorities come to know about through other ways than a report by the victim. (A typical case is the traffic accidents that constitute a crime.) So we can conclude that there are some other crimes that the authorities come to know of without the help of the victim – although we cannot determine their number in this survey – and these crimes somewhat reduce the size of latency calculated on the basis of the data from the victims.

d) If we examine the data about the examined period (the last six months) the picture about the criminal situation is somewhat different. In this period the number of victims was 799, which would be 1,598, if projected over a

21 Korinek L.: op. cit. p. 115.

year's period. This is about 25% higher than the data about 2002. There may be two reasons for the difference. The first and more probable reason is that the "telescoping" effect was still at work and some of the events of the earlier period were also placed here by the victims. The other explanation is that crime increased by 25% in the first half of 2003[22]. The two effects may have worked together but we have no information available to decide what part each of this reasons played in the increase. This question can only be answered on the basis of the results of further examinations. The willingness of victims to report the crime to the authorities also changed to the same extent but this may be due to both of the above mentioned factors equally. The latency indicator did not change either because both of the values needed to calculate it increased practically at the same rate. It was still the case that the population reported more than twice as many crimes in the survey as the cases in which they turned to the authorities. We will deal with the reasons for latency and the change in the willingness to report the crimes to the authorities in a separate study.

The reliability and the validity of answers

The validity of the data can be examined with several methods. We planned a special validity examination to check the method of the research and the results. As we have mentioned earlier we do not know from the results of the present research what the interviewees exactly meant by crime. What we know is that the legal awareness of the population is certainly different from the system of concepts in criminal law. It is not sure that if lay people define something as crime for themselves the authorities would also have the same assessment of it. It is uncertain whether the events shown as crimes in the survey are really crimes because it is highly probable that we would have different interpretations of them and there are also complications concerning minor offences. The validity examination can help to decrease this insecurity but until we have performed a validity examination we have to make do with the practical consideration that if the victims feel something is a crime for them then it is a crime.

We examined victimisation in several stages and for several periods so the consistence of the answers received here can be examined now and the results show how reliable the answers of the interviewees were.

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22 We cannot ignore a third aspect either: in the first half of 2002 more incidents were suffered by the population than in the second half although the data in the criminal statistics do not indicate this seasonal difference.

On the basis of the comparison of life prevalence and the questions concerning the past five years we can see that the interviewees were very consistent. There was an inconsistency, when somebody gave inconsistent answers to the two questions, in only four cases.

We experienced an extremely high consistency in the case of questions concerning five years' periods, one year's periods and six months' periods: the percentage of inconsistent answers was under 0.1%. These very high values are probably the results of the great attention the questioners paid to these questions owing to the thorough preparation and practice they went through.

The questionnaire came out well in comparison with other surveys. For example, the question in the questionnaire to be filled by the interviewees themselves asking whether they belonged to a minority group brought practically the same results as the data of the census performed by the Central Statistical Office. The same proportion of people said they belonged to one of the minority groups on the list. There are minor differences only within the confidence interval. Therefore, according to the internal confidence examinations the answers given to the questionnaire proved reliable.

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JÓZSEF KÓ

Fear of Crime[1]

Theoretical Considerations

As a first step in order to determine what we are measuring we have to define the concepts that constitute the subject matter of our analysis: fear and crime. Let us start with crime.

Crime is usually defined as a negative or deviant social mass phenomenon, which contains two elements: the violation of the norms of criminal law as a human behaviour and the person who violates the norms of criminal law[2]. We can add to this definition that crime should be interpreted in the context of the controlling mechanism of the society, which includes the laws, the willingness of the people to report crimes to the police, the success of crime detection and law enforcement as well as the practice of the administration of justice – therefore crime, taken as a whole, is not an independent variable. It depends on the norms of criminal justice what phenomena are included in the category of crime[3]. These norms change in the course of time and follow the public demand with a shorter or longer time delay. Therefore crime can always be interpreted in the context of a given social reality only and there is no absolute concept of crime. At the same time, society cannot be regarded as a uniform entity, it consists of different groups and stratums, which have their independent systems of interests and values and their own systems of norms. Although the root of crime is the violation of the norms of criminal law, the different members and groups of society do not necessarily agree in their judgement of it and they certainly have different opinions. "We tend to consider only those activities as crime which have a moral content"[4]. What we regard as amorality, however, depends on our position in society.

Crime, the impact of which we would like to analyse, proves relative in practice. It does not mean the same for all the interviewees. And if crime

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1 Another study by Tünde Barabás also published in this volume examines this topic along the same or similar aspects but from another direction. József Kó focuses primarily on the whole of the population, while Tünde Barabás focuses on the comparison of interviewees who have not yet been victimised and who have been victimised already. It is worth studying both papers if we are to examine the whole Hungarian adult population. – The editor's remark.

2 So e.g. Vavró, István: A bűnözés kriminálstatisztikai jellemzői (The Criminal Statistical Characteristics of Crime). KJK, Budapest, 1976, p. 53.

3 Király, Tibor: Rendszerváltás és bűnözés (Transition and Crime). In: Irk, Ferenc (ed.): Társadalmi átalakulás és bűnözés (Social transformation and Crime). OKKrI, Budapest, 1997, pp. 22–23.

4 Ibid. p. 23.

does not mean the same for all the interviewees then they are not afraid of the same thing if we examine fear of crime in general. This may be one explanation for the paradox of fear: it is not those who are most endangered that are afraid and fear is not the highest where danger is highest.

Fear is a very complex emotion with many factors influencing its formation and its intensity. It is interesting why exactly this emotion is usually examined in connection with crime since there are and there may be a lot of other emotions in connection with crimes, either connected to victimisation or in general. For example, if your bag gets stolen it is not sure that you will be afraid, maybe you will be angry or upset often not so much because of the financial loss but because of the inconvenience of having to have the stolen documents replaced.

If we think about the financial loss we may suffer owing to some crime, it is not sure that fear will be the most adequate word for the emotions that we feel. We may be sad if we lose some object that is dear to us or we may be angry because of the damage but it is not sure at all that we will be afraid. Fear is mostly justified in connection with crimes committed against persons. Most crimes (about 75% of them) are, however, crimes against property, so fear is less directly attached to them. Therefore, if we want to compare the actual danger with the fears related to crimes, it would be better to examine the crimes committed against persons than to analyse the distribution of all the crimes in the usual way. If those who are most afraid of crime are afraid of crimes committed against persons, the examination of aggregate data may result in a distorted picture of the actual situation.

If we ask questions about fears of crime in the course of the collection of data, it is an added problem to determine how the emotions that are present in other levels take part in the answer: how anger, helplessness, nervousness, etc. are converted into fear.

We could get a more realistic picture if we also examined the other emotions beside fear. In the questionnaire we asked questions about the presence of eight emotions concerning victimisation; analysing the answers given to these questions can help to find the answers to the previous questions but they will be processed only later. Now, as a first step, following the traditional way, we will examine the answers to the "usual" fear questions.

Usually only the role of *anxiety,* which is closely related to fear but appears in a more general way, not attached to specific objects, is examined among those emotions that are behind fear. There is quite an extensive literature of the analysis of this connection. László Korinek[5] gives a

good overview of the theoretical models that explain fear. He distinguishes the following six theoretical models:
— victimisation theory,
— the theory referring to the social order of the neighbourhood,
— social problem theory,
— cognitive anxiety theory,
— risk assessment theory,
— social insecurity theory.

In the above mentioned theories the mechanism of the explanation of fear has similar structures. The individuals assess their situation on the basis of some outside factor and if they come to a conclusion that could give rise to fear based on the assessment of the situation, they say they have fears. The differences between the theories may depend on which factor is emphasised: earlier victimisation experiences, the social order of the neighbourhood, the picture painted of crime in the media, personal risk assessment or the general order of society, the other existing social problems.

Probably none of the theories can give a full explanation of the fears connected to crime in themselves and only analysing the causes listed together can give the right result, which has been proved by earlier surveys in Hungary[6]. Fears are closely related to gender, schooling, occupation, income, and the type of municipality the interviewee's home is in; it is the result of the joint impact of several factors.

Separating fear of crime and anxiety is quite problematic. In the case of anxiety *"danger is originated within the person, in the desires of their instinctive self"*. Fear is an emotion generated by the real threats of the outside world or some danger[7]. The application of this psychological definition is not without problems in criminological practice. Often it is very difficult to define what can be a real threat or danger for the interviewee and what can be called anxiety without a special object instead. The usual distinction is related to the victimisation experiences: *"we can talk about fear if emotions are justified by victimisation expectations and through them the past experiences of victimisation [...] we can talk about anxiety if feelings are not supported either by the past events of victimisation or the expectations for victimisation"*[8].

However, we cannot fully agree with this definition as it emphasises only one element of the concept of crime and it is built on personal experiences

5 Korinek, László: Egy követéses vizsgálat ürügyén a bűnözési félelemről (On Fear of Crime in Connection with a Follow-Up Survey). Jogtudományi Közlöny, July–August 1996

6 Kó, József: Vélemények a bűnözésről. Egy közvélemény-kutatás tanulságai (Opinions on Crime.The Lessons of a Survey). Kriminológiai és Kriminalisztikai Tanulmányok, 35, OKKrI, Budapest, 1999
7 C. S. Carver: Social measurement and social indicators. George Allen and Unwin, London, 1981, pp. 87–89.
8 Korinek, László: Rejtett bűnözés (Hidden Crime). KJK, Budapest, 1988

and expectations. But crime is a more general concept than the immediate victimisation harms and we must accept fear as real and cannot regard it as anxiety if it is not simply originated in the mental mechanisms in the individual aimed at the protection of the self. Events such as bank robberies or showdowns between criminal groups generate fear among many people even if they know exactly that they are not personally endangered.

If we ask people if they are afraid of crime, normally they will think of crime and they will not consider whether they have been or will be the victims of some otherwise unspecified crime. The concept of crime that the interviewees will think about is not the same in each case. It is different for each social group and for each individual, sometimes to a great and sometimes only to a small extent but it will almost never be the same as the "official" legal concept, based on law. In view of this, the interviewees must consider whether the conglomerate portrayed by their concept of crime is dangerous to them, whether they have anything to fear of this danger.

As a first step in the examination of the "claims" of fear, to see whether it is justified, we should define the concept of crime that the given emotion refers to.

"In view of the above, the so-called fear paradox can be modified adjusted in our case by saying that it is not that the people less exposed to crime are more afraid but they are afraid of other things, that is, they are more anxious than others[9]". We definitely agree that there are people who are afraid of other things and mean something else by crime but we would like to note that this emotion can still be fear and categorising it as anxiety does not solve the problem.

We should not forget that emotions are not primarily rational. Therefore they may easily be wholly unjustified, beyond any rational explanation.

Evaluation of the situation

The appearance of the problem of crime

Exploring what the public knows about crime can take the analysis nearer to understanding the picture people have of crime. We examined this topic in more than one stage. First, we set out to clarify its situation among other social problems. Using open-ended questions we gave an opportunity for the interviewees to phrase the problems themselves that concern them the most and we wanted to know to what extent the issue of crime would be

9 Ibid. p. 151.

present in the spontaneous answers. After that closed questions followed about certain topics where crime was in the foreground.

First, we wanted to know to what extent the interviewees find crime an important and serious problem and what place crime occupies among *the current problems of the country*. Table 1. shows the distribution of the answers given to this question (Question K3).

Table 1.
What is the greatest problem of the country now?

problems	the frequency of the answers	in the percentage of the interviewees
unemployment, job creation	1,947	21.59
social tensions, problems	805	8.93
economic, financial situation	693	7.68
standard of living, livelihood, prices	689	7.64
problems connected to political life in general	643	7.13
public security, crime	497	5.51
problems related to the government	408	4.52
secure/insecure livelihood	405	4.49
opinions related to moral values	357	3.96
corruption	303	3.36
the situation of pensioners and the elderly/pensions	290	3.22
low wages, raising the wages to a Western-European standard	286	3.17
the situation of health care	281	3.12
problems related to agriculture	253	2.81
EU-accession	229	2.54
the situation and the support of minority groups	106	1.18

The problems related to unemployment and job creation were mentioned by the highest number of people. This topic stands out among the problems mentioned; one-fifth of the interviewees mentioned it. This exceeds the proportion of the actual threat; the proportion of registered unemployment is around 5% now and it is decreasing. Still, this is the issue that concerns people the most. This indicates that losing one's job can disturb the everyday life of families even if one can find another job soon and it means a basic sense of insecurity, especially for those in the middle income categories (they mentioned this problem at the highest proportion).

The first five most frequently mentioned problems include issues that have to do with livelihood and the economy, phrased in different ways; more than fifty percent of the interviewees mentioned problems in this category. Financial problems have an overwhelming significance among the problems that concern the country as a whole.

Crime and public security was only on the sixth place as it was the most serious problem according to 5.5% of the interviewees. This is partly reassuring because it means that nowadays people are not the most concerned about

public security; they find financial and livelihood problems much more important. On the whole we can say that although the problem of crime and public security is noticeably present in everyday life it does not mean the most important problem for the majority of people. Most of the problems are caused by the financial and social situation but political issues also precede crime.

Taking the problem nearer to *the area of personal life* we get a similar picture to what we got in the case of national problems when we asked *"What do you think the three greatest problems are in the place where you live?"* (Question K4). Here also problems related to unemployment and job creation are on the top of the list. In the second place there are the issues related to transport and the condition of the roads and the issue of *public security* came on the third place here. Examining the list, however, can be misleading in this case because Question K4 was an open-ended question in the questionnaire and we expected three answers. The interviewees were free to phrase the problems they found important so the answers we received showed an extremely high deviation and differentiation. The most frequently mentioned problem was unemployment, mentioned by 15% of the interviewees in the first place. 183 other answers were mentioned by the remaining 85%. The diversification of the answers can be significantly decreased through merging the answers, so taken the three answers by each interviewee together and merging the answers related to public security and crime we find that slightly less than ten percent (9.4%) of the interviewees gave answers that belong to this category. Therefore on the local level more people mentioned problems related to crime but on the whole only one-tenth of the interviewees found this issue worthy of mentioning.

The answers given to the open-ended, not guided questions can convince us that *the main problem for the Hungarian population at present is not crime.*

The opinions, however, show a quite different picture if we *ask concrete questions about public security.* When they were asked the question *"What do you think of public security in Hungary?"* (Question K6), 32.4% of the interviewees answered that it was bad or very bad. Referring the question to the neighbourhood where the interviewee lives, there were only 8.3% who found public security bad or very bad. There were a higher proportion of people from Budapest among those who had a negative opinion, which is justified by criminal statistics as well.

Examining the issue of crime on two levels (on the national level and in the neighbourhood) we see the interesting phenomenon of distancing problems. It is a phenomenon that has been known in criminology for a long time and Hungarian surveys also demonstrated that people usually find their

immediate neighbourhood more secure than distant areas or larger regions.[10] In the case of open-ended questions, however, we experienced the opposite. Crime was mentioned further down the list and less frequently as an answer to the question about the whole of the country than at the question about local problems, where it was the third most frequently mentioned problem. In the case of these question the situation is reversed, and is "back in its normal place": much more people found the public security bad concerning the whole country than in their neighbourhood.

The contradiction can be resolved if we take personal involvement into consideration. According to many interviewees the situation concerning crime and public security in the country is very bad and this opinion can be seen in the closed questions in the form of lower grades but the problem itself is not manifest in the immediate neighbourhood but somewhere else, in distant places, so although the situation is bad, it does not mean personal involvement. Thus, when we asked the interviewees to phrase the important problems in answer to the open-ended questions, crime is mentioned much less frequently among the problems because the interviewees are not confronted with it as a real issue. Crime receives more attention among the local problems because it is an important issue and it seems that at this question the interviewees primarily mentioned problems that require some action or help. That is why problems related to unemployment and job creation were in the first place, problems concerning transport (especially the condition of roads) in the second place and crime and public security in the third place. In these issues some measures should be taken, in the case of crime not so much in terms of decreasing it but in terms of prevention as in answer to the concrete question very few said that public security was bad in their neighbourhood.

This mechanism makes us aware that the questions related to crime should be handled with care because the answers we receive depend to a large extent in what context we phrase the question.

Knowledge concerning crime

The frequency of crimes

Regarding the knowledge concerning crime, primarily we did not want to examine the concrete information the interviewees possess but we wanted to know how they evaluate the information they receive about crime and on the basis of what specific information they form their own personal opinions.

10 Korinek, L. (1996): op. cit. p. 295.

The first question in this category referred to the frequency of crime indicating the volume of crime. This question has already been used in earlier surveys and it has proved to be a good indicator of how well-informed the public was. Those who gave a good approximate as an answer were better informed than the others about other questions concerning crime as well[11].

In the present survey we further fine-tuned the question and *we asked for a separate estimate of the number of police investigations and the actually committed crimes*. Through the comparison of the two data this separation makes it possible for us to get a picture of the estimates of latency given by the public. Compared to the results of earlier surveys the most conspicuous change is the increase in the proportion of "don't know answers". While in the two previous surveys one-third of the interviewees could not answer this question now their proportion rose to 48%. This means that nearly half of the people did not even dare to give an estimate of the number of crimes committed in Hungary in 2002. This is interesting especially in the light of the fact the Ministry of the Interior and the police have regularly published the annual criminal statistics in the past 4-5 years and they give an especially great publicity to these data if their tendency is increasing. This, however, is not reflected in the answers given to the question: first, the proportion of the answers even decreased compared to 1997 and 1999 and second, there has been no significant change in the proportion of those interviewees who gave an approximately correct estimate.

Table 2. shows the data summarising the results of the three surveys mentioned above.

Table 2.
The estimates given by the public of the number of crimes committed in a year

the estimates given of the number of crimes	the time of the survey		
	1997	1999	2003
	in the percentage of those who answered the question		
underestimated	52.2	61.1	69.7
a good estimate*	17.5	28.1	23.2
overestimated	30.3	10.8	7.1

* Answers between the half of the actual number and double that.

It is interesting that the proportion of those who underestimated the actual figure increased in the surveys conducted at different times and at present

60% of the interviewees gave an estimate under 100 thousand. People in Budapest are significantly better informed; they gave a good estimate at the highest proportion. People living in villages normally underestimated the number of crimes. The people who mentioned figures higher than the actual usually lived in one of the cities with a county status. There was no significant difference in the answers according to gender. A higher level of schooling, however, increased the possibility of correct answers; there were a significantly higher proportion of correct answers among those with a degree in higher education. Those who have been victimised in the past five years tended to give an overestimate more often although the majority gave an estimate under the actual value in this case as well.

The *estimates of latency given by the public* brought interesting results. 8.4% of the interviewees gave an estimate of the number of cases investigated by the police that was higher than the number of crimes actually committed. It means that they think that the police have carried out investigations in a few cases that later did not turn out to be crimes. But for the majority it is clear that not all the crimes are detected and there are crimes that remain hidden for the authorities. One third of the interviewees estimated latency to be under 25%; according to 50% of them the number of crimes that remain hidden and the number detected by the police are the same and according to one-fifth the number of undetected crimes is double the number in connection with the police start investigating.

Unfortunately about half of the interviewees could not answer the questions about the frequency of crimes so we could not use this method to deduce the latency as estimated by them. But the majority of the interviewees see it well that there is some latency although they usually underestimate it.

The structure of crime

The next group of issues we examined was the frequency of different crimes. More exactly, we wanted to know that according to the interviewees which type of crime is committed the most often (Question K18). The crimes mentioned the most often were the following:
- theft,
- robbery,
- car theft,
- burglary,
- murder,
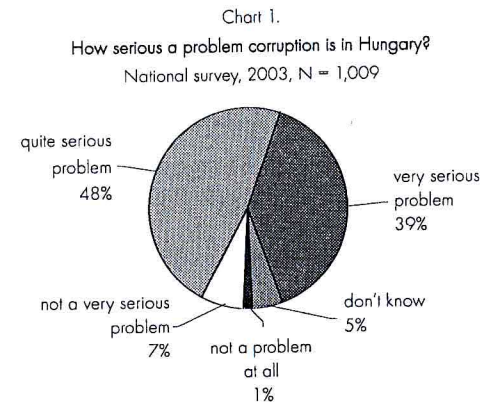- bribery, corruption,
- economic crimes,
- violent crimes,

11 Kó, J.: op. cit. pp. 142–145.; Kerezsi, K. – Finszter, G. – Kó, J. – Gosztonyi, G.: Nagyvárosi bűnözés. Bűnmegelőzés Budapest V., IX. és XXII. kerületében (Urban Crime. Crime prevention in districts V., IX. and XXII. of Budapest). OKRI–Bíbor Kiadó, Budapest–Miskolc, 2003, p. 253.

– vandalism,

– abuse.

The list clearly shows the opinions of the public about crime. There are some who mentioned theft, which is actually the most frequent crime. Many thought robbery and car theft were more frequent although they are few in number compared to the total number of crimes but these are the types of crimes that can cause serious harm to the victims and concern people most. It often happens in the course of public surveys that some of the people do not actually answer the question but in connection with it they mention some other thing that is important for them. That is what happened in this case as well. This phenomenon is even more conspicuous in the case of the next type of crime: thinking that murder is the most frequent crime shows absolute ignorance since it is obvious that a crime that is committed only in a few hundred cases every year cannot be the most frequent. It was mentioned probably because of its serious nature. In the case of violent and serious crimes probably the impact of the media can also be felt because it deals with these cases primarily as they count as sensational. Therefore if one wants to find out which crimes are the most frequent on the basis of the news in the press one will be mistaken.

A lot of people mentioned *bribery and corruption* among the national problems. The fact that this crime appears often at this question as well indicates that many are concerned about its spread. Comparison with the frequency in the official criminal statistics is not reliable in this case because we have to count with an extremely high latency in the case of this crime. Perhaps there are a high number of such cases but the authorities have only inadequate information about the acts that have been committed. Several surveys have highlighted the importance of the problem of corruption, for example the surveys conducted by the Gallup Institute.

"Our survey conducted in 2000 showed that the public regards different forms of behaviour belonging to this topic as corruption to a different extent. Nearly everyone regards it as corruption if officials or politicians tolerate organised crime in exchange for a suitable sum or if people are awarded positions, enterprises are given orders in the public or local government sphere in exchange for a bribe given to the decision-makers. Slightly more than one-fourth of the population considers tips for doctors as corruption and one-fifth of the population thinks tips in general are corruption.

In February 2003, 87% of the adult Hungarian population called corruption a serious problem (according to 39% it is very serious and according to 48% it is quite serious). 7% said it was not a very serious problem and 1% thought it was no problem at all (Chart 1.).

Chart 1.
How serious a problem corruption is in Hungary?
National survey, 2003, N = 1,009

quite serious problem 48%

very serious problem 39%

not a very serious problem 7%

not a problem at all 1%

don't know 5%

There is some difference about how serious a problem corruption is according to people depending on what kind of municipality they live in and which age group they belong to. A higher percentage of people consider it to be a serious problem in the capital than in cities with a county status and in other towns and the lowest percentage is among those who live in villages. As for the difference concerning age groups, those between 50 and 59 think that corruption is a serious problem the most frequently, followed by the age group between 25 and 49, and then those above 60, and people under 25 regard it the least serious. There is no significant difference in the assessment of this problem concerning schooling and between voters of the two big political parties (the Young Democrats' Alliance and the Hungarian Socialist Party).

When comparing the present situation with the situation ten years ago the people in Budapest find no change regarding a simpler or more client-friendly administration of affairs in the public sphere and regarding a higher or a lower level of corruption. The number of those who say that it is easier to find the right official to deal with one's problem is the same as the number of those who say it is more difficult. Although the number of those who say it is more difficult to receive the right treatment now is slightly higher than the number of those who say that it is easier, the difference is within the margin of error. As for our third question, whether it is more difficult or easier to ask a favour of an official now, the difference is within the margin of error again with 22% saying that it is more difficult and 19% saying that it is easier. According to 21% there is no change in this respect. However, there were an especially high proportion of those who could not or did not want to answer this question. Thus, we cannot say that there has been an improvement in this area.

More people think that bribery is necessary in order to get the treatment that you are entitled to have according to law, in Budapest in 2003

compared to 2000, in five out of twelve professions. The suspicion of the necessity of a bribe has increased in the following professions: health care, the private business sector, the customs offices, the MPs and the ministry officials. The proportion of those who think a bribe is necessary has not changed regarding policemen, officials in the tax office and the excise office and regarding the courts; it has increased within the margin of error regarding local government officials and the elected councillors while it has decreased within the margin of error regarding inspectors and teachers. The growth of distrust concerning certain groups is different than the change in the perception of corruption."[12]

The situation concerning economic crimes is similar: latency may be high in this case, too, and the impact of the media may also play a significant role in how these crimes are seen.

On the whole, we can say that the picture the public has of the frequency of the different types of crimes is quite different from the actual data in the official criminal statistics, which can be explained partly, but only partly, with the presumably high number of latent crimes but is clearly due to the impact of the media especially in the case of violent crimes. Those people for whom crime will appear as the multitude of violent crimes or perhaps murders will be afraid of those crimes even if the data do not support this opinion and these fears.

The answers we received for Question K21 confirm what we experienced at the open-ended question referring to the frequency of crimes and the interpretation of these experiences. At this question problems and types of crimes related to the seven crimes listed on our list had to be rated on a scale of five according to how serious problems they are now in Hungary. 1 meant that the issue is not a problem at all and 5 meant that it is a very big problem. Table 3. shows the average values of the answers to this question.

Theft was also in the first place here, based on the exceptionally high average value of the points it received and the opinions of the interviewees

Table 3.

How serious problems the different crimes are

	average points	standard deviation
thefts	4.57	0.74
violent crimes	4.11	0.95
car theft	4.07	0.98
drug abuse	4.06	1.06
organised crime	4.02	1.03
juvenile crime	3.92	0.98
violence within the family	3.6	1.14

were the most uniform in this case, with the smallest deviation. Thus, the public uniformly found theft the most serious problem. This also corresponds to the conclusions that can be drawn from the statistical data. Thefts mean the biggest problem in the Hungarian crime structure concerning their frequency, the number of the people affected and the total value of the damage caused by them as well. However, sometimes even the experts tend to forget about it, regarding the damage of the individual crimes as negligible. But the public opinion is a warning sign: more attention should be paid to these crimes.

The second place of violent crimes on the list and the points they received can be regarded as fully justified since here the issue is not simply the frequency of these crimes but their seriousness and significance; it is a big problem even if only a few of the crimes that endanger life and health are committed.

The high value of the points received by car thefts and the relatively low standard deviation, which indicates a uniform opinion, however, is interesting. Fortunately, in contrast to widespread public opinion, it is not a very frequent crime. Less than 1% of the motor vehicles and the owners are concerned every year. This is a much more favourable figure than the 3% involvement rate in the official statistics. But in view of the unfavourable financial situation of the population of the country, the motor vehicles of a relatively high value are attributed a significance even beyond their value and their loss is experienced as a severe blow by their owner. This is shown by the exceptionally high level of willingness to report these crimes: 83% of the cases are reported to the police. This means that the population regards car thefts as serious problems.

Drug abuse counts as a favourite topic and the high points, above 4.0, it received is mainly due to its topicality although the high deviation indicates that people's opinion is divided on this issue. (We did not ask people about drug trafficking but drug abuse.) This issue is fraught with serious social problems but on the basis of criminal data (there are 2-3,000 registered cases) this crime is not very frequent. Although detection by the police only scratches the surface of this phenomenon, on the basis of the surveys and analyses examining this topic[13] we can say that it is not among the most serious social problems at present. In the past few years it has been in the focus of political debates and received extremely high publicity so people got passionate about this issue, which surely played a part in forming the opinions on this problem.

12 http://www.gallup.hu/Gallup/monitor/kutatas/030318_korr.htm

13 Ritter, Ildikó (ed.): Jelentés a magyarországi kábítószerhelyzetről (A Report on the Situation of Drug Abuse in Hungary). ISM, Budapest, 2003

Giving an opinion on organised crime is quite problematic because although we cannot speak of a high number of officially detected cases it is always said that organised criminal groups are present in Hungary and everyone knows – though mostly from movies – what impact their activity can have.

Violence within the family received the lowest number of points, although with the highest deviation. The opinions of the interviewees differed most about this issue: a quarter of them think it is a very big problem but on the whole the majority did not consider it to be very serious.

International comparison

The interviewees had to place Hungary among the European countries considering the frequency of crimes (Question K19). On the top of list were the countries where the highest number of crimes were committed considering the size of the population. Table 4. contains the answers received.

Table 4.

Where is Hungary among the list of European countries?

	In the percentage of the interviewees
among the first three countries	13.6
among the first ten countries	49.9
around the middle of the list	23.9
among the last ten countries	11.1
among the last three countries	1.5

Based on international data about the number of crimes per 10 thousand inhabitants, Hungary belongs to the most secure countries and is in the lowest third of the list of European countries. Comparison is, however, difficult owing to the differences in the legal systems. In Hungary minor criminal offences are not included in criminal statistics and owing to the lack of official records we do not know their number but our purpose was not to make a professional comparison since most of the interviewees do not even know the Hungarian data. We suppose this question will help us to evaluate the Hungarian situation because those who place Hungary further down the list than the middle have an unfavourable opinion on the criminal situation in the country. The middle of the list means that the situation is neither better not worse than in other places, therefore it is basically acceptable. Those who place Hungary further down the list than the middle of it tend to be more satisfied and they feel that they are in a better situation than the average. This question can also be regarded as a control question of Question K6. The distribution shows a similar picture as well. The proportion of those who are

satisfied is almost exactly the same: 12.6% and 12.8%. By phrasing the question suitably we managed to reduce the number of those insecure about the answer by a half. Here the proportion of those who could not decide whether the situation is better or worse and chose the middle of the list is 23.9%, in contrast to the 51.9% at Question K6. Unfortunately the opinions of those who were undecided moved in a negative direction, increasing the proportion of the dissatisfied from 32.4% to 63.5%. It seems that there are some who are reluctant to express a negative opinion in the case of an open-ended question but if it is not obvious that they give their opinions on the situation in Hungary, it turns out that they are actually dissatisfied with the situation of the country.

Compared to the 1997 survey the opinions became more differentiated; then 60.6% of the people were dissatisfied and now 63.5%. But the proportion of those who are satisfied has significantly increased: in contrast to the 1.4% then, now 12.6% say that the situation is better here than in most of the European countries.

Those who mentioned violent crimes as the most frequent crimes tended to give a worse placement in international comparison.

Fears among the population

How secure the interviewees feel
their places of residence?

First, let us examine how secure the interviewees find the environment they live in (Question K33). We touched on this question partly when we examined the phenomenon of distancing problems. People tend to project their fears of crime to areas that are far from their places of residence. So it is no surprise that tend to find their immediate environment (the city or the village where they live) more secure. This picture of the situation is in harmony with the experience gained in international surveys.

"Concerning public security it is characteristic of every country and it can be regarded as somewhat natural that their residents have a greater sense of security about their own places of residence than about the whole country. This difference is the most conspicuous in Poland and in Hungary: there is a 20% difference between the evaluation based on the experiences gathered in one's own place of residence and the evaluation based on the opinions on the condition of the country as a whole concerning both the work of the police and public security. Propaganda and the media obviously play a part here since it is obvious that the opinions on the condition of the country cannot

contain as many personal experiences as the evaluation of one's own place of residence."[14]

The answers given to our question are shown broken down according to the places of residence in Table 5.

Table 5.
How secure do you find the environment (municapility), where you live?

the type of municipality	average points*	standard deviation
Budapest	3.48	0.96
cities with a county status	3.69	0.94
other towns	3.82	0.98
villages, farms	4.02	0.90
average	3.81	0.96

* The higher points indicate higher security.

The people of Budapest gave the lowest points to their city — their place of residence — and the people living in cities with a county status find their places of residence less secure than the average. The answers were fairly uniform in all the cases, as shown by the low values of deviation.

People living in villages find their places of residence the most secure, which corresponds to the data of criminal statistics, according to which the frequency indicator of crime is about 60% of the national average in municipalities with the population below 5,000. Taking the frequency of latent crimes into consideration modifies this proportion to some extent but the criminal data we measured also show the proportion of victims in 2002 was 30% lower than the national average in villages.

In the next question (K37) we asked the interviewees to give an estimate whether in their places of residence or in other parts of the country are more crimes committed. Only 9% think that they live in a place that is more endangered than the other parts of the country. The majority of them think that their places of residence are more secure than the other municipalities, while the remaining 31% could not decide this question.

Compared to the people living in other municipalities (7-9%) a higher number of people from Budapest (16%) said that they lived in a place with a higher danger of crime. If we look at the statistics, those giving an answer like that were the ones who evaluated the situation "correctly" but only a fraction of the people from Budapest gave this answer, the others do not know or do not feel that according to official statistics in Budapest crime is 1.5 times

14 A közbiztonsággal való elégedettség Közép-Kelet-Európában (Satisfaction with public security in Central-Eastern Europe). The monthly public survey of the Central European Opinion Research Group (CEORG), February 2002, www.tarki.hu

higher than the national average. The fault lies with the mechanism of distancing problems again, coupled probably with the lack of information in this case. We do not know yet whether correct information or the mechanism of distancing problems would prove stronger but we suppose that if people know that in their places of residence more crimes are committed than in other parts of the country they will not say the opposite in a survey. Therefore the majority of people in Budapest probably do not know that they are exposed to a higher danger and if they are not aware of this, they will not prepare for the threat of danger. Although it may be the case that the people in Budapest do not assess the security of their places of residence according to the criminal statistics (this, in itself, must be true) but according to their personal experience. The situation, however, will not change if we take latent crimes into consideration. The people in Budapest mentioned being victimised on nearly twice as many occasions than the people in villages. We can compare the indicators of the data collection and criminal statistics with the help of Table 6.

Table 6.
The frequency of crimes and victimisation in the case of different municipalities, based on the data of 2002

	Budapest	cities with a county status	other cities	villages	average
the proportion of victims within the population according to the data of the survey (%)	17.6	14.5	10.6	8.9	12.0
in proportion of the average	1.47	1.21	0.88	0.74	
the frequency of crimes according to the data of the UPPCS	4.76	4.01	3.34	1.86	3.05
in proportion of the average	1.56	1.32	1.10	0.61	

The two indicators measuring the level of crime show different results concerning the volume of involvement. The data of the public survey show higher values but looking at the inner proportions there is no significant difference between the results of the two methods of measurement. People living in municipalities of different sizes have a similar "share" of the totality of crimes. Consequently, taking latent crimes also into consideration, the proportions do not change to such an extent as to justify the opinions of the interviewees in Budapest. Therefore, we can conclude that the majority of the interviewees in Budapest do not assess the security of their city on the basis of the actual criminal situation. Victimisation experiences have only a minor role in forming these opinions. Although somewhat more of the people (20%) victimised in 2002 said that more crimes were committed in their places of residence than in other parts of the country, the majority (80%) of them also said that their

situation was the same or better than the situation of the people living somewhere else. Thus, the opinions of the interviewees on the level of crime in their places of residence were not determined by the actual situation or their personal experiences. It seems that the mechanism of distancing problems is stronger than personal experiences since even if people are victimised, they still think that they live in a secure place, or at least in a place that is more secure than others.

On the basis of the above, it seems probable that these opinions cannot simply be changed through campaigns to inform the people. In order for the people living in areas more infested with crime to take more care of their personal security and prevention we should find methods that are basically not built on a higher sense of danger.

The security of the place of residence

We examined the opinions related to security on three levels. The first was the national (macro) level, the second the security of the municipality (middle level) and the third was the immediate neighbourhood around the home (micro-level).

On the two levels we examined (macro and middle level) we found that while on the national level most of the interviewees were dissatisfied, coming nearer the personal living space we see that the opinions on the level of the municipality are much more favourable. This mechanism is recognisable as we go nearer but the size of the municipality basically influences the extent of the differences in the opinions.

On the whole there was no significant difference between the answers given to Question K33 (The security of the municipality) and Question K46 (The security of the immediate neighbourhood). The people living in smaller municipalities (villages, towns) make no distinction between their place of residence and their immediate neighbourhood. The people living in these places find no difference between the security of the municipality and the security of their neighbourhood. There is some difference, however, in the case of people living in cities and in Budapest; in their cases we received different answers for the questions regarding the micro and the middle level. Interestingly, differences appear both in the direction of better and worse opinions. In the case of the majority, the neighbourhood counts as more secure (K46) than the whole of the city. So we received the results we expected on the basis of earlier surveys but there were some people who gave a worse rating for the neighbourhood.

While in the case of questions about the whole of the municipalities, the mechanism of distancing problems operate dominantly and the interviewees

consider the security of their neighbourhood better than the situation on the national level and the situation that can be experienced in other municipalities, in the case of the immediate neighbourhood, on the micro level a more realistic evaluation appears as well: people suffering such harms – mainly on the basis of earlier victimisation experiences – gave a more unfavourable evaluation.

Table 7.
The security of the neighbourhood

the type of municipality	victimisation in the past one and a half years	the evaluation of security
Budapest	has been victimised	3.31
	has not been victimised	3.53
cities with a county status	has been victimised	3.42
	has not been victimised	3.65
other towns	has been victimised	3.53
	has not been victimised	3.80
villages	has been victimised	3.71
	has not been victimised	4.02
total	has been victimised	3.49
	has not been victimised	3.81

It is interesting that personal experiences finally overcome the mechanism of distancing problems but only on the micro level. The victims, it seems, do not project their personal experiences to the whole of the municipality. Their victimisation does not make them think that their places of residence are less secure.

The estimation of personal risk

We approached fear of being victimised and the estimated possibility of victimisation in two steps. First we examined how frequently the possibility of victimisation appears in the thinking of the interviewees. We separated the examination of the "expectations" concerning crimes against property and violent crimes because these two groups of crimes can be characterised by basically different characteristics. We tried to select a crime from crimes against property that is experienced by the interviewees as a major harm and that can be examined in everyone's case. In the examination of the different types of crimes it was noticeable that people attribute a great significance to two crimes against property: car theft and burglary. Since not everyone has a car we chose burglary as the indicator of opinions on crimes against property.

Question K42 was the following: "How often do you think of the possibility of your home being burgled?" The distribution of the answers given to the question is shown by Table 8.

The majority of the interviewees (64.8%) never or rarely think of this possibility. But 15.2% of the interviewees often or very often think of such things. The bigger the municipality one lives in the more often one thinks of the possibility of being burgled. Women think of such things significantly more often than men. Those who lost their spouses for some reason and live alone now, think of the possibility of being burgled much more often than single people. But those with a higher income and those in full time employment are less afraid of such an incident. Being victimised in the past one and a half years increases the frequency of thoughts of being burgled.

The interviewees less often think of the possibility of a *violent crime* but people living in Budapest and in smaller towns more often think about it. Women, those who have been victimised and those with a lower level of schooling think about the possibility of physical harm significantly more often. Married people, on the other hand have such thoughts more rarely.

We examined personal risk management and the security of the place of residence together as well (Question K48). First, we asked whether the interviewees thought it possible that they would be assaulted in the vicinity of their homes in the street. 26.7% of the interviewees thought so. This is a quite high proportion, especially if we take it into consideration that only 8.5% found their immediate neighbourhood insecure; that violent crimes and vandalism make up approximately 7% of all crimes detected[15] and that we registered a similar proportion among crimes that remained hidden. Approximately 1,000 of the interviewees find their places of residence secure although they think an assault or physical abuse in the street possible. At the same time, approximately 40% of those who do not find their neighbourhood secure are still not afraid of being assaulted in the street. Thus, it seems that *the concept of security of the public is quite relative.* There are some whose sense of security is not influenced by certain crimes and there are some who do not feel secure but are not directly afraid of crimes.

Table 8.

"How often do you think of the possibility of your home being burgled?"

frequency	in the percentage of the interviewees
1 never	31.9
2	32.9
3	19.4
4	9.1
5 very often	6.1
no answer	0.5

The interviewees find assault in the street clearly an urban phenomenon. In Budapest and cities with a county status a significantly higher number of people consider an event like this possible. Young people and women feel endangered in a somewhat higher proportion but the differences according to age are not significant. Victimisation, however, basically influences the opinions on assault and the shorter time has passed since the victimisation the more of them think that such an event can happen to them. 39.4% of those who were victimised in 2002 thought it possible that they would be assaulted in the street but only 22% of those who have not been victims of crimes in the past five years answered "yes" to this question.

Far fewer people thought it possible for an assault to happen in the area between the home and the street: 10% of the interviewees gave such an answer (Question K48.2). Fear of such events is also related to cities: a significantly higher number of people are afraid of such incidents in Budapest and in other cities than in smaller towns and villages. The proportion of women who are afraid of these events is twice as high as the proportion of men; and the elderly, especially those above 60, feel endangered in areas considered to be secure by the majority.

In the case of the question about *burglary* a quite high percentage of the interviewees thought it possible for such an event to happen. 47.6% of the interviewees are afraid that their homes may be burgled but the actual danger is much smaller than that. According to UPPCS data, burglaries make up about 14% of all crimes and taking all the other crimes into consideration, 3% of the population are involved in burglary. This means that the number of people who are afraid of this crime is much higher than the number of those who are endangered. The way the question is phrased and its concreteness basically influence the answers received. The phrasing of this question was too general and theoretical because at a question asked later (K56.7), where the probability of this event had to be estimated concerning the next one year, the proportion of those who were actually afraid of burglary dwindled to less than a half and was only around 20%. The people who gave a negative answer consequently gave answers indicating a low probability to the control question as well.

Overestimating personal risk is usually characteristic of people: the estimate they give for the possibility of being victimised is much higher than the proportion of crimes that have actually happened or can be expected to happen in all categories of crimes. Earlier surveys also brought similar results[16].

15 Tájékoztató az Egységes Rendőrségi és Ügyészségi Bűnügyi Statisztika adataiból (Extracts from the data of the Unified Police and Prosecution Crime Statistics). Legfőbb Ügyészség Számítástechnika-alkalmazási és Információs Főosztálya, Budapest, 2003

16 Ugljesa, Zvekic – Kertész, I.: Bűncselekmények áldozatai a rendszerváltás országaiban. Nemzetközi vizsgálat eredményei (Victims of Crimes in the Countries of Transition. The Results of an International Survey). UNICRI–BM Kiadó, Róma–Budapest, 2000; Korinek, L. (1996): op. cit.; Kó, J.: Vagyon elleni bűncselekményt elkövetők szociológiai vizsgálata (A Sociological Survey of the Perpetrators of Crimes Against Property). Kriminológiai és Kriminalisztikai Tanulmányok, 34. OKKrI, Budapest, 1996, pp. 133–158.

The most important lesson to be learnt from the K48 question group is that the questions phrased in a general way about the estimates on victimisation result in high proportions and in estimates that are higher than the actually existing anxieties.

This means that the following questions do not yield suitable results:

– is it possible that you will become the victim of a crime in the future and in the near future?

– how probable do you think it is that a crime will be committed against you?

Questions about the probability of victimisation yield suitable results if they specifically refer to a crime that the interviewees know well and to a definite, not too distant period of time.

The connection between personal risk assessment and fears cannot be debated but it is not sure that the expectations concerning crimes will induce fears especially in the case of minor crimes against property.

In the questionnaire we examined the expectations concerning crimes in detail in the case of 19 types of crimes. The interviewees had to assess on a scale of five how probable they thought that the crimes on the list could happen to them in the following 12 months ("1" means that they do not think it probable at all and "5" means that it may happen very easily). The average points calculated on the basis of the answers are shown on Table 9.

The average points are never higher than three, which shows that the majority of people do not think it probable that these events will happen to them in the next year. The presence of serious problems concerning *transport* is indicated by the first position of road accidents resulting in personal injury; this was the incident that the interviewees found the most probable. The incidents in the second and third place belonged to questions that we asked mainly as control questions. The relatively high probability attributed to *overcharging* shows the frequency of this incident. Attacks by dogs have a prominent place on the list probably owing to the impact of the media; a few recent incidents have received a lot of publicity.

Car theft is on the top of the list of "classical" crimes again. Several earlier surveys showed that events related to motor vehicles concern people much more than their actual role and importance and in view of the quite low latency of this crime – more than four-fifth of the cases are reported to the police – the number of cases in criminal statistics does not justify these expectations.

The position of *thefts,* considering that they are the most frequent among the crimes against property, fulfils the expectations. It is interesting to note, however, that *violent* crimes received only a lower rating of probability. This suggests that although the public tends to overestimate these incidents (many

Table 9.

Personal risk assessment

How probable do you think that it can happen to you that ...	the number of answers	average points	standard deviation
... you will be the victim of a road accident resulting in personal injury?	9,768	2.91	1.31
... you will be overcharged in a shop or in a restaurant?	9,808	2.79	1.38
... you will be attacked or bitten by a dog?	9,866	2.76	1.27
... your car or other motor vehicle will be stolen? (We asked only owners of motor vehicles this question.)	5,413	2.73	1.38
... your wallet or money will be stolen?	9,848	2.72	1.33
... some of your other valuables will be stolen?	9,839	2.66	1.26
... your home will be burgled?	9,822	2.45	1.24
... your child will suffer some serious harm in school? (Only if the interviewee has a child who goes to school.)	4,433	2.29	1.33
... you will be disturbed by vandalism?	9,875	2.28	1.29
... some of your valuables and properties will be damaged?	9,825	2.20	1.20
... you will be the victim of physical assault and will be lightly injured?	9,789	1.93	1.10
... you will be the victim of defamation?	9,755	1.76	1.09
... you will be the victim of physical assault and will be seriously injured?	9,750	1.74	1.03
... you will be harassed or molested?	9,815	1.74	1.06
... you will be raped? (only of women)	5,296	1.43	0.86
... there will be an attempt on your life?	9,783	1.40	0.83
... you will be the victim of a terrorist attack?	9,768	1.26	0.69
... you will be sexually harassed by your boss or a colleague at work? (only of women)	5,252	1.23	0.69
... you will be injured in a serious argument with a member of your family?	9,883	1.19	0.63

people mentioned violent crimes among the most frequent crimes as well) nevertheless they assess the situation quite realistically concerning dangers. This, however, calls our attention to the fact that the personal assessments of risks and the opinions on the probability of crimes cannot be used to measure fear. People are most afraid of crimes committed against persons but in the case of these, especially in the case of serious crimes, there is a certain preventive mechanism as well. Although we are afraid that someone carries out an attempt on our lives we still hope that it will never take place. The dividing line between fear and anxiety is quite thin in this case but this does not mean that we can categorise fears concerning the protection of life and health purely as anxiety.

This preventive mechanism can serve as an explanation for the low probability attributed to crimes against life and terrorist acts.

It is interesting to examine the acts at the bottom of the list as well. It is worth noting that a *family argument* with a personal injury proved to be the least probable. The sense of the security of the home is present although a significant percentage of violent crimes are committed among people who

know each other, often by family members. The possibility of being endangered at home is hardly noticeable in the public opinion. Violence within the family, which is becoming a current issue nowadays, remained hidden here and there was no difference between the assessment of this crime by men and women. Women attributed a higher probability to an attack by a dog, to harassment and to the theft of their wallets.

There is no significant difference between the evaluations regarding marital status with the exception of those who are divorced but still share a flat with a spouse who considered nearly all these incidents significantly more probable. It is interesting that the supportive role of the family does not prevail in the estimations on victimisation; people living in families consisting of more than three people consider the possibility of most crimes even higher.

People who have been on a holiday abroad in the past two years considered the possibility of all the incidents — except for family quarrels — higher than the others.

Those with a degree in higher education find the possibility of crimes against property smaller than the people with a lower level of schooling.

The place of residence influenced the estimates on victimisation. The bigger the municipality the interviewees lived in the more probable they thought these incidents would occur. People from Budapest thought the occurrence of most crimes the most probable. The only exception is crime against life; people living in county seats found it the most probable. People living in smaller towns feel less endangered and people living in villages attribute a significantly lower possibility to the occurrence of crimes.

Besides the average values of probability it is worth examining the proportion of people giving high and low possibilities (Table 10.).

Comparing the results of our survey with the values registered in the two earlier public surveys conducted by the Gallup Institute we get practically the same picture. The results can be compared in the case of physical abuse, although it is not the same as the concept of violent crimes used by the Gallup Institute and the value we measured is probably lower because the category used by Gallup is wider. In the case of car theft, our result is nearer the value they received earlier and in the case of burglary our results were somewhat smaller but they are probably within the confidence interval of the Gallup survey so the results can be considered practically the same.

Fear of crime

In this group of questions we asked questions about the extent fear of crime influences the lifestyles of the interviewees and where they go out; whether

Table 10.
"How probable do you think the following incidents are?"

	not probable (%)	probable on average (%)	probable (%)
you will be the victim of a road accident resulting in personal injury	42.3	25.3	32.4
you will be overcharged in a shop or in a restaurant	38.0	31.0	31
you will be attacked or bitten by a dog	43.5	26.6	29.9
your car or other motor vehicle will be stolen	44.6	27.4	28.0
your wallet or money will be stolen	41.5	31.4	27.1
some of your other valuables will be stolen	46.4	29.1	24.5
your home will be burgled	53.7	27.0	19.3
your child will suffer some serious harm in school	59.7	21.1	19.2
you will be disturbed by vandalism	61.0	28.8	18.2
some of your valuables and properties will be damaged	63.6	21.6	14.8
you will be the victim of physical assault and will be lightly injured	73.0	17.5	9.5
you will be the victim of defamation	77.5	13.9	8.7
you will be the victim of physical assault and will be seriously injured	79.1	12.7	8.2
you will be harassed or molested	79.4	13.5	7.1
you will be raped	88.4	7.7	3.9
there will be an attempt on your life	89.4	7.1	3.5
you will be the victim of a terrorist attack	93.2	4.5	3.2
you will be sexually harassed by your boss or a colleague at work	93.4	4.2	2.4
you will be injured in a serious argument with a member of your family	94.8	3.1	2.1

Chart 2.
The Possibility of Crimes Happening in the next 12 months
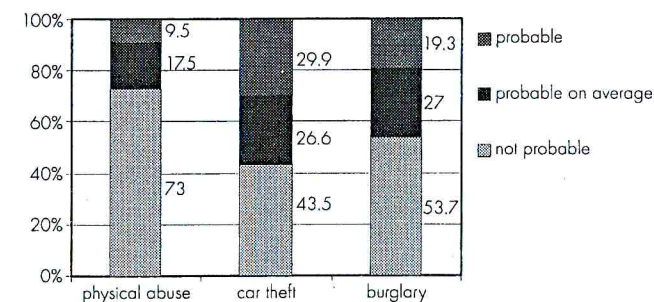
they feel fear during their everyday activities and whether they are limited by fear in the free movement in their neighbourhood.

Let us first examine the fears at night. The question was the following: "Independently of whether you go out after dark, is there a place in your neighbourhood where you would not like to go after dark because of your fear of crime?" (K50).

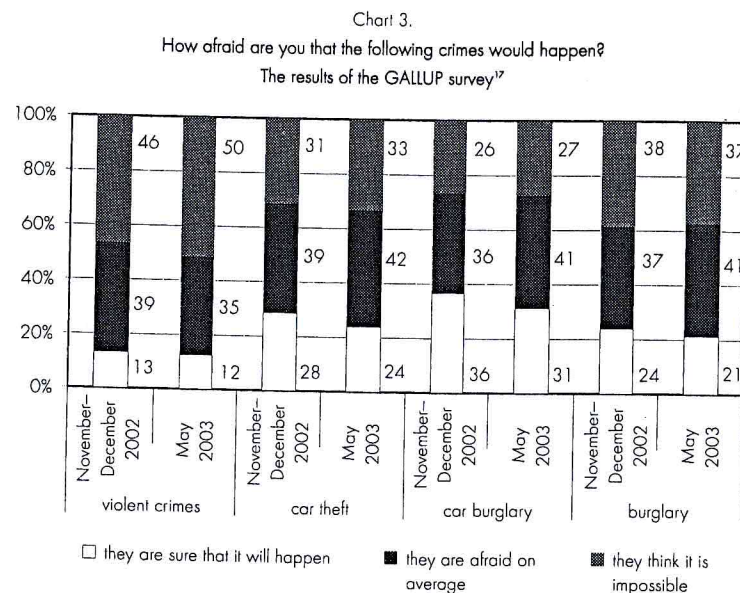The distribution of the answers is shown in Table 11.

Chart 3.
How afraid are you that the following crimes would happen?
The results of the GALLUP survey[17]

| | they are sure that it will happen | | they are afraid on average | | they think it is impossible |

Table 11.
Is there a place that you avoid because of your fear of crime?

	at night	during the day
	in the percentage of the interviewees	
don't know, didn't answer	3.24	1.90
they are afraid everywhere, they don't go anywhere	4.44	0.58
there are several places where they don't or wouldn't go to	15.85	6.70
they don't go to a certain place	15.83	9.13
there is no place where they would be afraid to go to	60.64	81.53
total	100.0	100.0

60.6% of the interviewees find their places of residence perfectly secure even at night. This figure is 73% in villages, while only 48% of the people living in Budapest find their places of residence secure at night. While men are less afraid at night in their neighbourhood, the overwhelming majority (88.5%) of those who said "they are afraid everywhere, they don't go anywhere" were women. Earlier victimisation experiences influence the sense of security at night negatively. A significantly higher number of those who have been victims of crimes in the past one and half years would avoid certain places,

17 The Gallup Organization – Budapest 2004. www.gallup.hu

independently of whether the crimes committed against them took place at night or during the day.

The interviewees find their places of residence more secure during the day. 81.5% of them would not be afraid to go anywhere in the neighbourhood then. Fears during the day are influenced by the same factors as fears at night. Men are less afraid during the day as well and the interviewees find the smaller municipalities more secure.

The characteristic feature of the fear of crime that we tend to be more afraid at night was obvious in this case, too. Although the interviewees themselves said that 60% of the crimes were committed against them during the day, 14% in the evening and only 24.7% at night, much more of them are afraid of crime at night.

Certain paradoxical fears seem to be lasting and come up in nearly every victimological survey. Earlier Hungarian and international surveys all prove that some of the fears of crime appear independently of other factors. It is possible that the fears that regularly come up in them are fundamental parts of human behaviour.

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SZILVESZTER DUNAVÖLGYI

A Public Survey on Public Security and on the Police

Introduction

A democratic state governed by the rule of law naturally relies on the opinion of the public in several areas of social life. It takes the different opinions of different interest groups into consideration. It has developed various techniques of probing in order to be able to measure the balance of power. Public surveys regularly and increasingly more exactly report on the political behaviour of smaller and larger communities, the qualification of government institutions and on the public perception of their operation. Democratic institutions rely on the public opinion. There are some clearly recognisable reasons for these efforts. These are the following:

- The *impact of the market* can be felt in the way we define political and administrational decisions as a kind of service, accepting the fact that society judges the standard of these services, shows huge demand, or on the contrary, rejects the supply of the authorities and bureaucracy.
- The *operation of democratic institutions* is based on choices and evaluation; therefore the conscious development of political programs and the theory of government cannot do without a prognosis of the choices and evaluations, the main instrument of which are public surveys.
- The success of *natural sciences*, which was attributed to their *exact nature*, prompted social sciences to adopt quantitative methods in ever widening circles. Statistical evaluation became the mathematics of human sciences.
- The revolution of *information technology, communication and computers* makes surveys possible in such volume and at such frequency that would not have been possible earlier.

The world of the law, the rule of norms held out against these techniques for a long time since the law does not ask questions but gives orders to society. However, there has been a noticeable breakthrough since the 1960s in three directions:

- Measuring the expected impact of the planned new legislation on society and studying law-abiding behaviour was able to add to the efficiency of the law.[1]

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1 In the Hungarian literature, see Sajó, András: Jogkövetés és társadalmi magatartás (Law-abiding and Social Behaviour). Budapest, 1980

- Among the sciences dealing with crime, criminology, which is based on statistics, found the questioning of victims the most suitable method to evaluate latency.[2]
- The law on public administration attributed an increasing importance to the science of organisation and the manager techniques developed in the sphere of enterprises that urged profitability, the satisfaction of the producers and the consumers as well as the development of quality. The office started to behave as a factory, regarded its clients as customers and relied on the public opinion in evaluating its own work.[3]

The new method has to go through a victorious and a critical stage. The initial spectacular successes may result in a conviction that there is a methodological revolution going on and we have acquired an instrument that works as a general formula and erases all problems. As it is not the case, disillusionment and the devaluation of the method follow inevitably. (Taking an example from criminology, the results of latency research promised that a criminal policy based on the real criminal situation can significantly increase efficiency. Practice, however, hardly changed anything. Disappointment is indicated by the view that "the research into the causes should be banned".) In order to get over these extremes it is necessary to authenticate the instrument of measure and to clarify what can be measured with it.

As for the instrument, the question is not only whether the sample taken from the population is representative but also whether the interviewees are competent to answer the questions they are asked. There are two extreme views here. According to one of them the masses can never be clever. Therefore either the interviewer is not really curious to know the interviewees' opinion but wants to influence their opinion artificially through his or her questions or he or she accepts the suggestions of the public and will make stupid decisions hoping to get the support of the majority. There are some in whose interpretation modern communication opportunities cause people to become victims of political manipulation and it is the responsibility of the intelligentsia to expose demagogy. (This phenomenon was predicted by Julien Benda in his famous essay entitled "The Treason of the Intellectuals"[4].) According to other views, the masses assume power and manipulate political factors, thereby discarding every sober professional consideration in an

attempt to acquire more votes. Therefore the governments do not build the future instead they are just improvising for short-term goals.[5]

The interviewees are either stupid or wise depending on what questions they have to answer. If the questions can be answered relying on one's experience of everyday life, we will get so clever answers that even experts could not give because no matter how old they are they do not have so much experience as there is in a sample of thousand people, independently of the way the people in the sample are selected. On the other hand, if the answer requires special professional skills, it is no use turning to lay people, however many of them there may be. (That is why there is no point in deciding on the truth of scientific theses by a referendum or in debating the correctness of a criminal judgement with this method.)

Considering our example about the research of latency again, its success lay in the fact that it examined how burdened the public were by crimes, together with their sense of security and their opinion on the organisations that are supposed to protect the law. The questions asked those people about concrete experiences that they can talk about the most authentically, considering even the fact that these impressions fade with the passing of time. The statements about hidden crime seemed to be suitable to draw conclusions from concerning legislation, public administration, the administration of justice and politics. The conclusions include the following:

- Latency examinations pointed out those moral reserves of society that made it possible to transform penal law traditionally built on retribution and revenge and to integrate alternative punishments into penal material law.
- Public surveys proved the values of the penal procedure with respect to the constitutional state therefore the reforms in procedures brought the strengthening of guarantees everywhere. In Europe the practice of the European Court of Human Rights contributed to it significantly, whose decision drew a lot from the humanistic convictions of the citizens of the EU. (People do not wish to give up their freedom in exchange for security.)
- The selective working methods of the law enforcement organs and the prejudices distorting police operations can be identified from the criticism of the public. The organisational causes why the police are slow to react and why they are not easily accessible were revealed. All the important police reforms in Europe relied on the public opinion about the police. One

2 Korinek, László: Rejtett bűnözés (Hidden Crime). KJK, Budapest, 1988, pp. 41–45.
3 Király, László György: Teljesítménymérés és -értékelés a közigazgatásban (Measuring and Evaluating Performance in Public Administration). Vezetéstudomány, 7–8/1999.
4 Julien Benda: Az írástudók árulása (The Treason of the Intellectuals). Fekete Sas Kiadó, 1997

5 "Executive power has always been like that when exercised directly by the masses: omnipotent and transitory. That is why it does not build anything, although it has great opportunities and great powers. And in our age this type of person will make the decisions." José Ortega y Gasset: A tömegek lázadása (The Revolt of the Masses). Nagy Világ, Budapest, 2003, p. 77.

of the declared aims of the reforms was to meet the expectations of the community about the police.

– The reactions from political sphere were the slowest and they were full of contradictions. Although the public would like to see the end of the situation in which public security is at the mercy of power struggles this expectation has not really been fulfilled yet but the increasing responsibility of the governments is proved by the bills and other documents that were supported by the opposition in Parliament, too.[6]

The processes outlined above cover nearly forty years (In the United States they started to interview victims in 1972 and this system was introduced in Britain in 1982, while in Germany and France, similarly to other Western-European regions, there have been regular public surveys on subjective security and on public opinion on law enforcement. The UN started to prepare worldwide comparative analyses in 1989.)[7]

We should ask the question whether these results have made the governmental activities of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Justice wiser, whether the performance of the civil right organisation has improved and whether the rich countries have a criminal policy that is characteristic of constitutional democracies, built on common values and having a far-sighted vision.

Zero tolerance and variations of criminal policy

László Korinek pointed out that the public opinion on public security hardly changes over a longer period of time although the socio-political, legal and criminal environment has undergone radical transformations.[8] A similar observations can be made on the profile of criminal policy followed in the different countries. Traditions and the different approaches that are rooted in the historic past have a strong effect in this case as well.

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6 This evaluation is proved by the developments that took place in French legislation after the turn of the millennium. For instance, in 2002 the National Assembly dealt with public security in three decrees. The law passed on 15 May 2002 made provisions for the creation of a Public Security Council with the President of the Republic as its president and the ministers concerned as its members (2002-890. decree). On 17 July 2002 a law was passed on the County Crime Prevention Conference (la Conférence départementale de sécurité), whose two presidents are the Prefect and the Chief Prosecutor of the county (2002-999. decree). On 29 August 2002 the Public Security Programme for the period until 2007 was approved at the highest source of law (2002-1094. decree).

7 Ugljesa Zvekic – Kertész, Imre: Bűncselekmények áldozatai a rendszerváltás országaiban. Nemzetközi vizsgálat eredményei (Victims of Crimes in the Countries of Transition. The Results of an International Survey). UNICRI–BM Kiadó, Róma–Budapest, 2000

8 Korinek, László: Félelem a bűnözéstől (Fear of Crime). KJK, Budapest, 1995, p. 172.

Zero tolerance

This strategy of the fight against crime has become famous all over the world and has become very popular, first of all among the law-abiding citizens of cities, who hoped to get back the security they had lost through this movement. There was a well-established need for security in society. The violence that flooded American cities, with illegal drug trafficking in the background in nearly all of the cases, grew to unbearable proportions. The fact that this strategy was built on calculated communication added to its popularity. The police reports transmitted an easily decipherable code to the middle classes: we are strict for you, criminals deserve no mercy, crime can be detected, the offender is personally and alone responsible for the crime, these wicked people has to be ruled over with an iron fist. The weak and helpless citizens need protection and therefore they support the police with their tax, in exchange for which they can rightly expect protection.

First, the strategy met with great success in the professional circles of the police as well because this vision supposed a significant rise in the budgetary funds given to the police and a rise in the staff nearly by double. The policing experts, however, soon became disillusioned with this ideal because according to the principle of zero tolerance the only standard by which the work of the police is measured is the statistics concerning the number of police actions carried out. As a direct consequence of it, a significant proportion of the district police chiefs in American metropolises were relieved of their position. Zero tolerance meant the loss of professional prestige in law enforcement. Competence and the principle of cooperative management were replaced with helplessness against hectic management decisions, insecurity of livelihood and a coercion to perform, which resulted in infringements of the law. (In the professional literature we can read about brutally tortured victims and ones who were riddled with bullets by mistake.)[9]

The crusade against crime was built on certain *presuppositions*. These are the following:

– The fight against crime is a total war. The phenomena of internationally organised crime and especially the operation of terrorist networks can prove this hypothesis. The turn came about when the old world order of two poles came to an end and fight against crime became the number one problem of the Earth.

– There is a sharp dividing line between the good and the bad in society. Thus, there is a frontline, which is essential for a war.

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9 Maurice Cusson: Qu'est-ce que la sécurité Intérieure? Montreal, 1999 (Manusript.)

– The bad can be easily detected and revealed (the theory of the soft target). We have to start punishing the bad as early as possible and a draconian punishment has to be imposed on very slight crimes as well.

– The results of the war on crime can be measured by statistical figures. Like in the case of good war reports, it is necessary to report on sweeping victories every day. Zero tolerance is the friend of the media; the media is an ardent supporter of zero tolerance.

The conclusions:

– The guarantees provided by the rule of law are to be demolished. In the jungle the laws of the jungle prevail.

– Prejudices help to recognise the visible enemy, therefore the hunt for those who have been labelled as criminals strengthens prejudices.

– As a consequence of the draconic punishments, the prison population is at an all-time high. (It is many times as much as in the developed European region.)

– Statistics hides the actual situation about crime instead of revealing it and measuring performance on the basis of statistics destroys the professional values of law enforcement.

– Crime does not cease to exist, instead, it will shift to the less affluent strata of society and there is increasing helplessness against serious crimes.

– Deficient professionalism decreases the prestige of policing in society, crime committed by police is on the rise and misuse of power is increasingly frequent.

Zero tolerance in Europe

According to the European concept of a state under the rule of the law, the authority of the police derives from the rule and the power of the state and therefore the whole activity of the police comes under the public law.[10] On the one hand, it means limiting interventions to cases defined by the material law of policing and on the other, it sets certain limits on the form of actions by rules

10 In the last World Congress of Criminology Wesley Skogan in his lecture presented the model of the so-called intelligence driven policing. This method involves the community in the process of setting the local priorities concerning public security and making the policemen giving an account of their work. The public knows more about the local conditions therefore often it sets different priorities and it can provide information to the police. The main thing is that effective policing requires continuous research and development. Policing is an industry that has to know more about its consumers and about the quality of the product it tries to sell to them. At the same time, Skogan emphasises that the police continue to have responsibility in maintaining the integrity of the law within society. This means that the police behave according to the constitution, the laws, court rulings and their own internal regulations. This is important because we give strong powers to the police and also because according to research, unlawful police actions undermine efficiency. For example, in the Nazi Germany the police had to be "deprofessionalised" before it became a part of the oppressive system. The professional police were too committed to protect constitutional order. Manuscipt, 2004.

of guarantee. The ethical recommendation of the Ministerial Committee of the Council of Europe made on 19 September 2001 strengthens this interpretation of policing concerning European police forces.

Fight against crime is not a war because there is no enemy that can be defined in advance, there is no front line, there is no obligation to victory and the principle of "the end justifies the means" is not acceptable. Policing and military activities cannot be mixed. Policing is a profession that requires the performance of activities and duties professionally and lawfully. The guarantees protect the accused as well because there are no other guarantees of acquiring information in criminal law that would be suitable for determining the truth. There principles are the most valuable traditions of the European Legal Culture, which are endangered by zero tolerance. The new crusades after 11 September 2001 weakened the above mentioned values characteristic of the constitutional state instead of terrorism.

Protecting the constitutional state is not just an ethical issue but it is an imperative of rational thinking and practicability. In Europe the instruments of the constitutional state were suitable to create a significantly higher level of public security than in the American continent. The spread of crime that was observable from the 1960s onwards was not caused by the weakness of the penal power but by a decline in the ability of society to create values in the area of spiritual goods. As a result of welfare programs, as well as solidarity and tolerance, this rise stopped by the middle of 1990s. Nowadays European integration is making headway in the direction of creating a uniform criminal policy that is characterised by a synthesis of repressive and preventive elements. In order to understand this tendency of development better, it is worth reviewing the characteristics of the two kinds of criminal policy.

The two concepts of criminal policy

There are two ways of creating and protecting public security, one can be called preventive, the other repressive.

The public security strategy of *preventive criminal policy*[11] can be characterised by the following:

- It focuses its attention on the offences that have not been committed yet, it tries to identify the dangerous places, the risky activities and the personality traits that show a tendency for deviance. It regards public security as a collective product of society, in which the penal power of the state has the local governments, the cooperation of civil communities, the services of the market and individual self-defence as its partners.

- It supports the activities of the positive control mechanisms of society (economy, education, culture, science, etc.) aimed at creating values in the direction of decreasing the number of dangerous places, reducing the risks and helping the development of valuable human qualities.

- With the methods of solidarity and the creation of chances it makes efforts to make participation in the creation and sharing of new values open for every member of society.

- It recognises the limits to the efficiency of the use of force by the police and the use of criminal punishments in dealing with the offences, therefore it restricts their use to dangers that cannot be averted in any other way (the principle of minimal use of force) and criminal punishments are really used as "closing stones".

- It puts the double measure of legality and efficiency in front of law enforcement and administration of criminal justice, therefore it does not

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11 In view of the nature of our topic, we discuss public security strategy as part of criminal policy. There are some people who can demonstrate a marked difference between the two concepts. According to this, public security strategy encompasses the whole arsenal of management instruments to deal with the dangers resulting from unlawful human behaviour and as such, it is really a management instrument that belongs to the competence of executive power (perhaps the municipalities). Criminal policy, in contrast to this, is the totality of the penal policy answers that the organs of the administration of justice give to breaches of the law and the local government has only limited powers in connection with this. The main workshop of criminal policy is the administration of justice and the executive power can take part in forming it only indirectly, with the right of initiating new legislation. Finszter, Géza: Közbiztonsági stratégia, kriminálpolitika, rendőrség (Public Security Strategy, Criminal Policy, Police). Belügyi Szemle, 6/1995, p. 13.

The governments do not usually share this view, on the contrary: they regard themselves as the only authentic representatives of criminal policy. (They use this to justify the centralisation of policing competences, the subordination of the prosecution office to the government and the establishment of legal institutions that limit the opportunities of the courts for making their own considerations. Moreover, they use the exclusive responsibility of the government for criminal policy as the justification for the piece of constitutional legislation according to which the actual limit to the competence of the President of the Republic to exercise the prerogative of pardoning is the countersignature of the Minister of Justice. We know that the latter was used to veto the pardon exercised by the President in a concrete case.)

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accept the infringement of constitutional rights in the pursuit of efficiency. It does not intend to limit the scope of guarantees concerning police procedures but through the modernisation of policing and the administration of justice it is committed to seeing them prevail to the full extent. It is convinced that the simplification and acceleration of procedures can only be successful in this way.

- It seeks the opportunities and the ways to repair the damage caused by crimes and in order for this it increases the participation of the state in helping the victims; those who suffered damage. It extends the procedural competences of the victims, while at the same time not loosening the guarantees that protect the accused. It does not regard the security of the citizens as an inalienable right but as the realisation of a public goal that democratic governments must make efforts to achieve. Restoring damage therefore does not mean assuming responsibility for the infringement of the right for security guaranteed by the state (as it turned out in the concrete case, the state, against its promise, could not protect its citizens from the criminal attack) but it is a manifestation of solidarity in society.

- It espouses the restorative (restoring) forms of the administration of justice, it initiates a wider selection of alternative punishments, it creates the material bases for limiting the use of imprisonment on the narrowest possible circle of offenders and for administrating it in a more humane way.

- It designs and carries out the modernisation of policing as part of the modernisation of public administration. It improves the inner division of labour within the police forces, ensures the harmonisation of the double principle of centralisation and decentralisation with the professional requirements, it renews the right of policing and regards it as compulsory for itself, too. (It raises the awareness that the police are controlled not by the government but by the law.) It finances technical development and a high level of training for the staff. Through modernisation it intends to restore the lost (or never found) professionalism of policing.

It includes the above goals in a long-term (5-10 year) strategy, for which it enlists the support of all the constitutional political factors and the public. By creating a political consensus it withdraws the issue of public security from the area of the struggles of political parties, thereby preventing criminal law from becoming an instrument of political conflicts and preventing political life from becoming infested with crime. It strives for legislation encompassing the tasks of the public security strategy to be performed by the state, the competences needed for that, the organisational forms and the budgetary conditions of implementation.

The main characteristics of *the repressive strategy* are the following:

- It focuses its attention on the crimes that have been committed. Therefore it aims at creating all the conditions necessary for the state to be able to carry out the punishments.
- As for public security, it maintains that the quality of it basically depends on the efficiency of law enforcement. It centralises the policing powers, assigns a secondary role to the non-authoritarian instruments in the protection of local public security, enlists the civil forms of collective self-defence to give moral support for the rigour of the state and subordinates security enterprises wholly to the operation of the market.
- It regards economy, culture, science and religion as the world of individual values and free initiatives, where the community that involves the values and the individual responsibility that respects these values have a crucial role.
- It makes the extent of the social care provided for people increasingly dependent on their participation in the production of values in society instead of their needs.
- It does not believe in the crime prevention effects of positive controls, on the contrary: it emphasises that these areas are often the number one, inexhaustible sources of crime and it would be useful to have them under strict state control (economic crime, fight against corruption, the punishment of money laundering, etc.).
- It reserves solidarity and the creation of chances for the "valuable" part of society, while it reckons that limitations, separation and segregation can be the most effective instruments against a genetically or culturally badly motivated population ("...crime is an area of social behaviour about which we rightly suppose that it is not independent of genetics"[12]). It usually does not state this openly but we can demonstrate it in the practice of zero police tolerance that these groups in society serve as the "soft targets" of police actions. However, it is straightforward in limiting migration, which it defines as a factor of the export of crime, which threatens the nation in its existence.
- It regards the use of force by the police as an effective instrument of the fight against crime, therefore it increases the powers of the police in this respect to such great extent where the essential differences created by the constitutional state between the use of force by the military and the police disappear. It declares war on crime. It also believes in the power of retaliatory sanctions and it expects significant results only from long-term imprisonment.[13] (Zero tolerance aims at as severe punishments as possible,

12 Francis Fukuyama: Poszthumán jövendőnk (Our Post-human Future). Európa Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 2003, p. 49.
13 Richard B. Freeman: Miért követ el sok amerikai férfi bűncselekményt? [Why Do So Many American Men Commit Crimes?] Esély, 6/2000.

against offenders from an age as early as possible, for as petty crimes as possible.)
- It is becoming increasingly impatient in demanding that the administration of justice should be more efficient and that cases should be finished fast and in an exemplary fashion. It proclaims widely that it is impossible to protect against 21st century crime with rules of guarantee developed in the 19th century. It charges the law of criminal procedures with "exaggerating" human rights and urges stricter limitations on them. (The rights are only for the law-abiding citizens, as the proponents of this view proclaim.)
- The theoretical basis of compensation for the victims — according to the proponents of repression — is the fact that the unalienable rights of the citizens for security was infringed when the state, against its promise, was not able to defend them from the crime. According to this view, it is possible to extend the rights of the victims in the criminal procedure only if we limit the rights of the suspects at the same time.
- It regards the restorative techniques of the administration of justice as alien to the operation of the penal power. It continues to give imprisonment a central role and against the objections that the conditions of imprisonment are inhuman, it finds it sufficient to say that "a prison is a sanatorium".
- It intends to preserve the use of force as the monopoly of the police. Therefore, while it supports technical modernisation, it rejects the reform of policing. It categorises unconditional obedience, the courage to take risks and comradely solidarity as the traditional values of the police. It makes a sharp distinction between policing and civil public administration, which is symbolised by uniforms and the carrying of arms. It proclaims that militant organisational culture is a collective value to be preserved in the future.
- Strategic planning has no importance for the conservative approach of policing; there is no need to forecast what remains unchanged. Since criminal policy opts for forms that have proven historically correct, it is not motivated to look for political compromises. It is convinced that it possesses the only right method of protecting society that leaves no room for debate. The offender should be punished!

We should always add the following to the summary of the main characteristics of preventive and repressive strategies. The descriptions are about types and they are simplifications. There are no such pure models operating in reality, the practice in the individual countries tends to show the picture of transitory systems but the elements of one or the other type are always dominant. For example, the theory of zero tolerance, which started in the American continent, can be well applied for the decentralised, American police model although it is generally true that repressive criminal policy favours

centralised solutions. It is no accident, however, that this theory of police management was born in New York, at the police force of a city that is as big as a country and where the number of staff (nearly 48 thousand) far exceeds the staff of the Hungarian police (about 38 thousand). Another contradiction is that the management type of police leadership emphasises cooperation with society, which is a characteristic of preventive strategies. However, if we examine this problem more closely, it turns out that the counselling firms that support the police created the philosophy of etatism in policing.[14] It is not true that one of them has scientific foundations, is in conformity with the idea of constitutionalism and has a humanistic commitment, while the other is voluntaristic, anti-theoretical, populist, dictatorial and inhuman. It is no accident that those who study criminal policies in depth all came to the conclusion that the mixtures of the two types, containing the good characteristics of both are the ones that are really successful. Finally, experience also proves that the division of political life into the traditional political right and left does not answer the question, which criminal policy the parliamentary right or left will take sides with. Until the turn of the 1990s, all democratic governments were committed to prevention, independently of which political party they belonged to, while at present, at the turn of the millennium, we have the renaissance of conservative solutions.[15]

It is worth taking a look at the new trends of public security in France since 2000[16]. The new concept intends to place crime prevention in society in the framework of a comprehensive public security strategy. It attaches primary importance to professional law enforcement. It is a professional policing task and because of this it is not the boundaries of public administration but the actual regional distribution of crime that has a crucial role in it. Accordingly, nine regional units of criminal police were formed. Organising police presence also requires professional competence, here, however, the local governments have a special role. (Conseil communale de prevention de la délinquance.) Where threats to public security transcend the borders of autonomy, cooperation between the local governments is given an organisational form (etablissement public de cooperation intercommunale). One of the ways to ensure policing professionalism is the setting up of mobile units. These brigades are suitable to be present at the sites of attacks against public security as fast as possible with

the highest possible level of competence. The other solution is the reactivation of retired policemen for service if the deterioration of public security makes it necessary. The third step is a more rational division of labour between the police and the gendarmerie forces, the cancellation of the traditional principle of the gendarmerie working only as the policing force of the country.

New solutions have been born in order to protect public security. In the Ministry of the Interior a central office was set up in order to help the hunt for wanted offenders. They organised joint units of police, gendarmerie and customs in the areas most infested by crime. They paid special attention to putting obstacles in the way of illegal immigration and to prevent crime by the so-called "travelling people". In the cities fight against organised prostitution, the housing mafias and forcing back "aggressive begging" received priority. At the same time, the public security programme finds it necessary to develop the established forms of crime prevention in society; therefore it urges the protection of schools in the framework of local crime prevention contracts. In order to increase the security of public roads it introduces new methods of organising duties.

French legislation enriched the fight against crime with other legal means as well. Besides adjusting the competences of criminal police to the regional distribution of crime, it tries to increase efficiency by simplifying forced actions in the criminal procedure. They introduced stricter sanctions against travelling crime, for instance, by making it possible to confiscate the motor vehicles in these cases. The system of criminal records is renewed, they increase the number of registered DNA (genetic fingerprint) profiles and the particulars of offenders of violent crimes can be entered in the criminal records from the age of 12. There are plans for extending the system of cameras that monitor public places and for improving the level of technical equipment at police organs. The police forces in the cities are reinforced. The public security programme accepted in 2002, on the whole, reflects the conviction that crime prevention in society and the cooperation of local communities can be expected to bring about results only if the state monopoly of law enforcement and the professional skills of policing are strengthened. There is no doubt that this is a kind of penal policy in which repressive elements have a priority.

This is characteristic not only of the conservative political trends, which is proved by the reform of the British Police that the Labour Party decided on, which also focused on the professionalism of law enforcement and stricter penal sanctions.[17] Modernisation in Britain provide an example that these enterprises can only expect success if supplementary funds are allocated

14 Loïc Wacquant: A nyomor börtönei. A zéró tolerancia világméretű terjedése (The Prisons of Poverty. The Worldwide Spread of Zero Tolerance). Helikon Kiadó, Budapest, 2001, p. 15.

15 For more details about it, see: Kerezsi, Klára: A kriminológia és a büntetőpolitika kapcsolata (The Relationship of Criminology and Penal Policy). Kriminológiai Tanulmányok, 40. OKRI, Budapest, 2003

16 Regards sur l'actualité, no. 284., pp. 2., La documentation Francaise, septembre–octobre 2002

17 Katona, Géza: Az angol rendőrség reformja (The Reform of the British Police). Belügyi Szemle, 9/2002., pp. 3–27.

from the central budget for the reform. (In the case of Britain this meant a 21% rise in the budgetary funds allocated for the 43 police forces.) Besides, a decision was made to increase the staff by 6,000 new police. The material by Géza Katona also clearly indicates that creating the scientific and technological background, the renewal of professional training and leadership methods as well as a significant raise in the salary of the police are all essential conditions of modernisation.[18]

Tony Blair, the Prime Minister of the Labour Party, who decided on the reform, (and who was the Minister of the Interior in the shadow government in 1992, at a time when the Tories were on power) in one of his interviewees highlighted the essence of the criminal policy that he follows: emphasising community values besides personal autonomy, declaring the responsibility of the individual besides the individual rights, protecting the victims, while keeping the guarantees that protect the accused. Blair called for a strong and fair society, one that can demonstrate its power against the offenders and is fair in helping the impoverished, the deprived and the needy. It is important to compensate for the inequalities also because the impoverished groups of society are in an increasing danger of becoming criminals besides being the number one targets of crime. (According to British statistics, the possibility of becoming a victim of crime is three times as much among the residents of slums than among their more fortunate compatriots). Thus, while social policy is making efforts to create new chances, criminal policy is increasing the range of instruments in service of rigour. These efforts are explained by the following in the article mentioned above: "... – the administration of justice of the 19th century cannot solve the problems of crime in the 21st century; the cooperation is inadequate between the police, the prosecution offices and other public administration authorities; we are unable to concentrate our efforts against the hard core of recidivists, who are responsible for more than half of the crimes committed; penal procedures are cumbersome. The administration of justice concentrates on the offenders and does not pay attention to the victims. The police are not given the necessary freedom to concentrate on crime and offences. The punishments are not in proportion with the importance of the offences."[19]

Nevertheless, we can say that in the countries of the democratic centre the values of constitutional democracies were preserved throughout the modernisation of policing until the end of the 20th century.

18 Ibid. p. 7.
19 Tony Blair: Pour une société forte et équitable. Le Monde, avril 2002

The situation is, however, radically different now, at the beginning of the new millennium. Since 11 September 2001 our idea of public security and our opinions on the social mission of policing have undergone changes. We used to regard public security as a value that can be harmonised with the need for freedom, while now for an increasingly high number of people public security lies at the pinnacle of the pyramid of values so freedom can only be subordinated to it. We defined policing as a branch of administration that can fully assert the guarantees of the democratic constitutional state in the legal use of force. Nowadays we hear people more and more often talking about the obsolescence of these guarantees but this cannot result in having the hands of the police tied. There are some who see the views characteristic of the constitutional state, which are embedded in European culture as a sign of "weakness" at the time of a total war against terrorism. Therefore these days public surveys that summarise the public opinion on public security and policing have an increased responsibility. Public surveys can indicate how public security – as the standard of life, human dignity and the inviolability of property – influences the quality of life. The questions enquiring about the essential problems of society show the place public security has in the fears haunting the population. It is never the first on the list. International experience shows that in the developed countries unemployment, diseases – the apparently invincible AIDS among them –, terrorism, the global problems threatening the world such as the pollution of water and air and the dangers posed by nuclear power stations all precede fear of crime. (A survey carried out in 1989 on a sample of 14,000 in France showed the previously mentioned order with an index of fear of 80% concerning unemployment, while fear of crime came only seventh on the list with an index of 57%.)[20]

The picture formed of public security and of the activity of the police concerning this

It is a well-known fact that the police are under pressure from two directions: they are pressed by the expectations of the public on the one hand and they are hamstrung by the existing organisational conditions. This situation, which is not at all easy, is made even more difficult by a regrettable approach, which measures public security through criminal statistics and from rising or declining statistics it draws conclusions concerning the worsening or the improvement of the situation. Our earlier surveys have already pointed out

20 Jean-Claude Monet: Policesa et siciétés en Europe. La documentation Francaise, Paris, 1993, p. 152.

that this view is mistaken.[21] We also proved that the concept of security that the public authorities can handle is not the same as the totality of the security factors that are important in human life. The activity of the public authorities may result in a high level of security in the legal sense but it cannot produce security in society and real freedom from dangers.

We would like to avoid the pitfall of an oversimplified analysis of the "crime has increased = public security decreased = the police did not work well" type, so we continue to consider crime to be the "failure" of society and not law enforcement. Public security is the product of the interaction of crime and law enforcement; and law enforcement is supposed to deal with the conditions (of society) created by crime. It is not sure, however, that the law enforcement apparatus (in itself) can create an acceptable level of public security, even if it makes the best use of its opportunities in order to be effective (efficient). The answers given to the individual questions of the survey, however, give a few points of reference for evaluating the work of the police.

We asked the interviewees in the survey to evaluate public security in 2003 on a scale of five (K6 question). 53.5% of the people said it was "average", while 33.3% found the situation concerning crime in Hungary bad or very bad and 13.2% thought it was good (and there was a very slight, 1% who thought it was very good). We can see the data in Table 1.

Table 1.
Opinions on public security (2003)

very bad	809 people	8.3%
bad	2,435 people	25.0%
average	5,201 people	53.5%
good	1,187 people	12.2%
very good	96 people	1.0%

The 1997 survey showed that 55.2% of the citizens had a negative opinion on public security and only 7% found it good. 37% of the interviewees said it was average.[22] In a survey conducted in Budapest in 1999 nearly 43% of the interviewees said that public security was bad, and a same percentage (43%) found it average, while only 14 thought it good.[23]

21 In 1997 our institute conducted a public survey on a national representative sample of nearly one thousand and in 1999 another survey on the request of the Ministry of the Interior on a representative sample of one thousand each in districts V., IX., and XXII. of the capital city.
22 Kó, József: Vélemények a bűnözésről. Egy közvélemény-kutatás tanulságai (Opinions on Crime. The Lessons of a Public Survey). Kriminológiai és Kriminalisztikai Tanulmányok, 35. Budapest, 1998, p. 21.
23 Finszter, Géza – Kó, József: Vélemények a közbiztonságról és a bűnözésről Budapest V., IX. és XXII. kerületében (Opinions on Public Security and Crime in Districts V., IX. and XXII. of Budapest). 1999. október, Manuscript, p. 13.

We can clearly see from the data above that the proportion of citizens who found public security to be average has been on the rise in the past few years, while the proportion of those who find the situation bad has decreased and those think that public security is good has remained on the level of 1999 (the 0.8% drop is negligible).

In the survey of CEORG carried out in June 2002[24] they drew conclusions concerning public security from people's (subjective) sense of security and they did not ask them about their opinion on public security. "Concerning the sense of security, Hungary is in the first place in every respect: there are the highest proportion of people (74%) here who find their neighbourhood secure and it is also the Hungarians who find their country as a whole the most secure: every second interviewee said that he thought Hungary was definitely secure or somewhat secure" (Table 2.).

Table 2.
Sense of security in the neighbourhood and in the country in general (%)

	Hungary	
	neighbourhood	country
find it definitely secure	25.7	6.5
find it somewhat secure	48.0	45.5
find it somewhat insecure	18.4	36.6
find it definitely insecure	7.0	7.4
do not know. no answer	1.0	4.0
total	100.0	100.0

The number of elements in the sample: Hungary N = 1509[25]

52% of the interviewees found Hungary as safe, which is significantly higher than the 13.2% in last year's survey who thought public security was good, and it is near the 53.5% who thought public security was average.

The public survey of the Gallup Institute last May and November approached the issue in a similar way as the CEORG survey.[26] One of their questions about sense of security was the following: "If you think of the work

24 The Central European Opinion Research Group; CEORG is a joint enterprise of three institutes involved in sociology and public research, one from each of the three Central-Eastern European countries of the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary, which was founded on 1 January 1999. Within the framework of their cooperation, in every month a unit consisting of the same four to five questions on a certain topic appear on the omnibus questionnaire of the institute in each country. A preliminary report is prepared each month based on the analysis of the data. In June 2002 public security was compared in Central-Eastern Europe, besides the three permanent countries – Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland – Lithuania and Russia were also included in the survey. The questions were about – among other things – people's opinions on the work of the police and on their general sense of security. http://www.tarki.hu/integracio/ceorg/index.html
25 Ibid.
26 http://www.gallup.hu/Gallup/release/orfk030616.htm

of the police and public security, how secure do you feel?" In November 2003, 59% of the interviewees felt somewhat secure and 14% perfectly secure and in May 55% felt somewhat secure and 15% felt perfectly secure, while in November 26% and in May 29% felt insecure. In this survey the data about November 2002 are also higher than the similar data on sense of security published by CEORG. According to the data of the Gallup survey in November 2002 67% of the people felt secure and 30% of them thought that their neighbourhood was not secure.

Chart 1.
Opinions on the Sense of Security
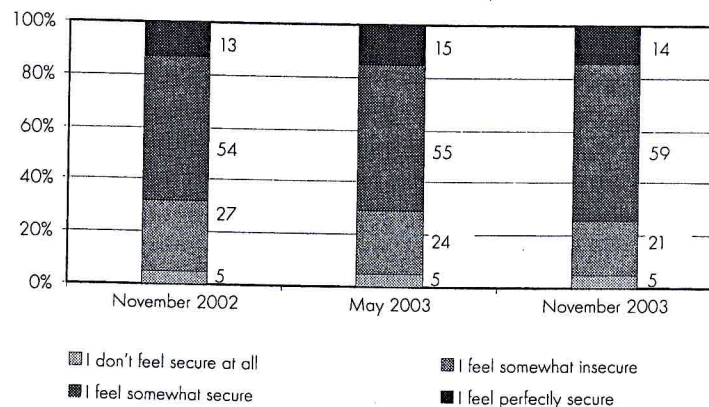
The 59% in November and the 55% in May in the Gallup survey who felt "somewhat secure" is nearer to the 53.5% of the interviewees who rated public security as "average". The data from Gallup Institute are shown on Chart 1.[27] On Chart 2. we showed the data from the CEORG survey in June 2002, from our own survey in the autumn of 2003 and from the Gallup survey in November 2003. The trend these data show is that the population find public security neither good nor bad, their opinion is somewhere in the middle – average (not excellent but not poor) (Chart 2.).

We were curious about people's opinion on the change in public security as well (Question K8). The interviewees found the change in public security in the past five years a little worse than the present situation.

33.3% of the interviewees think that the present situation is negative and 35.3% find the worsening trend worrying. The perception of the change in public security is much less negative than what we experienced in earlier research: in

27 Ibid.

Chart 2.
Opinions on the sense of security and public security
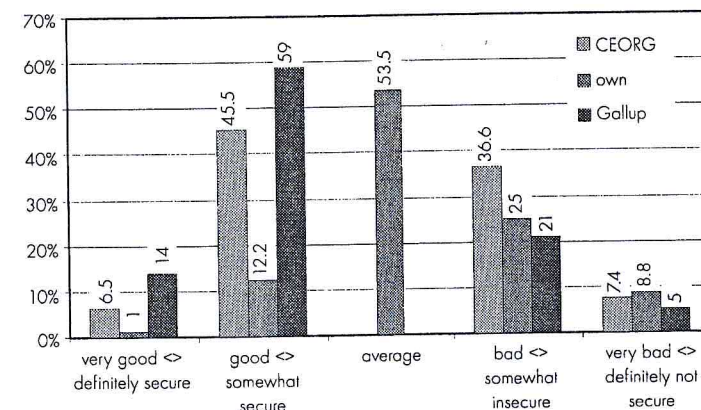
the 1997 survey 70% of the interviewees said that the situation got worse or much worse (while 23% of them thought public security did not change and 6% thought it improved).[28] In the 1999 51% found the situation worsening.[29]

35.3% of the interviewees found public security worsening in the past five years, 45.4% did not find any change in the positive or in the negative direction and 19.3% saw a positive change.

Examining public security and the reasons for the changes experienced in the past five years, we asked people's opinion about what circumstances they thought influenced the developments concerning public security (Question K7.). We summarised the groups of reasons most frequently mentioned in the three places of the questionnaire in Table 3.

The highest percentage of interviewees blame the police for the bad state of public security and besides that they consider the rise in crime – especially crimes against property, violent crimes and corruption – a criminogenic factor (although security should be regarded as the result of cooperation between policing and citizens who are able to defend themselves).

In the 1997 survey the police still "performed well" because only 4% of the interviewees held the police responsible for the situation of public security, which indicated that the majority of people did not consider the dealing with the problem of crime is only the task of the police.[30] According to the results of the 1999 survey, most of the interviewees mentioned the

28 Kó, J.: op. cit. p. 23.
29 Finszter, G. – Kó, J.: op. cit. p. 19.
30 Kó, J.: op. cit. p. 26.

Table 3.

Opinions on the reasons that have the greatest influence on public security in Hungary in 2003

mentioned in the first place	%	mentioned in the second place	%	mentioned in the third place	%
crime in general, the lot of crimes	14.9	did not answer	71.0	did not answer	93.5
does not know	9.7	impotent police	4.3	impotent police	1.2
impotent police	8.8	inappropriate police action	3.0	other, concerning police	0.8
inappropriate police action	8.7	a lot of crimes against property	3.0	the need for stricter laws and punishments	0.6
few policemen	7.8	other, concerning police	2.9	inappropriate police action	0.6
a lot of crimes against property	6.9	crime in general, the lot of crimes	2.5	a lot of crimes against property	0.5
other, concerning police	6.2	the need for stricter laws and punishments	1.9	corruption	0.4
there is no problem	5.2	a lot of violent crimes	1.9	a lot of violent crimes	0.4
did not answer	4.4	corruption	1.7	crime in general, the lot of crimes	0.3
corruption	3.6	few policemen	1.4	few policemen	0.3
good police	3.3	more patrolling	0.9	more patrols	0.1
a lot of violent crimes	2.6	bad administration of justice	0.5	vandalism	0.1

responsibility of the police and the government. This result proved that *"the population takes the mistaken approach [of police leaders] seriously, according to which the work of the police can actually be measured by the change in the number of crimes. Therefore they draw the firm conclusion that the performance of the police must have got worse if they feel less secure. On the other hand, the »statistical successes« achieved in different ways have no impact whatever on these opinions."*[31]

31 Finszter, G. – Kó, J.: ibid. p. 22. Nevertheless on 20 February 2004, at a celebration of the anniversary of the Belügyi Szemle, the Chief of Police of Hungary gave a lecture on the foundation of police reform and he talked about the contradiction between the official view and the public opinion on public security and the police – he called it a "double vision" – and he was still unhappy about "there existing no harmony between the exceptionally good foreign views of the Hungarian police and the public perception of the police within Hungary. The same is true about the connection between the view the police have of themselves and their public perception; and an unhappy organisation that lacks confidence can hardly expect a positive reputation in society, the demand for which has been voiced in unison form outside and from within the police by politicians and police leaders for decades with no effect." He emphasised that society – which is not insensitive to the inner problems and the identity problems of the police – is impatient: "it expects police to be able to react more efficiently, more confidently, more professionally and at the same time to be more polite, more sensitive to the problems of citizens, more responsive to the frightening criminogenic problems of society; to build up confidence in the law-abiding citizens in its outer and inner appearance while being determinate and deterring offenders". http://www.b-m.hu/police

Table 4.

Opinions on how well the police are able to guarantee public security

are not able at all	947 people	9.7%
are not really able	2,165 people	22.3%
are able at an average level	4,920 people	50.6%
are quite able	1,477 people	15.2%
are perfectly able	219 people	2.3%

The reasons the interviewees mentioned about the responsibility of the police are in harmony with the opinion of 82.6% of them, according to which the police can guarantee public security at an average level or below that (Question K5). 33.3% of the interviewees have a negative opinion on public security, while 32% have doubts in the ability of the police to maintain order. This is shown in Table 4.

In the 1999 survey 31% of the interviewees were satisfied with the work of the police, 43% thought it was average and 26% found it good.[32]

We were also curious about the connection between crime and the other social problems and the proportions concerning them so we asked the citizens to explain in a few words what they thought the greatest problem was in Hungary last year (Question K3). Table 5. shows the most frequent answers to this question.

The data of the table show that it is not crime and public security that concern people the most because other issues come before the problems related to crime and public security. The results of this survey show a striking resemblance to the data from 1997, where the greatest problems of people were poverty (23.4%), economic problems (18.4%), lack of money (17.2%) and unemployment (14.5%). Although at that time the government was considered to be one of the greatest sources of problems.[33] According to the results of the 1999 survey the worsening of the economic situation was also a decisive factor.[34]

The 2003 survey also proved our supposition that people's opinions about distant problems are more negative than the their opinions about problems that are closer to them. Consequently, it is natural to some extent

Table 5.

Opinions on the reasons that had the greatest influence on the problems in Hungary in 2003

|	
unemployment	19.4
don't know	8.6
social problems	8.0
economic situation	6.9
standard of living	6.9
political life in general	6.4
public security	5.0
government	4.1
financial insecurity	4.0
moral values	3.6
corruption	3.0
the situation of the elderly	2.9

32 Ibid. p. 23.
33 Kó, J.: op. cit. pp. 36–37.
34 Finszter, G. – Kó, J.: op. cit. p. 22.

that people find public security better in their neighbourhood than in the country in general. This is shown by Chart 3.

Chart 3.
Opinions on the change of public security, locally and nationwide, in the past five years
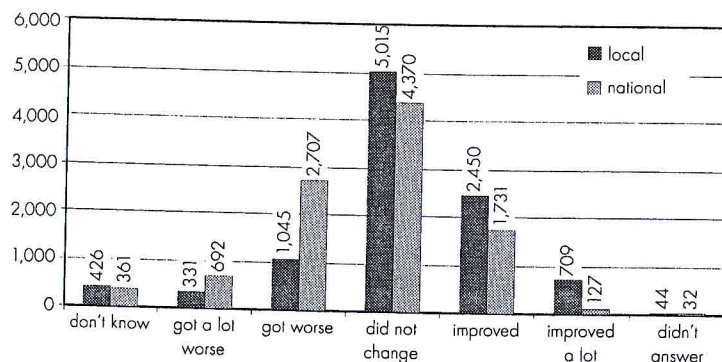
The overwhelming majority of the interviewees (50%) think that the security of their neighbourhood has not changed in the past five years, 31.6% felt that security has improved and 13.7% felt that it has got worse (Question K34). The result was similar concerning changes expected about public security in the future, as shown in Table 6. (Question K35).

Table 6.
Opinions on the expected changes in public security

	in the neighbourhood		nationwide	
don't know	1,494 people	14.9%	1,567 people	15.6%
will be much worse	179 people	1.8%	358 people	3.6%
will be worse	592 people	5.9%	1,279 people	12.8%
will not change	3,727 people	37.2%	3,366 people	33.6%
will be better	3,066 people	30.6%	3,002 people	30.0%
will be much better	887 people	8.9%	359 people	3.6%
did not answer	75 people	0.7%	89 people	0.9%

Thus, the opinions of the man in the street do not reflect the official standpoint, which refers to improving public security according to police statistics. *The work of the police performed in the interest of public security is viewed by the public in a similar way as public security itself: where people are more satisfied with public security, the police are viewed more favourably. On the whole, this view is somewhere in the middle with a tendency in the unfavourable direction.* This is shown by Chart 4.

Similar consequences can be drawn from the CEORG survey conducted in June 2002: *"In Hungary satisfaction with the police is mixed. While six out*

Chart 4.
Opinions on the work of the police performed in the interest of public security and on public situation
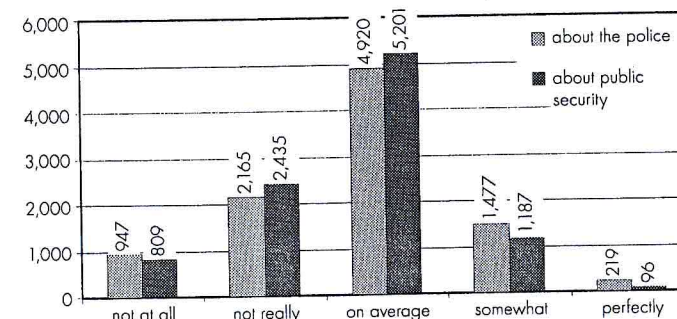
of ten people are satisfied with the work of the police locally, and a bit less than four are dissatisfied, two out of three are dissatisfied nationwide.

The two issues examined are strongly related. A much higher percentage of people find their neighbourhood secure among those who are satisfied with the work of the police locally than among those who are dissatisfied. Among the latter group there is a much higher percentage of those who do not find their neighbourhood secure. The same deterministic connection exists characteristically between the general view of the work of the police and the general sense of security." (Table 7.)

Table 7.
Satisfaction with the work of the police locally and nationwide (%)

	Hungary	
	locally	nationwide
very satisfied	10.7	2.1
somewhat satisfied	46.3	30.1
somewhat dissatisfied	24.8	47.7
very dissatisfied	11.3	14.1
don't know, no answer	6.8	6.0
total	100.0	100.0

Number of elements in the sample: Hungary N = 1509
http://www.tarki.hu/integracio/ceorg/index.html

The Gallup survey in November 2003 enquired about "the general opinion on the police", which, obviously, includes not only the activity of the police performed in the interest of public security but an assessment of a much wider scope. Table 8. shows the distribution of the answers of all the interviewees. The

Table 8.
General opinion on the Hungarian police

don't know at all	3.7
very unfavourable	1.6
somewhat unfavourable	10.3
partly favourable, partly unfavourable	34.1
somewhat favourable	44.0
very favourable	6.3

http://www.gallup.hu/Gallup/release/orfk030616.htm

opinions mentioned above have different patterns of distribution according to whether the interviewees have been to the police or not.[35]

On Chart 5. we showed the data from the CEORG survey conducted in June 2002, our own survey conducted in the autumn of 2003 and the Gallup survey conducted in November 2003. According to this, the public view of the work of the police performed in the interest of public security is average (50.6%) and the proportion of negative opinions (32%) is much higher than the "general opinion of the people" on the police. The "overall view" is higher than the median (44%), only 11.9% of the citizens gave a favourable answer.

Chart 5.
Opinions and views on the police
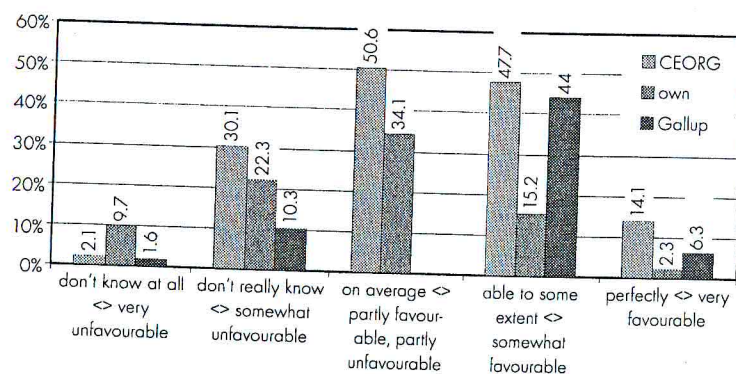
On the whole, we can say that in spite of the negative social and economic phenomena that have been present for years, the problems related to public situation and crime still dominate people's thinking. Crime is not an everyday problem for people in Hungary yet. This is clearly shown by the answers given

35 For more detail, see Tünde Barabás's study in this volume, the chapter entitled "The evaluation of the work of the police" (page 187.).

to the question "How much does crime influence your everyday life?" (Question K41) Only 8.6% of the interviewees said that problems related to crime affect their everyday life, while the majority, 71.7%, said "no" to this question. Table 9. shows the distribution of the answers.

Table 9.
The influence of crime
on people's everyday life

not at all	4,568 people	46.0%
not really	2,547 people	25.7%
on average	1,952 people	19.7%
somewhat	617 people	6.2%
perfectly	240 people	2.4%

Ideas about the measures required to improve public security

It gives hope about the active attitude of the citizens that most of the interviewees have some opinion on the measures required to improve public security (Question K59). 25% of all the interviewees could not really answer this question. This means that the great majority of the citizens have expectations and demands concerning this issue, which cannot be neglected when designing the measures. We summarised the most important groups of reasons mentioned in the three places of the questionnaire in Table 10.

Table 10.
Proposals for the improvement of public security

mentioned in the first place	people	%	mentioned in the second place	people	%	mentioned in the third place	people	%
stronger police presence	3,254	32.5	greater competence for the policemen, more determinate police actions	551	5.5	greater competence for the policemen, more determinate police actions	80	0.8
don't know	2,507	25.0						
the improvement of the administration of justice, stricter laws	676	6.7	stronger police presence	409	4.1	other, concerning the police	66	0.7
greater competence for the policemen, more determinate police actions	597	6.0	the improvement of the administration of justice, stricter laws	295	2.9	the improvement of the administration of justice, stricter laws	65	0.6
civil guard	486	4.9	more money for policemen	224	2.2	stronger police presence	60	0.6
more money for policemen	336	3.4	civil guard	195	1.9	more money for policemen	42	0.4
other, concerning the police	245	2.4	other, concerning the police	194	1.9	civil guard	26	0.3
nothing, they are satisfied	181	1.8	more qualified policemen	129	1.3	repairing roads and utilities, construction of bicycle roads, transport	21	0.2
creation of jobs	181	1.8	public lighting	74	0.7	more qualified policemen	20	0.2
more qualified policemen	174	1.7	system of cameras monitoring public places	71	0.7	creation of jobs	16	0.2
			rooting out corruption at the police	69	0.7	other	16	0.2

From the table we can clearly see that the great majority of the interviewees would like to see the work of the police improved and made more effective. The demand that can be seen most markedly is the one for the improved presence of the police. This was a definite expectation of 60.5% of the interviewees in the 1999 survey already.[36] The authors have already analysed the impact of such a measure on the criminal situation and on people's sense of security. Other expectations people have of the police include such proposals aimed at improving the circumstances the work of the police and the level of services provided by the police, as a rise in the salary of the policemen and the need for the employment of more qualified policemen.

Similarly to the results of the 1999 survey, it continues to be a warning sign that a high proportion of the proposals made for the improvement of public security urges repressive measures, such as making laws stricter, extending the competence of the police and the demand for more determinate police actions. We think that behind these kinds of proposals often there is the illusion that loosening the fetters on certain authorities, especially on the police, at the expense of either the essential human rights or the democratic exercise of power can serve the strengthening of (public) security. If, however, we regard public security as security of law – often manifested in policing activities that are possible only through limiting other people's rights to a necessary and proportional extent – then it is evident that new legislation making it possible to limit rights and "liberating" the police weakens security instead of strengthening it. Thus, it is highly dangerous to contrast the efficiency of the police (or perhaps the whole administration of justice) with the constitutional or universal human values. This warning sign is given extra emphasis by the fact that the interviewees mentioned the "impotence" of police as one of the factors that had the greatest emphasis on public security in 2003.

It is still worth noting the fact that very few proposals were received for the dealing with the problems in society usually mentioned as the causes of crime: poverty, unemployment and other social problems. In 1999 6.4% of the interviewees made proposals concerning these issues. Thus, the preventive measures made to reduce the risk factors are still not supported very strongly by the public.[37]

In the 1999 survey 5.2% of the interviewees proposed a strengthening of the role of civil guards.[38] In the table we can see that this proportion has not

36 Finszter, G. – Kó, J.: op. cit. p. 62.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid. p. 63.

changed since then although the greater proportion of the interviewees (52.9%) said that there was a civil guard in the place where they lived and that they were satisfied with its activity – providing they knew it (Questions K15 and K16). 31.9% of the interviewees said that there was no civil guard where they lived and 15.1% of them did not have any information about it. The opinions on the activity of the civil guards are shown in Chart 6.

Chart 6.
Satisfaction with the activity of the local civil guards
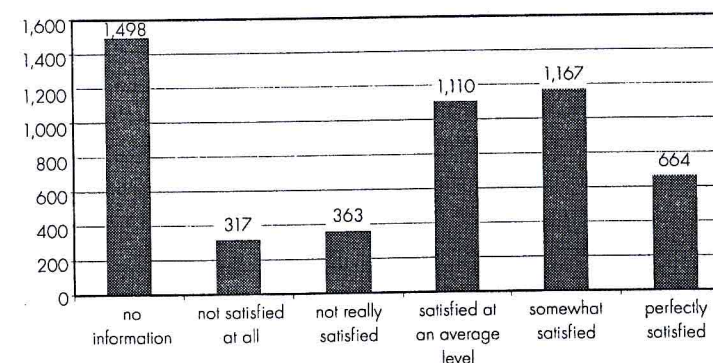
In the present sample of 10,000, most of the other answers to the question *"What is the greatest problem of the country?"* were much more frequent than crime, which was considered to be the sixth greatest problem. These problems were: unemployment (1), social tensions (2), problems of livelihood (3), economic-financial situation (4) and problems related to political life (5). It seems that people find it the most difficult to bear deficiencies. One type of deficiencies is physical deprivation (unemployment, security of livelihood, standard of living, economic-financial difficulties) and the other type is moral deficit like social tensions and the cares of political life. The results are rather interesting. Threats outside the social-political sphere, of global and environmental nature are not even in the first ten although the public in Western Europe is most concerned about them. On the other hand, the conditions of political life precede a lot of other factors, which would take a much higher priority in an atmosphere that is not so permeated by politics. (Drug-related crime, corruption and homelessness were placed surprisingly low on the list.)

It may be even more interesting to evaluate the most important problems of the neighbourhood. Here public security has come up to the fourth place from the sixth. Unemployment is in the first place locally as well (1), followed by the creation of jobs (2) and the conditions of roads (3). Public cleanliness

comes last after crime. While national problems indicate an atmosphere permeated by politics, local problems tend to be the same as the phenomena of everyday life. This picture is not modified by answers regarding the second or the third group of local problems. The questionnaire made it possible for the interviewees to distinguish between first, second and third rate local problems. Taken them together, it is interesting to see that there is no mention of local public life. Expectations of the local government are not significant; there is hardly any mention of civil communities, services protecting property and the role of civil guards. Presumably not only because these institutions are free of problems but also because they are not in the centre of public attention. This indifference is a worrying message for a social crime prevention programme that intends to rely on local autonomies.

The previous analysis makes it clear that *public surveys are suitable only to measure a concept of public security that can only be identified with security of life and property and can be characterised by the volume of crime*. Public surveys are indispensable but they do not give enough information for legislation and for the work of government. A comprehensive public security strategy includes an assessment of the institutions of public law from the aspects of constitutional law, public administration and the penal administration of justice; of the connection between the intactness of the law, legality and efficiency and of the development of public administration, policing administration and penal administration of justice in a system.

Interviewing the victims does not help us to gain more exact knowledge of the actual performance of policing administration, the efficiency of policing, the legality of its measures, the rate of its efficiency and *the tasks facing the modernisation of policing*. On the contrary, they can lead to the establishment of certain false statements, which Monet calls the main problem of Western-European surveys. He thinks that the public view supposes a direct connection between public security and the work of the police (good public security = good police, bad public security = bad police), although there is no such connection. According to the other stereotype more policemen = better public security, fewer policemen = worse public security.[39]

As a solution to the present situation we recommend the same method that we followed when interpreting public security. There are two questions here again: what is the content of the activity of the police and what are the aspects that are authentically reflected in the public opinion?

39 J. C. Monet: op. cit. p. 148.

The police and the public opinion

As we have already stated in the case of public security, public surveys also start out from a homogenous and simplified concept in the case of policing. *They make the concept homogenous* as they take into consideration only one of the functions of the department of police responsible for public security: its presence, as this is the function that can be perceived by the public most directly. The accessibility of the police and its ability to react can also be measured in cases when it takes place in public but these functions do not go beyond the function of guarding. The survey does not cover the ability of the police troops to intervene or the criminalistic expertise of the criminal police and or the extent to which the publicly or secretly performed actions conform to the legal regulations. The fact that guarding is the function that can be socialised most easily *simplifies* the service of the police and it casts doubts on the professional prestige of this public service. That is why policing has to fight a long battle to be accepted as a profession involving other professions that require professional expertise and a thorough knowledge of public law. This fight achieved success through the establishment of modern policing public law and through a scientific study of the policing functions. As the regulations of public law mean self-imposed restrictions at the same time, professional acceptance can come to fulfilment only in constitutional democracies. (We cited the example of Skogan on "making the German police stupid" under the Nazi regime.)

The legal definition of the police

The constitution decides on the police in two aspects: it defines their social function (public security and the protection of inner order) and it defines their place in the organisation of the state as well, when it puts them in the same administrational unit as national defence. (The title of chapter VIII. of the constitution is "The Armed Forces and the Police".) It follows from this that similarly to national defence; the government performs the most important tasks of directing the activity of the police and exercises these responsibilities together with the Parliament and the President of the Republic (48/1991. decree of the Constitutional Court). There is no doubt, however, that in the organisation Hungarian state police, which is built up according to centralised, military principles, the executive power has nearly exclusively competences of direction and the regulations of the Police Law — approved by a two-third majority —, parliamentary control, the right of disposal over criminal cases by the Prosecution and rather slight controls of local governments do not impose strong limitations over these competences.

The Police Law contains the public administrational concept of policing and a catalogue of its tasks. *"The police are an armed state organ set up for the protection of law and order, performing tasks of crime prevention, law enforcement, public administration and policing."* These regulations ensure that the police should keep the necessary distance from civil public administration, which is further reinforced by the separation of the regulation of police service relations from civil public service.

Still, the strong attachment of police to the law is shown by the fact the public administration law or the penal material law defines the foundations for all police actions. The form of the procedures is prescribed by the general and special rules of public administration procedures as well as the code of penal procedures. Why is it important to emphasise this? First, because this is the foundation in public law on the basis of which it can be decided whether policing functions are lawful, because this legal material contains the rules that guarantee the rights of persons under police procedure and also because this law protects the whole staff of police from arbitrary orders; and furthermore this law makes it possible to measure the lawfulness of police activities objectively. Public surveys, however, are not suitable to measure the lawfulness of police activities.

In spite of it, policing can be subordinated to the rule of the law only partly. The dangers inherent in the police presence for public security purposes, in interventions by police troops and in unlawful human behaviour can be averted through the lawful use of force only under legal authorisation but the implementation of it is not possible under detailed normative regulations. Even investigation, which is the preparatory phase of the penal procedure, requires far fewer formal rules than a criminal trial at court. The secret nature of detection imposes limitations on a legal settlement but *publicity* is an indispensable aspect of the latter. Thus, if we consider whether regulations can be imposed on it, a philosophy of administration based on one's own discretion has good chances.

Those who agree that government programmes should not go into too many details – and especially not for a long term – about the control exercised over policing, say that promptly responding to the security needs of everyday life does not make it possible to make plans ahead about this work. First, because the sources of dangers at a certain time cannot be forecast and also because the content and the form of the responses given to these dangers can only be determined depending on the situation at a given time. There are some concrete advantages of the lack of strategy. For example, the executive power cannot be made responsible for the public security concepts that were left out of government programmes; furthermore,

the missing visions for public security do not force the central administration to provide direction for the policing organs continuously and carefully. It is enough to intervene only if something unexpected happens, if there is some problem, which, of course, can be explained by the lack of preparation on the part of policing. (This is called the "scapegoat function" of the police by Robert Reiner, an English researcher of police.) Thus, the government does not have to take responsibility for it. According to another concept, the crisis of the police forces is the main catalyst for modernisation.

The world of police culture, which cannot be planned and regulated can reject all scientific inquiry and intention of research easily and thus can free itself of the criticism of theory. The senior officials responsible for the administration of policing are not interested in the conclusions of theories and they are giving increasingly clear signs that policing cannot bear any self-imposed power; law enforcement can be successful only through dictatorial methods and only law-abiding people can have a claim on human rights. In the second half of the 1990s at one of the frequent international police conferences the following statement was made: *"we have to raise the spirits of policemen again after they have had to suffer the intrigues of sociologists and criminologists for years".*[40]

Policing functions

The tasks of policing to avert dangers are accomplished through performing the policing functions. These include the following: guarding presence, the lawful use of force and the collection of information. It is easy to see that the functions we have listed above are in a temporal connection with the dangers generated by unlawful human behaviour. The function of *preventing dangers and guarding* and ensuring police presence seemingly require no professional skills whatever. This approach was strengthened especially after the so-called Kansas City experiment in 1974, which was supposed to demonstrate that police presence has no influence at all on the rise or decline of crime. (They divided the city into two parts; in one part they doubled the number of policemen and in the other they halved their number in public areas. They did not experience any measurable change in the security of the two parts of the city. It did not decrease where police presence increased and it did not increase where there were only few policemen left.) This experiment was repeated in Minneapolis in 1998, where they used the new discoveries of modern risk analysis and the science

40 Loic Wacquant: op. cit. p. 46.

of police organisation. They identified several "hot" locations of the city, which were especially infected with crime, and they strengthened police presence there. There was a clearly noticeable improvement in public security. The professional requirements of guarding were also made clear by the great emphasis that civil security companies placed on the training of their staff because they could be competitive only in this way. For similar reasons professional training for the volunteers of the civil guards are urged in Hungary.

The high professional prestige of *criminal* police is due to the development of criminalistics but the secret collection of information, for example, still does not receive this support because it cannot be the object of criminalistic analyses. In a strange way, secrecy stands in the way of acceptance by society and the acquisition of professional prestige.

The interpretation of interventions by *police troops* is the most problematic. In this case, the representatives of policing authorities must develop techniques and skills that make it possible to evaluate and transmit the body of knowledge concerning policing power. Still, it will remain a closed world and communication with the world does not belong to its tasks and the community is not competent in judging its professional values.

There are a lot of obstacles in the way of the professional acceptance of policing. Some of the interventions in the course of policing go together with spontaneous, amorphous and autonomous action, which require skills and experience but it is difficult to recognise special professional expertise behind these. The inner division of labour is not based on professional skills but on organisational structure instead. A proof of this is normal practice, according to which it is no problem if somebody is directed from one area of service to another even if they have the qualifications for only one area. A prerequisite of progress would be an objective and many-sided system of evaluation that can clearly distinguish between poor, average and excellent performance. The activities that cannot develop such criteria for themselves can hardly expect to be acknowledged as professional. In addition, in the vocational schools theoretical training far exceeds the importance of practical preparation with the legal subjects taking a leading position, and the curriculum of these subjects is not different from that of subjects in the training of legal professionals. Neither the specialisations in the schools nor the initial period of service offers a chance to receive more specific training as the status of trainees, which would be indispensable for it, is missing. The greatest hindrance of the acceptance of professional policing knowledge, however, is the hierarchy of policing itself. As professional knowledge is the most effective antidote of dependence in the office, systems built on obeying

orders can hardly tolerate it. Or there is only one way they can accept it: if it is always connected to position. Therefore, on the final count, the number one expert will be the number one leader himself. It is easy to see that this system accepts only those methods of measuring professional performance that conform to this hierarchical approach. The much condemned statistical method is very suitable for a few leaders to make unquestionable judgements about the work of a lot of subordinates relying on little information only, even if these statistical data do not say anything about the actual performances and even if they quantitatively measure tendencies that policing has no actual influence on. (It is as if the expertise of doctors depended on the number of sick people and it would mean that in the case of epidemics all senior doctors should be dismissed.)

An occupation or a profession has the power to create groups; therefore these entities are able to build their own organisational culture relying on the values of professional expertise and professional activities. "*As they consist of individuals performing the same job whose interests are in harmony or perhaps are the same, there is no better ground for the development of social ideas and emotions.*"[41] The more suitable a profession is to judge the values produced with an objective measure, the stronger the cohesive force of the same profession is. From this respect there are huge differences between professions, which, in turn, exert a huge influence on the content of organisational culture. The more exact the objective methods of measuring performances are the smaller significance the position in the hierarchy of the organisation has and the higher prestige individual qualities, talents and experience receive. In these professions one can build one's career without taking a single step upwards on the ladder of hierarchy. Police cultures often show characteristics of deviance, deviating from their original mission in society, because there is no professional authority that would be able to strengthen the basic values within the group. Where schools teach only theory separated from experience and where practice can only speak of theory with contempt, it is easy for a situation to come about in which "*there is no connection between theory and practice and these two are regarded as separate areas by the teachers in the school and the leaders of field practice since it is an integral part of police culture – to put it in a commonsensical way – that you should forget what you have learnt at school, they will show you in practice how things are actually done*".[42]

41 Emile Durkheim: Az öngyilkosság (Suicide). Osiris Kiadó, Budapest, 2000, p. 417.
42 Wolfgang Stangl: A rendőrképzés gyakorlati és tudásszociológiai problémái (The Problems of Training Policemen Concerning Practice and the Sociology of Knowledge). Belügyi Szemle, 10/2001., p. 10.

The police forces find this world — where their instinctive use of the monopoly of force and their being totally at the mercy of politics counts as normal — "environment-friendly" only for a short time. Sooner or later they will realise that they cannot fulfil their mission in society without politics supporting them, planning for them and transmitting values to them but if they are not given the professional autonomy, they may get into the state of unpredictable feudal dependence for a long time and they will experience every change of government as a crisis.

Conclusion

The police can be the object of the following main types of public surveys:
- The main purpose of *interviewing victims* is to disclose hidden crime, in view of this, the opinions on the police are only secondary because reporting crimes to the police shows a relationship of trust in the police.[43] The analysis of the process from the point where the authorities come to know of the crime all the way to the court exposes the working method of the police based on selection and finally we receive information about the motives of policemen have for their actions, which often testify to prejudices and a rather negative self-image[44]. Therefore in the surveys of victims the police are only the *secondary objects* but owing to this, spontaneity and the lack of questions suggesting some answer increases the authenticity of the answers. The interviewees have to give their opinions on only one aspect of policing activities: the system of social relationships and the ability to cooperate — but it is an aspect of policing that the public can judge most authentically. Finally, the picture of police that came to be formed as the result of latency surveys is always *critical,* so it could be used to renew police services very well. Making these surveys regular means an excellent help for cooperative management styles but the authoritarian style can do nothing with it. The experiences, however, can be put into practice only very slowly and in a hardly noticeable way.
- *Model experiments* and relationship with the public are needed to assess the readiness of the participants to cooperate in the best local alternatives

43 We know interviewing techniques where six to eight dangerous policing situations are described in the questionnaire and the questions enquire about what percentage of the interviewees choose to report it to the police and when they avoid doing so. The comparison of French and English surveys shows that more than 70% of the people turn to the police in England, while in France this index of trust is just around 60%. J. C. Monet: ibid. pp. 275–276.
44 We can find examples of the latter especially among those surveys of police-sociology that enquire about the opinions of policemen about their own profession. See, e.g. Krémer, Ferenc: A rendőri hatalom természete: társadalmi szerep és foglalkozási kultúra (The Nature of Police Power: Social Role and Professional Culture). Napvilág, Budapest, 2003, p. 88.

of crime prevention. In this case, the police become a *primary object* and therefore there is a danger that we get too stereotypical answers. Evaluation is *less critical* because it looks for those values of the police that facilitate cooperation. According to experience in Hungary, the greatest fault of these surveys is that hardly anything is realised from the model for the establishment of which they decided to collect these opinions.
- The purpose of *marketing interviews* is to increase the prestige of the police in society and putting the police in a better position. The police are the primary object, the questions often suggest an answer, there is no critical aspect of these surveys but they are used the most efficiently because they are suitable to justify the decisions made by the leaders of the Ministry of the Interior and the police and to strengthen the prestige of the police in society.
- The topics of the interviews *serving the purpose of quality development* are defined in view of the evaluation of police services by local communities and the development of social relations. If they are repeated regularly they are suitable to improve the culture of the activity of the authorities performed in the interest of public security.

Our present survey, consisting of interviews with victims and examining latency, defined the activity of the police only *as a secondary object of the examination.* The question inquiring about how much the Hungarian police are able to guarantee public security is preceded by questions about the general condition of the country. Therefore this question does not suggest an answer, so relatively objective and spontaneous answers could be expected. The performance of the police was assessed as average, which is the same as the assessment in other surveys and international trends also support it. The interviewees consider the protection of public security as the most important task of the police, which also conforms to our expectations. It is worth noting, however, that although a high proportion of people would like to see a rise in the number of policemen, they think inadequate police action and undetected crimes are more serious faults. Thus, the public is increasingly willing to accept policing as a profession even if in this case it noted the professional deficiencies. The usual tendency to homogenise, however, can be experienced here as well; outsiders cannot see the different branches of police service, such as the public security, criminal and emergency branches as separated. This is not a deficiency; it serves only as a warning that the results of the interviews made with victims do not provide a basis for the performance of all the professional tasks. There is another characteristic of the answers discussed: the public does not believe at all that stricter punishments could result in a significant improvement. Other surveys also prove that the claims repressive criminal policy makes on public demand are false.

The public cannot be given competence for the legal assessment of policing. It can be important for decision-makers, however, to know the public opinion in order to choose the right model of policing for the country and to decide how much the public can be involved in some functions of policing. The question in our survey about how police chiefs should be selected was enquiring about, in an indirect way, how the decentralisation of certain policing competences and the setting up of a local government police would be received. In this case there were more "no" answers (46.2%) but quite a lot of "yes" answers (42%) as well. This situation indicates that the traditional etatist view is being transformed slowly and that lack of concern about local public life, which we have already shown at other answers, also provides an argument for maintaining centralisation. At the same time, most of the interviewees are well-informed about the civil guard in their municipality and were able to define the main tasks of the civil guards as well, which would serve as an argument for involving the public in the performance of policing tasks.

Public surveys, of course, are not suitable to assess the condition of the public law of policing and the place the police occupies in the organisation of the state. It is the task of legislation to answer these questions. In order to have the right answers there is a need for a political consensus.

Public opinions can contribute to the creation of a public security strategy but they cannot replace it as it is the task of the government.

The number of hidden crimes is one of the factors in decisions about criminal policy but these decisions can be made primarily on the basis of the responses given to crime by the criminal organs that apply the law. The government can support it by initiating new legislation and by improving the budgetary conditions but criminal policy cannot undermine the independence of the administration of justice.

The development of the branches and the regions of policing administration require direction by the government, in which the professional requirements of policing and the expectations of the population must have a decisive role. The present survey seems to suggest that in order to gain professional and moral acceptance the police should "position themselves" for the government, in other words, they should acquire professional prestige and respect.

It is an important goal to make the interviewing of victims regular but it would be good to avoid two pitfalls. On the one hand, these interviews should not be overestimated and should not be used to replace budgetary decisions but on the other hand, they should not be neglected or used only for propaganda purposes either.

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KLÁRA KEREZSI

The Presence of the Different Dimensions of Crime Prevention in the Examination of Attitudes

Self-image and crime prevention: the relations between the images the interviewees have of themselves and of crime prevention

Crime prevention is a multi-dimensional concept. It is a system of practical concepts embedded in a theoretical framework, which is able to identify the causes and processes leading to crime and to describe the mechanisms of crime prevention relying on the body of knowledge available on the causes of crime. We have to accept the fact, however, that there is always a conflict between using short-term (situational) and long-term (serving the development of society) crime prevention instruments and recognising the need for them. At the same time, the use of crime prevention instruments cannot mean only "to look around the horizon sometimes and prevent a few limited and temporary criminal problems with the help of the new techniques available. On the contrary: it requires continual creation of capacities because crime always exists where there are conflicts between persons or groups or where the economy, the products and the services are concentrated. It is because offenders – sometimes rightly – believe that they can reap the harvest of a wealthier or more enjoyable life. Crime and crime prevention therefore consist of an endless fight between the instruments, in which the results and the failures are influenced by technical development and changes in the society" – as Paul Ekblom writes in one of his studies[1]. The existence or the lack of security, however, is one of the basic factors determining people's quality of life. The purpose of crime prevention therefore is to mitigate the effects of the causes of crimes, to reduce the risks of victimisation and to improve the security of the whole community.

Within the framework of the research project entitled "Victims and Opinions", when evaluating the results, first of all, we were looking for a useful typology of the factors that influence people's attitudes to crime prevention (its necessity, its possibilities and its forms, etc.). There is no question that the

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1 P. Ekblom: Future crime prevention – a 'mindset kit' for the seriously foresighted. http://www.foresight.gov.uk/servlet/DocViewer/docnoredirect=2475/Future.htm

situation of Hungarian citizens has basically changed in the past 10 to 15 years: there are some who have profited from the changes, there are some who have experienced them only to a small extent and there are some who got into a hopeless situation in the past decade. Inequality and poverty increased rapidly after the fall of communism. "About 15% of Hungarian society is poor if we consider only those people as poor who live below the half of the – not very high – average. The proportion of poor people is around one-third if we consider those families or individuals living alone as poor who live under the subsistence level, which means that they can support themselves only if they economise very strictly and the smallest unexpected problem can upset the balance of their living."[2] At the same time, a book containing interviews with the 100 richest Hungarians was a great success last year...

The attitudes to personal security and security of the environment are influenced by several objective and subjective factors as well. Therefore we examine the findings of the research that can be connected to the sense of security and crime prevention in many ways in the light of the so-called "general feeling questions", exposing the possible connections between a positive or negative change in people's general feelings and the assessment of the social problems in Hungary.

The situation/general feeling of the interviewees can be categorised as improving, stagnating or worsening, therefore we analyse the personal attitudes to security and crime prevention according to this typology.

There are five questions related to this typology (K1–K2) and the series of questions take us from the present through the past to the future. The opening question of the questionnaire (K1a) is about the general feeling of the interviewee. At this point, however, the interviewees have not been warmed up to answering the questions, their attention is not concentrated yet, therefore I do not use this question as a general filter question indicating the actual content of personal attitudes.

It is a well-known fact in sociology that the interviewees usually paint a darker picture concerning their financial situation and even those who live among better circumstances evaluate their situation as worse than the actual. This shows that we get relevantly more dissatisfied answers when we ask the first question again and in a different way (K2a). It is also proved by research experience that although the interviewees are more pessimistic about their financial situation, in consequence of their desires for the future, their expectations concerning the next few years are always more optimistic.

2 Ferge, Zs.: Kétsebességű Magyarország (Hungary: A Country Running at Two Speeds). ELTE TáTK Szociális Munka és Szociálpolitika Tanszék, Budapest, 2003, p. 20.

Accordingly, the answers to the question about the expected change in the interviewees' financial situation in the next five years (K2c) indicate optimistic expectations.

This train of thought makes us suppose that very probably the answers given to the K1b question describe the actual condition of the interviewees: their actual financial situation and general feelings. It is because people usually assess their situation more realistically if we ask them about the actual changes that have taken place in the past five years than if we ask them about their possible visions for the next five years. Therefore we used questions K1b (How have your feelings changed in the past five years?) and K1c (How has your financial situation changed in the past five years?) as filter questions indicating the actual content of personal attitudes. Of course, at the same time, we do not deny that the changes in the financial situation mean only one dimension of the shaping of a vision for the future.

One of the fundamental questions for us was that on what factors it depends whether people think their situation

a) is improving or
b) constant, unchanging or
c) worsening, deteriorating.

Therefore we compared the questions about the environment first with the answers given to questions about the changes in the financial situation (Chart 1.).

The chart shows that the changes in the financial situation and in the general feelings are in close connection with each other; the financial situation determines the direction in the change of the general feelings.

Chart 1.

The connection between the changes in the financial situation and the general feelings (K1b–K1c)

- worsening financial situation
- unchanging financial situation
- improving financial situation
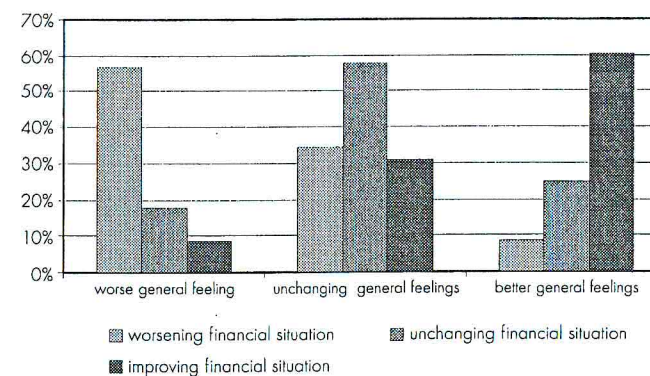
The "measurable" background of the change in the general feelings

Before we discuss the questions related to crime prevention (as well) I would like to review shortly the sociological indicators that we examined in view of the changes in the general feelings experienced in the past five years.

The data broken down according to genders show that the general feelings of 46% of the men have not changed in the past five years. Besides 27% of the men reported a worsening of their general feelings and equally 27% reported an improvement of their general feelings. Only 43% of the women said that their general feelings have not changed, while the general feelings of 30% worsened and of 27% improved in the past five years.

The social changes of the past one and a half decade have had a bad effect on the older generation. The present survey also shows that if we examine the answers about the change in the general feelings according to the age of the interviewees we can see – without regard to genders – that it is the younger generation (between 18 and 29) that reported a positive change in their general feelings. The elder generation – especially women above 60 – reported a negative change in their general feelings.

Among the interviewees we selected the data of those women who raise their children alone[3] in order to check the statements of an earlier OKRI survey, according to the results of which these women have a weaker sense of security than the average[4]. We found 131 such people in the sample (Table 1.). Since being single was not included among the questions, on the basis of the distribution we received, we supposed that women above 59 lived together adult children, which strengthens rather than weakens their sense of security. Therefore from this respect we took those interviewees into consideration who were under 60 (Table2.).

Half of those who were asked this question, that is, half of the sample of ten thousand are not active in employment (N = 5,074). The data clearly

Table 1.

Women raising children alone in the sample

18–19 years	4 people	3.1%
20–29 years	5 people	3.8%
30–39 years	19 people	14.5%
40–49 years	33 people	25.2%
50–59 years	29 people	22.1%
60–69 years	16 people	12.2%
70–79 years	15 people	11.5%
80–89 years	7 people	5.3%
above 90 years	3 people	2.3%
total	131 people	100.0%

3 We defined the category of "single woman with child(ren)" according to the following data: Sz1/woman + Sz4/with child(ren) Sz2_Rec/age (18-40 years) + Sz3/from marital status: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 answers.

4 Kerezsi, K. – Finszter, G. – Kó, J. – Gosztonyi, G.: Nagyvárosi bűnözés. Bűnmegelőzés Budapest V., IX. és XXII. kerületében (Urban Crime. Crime Prevention in Districts V., IX. and XXII. of Budapest). OKRI–Bíbor Kiadó, Budapest–Miskolc, 2003, p. 385.

Table 2.

The distribution of interviewees between 18 and 60 raising their child(ren) alone in percentages (N = 131)

	general feelings			
	worsened	did not change	improved	total
old age pensioner	39.4	45.8	14.9	51.5
disability pensioner	47.2	39.9	12.9	16.2
on maternity leave	12.7	44.8	42.5	7.1
homemaker	29.1	42.7	28.2	2.3
student	8.9	34.7	56.3	8.4
in military service	30.8	46.2	23.1	0.3
unemployed	35.6	42.0	22.4	10.5
other	36.5	42.9	20.6	3.4
don't know	26.3	42.1	31.6	0.4
total	35.4	43.3	21.4	100.0

show that among those not active in employment, the general feelings of the old-age pensioners, the unemployed and especially the disability pensioners have worsened in the past five years. At the same time, it is worth noting that the general feelings of those on maternity leave have not changed or have improved more often than worsened and the general feelings of adult students have shown an especially strongly improving tendency.

Examining the financial situation, we can see that the general feelings of those who are in active employment do not change together with changes in their financial situation because their general feelings have worsened to a smaller extent than what would be expected according to the unfavourable assessment of their financial situation (Table 3.).

We examined whether the changes in the general feelings experienced in the past five years have been influenced by schooling.

These data confirm the widespread view that the higher schooling one has, the more one's general feeling has improved. It can be seen clearly that

Table 3.

The distribution of not in active employment in percentages (N = 5,074)

	financial situation			
	worsened	did not change	improved	Total
old age pensioner	40.8	49.6	9.6	51.7
disability pensioner	53.0	38.8	8.2	16.3
on maternity leave	26.4	43.1	30.6	7.1
homemaker	42.7	41.0	16.2	2.3
student	10.5	51.0	38.5	8.1
in military service	15.4	53.8	30.8	0.3
unemployed	53.4	34.8	11.8	10.5
other	51.8	32.7	15.5	3.3
don't know	47.1	41.2	11.8	0.3
total	41.0	45.1	13.9	100.0

Table 4.

The connection of schooling and the changes in the general feelings in the sample (N = 9,914)
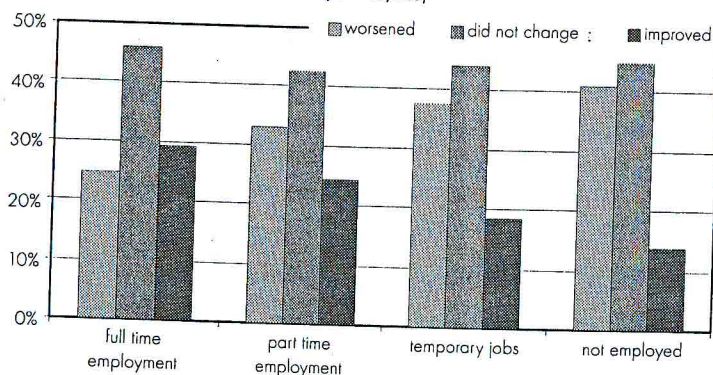
schooling	general feelings		
	worsened	did not change	improved
primary school	45,5	44,3	10,2
trade school	37,7	44,1	18,2
vocational school	28,5	46,2	25,3
grammar school	24,4	48,0	27,6
higher education	18,5	46,0	35,6
didn't answer	27,9	51,2	20,9

the interviewees experience a negative change in their general feelings in reverse proportion to the level of their schooling, or with a rise in the level of schooling there is also a rise in the proportion of those who have experienced a positive change in their general feelings. There is a fairly equal distribution in the group of those who experienced no change in their general feelings.

The data also show that having an opportunity to work strongly influences people's general feelings (Chart 2.).

Chart 2.

The connection between employment and the change in the general feelings in the sample (N = 10,020)

A smaller proportion of those who are in full time employment say that their general feelings have worsened and a higher proportion say that their general feelings have improved or have not changed (Table 5.). At the same time, the looser the relationship one has with the world of active employment the greater negative change one has experienced in their general feelings in the past five years.

It seems that those employed by the armed forces and the public servants have been the most satisfied in the past five years as they reported the

Table 5.

The changes in the general feelings of those in full time employment (N = 4,477)

occupation	general feelings			
	worsened	did not change	improved	Total
civil servants	24.3	46.4	29.3	25.5
public servants	16.1	46.8	37.1	4.3
employed at a private firm	27.6	45.6	26.9	51.7
member of the armed forces	12.7	43.1	44.1	2.1
self-employed	25.2	44.5	30.3	13.0
did not answer	26.7	48.5	24.8	3.4
total	25.6	45.7	28.7	100.0

greatest positive change in their general feelings. As we already pointed out when analysing an earlier set of data, the change in people's general feelings is influenced most strongly by the change in their financial situation; therefore we must conclude that the financial situation of these two groups has improved significantly in the past five years. This, however, is only one aspect of the whole picture. Both of these categories of employment include so-called "pensioner jobs", which means a more or less secure livelihood. This must also have played a role in the change in the general feelings of these people.

Table 6.

The changes in the general feelings of the interviewees according to employment categories (N = 4,066)

occupation	general feelings			
	worsened	did not change	improved	Total
unskilled and semi-skilled workers	25.0	49.1	25.8	99.9
skilled workers + employees not doing office work	22.0	44.9	33.2	100.1
employees doing office work + group leaders	18.3	44.3	37.4	100.0
professionals + executives	18.4	45.6	36.0	100.0

The study confirms the well-known fact that the more highly educated people are, the more probable it is that they can defend themselves against the unfavourable impacts of economic and social changes and can capitalise on the advantages. The data indicate that in the occupation categories that are connected to a higher level of schooling there is also a similarly higher proportion of people who generally feel better about the way things are and a lower proportion of people who generally feel worse about things. At the same time, we cannot help noticing that the proportion of those who feel that their situation has not changed is nearly 50% in the group of unskilled workers

Chart 3.

The changes in and in people's financial situation and general feelings in the past five years
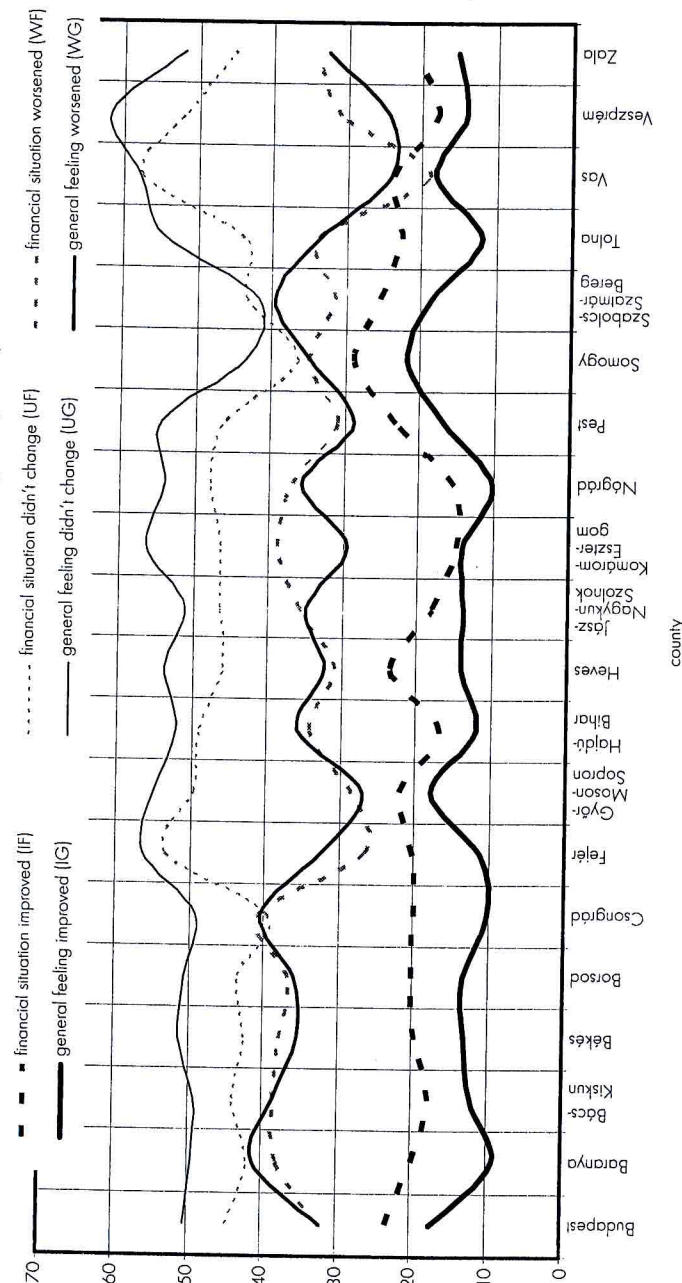
and semi-skilled workers. In the other groups – although to a lesser extent – the proportion of those reporting such sentiments is lower.

We also examined the answers to the questions about people's general feelings broken down to each county in order to be able to paint a more exact picture of the changes in the local attitudes concerning security. We did so because we know different factors have an influence on the issue of people's sense of security in a region or county that is prosperous than in on that is fraught with regional, infrastructural deficiencies. The data broken down to counties show an interesting picture (Chart 3.).

In the chart we put answers indicating a worsening (WF) and an unchanging (UF) and an improving (IF) **financial situation** side by side with the answers about the *general feelings* (WG)-(UG)-(IG). It seems to be a clear tendency that all three pairs of graphs run more or less parallel to each other, therefore there is a close connection between these variables. At the same time, there is a significant difference in the positive/negative character of the curve of these three pairs of graphs:

a) the improvement of general feelings are always below the improvement of the financial situation (the IG curve is always below the IF curve);

b) worsening general feeling is more or less above worsening financial situation (the WG curve is above the WF curve);

c) the curves of unchanging financial situation and unchanging general feelings are very close to each other (the UF and UG curves).

This means that we can say that while an improving financial situation is only slowly followed by an improvement in the general feelings, in the case of an unchanging financial situation the general feelings of the interviewees have definitely improved although they feel a worsening financial situation very acutely and this determines their general feelings.

If we examine the data according to the type of neighbourhood we can see that it is mainly the people in small towns and villages who report a worsening financial situation and general feelings (Chart 4.).

General feelings and the perception of national problems

According to a public survey[5], the health of people comes first among the problems that concern the majority of society, followed by the cares of everyday living. Other problematic areas are the situation of young people, public security, the housing situation, and alcohol and drug abuse.

5 Bernát, A.: Elemzések a gazdasági és társadalompolitikai döntések előkészítéséhez 38. (Analyses for the Preparation of Decisions in the Economy and Social Policy 38.). Tárki, June, 2002

Chart 4.

Worsening and improving general feelings according to the type of residential building
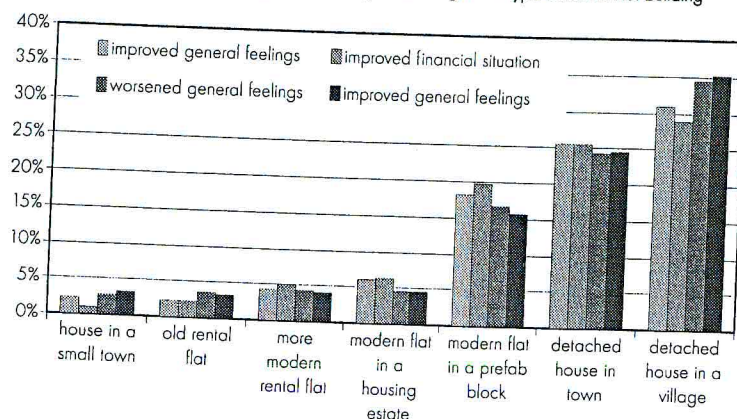
In the present survey, at the question about national problems, the interviewees mentioned such a lot of problems that it became necessary to put them into separate groups. On the whole, there are three main groups of problems based on the answers. In one of the groups the social type of problems are the most important on the national scale: the standard of living, the housing situation, low wages, unemployment, social tensions, etc. Otherwise, concerning the frequency of the answers it is the strongest category by far. According to the second group economic problems are the relevant problems at the national level. In the third main category political problems are named as the greatest problem of the country. We put those answers that mentioned problems of public security as the most important national problems in a special category. It is interesting to note that problems concerning health care were not mentioned so frequently among the national problems that it would have been justified to group them into a special category.

When evaluating the results we formed the following five main categories from the answers:

1) **Generally defined problems.** 761 people gave answers in which they could not define the essence of the problem and used general categories to describe it. One such problem is globalisation, which can have several components and at the same time it can be interpreted as a single concept. Similarly, we think that the answers related to the peace of the country, moral values or the lack of a future vision also belong here. (According to the code instructions we included the answers with the following codes here: 11 + 12 + 13 + 16 + 17 + 18 + 20 + 21 + 22 + 24 + 26 + 27 + 29 + 375 + 997 + 998.)

Table 7.

Thinking about the problems of the country in general terms (K3)

code number		number	%
17	churches, the politics of religion	3	0.4
24	problems related to sports	3	0.4
11	globalisation	7	0.9
26	issues of defence and the military, military service	7	0.9
18	the development of cultural life	13	1.7
29	decreasing population, few children	14	1.8
16	public administration, local governments, the financial situation of the local governments	18	2.4
12	leace, quiet	32	4.2
22	the situation of education	33	4.3
20	infrastructure, the construction of roads, transport, road network	35	4.6
27	the lack of a vision for the future, hopelessness	40	5.3
21	the housing situation	49	6.4
375	environmental protection	70	9.2
13	opinions on moral issues	357	46.9
997	a lot of problems that cannot be enumerated	16	2.1
998	other answers that cannot be categorised	64	8.4
total		761	100.0

This question is worthy of some attention only because the answers that are missing in 92% paint a quite alarming picture of the Hungarian population. We are not very happy to interpret this huge proportion of missing answers but it can hardly mean anything else but that the situation of "the country" does not mean much for the Hungarian population. The problems of "the country" are not manifested for the people in a form that can be clearly expressed. Perhaps as an issue of political parties but even then only if that party is active on the local level and in that case the **"homo localis"** magnifies the local characteristics to the national dimensions.

2) **Politically defined problems.** We put 1,377 answers in this category, mainly those that used definitions on the level of political terms, often in reference to the current political situation, to describe the essence of the national problems they found the most important (answers with the following code numbers: 23 + 400 + 401 + 403 + 450 + 456 + 458 + 475).

Half of those who mentioned the problems of "the country" at a general level (46.9%) talked of moral issues.

The proportion of those who gave answers related to the current political situation was nearly the same, with about half of the answers (46.7%) mentioning problems connected to the general political situation, another 30% criticising the government and a relatively high percentage (16.6%) mentioning the problems concerning the accession to the EU.

Table 8.
Answers related to the current political situation (K3)

code number		number	%
475	too much centralisation in the capital	3	0.2
400	general foreign policy problems	11	0.8
23	the situation of democracy, human rights	17	1.2
403	related to Hungarians as an ethnic group and the borders of the country	29	2.1
456	problems related to the political opposition	37	2.7
401	EU-accession	229	16.6
450	problems related to the government	408	29.6
458	problems related to the general political situation	643	46.7
total		1,377	100.0

3) **Economic type** answers. 1,413 answers belonged to this category, those that phrased the national problems mainly in economic terms (for example the black economy, secure livelihood, tax reform, supporting the entrepreneurs, the situation of the market and the stock exchange, etc.). Very probably these answers also indicate the problems that concern the interviewees personally (answers with the following code numbers: 10 + 101 + 108 + 110 + 111 + 153 + 257 + 425).

Table 9.
Economic-type answers for the problems of the country (K3)

code number		number	%
153	the prospering of the black economy	3	0.2
110	Tax reform, reducing taxes	11	0.8
111	supporting entrepreneurs or inadequate support	12	0.8
108	the situation of the market and the stock exchange	36	2.5
425	problems related to agriculture	253	17.9
10	secure/insecure livelihood	405	28.7
101	economic, financial situation	693	49.0
total		1,413	100.0

Half of the people giving answers related to the economy mentioned generalities. On the second place were those who complained about (their own!) security/insecurity of livelihood with 28.7%. The problems of agriculture came then on the third place, which is closely related to the bad general feelings mentioned at the question about the neighbourhood.

4) **Social type** answers. We included here the 4,592 answers that named the most important problem concerning the country in relation to unemployment, the system of subsidies, job creation, the situation of the elderly and the pensioners, the issue of gypsies, etc. (the answers with the following code: 100 + 150 + 151 + 152 + 200 + 201 + 202 + 275 + 325 + 350 + 351 + 352 + 353).

Table 10.
Social-type answers for the problems of the country (K3)

code number		number	%
352	racism, the hatred of minorities and foreigners	10	0.2
353	problems related to foreigners	12	0.3
201	the situation of families, supporting families	21	0.5
152	problems related to employment	37	0.8
350	social problems, homeless	40	0.9
351	the issue of gypsies, minorities	68	1.5
202	the situation and support of minority groups	106	2.3
325	the situation of health care	281	6.1
150	wages are low, the lack of wages at a Western-European level	286	6.2
200	the situation of pensioners and the elderly, pension	290	6.3
100	standard of living, livelihood, prices	689	15.0
275	social tensions, problems	805	17.5
151	unemployment, job creation	1,947	42.4
total		4,592	100.0

Less than half of those who considered the most serious problem of the country to be of the social type (42.4%) complained about the deficiencies of unemployment and job creation. The second largest topic among the social-type answers are "social tensions, problems" followed closely by the standard of living.

5) **Public security** problems. According to our category 870 answers belonged to this category. These answers include problems related to the death penalty, organised crime, the situation of public security, legal loopholes and courts. We suppose, although we cannot be sure about it, that the people who gave these kinds of answers were also influenced by their own experience when they mentioned the national problems (answers with the code number: 51 + 52 + 53 + 54 + 55 + 56).

Summarising the problem tables mentioned, we can say that since in each series of problems of the problem typology that we set up one problem rises above the others, therefore we are justified in selecting them as the headword for the tables and as a typology element representing the given series of problems (Chart 5.).

Table 11.
Answers related to public security for the problems of the country (K3)

code number		number	%
54	restoration of the death penalty	7	0.8
52	organised crime	10	1.1
55	courts, legal loopholes, legal cases, bureaucracy, jurisdiction	17	2.0
53	the spread of drug abuse	36	4.1
56	corruption	303	34.8
51	the situation of public security, crime	497	57.1
total		870	100.0

Chart 5.

The greatest problem of the country according to the type of problem indicated (N = 10,020)
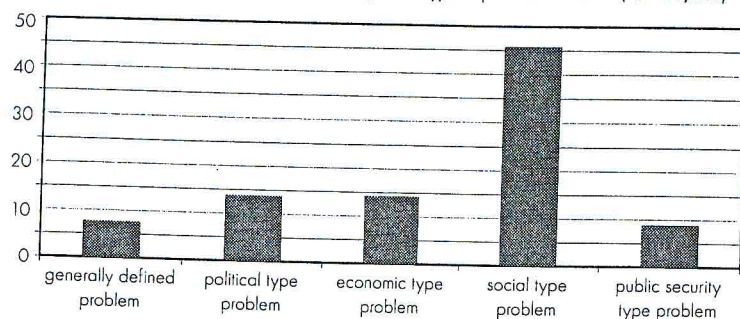
Taking the above-mentioned series of data together, we can state that social type problems are mentioned as problems of national importance many times more often than the political, economic problems or even the generalities that do not contain anything special in concrete. It would not be difficult to draw the conclusion from this that very probably those people mention the social problem as a problem affecting the whole society and the country whose situation worsened in the past few years. But it is not true. The refutation of this conclusion is strengthened by the comparison of the changes in the general feelings and the types of national problems. Chart 6. indicates that there is no such connection between the two dimensions, that is, the interviewees whose situation a) improved, b) basically remained unchanged and c) worsened were mentioned in a similar proportion (all the three curves are horizontal – with deviations within five percent). Thus, the mention of the social problems is significant because both those whose situation improved

Chart 6.

Changes in the general feelings and the types of national problems (%)
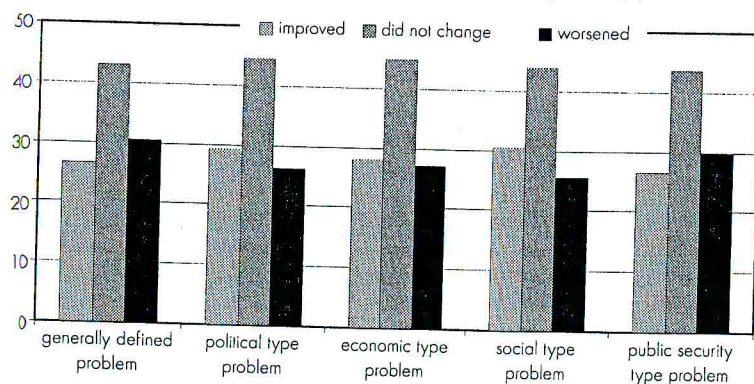
and those whose situation worsened considered these issues the most serious national problem.

We find interesting differences in the selection of national problems if we examine the data according to age groups. We can see that people above fifty use mainly political type problem definitions and it is especially characteristic of the generation above 60. It is also more characteristic of them to talk about the issues concerning public security as the most important national problem. People under 50 think that the most important problems of the country are mainly social and economic problems or problems defined in general (Chart 7.).

Chart 7.

The most important problems of the country broken down according to age groups within the given group of problems (%)
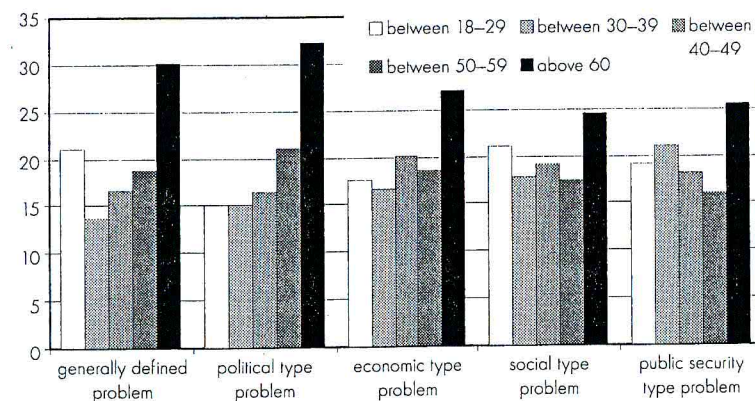
Place of residence and security

At question K4 the interviewees had the opportunity to mark those difficulties that they think are the most important in their own place of residence. In the course of survey we dealt with the problems that at least 1% of the interviewees marked as problems.

Among those interviewees who mentioned local problems in the first place there were 2,865 people who mentioned a problem that was mentioned by more than 1% of all the interviewees. (When evaluating the answers we also considered those answers that could not mark a local problem as we think that lack of knowledge is also an important sign.) Even in the case of these people we merged certain categories because there were several mentions that referred to similar local problems. In the evaluation

Table 12.
The local problems mentioned in the first place by the interviewees (N = 2,865)

don't know	12.4
unemployment, job creation, low wages	22.7
roads and transport	10.4
public security/theft	7.7
secure livelihood/poverty	3.7
public cleanliness	3.3
a lot of gypsies/homeless people	3.0
infrastructure/sewerage	3.1
no problems	2.6
noise	1.4
connected with local government	1.1

we used the following categories and we found the following distributions at the summary (Table 12.).

Those interviewees whose general feelings have improved in the past five years mentioned characteristically the local problems listed in Table 13.

Table 13.
Local problems mentioned in the first place on the basis of the changes in the general feelings and the financial situation of the interviewees

local problems mentioned in the first place	general feelings			financial situation		
	improved N = 1,845	did not change N = 3,211	worsened N = 2,062	improved N = 1,450	did not change N = 3,199	worsened N = 2,435
don't know	15.7	17.9	17.8	15.3	18.5	17.0
unemployment, job creation, low wages	30.2	31.5	34.1	31.7	29.6	35.0
roads and transport	19.6	14.4	10.4	17.5	15.2	12.2
public security/theft	10.8	10.3	11.3	10.9	11.3	9.8
secure livelihood/poverty	3.6	5.2	6.4	4.0	5.0	6.0
public cleanliness	5.2	4.9	3.9	4.7	5.1	4.1
a lot of gypsies/homeless	4.5	4.0	4.4	5.3	3.8	4.1
infrastructure/sewerage	4.0	4.4	4.4	4.0	4.3	4.6
no problems	3.2	4.0	3.4	3.2	3.9	3.4
noise	1.7	2.0	2.1	2.0	1.8	2.2
connected with local gvmnt.	1.5	1.5	1.7	1.4	1.5	1.7
total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

We should emphasise that the local problems of unemployment and job creation cause the greatest problems – even for most of those who think that their general feelings have improved in the past five years. This category is especially conspicuous among the data broken down according to counties[6].

6 The results acquired through breaking down the data for regions will be published in detail on another occasion. – The editor's remark.

Social type problems are followed by the local problem of transport and the condition of roads. The county data also show that this category appears in a larger proportion among the problems in counties where the level of development is higher and among interviewees whose financial situation and general feelings are better. 10.8% of the interviewees indicated local problems related to public security and frequent theft.

Among the local problems mentioned in the **first** place, it was in the case of *problems mentioned in connection with the local government* that people who experienced improvement both in their general feelings and in their financial situation found it a local problem (although there were only 13 such people). .31 of the people who experienced no change either in their financial situation or in the general feelings mentioned this problem, while 25 of the interviewees who experienced a negative change both in their financial situation and in their general feelings said that difficulties of the operation of the local government mean local problems for them.

If we examine those local problems that are mentioned in the first place, we see that there is an approximately 5% sensitivity threshold in the case of problems related to the local material environment (public cleanliness 3.8-5.3%; noise: 1.5%-2.4%; infrastructure, sewerage: 4.2-4.5%) and also in the case of problems related to secure livelihood and poverty (4.5-5.4%). Public security problems have a 10% sensitivity threshold and here there is no difference depending on how long people have lived at their present place of residence. It is interesting to note that the proportion of "no problem" answers (although it is under 5% in total) is higher among those who have lived in their present place of residence for at least 25 years (Chart 8.).

It is interesting to see, however, that the proportion of "don't know" answers is above 15%. This answer can be understood in the case of those who moved to their present home 1-5 years ago but the distribution rises to 22% especially among those who have been living in the same place for 25 years. As in the case of other relationships, concerns about unemployment and job creation have a special significance here as well; about 30% of the interviewees regarded them as local problems. Especially those who have been living in the same place for 6 to 15 years regarded this as a problem (34.7%) but it is a local problem for each group. Probably the view mentioned above has also been influenced by the significant inner migration that has taken place in the country for the past 10-15 years, which was partly the result of the decreasing number of job opportunities in some regions of the country.

Among the local problems mentioned in the **second** place *problems concerning unemployment and job creation* continue to have a 25-27% distribution (Chart 9.).

Chart 8.
Local problems mentioned in the first place/How long people have been living
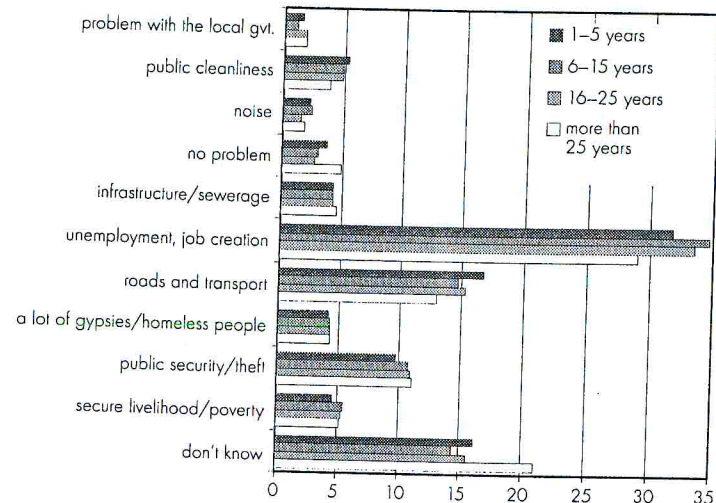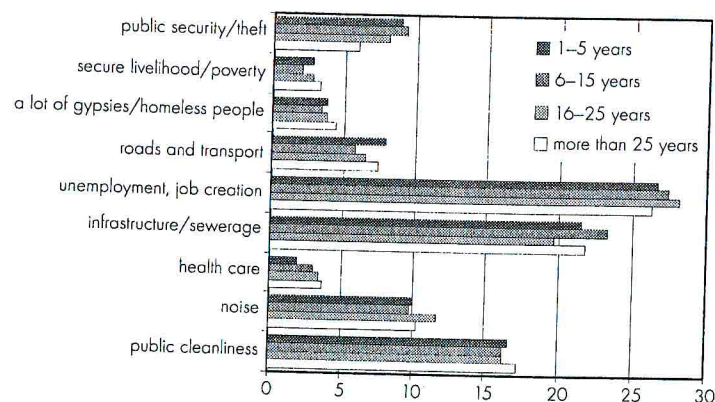in their present place of residence (N = 7,063) (Sz7o/Probl_1.) (%)

Chart 10.
Local problems mentioned in the third place/How long people have been living
in their present place of residence (N = 2,009) (Sz7o/Probl_3.) (%)

Chart 9.
Local problems mentioned in the second place/How long people have been living
in their present place of residence (N = 3,608) (Sz7o/Probl_2.) (%)

In this context problems related to the local general infrastructure receive much more emphasis. The problem of health care does not appear among the local problems mentioned in the first place and it is mentioned in about 5% of the cases both in the second and the third place (Chart 10.).

Among the first-second-third mentions, employment was mentioned especially often in the first place and physical environment in the second

place. Public security is also mentioned here. Among the problems mentioned in the first place the issues related to people are conspicuous, which can mean poverty and a higher number of gypsies. It is interesting, however, that one third of the people could not mention two local problems and two third of them could not mention three local problems.

Considering *the frequency of the mentions, the problem of jobs and employment* receive the greatest emphasis. This may mean that among local problems the lack of job opportunities is really outstanding but it may also happen that the interviewees project their personal problems as local problems. It definitely raises the questions that while local governments as the greatest employers play a significant role in local employment policy why local residents cannot see this. The answers do not show the existence of effective regional development programmes, while several governmental and non-governmental efforts have been directed at dealing with this problem. This lack of answers, in our opinion, strongly supports the EU intention, which is proving to be right, to connect the funds that you can apply for in the EU essentially to the "job problem"; as they try to alleviate social problems through creating the financial/income stability that can be expected as a result of job creation. (The problem of unemployment was mentioned in more than 5% of the answers in all the counties except two.) The second most widespread problem is the lack of subsidies for job creation. The word "work" has a strong appeal in all the counties but to a smaller extent in places where unemployment is not a

significant problem. It seems that these problems are dealt with inadequately nearly everywhere because the local residents do not sense its impact. Where the official unemployment rate is high, the problem of unemployment is always mentioned in the first place.

It is especially interesting that the "don't know" answer was on the second place, which may mean different things. Maybe the interviewee has no "local roots". Local politics was not included among local problems. This is very probably because the interviewees consider being engaged in politics to be a "national" issue and not a local activity and among the local problems they tend to find living conditions more important. This means that they do not think it would be possible to exert a stronger influence on their living conditions through participating in local political life together than through their individual efforts.

Lack of security and problem management

Lack of confidence can be addressed through crime prevention activities. In our interpretation this treatment can be both active and passive. Resignation and shifting the responsibility for the problems to others shows passivity concerning crime prevention. Active crime prevention tries to do something to avert the negative consequences before the events can be expected to take place. We examined the data available from different aspects as we tried to find which of these alternatives of action is more characteristic of the Hungarian population.

First of all, we examined how the interviewees *would improve public security* (Chart 11.).

Chart 11.

How would you improve public security? (%)
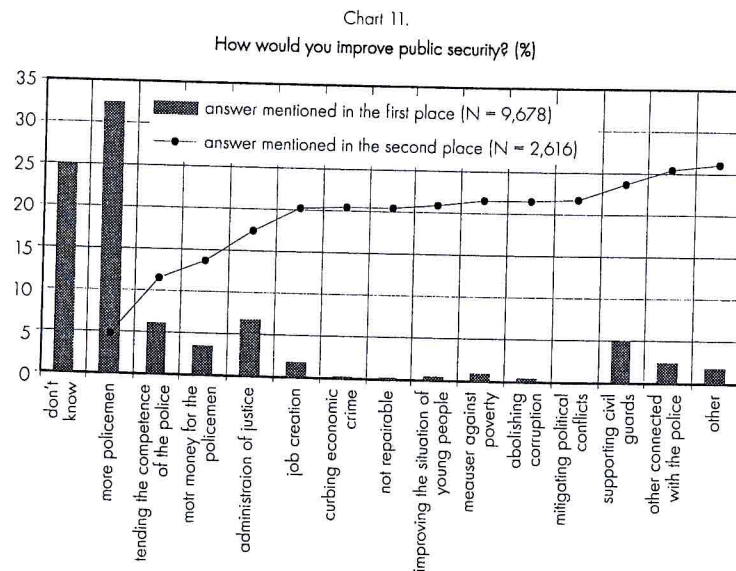
From the answers given to the question *in the first place,* we can draw an obvious conclusion about an intention to strengthen *police resources* (which means passivity concerning crime prevention)[7]. The *social type* solutions to handle crime appear in the second place although it is also noticeable that a quarter of the interviewees could not tell what they would do in order to improve public security. It is especially interesting in comparison to question K5, where a lot of interviewees said that they did not know or said that the police could not guarantee public security. The answers to this question give no clue about whether it is so because the police do not have enough resources to perform this task or because the interviewees think that not only the police have/can have a role in providing public security. The answers also suggest that the interviewees could only interpret the questions for themselves as police chiefs. At the same time, another possible explanation is that the interviewees suppose that the relationship between the local government and the police is much stronger than actually and they do not know what the relationship of the police, which work under strong centralisation, is like to the local government. It is interesting to note that the civil guards were mentioned by 5% of the interviewees, which may indicate a close relationship to the activity of the police in people's thinking.

We examined the answers defining public security as a local problem with special care (the answers that mentioned it in the 1st-2nd-3rd place). Chart 12. shows the opinions of these interviewees on the role of the police in guaranteeing public security.

Those for whom crime does not mean a personally perceived local problem, think that the police are practically able to control this problem; to

Chart 12.

Crime as a personal local problem and the role of the police in guaranteeing public security (K5/K36_1.) (%)
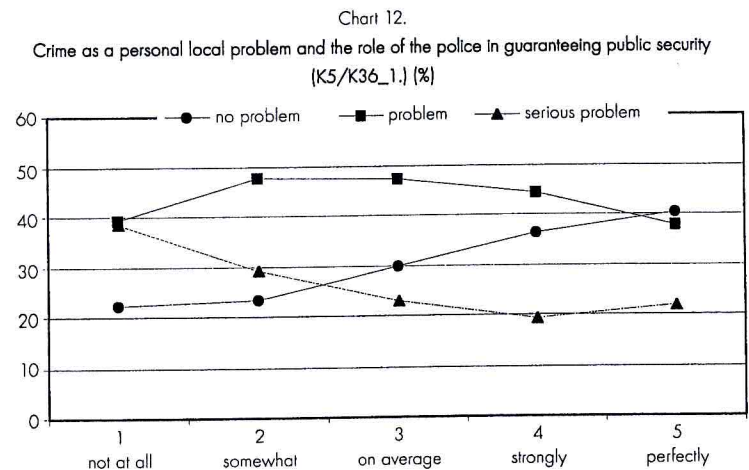
7 The study by Szilveszter Dunavölgyi analyses the role of the police in detail (page 87.).

handle it and can guarantee local public security. These people may think that local crime is not a problem for them because the police do their best in performing their task. But it is also possible that these people have never had a relationship with the police and that is why they have a very favourable picture of the possibilities of the police.

On the other hand, those who think that crime is a problem or a serious local problem do not have such a good opinion of the public security activities of the police at all. These interviewees said that the police are not so good at solving the problem of local prime, which counts as a personal and local problem for the interviewees. We have to add, however, that this opinion did not refer to the activity of the police as a whole but only their ability to guarantee public security.

While we were looking for an answer to the question what the opinion of the population is of the public security activity of the police we came across a definition problem: when we ask people an open-ended question about "what they think the most serious local problem is" and public security is the third on the list of most frequent answers, we do not know whether these answers are based on an interpretation of public security similar to how researchers use this concept or on an interpretation that contradicts this use. Because if the latter is true then the interpretation of the previous question can easily be misleading. We meant to resolve this dilemma by handling the contents of "crime" and "uncivilised local circumstances/public disorder" concerning the concept of public security. By the latter we meant that the following phenomena are characteristic locally: loud street noise, heavy traffic, litter and pollution in the streets and in green areas, homeless people, beggars, drunks, gypsies, drug addicts, bored and idle youngsters, the presence of too many foreigners applying for a refugee status and a lot of undisciplined motorists. On the other hand, we also wanted to either prove or discard the supposition that the interviewees say that the police work well because they have not had any actual experience with the police, as they have not been victimised and that those who have had to do with the police tend to give less positive references about them.[8] Therefore we prepared a cross-table about the victims' opinion on the police (Chart 13.).

The chart clearly shows that those who have been victimised and consequently have had to do with the police do not have a different image of the police than those who have not been victimised and therefore presumably have not had much to do with the police. The lines of the two

8 The study by Tünde Barabás contains a detailed comparative analysis of those people who had been victimised before the interviews and those who had not (page 161.).

Chart 13.

Have you been victimised or not and what do you think of the ability of the police to guarantee public security? (VICTIMOE/K5) (%)
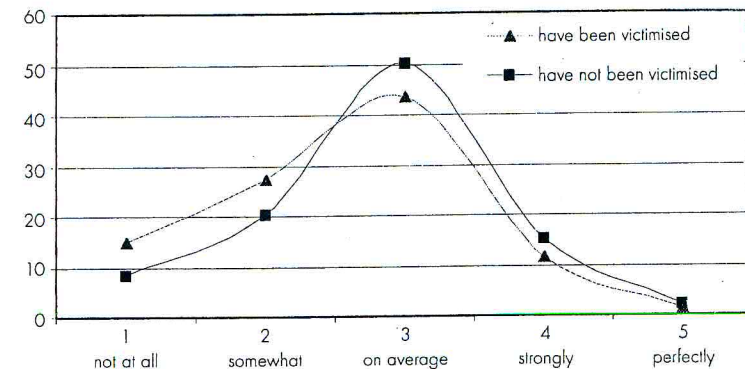
curves are nearly the same and are only slightly different at the two-third of the attitude scale. At lower values the proportion of victims is higher, while at values higher than that the proportion of those who have not been victimised is higher, which means that victimisation and the personal relationship owing to this do not influence the picture the public has of the public security activities of the police.

We connected questions K1b and K5 in order to find out whether it is true that those who find their situation improving think in an authoritarian way and the other way around.

Only 1,736 interviewees mentioned the problem of public security and theft among the local problems in the first (N = 767), in the second (N = 607) and in the third place (N = 362).

We also examined the question from the point of view of whether the interviewees think the police are able to guarantee public security. (Note: we

Chart 14.

Local problems primarily concern public security together with the answer to the question whether the police are able guarantee public security (N = 865) (K5/K1BOSS/K3_KO.) (%)
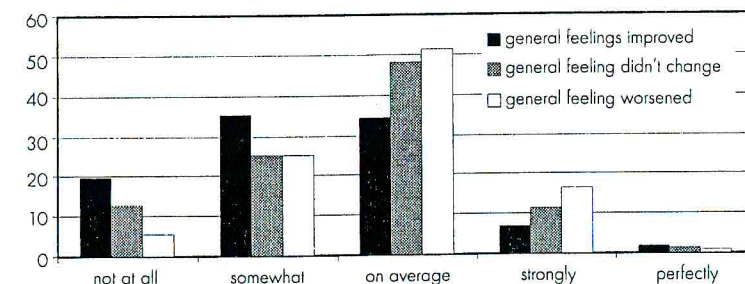
did not ask people about the guarantee of the security of the public!) We wanted know if the opinions had changed in view of how the general feelings of the interviewees had changed in the past five years. The chart shows that it is really those whose general feelings have improved in the past five years who think in authoritarian way. A higher percentage of them think that the police have a significant role in maintaining an acceptable level of public security. Those whose general feelings have not changed have an ambivalent attitude towards this question and most of them attribute an average importance to the role of the police in maintaining public security.

After all this, the question may be raised: if the interviewees (especially those whose general feelings have worsened) have such an ambivalent attitude towards the ability of the police to guarantee public security, who can guarantee security for them?

The overwhelming majority of the interviewees answered the question asking about the role of the *civil guards*[9]. Only 1,400 people could not answer, while others mentioned more than one task. We also took into consideration the multiple answers concerning the tasks of the civil guard. The questionnaire did not offer multiple choices for this question; therefore (or owing to the lack of other information), the overwhelming majority of the interviewees gave only one answer. At the same time, more than 2,500 interviewees gave an answer in the second place as well and some of them even knew about a third task of the civil guard. Multiple mentions are also important although the proportion of the answers in the third place was very low (under 1%). Therefore we decided on merging the answers (Table 14.).

Taking the answers together we can conclude that people see the tasks of the civil guard correctly as they primarily think that the civil guards are mainly

Table 14.
The opinions of the interviewees on the tasks of the civil guard

tasks	mentioned in the			together, accumulated	%
	first place	second place	third place		
improving public security	3,706	647	59	4,412	39.4
helping policemen	2,843	916	80	3,839	34.2
patrolling, civil defence	1,476	754	123	2,353	21.0
catching criminals	201	152	14	367	3.3
checking dangerous elements	42	57	25	124	1.1
checking parked cars	16	12	0	28	0.2
supervising gypsies	7	1	0	8	0.1
other	59	16	4	79	0.7
total	8,350	2,555	305	11,210	100.0

9 Another study in this volume – the one by Szilveszter Dunavölgyi, mainly on the issue of the police – deals with this topic in more detail. – The editor's remark.

the civilian helpers of the police and only a relatively few people think that they actually perform policing tasks. Half of the interviewees (52.3%) know about a civil guard operating in their locality, 31.6% said that they did not know about a local civil guard and only 15% said that they did not know anything about them. Thus half of the interviewees were influenced by their own local experiences as well when they identified the tasks of the civil guard. Therefore it is interesting that there is no significant difference between those at whose locality there is a civil guard and those at whose locality there is no civil guard: both groups identified the tasks of the civil guard in the same way.

We examined the data from the aspect how the interviewees *strengthen their security*[10]. As we found the examination of the general feelings important, we categorised the interviewees from this aspect at this question as well, with special regard to the fact that there were only 54 interviewees who could not/ did not want to answer the question about the change in the general feelings. There may be multiple answers among the answers given to questions K39 1-7. because the interviewees have different means available to protect against becoming a victim and they could mention several instruments among the ones that they did not use. The mentions that were made about the instruments of security in the whole sample can be seen in Table 15.

Table 15.
The security instruments applied by the interviewees

	use it for protection	yes (%)	do not use it for protection	no (%)
security lock	6,568	42.1	3,345	7.6
locking bar	2,268	14.5	7,645	17.4
bars	1,226	7.9	8,687	19.8
local alarm	611	3.9	9,302	21.2
alarm at an emergency centre	149	1.0	9,764	22.3
watchdog	4,788	30.7	5,125	11.7
total	15,610	26.2	43,868	73.8

2,692 interviewees (26.9%) said that their general feelings improved in the past five years. The data show that 4,387 of those interviewees whose general feelings improved mentioned that they used some kind of situational crime prevention instrument against being victimised (Table 16.).

4,414 interviewees (44.1%) said that their general feelings did not improve in the past five years. They mentioned it in a total of 6,909 cases that they used crime prevention instruments (Table 17.).

10 Several other studies of this volume deal with voluntary strengthening of security, still, primarily we refer to József Kó's analysis of this topic (page 59.).

Table 16.

The security instruments used by those interviewees whose general feelings improved

	use it for protection	yes (%)	do not use it for protection	no (%)
security lock	1,874	42.7	588	5.7
locking bar	682	15.5	1,780	17.1
bars	317	7.2	2,145	20.7
local alarm	210	4.8	2,252	21.7
alarm at an emergency centre	46	1.0	2,416	23.3
watchdog	1,258	28.7	1,204	11.6
total	4,387	100.0	10,385	100.0

Table 17.

The security instruments used by those interviewees whose general feelings did not change

	use it for protection	yes (%)	do not use it for protection	no (%)
security lock	2,889	41.8	1,029	6.2
locking bar	1,019	14.7	2,899	17.5
bars	554	8.0	3,364	20.3
local alarm	252	3.6	3,666	22.1
alarm at an emergency centre	63	0.9	3,855	23.2
watchdog	2,132	30.9	1,786	10.8
total	6,909	100.0	16,599	100.0

2,860 people (28.5%) said that their general feelings worsened in the past five years and these interviewees mentioned the use of protective instruments in 4,219 cases (Table 18.).

Table 18.

The security instruments used by those interviewees whose general feelings worsened

	use it for protection	yes (%)	do not use it for protection	no (%)
security lock	1,769	41.9	712	7.4
locking bar	554	13.1	1,927	19.9
bars	343	8.1	2,138	22.1
local alarm	139	3.3	2,342	24.2
alarm at an emergency centre	38	0.9	2,443	25.3
watchdog	1,376	32.6	1,105	1.1
total	4,219	100.0	9,673	100.0

We expected that the more frequent use of protective instruments would somehow be seen in whether the general feelings of the interviewees improved or worsened. On the basis of Chart 15., however, it seems that there is no significant difference concerning the different use of protective instruments between the groups of people whose general feelings are different. It seems

that the only difference exists perhaps concerning the keeping of a watchdog: those people whose general feelings did not change or worsened tend to keep dogs more often. (We'll come back to this question later.)

Chart 15.

General feelings and the types of security instruments
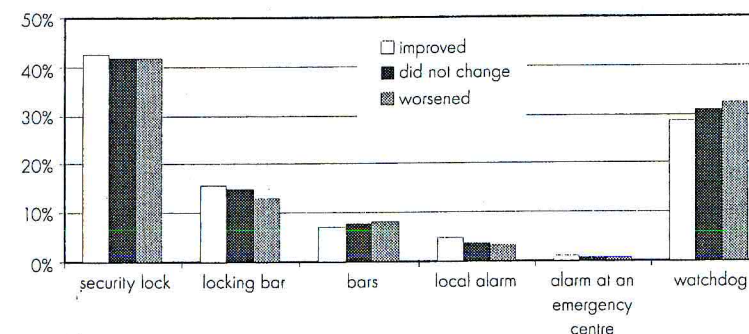
There is no doubt that the financial opportunities determine the quality of "purchasable" security. So we wanted to know how the net income of the family influences the use of different security instruments.

There were altogether 8,861 interviewees who gave an answer about their general feelings and besides they answered that they used some sort of security instrument and also gave an answer to the question about the net monthly family income. We recorded 2,462 mentions about security instruments among those people whose general feelings improved, 3,918 mentions among those whose general feelings did not change and 2,481 mentions among those whose general feelings worsened. Based on the data available for us we examined whether there is a difference in the different income categories between the mentions. We did not look for differences such as those who are in a higher income category can more probably afford the use of more expensive security instruments because this would not say much. Alarm systems linked to an emergency centre were mentioned in only a very small percentage (1.5%) of the cases in the sample, anyway. Instead, we examined whether there is a connection between the well-known protection instruments and the growth in the size of the incomes.

Using a security lock for protection is more frequent than fifty percent even in the lowest income categories (Chart 16.).

The proportion of those who use a locking bar for protection is quite high, it is not above 30% even in the 250 thousand HUF income category and typically there is no difference depending on what people's general feelings

Chart 16.
The instrument of protection: security lock (%)
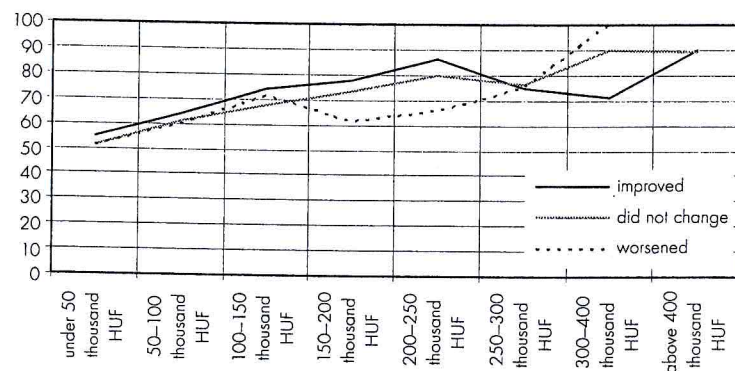
are like. It is interesting to note that in the higher income categories locking bars are typically used by those whose general feelings have not changed; about 80% of them use it, but its use is above 50% even among those whose general feelings have worsened (Chart 17.).

Chart 17.
The instrument of protection: locking bar (%)
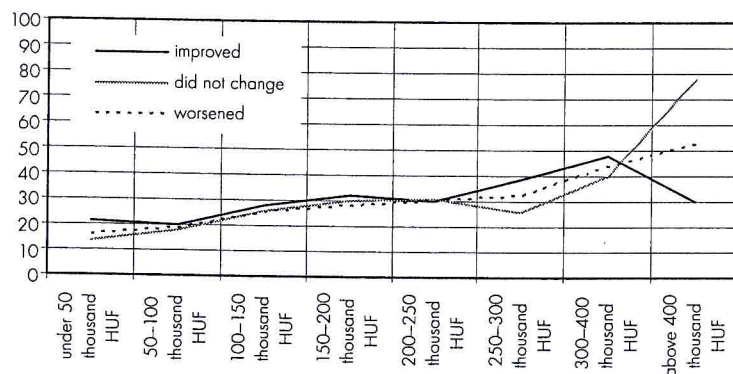
The interviewees use bars on the doors or on the windows for protection at a low proportion, of about 10% in the 150–200 thousand HUF income categories. The more frequent use of these is characteristic in the higher income categories, especially among those whose general feelings have worsened, where – in the income category above 400 thousand it reaches 50% (Chart 18.).

The use of a local alarm and an alarm connected to an emergency centre shows the expected distribution in the sample (Charts 19. and 20.) and these data show that the more expensive instruments of protection are

Chart 18.
The instrument of protection: bars (%)
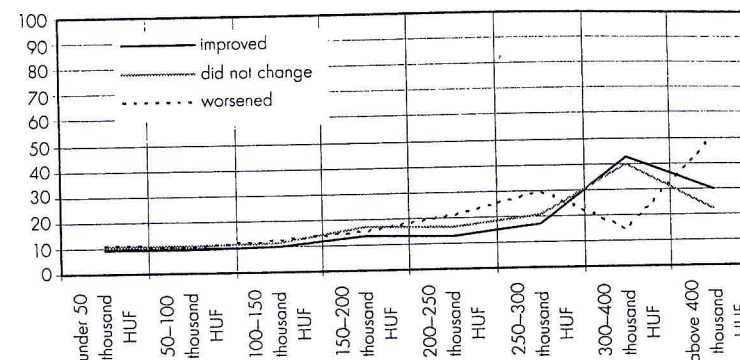
Chart 19.
The instrument of protection: a local alarm system (%)
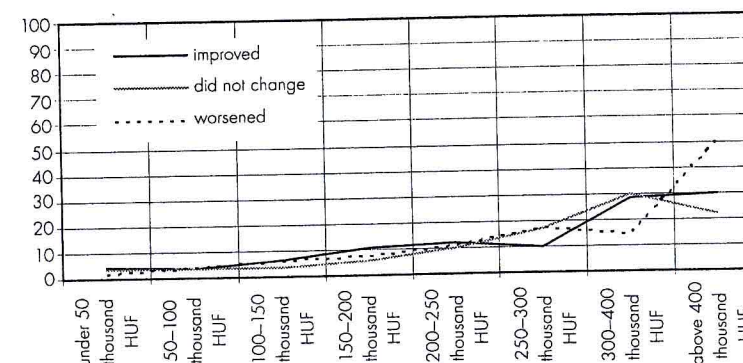
Chart 20.
The instrument of protection: An alarm connected to an emergency centre (%)
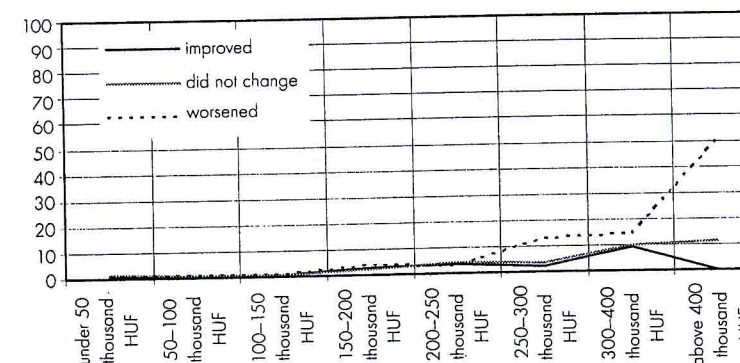
not characteristic in the lower income categories. The use of a local alarm is characteristic at a noticeable proportion in the categories above 250–300 thousand HUF and an alarm connected to an emergency centre is characteristic in the categories above 400 thousand HUF. In both cases it is noticeable that half of those in the upper income categories who find their situation worsening mentioned that they use an alarm for protection.

Keeping a dog as an instrument of protection is characteristic of the half of the sample, independently of their income situation and general feelings. There is only one conspicuous feature in this group: those people who find their situation worsening keep a dog in an increasingly high proportion from the 200–250 thousand HUF income category upwards and this proportion reaches 100% in the highest income category (Chart 21.).

Chart 21.
The instrument of protection: a watchdog (%)
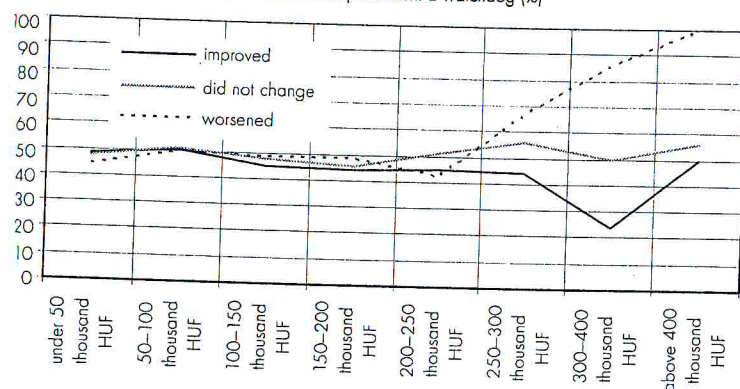
We think that the main reason for keeping a dog in Hungarian families is the love of dogs and not greater protection. As Chart 22. shows keeping a dog is independent of whether people think they can become victims of burglaries. The proportion of those who keep a dog is not even higher among those who often think of the possibility of becoming a victim of crime; what's more, there is a higher proportion of people who keep a dog among those who never or hardly ever entertain the thought of being burgled. One may, of course, add that keeping a dog depends on the housing conditions as well: it is more characteristic in a house with a garden.

If we examine the people who use some kind of instrument for protection regarding how often they think of the possibility of being burgled we see that the idea of this danger is characteristic of the lower income categories. It is hardly noticeable in the higher income categories, which may be due to the fact that in

Chart 22.
Is keeping a dog an instrument of protection against burglary? (%)
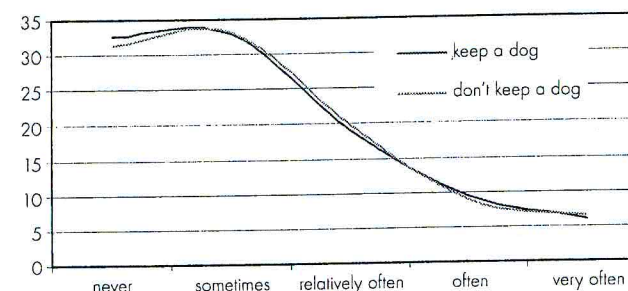
Chart 23.
Fear of burglary among those who use situational instruments for protection according to income categories (%)
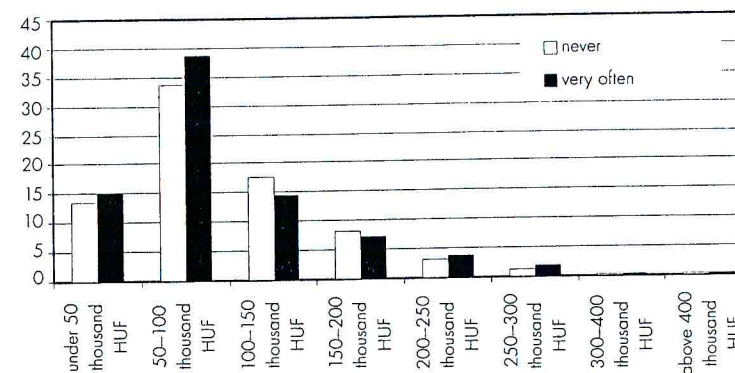
these categories more expensive and more reliable instruments protecting against burglary (such as alarms) are more characteristic (Chart 23.).

As we have seen, most of the interviewees use technical instruments for protection. At the same time, we know that the possibility of preventing (and of committing) crimes is to be found in the locality, in the neighbourhood.

We examined the data from the aspect whether *the value judgements on local security urges local residents to change their place of residence*. We experienced that 70% of even those who complained about lack of security do not want to change the situation they described as unfavourable by moving (Chart 24.). (In this phase of the evaluation we did not take into consideration that the possibility of moving does not depend only on the intention of the interviewees but on their financial means and other circumstances as well.)

The fact that 57.4% of the interviewees have lived in their present place of residence for more than 16 years obviously plays a part in this. The data show

Chart 24.

The evaluation of the security of the neighbourhood and the intention to move (%)
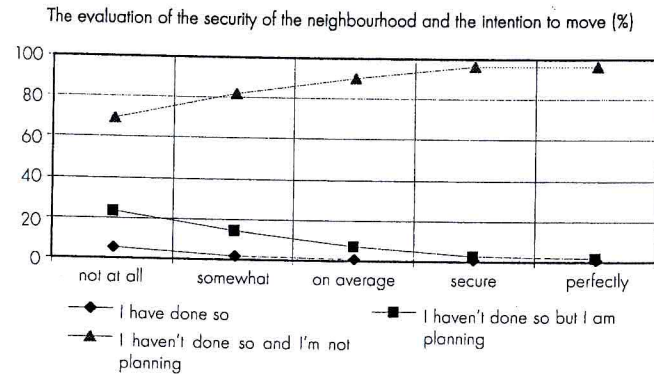
that the longer someone lives in the same place the more secure they find their immediate neighbourhood. This shows a certain degree of stability of the neighbourhoods that definitely can be built on when using local crime prevention instruments. At the same time, it is also true that a little more than 20% of the interviewees would like to use this solution to get out of an environment that does not seem secure to them. Perhaps it could be taken as natural that 17.2% of those who think that their environment is not secure at all or only partly secure can imagine being assaulted in the street in their neighbourhood. 39.1% of those who consider their neighbourhood secure or perfectly secure said the same, which is an interesting phenomenon and it shows that a lot of factors influence the picture people have of local security. 22.5% of those who consider their place of residence less secure can imagine being assaulted inside the building while 34.2% of those found their neighbourhood very secure also found such an assault possible, which also shows the insecurity of the picture people have of the security of their neighbourhood. It is especially noteworthy that a much higher proportion of those who live in an environment that they find secure think it possible that their home may be burgled. 51.7% of them thought a burglary was possible, while only 11.8% of those who found their neighbourhood secure thought the same.

Crime prevention literature mentions in several cases that changes in *the sense of security* are influenced not only by acts that are formally categorised as crimes but also by regional disorder and uncivilised human behaviour. Therefore from the point of view of our basic approach (improving/not changing/worsening), with the help of question K36, we examined this phenomenon as well (Chart 25.).

The direction of the change in the general feelings can influence the threshold level of perception concerning local disorder. On the whole, we see

Chart 25.

The direction of the change in the general feelings and the perception of certain phenomena as problems (%)
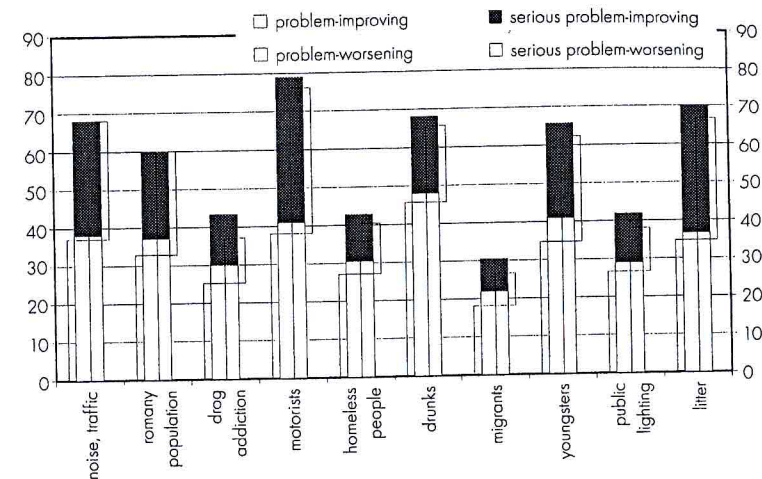
that there is an outstanding phenomenon among those that are regarded as problems: defining the behaviour of undisciplined motorists as a problem or as a serious problem (improving general feelings: 78.8%, worsening general feelings: 76%), which means that there is no significant difference in perceiving this phenomenon as such from the point of view of general feelings. Litter in the environment is also considered a serious problem by both groups — the difference males up only a few percentages — and with a similarly small difference both groups regard drunks and bored youngsters hanging around a problem. The two groups also have the same opinion of the problem of noise, traffic and the presence of the Romany population. They find all other disorder problem-free to a greater extent than the interviewees whose general feelings have improved. At the same time, those who find their situation worsening consider the phenomena listed among those regarded as problems less important — to a smaller or a greater extent — than those who find their situation improving. It is noticeable that the problems of drug addicts, homeless people and migrants are mentioned in fewer than 50% and the same is true of public lighting among the elements of the physical environment that strengthen security. From this, we can draw the conclusion that *the local residents' sense of security is basically influenced by two groups of people: the motorists and the Romany population.* The former can be explained by the spread of driving habits that neglect even the basic rules of traffic, while the latter can be explained by cultural differences.

We should note that there is a connection between the direction in the change of general feelings and the picture people have of the security of their neighbourhood. No matter what the neighbourhood is like, those interviewees whose general feelings have worsened in the past five years give significantly worse marks for the security of their neighbourhood (Chart 26.).

Chart 26.

The direction of the change in the general feelings and the security of the neighbourhood (%)
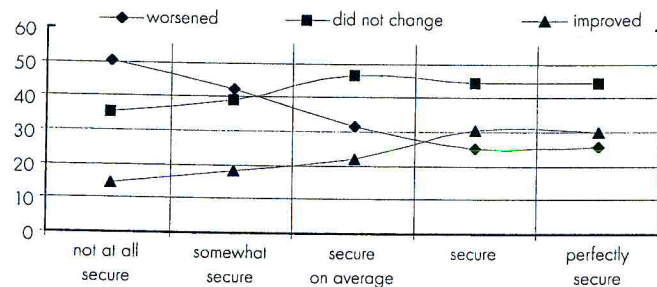
In the process of transition, as the institutions of society that exercise formal control were weakened, this was not followed by a strengthening of the informal control of small communities within society. The cooperation of the citizens at the local level and involvement in programmes has received little attention so far, that is, the environment where we live and work, the "little world" of the neighbourhood where spend our everyday life – in a paradox way – seemed to have lost some of its social significance in the past decade. Thus, in order to strengthen security we must find the delicate balance between exercising informal and formal social control[11]. Therefore we examined those *neighbourhood resources* that can strengthen or weaken the interviewees' security or sense of security (Chart 27.).

Concerning the relationships in the neighbourhood only 8% of the interviewees suggested (in an indirect way) that they do not even know their neighbours and therefore they do not have any relationships with each other. Those, however, who gave a positive answer to this question, indicated that they at least greet each other when they meet and they are basically aware of the place their neighbours occupy in society. "They know where they belong to."

11 Kerezsi, K.: Önkormányzat és közösségi bűnmegelőzés (Local government and community crime prevention). In: Bűnözés és bűnmegelőzés a válságrégiókban (Crime and Crime Prevention in Crisis Regions). Kriminológiai Közlemények. Különkiadás. A III. Országos Kriminológiai Vándorgyűlés anyaga. Magyar Kriminológiai Társaság, Budapest–Miskolc, 1999, pp. 84–110.

Chart 27.

Neighbourhood relationships (%)
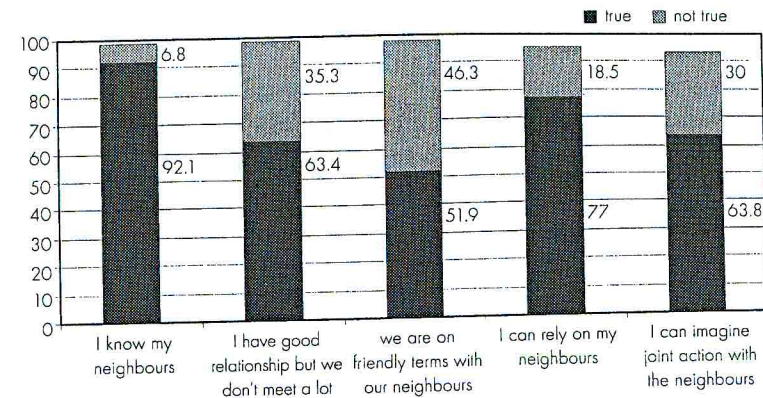
One third less of the interviewees (63.4%) considered their neighbourhood relationships good and loose 51.9% of them have even closer relationships: they consider their neighbours as friends (!)

The real surprise, however, can be the statement that 77% of the interviewees even rely on their neighbours (again, only at a minimal level: in such everyday situations when they run out of salt or red pepper at home or when someone has to receive registered mail, etc.).

It can also be very surprising that according to 63.8% them joint action with the neighbours would be possible. In the process of transition, the weakening of the institutions within society that exercise formal control was not followed by a strengthening of the informal control exercised by small communities in society. Cooperation between the citizens on the local level and involvement in programs has received little emphasis so far. In order to strengthen security we have to find the fine balance between the exercise of informal and formal control of the society. Therefore we examined those *resources in the neighbourhood* that can either strengthen or weaken the interviewees' security or sense of security. The data we collected here must radically change the stereotypes of "people estranged from each other" "residents who don't understand each other and fight about every small thing" and "alienated society". The message of these figures can only be that despite all the rumour to the contrary, Hungarian society has not lost the intention to cooperate altogether. People have not been alienated from each other and the basic tone in relationships in the neighbourhood is not enmity. This inner need, however, remains hidden and does not come to the surface and the loose relationships do not join together to form a proud web of

solidarity of local identity. It is the huge responsibility of politicians and the government not to waste this real potential within society and to provide incentives – through practically any possible means – for local people to find each other in a local community. And why could not this catalyser be local social crime prevention? Why could not common activities have the direction that occupies the third place among the problems received now: the security of the public?

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TÜNDE BARABÁS

General Victimology, Latency[1]

Introduction

The research in *victimology* known as "Széchenyi research" in Hungary offers a unique chance for researchers to come to know in general and in detail, according to the type the characteristics of victims, the frequency of victimisation, the emotions and fears of the victims and what happened in their lives after the crime. So far there have been no examinations of similar volume in Hungary that explored this problem in such depth, from so many aspects and on such a huge sample. One of the openly stated goals of these surveys, which are similar to the so-called *victim surveys* regularly performed in Anglo-Saxon countries, is to make them regular practice in Hungary, too, so that it would be possible to monitor the surveys on victimisation in Hungary and to compare them with official statistics. This can help us to improve the situation of the victims and to create a uniform concept of treating them. Besides, annual examinations will be inevitable now that Hungary has joined the European Union. Thus, we can regard this examination as the forerunner of a national core research

The role of the victims receive an increasingly great emphasis in international documents and consequently in the national systems of administration of justice[2]. This is partly due to the development of the science of victimology and partly to the realisation that the legislators and those applying the law in the 20th century were forced to face: the earlier trends – that concentrated on the person of the offenders using different approaches when dealing with the causes of crime and on the basis of this came up with solutions – did not bring

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1 This topic is discussed mostly according to the same or similar aspects but from a different perspective by a study by József Kó in this volume. Tünde Barabás concentrates on the comparison of the interviewees who have been and who have not been victimised, while József Kó focuses primarily on the whole population. Concerning the whole adult Hungarian population it is useful to study both papers. – The editor's remark.

2 Thus, for example:
  – The declaration of the UN accepted on 29 November 1985: the declaration of the basic principles of the administration of justice in connection with the victims of crimes and the misuse of power.
  – The No. R (87) 18. recommendation of the Ministerial Committee of the Council of Europe for the member states on the simplification of criminal procedures.
  – The no. 19. recommendation of the year 1999 of the Ministerial Committee of the Council of Europe on the use of mediation in cases of criminal law.
  – The 2001/220/IB framework resolution of the Council of the European Union on the legal standing of victims in the criminal procedure.

the desired result. The number of crimes and within them the number of crimes committed by recidivists has not decreased and the practical realisation of certain theories may lead to serious conflicts, for example, in the administration of punishments[3].

As the result of all these, the role of the victims came to the foreground and together with it the tendencies that placed the process and the causes of victimisation and other important related issues – such as latency, secondary and tertiary victimisation, sense of security and compensation after victimisation – became increasingly strong.

The hypotheses of the research

One of the main hypotheses of our research was that in contrast to the picture reflected in the official statistics, citizens become victims of crime at a much higher number in reality than the number of times they report crimes. In the background of it there are those crimes that are not reported for some reasons, so they are not shown in the data of the police. The question is only the extent of latency, that is, the number of cases that remain hidden. The task of research, however, reached farther than this, namely, it intended to examine which types of crimes remain characteristically hidden and also what the reasons are that the victims fail to report the crimes. These reasons may be subjective, for example, it is not worth reporting the incident because the case is not important or very "awkward" (for example, in the case of sexual crimes) if the offender was an acquaintance or a relative, or maybe the victim is distrustful or even afraid of the police. There may be objective reasons, for example, the victims come to the conclusion on the basis of the earlier activities of the police that it is not worth the trouble reporting the incident as they will not be given fair treatment, the police will not catch the offender or based on this realisation the authorities themselves will try to "deter" the victims who try to report a crime. Obviously, mostly minor, not so serious incidents remain hidden. In these cases when the victim considers the consequences of reporting the incident and compares them with the consequences of not reporting it, it is still the latter that seems less disadvantageous so they chose not to report the incident. Therefore, for example, in the case of a theft in the street, even if a large amount of cash was stolen, the victim presumably tend to "not report" the theft, since very probably the money will not be recovered but he or she will face a long police procedure.

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3 Thus, for example, as the result of the ideology of treatment, prison rebellions broke out in the prisons crowded with prisoners convicted for uncertain terms in the USA in the 1950s.

The international theories of criminal victimology all agree that there is a high degree of latency in the case of crimes. There is a difference only concerning the extent of latency. There are some who think that crime as it appears in the statistics is just the tip of the iceberg and the greater part of it "remains in the dark" for lack of being reported, while others estimate this proportion to be smaller, three or four times as much[4].

One may ask the question in connection with the examination of latency: In whose interest is it to disclose the cases that have been hidden so far and why? Higher figures can spoil trust in official statistics and faith in the omnipotence of the administration of justice. Actually, however, everyone knows about these problems, since presumably in every family in Hungary, either a close or a distant member or an acquaintance has been the victim of a crime that he or she failed to report for some reasons. According to the *other hypothesis* of the research, supposedly an unpleasant experience endured either by them or by someone else, in connection with a procedure earlier, could have played a part in it. Thus, the result of the survey disclosing these facts will probably result in understanding and not astonishment. Besides, the conclusions drawn from the research can help the work of the authorities (the police, the prosecution office or the court ruling on the case). Finally, as Imre Kertész put it: in order to evaluate criminal statistics, to assess the tendencies objectively and to make international comparisons we should have reliable data about the quantity, the composition and especially the changes in the number of not only the crimes that are known by the authorities but also the hidden crimes. Without this, we can only have a distorted picture of the actual criminal situation in the country[5].

The *third hypothesis* of the research was that the sense of security of the interviewees is closely connected to earlier victimisation. That is, being the victim of a crime has an effect on the sense of security of the individual; it will become weaker, often even weaker than what would be justified realistically. This was proved by the Hungarian experiences of the international research (INSEC) examining the sense of insecurity in five European cities (Hamburg, Amsterdam, Krakow, Vienna and Budapest), according to which the risk assessment of those who have been victimised and the people living near them is characteristically higher than the assessment of those who have not been the victims of crimes[6].

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4 For more detail, see: Korinek, László: Rejtett bűnözés (Hidden Crime). KJK, Budapest, 1988

5 Kertész, I.: Szociológiai módszerek a bűnözés megismerésében I. (Sociological Methods in Coming to Know Crime I.) Belügyi Szemle, 3/1997., pp. 39–50.

6 Kó, J.: Az InSec-vizsgálat tapasztalatairól. WP2. Kvantitatív vizsgálat (On the Experiences of the InSec Survey. WP2. Quantitative Survey). Manuscipt, 2004

Facts and Results

As we will see below and go into details about it[7], the results received in the course of the present survey proved our first hypothesis. Among the *10,020* interviewees *3,326* said that they had become the victims of incidents they considered to be crimes in a total of *8891* cases in the past 5.5 years (between 1998 and the first half of 2003). This seems quite an alarming figure even if we know that there are cases when the same person was victimised in more than case: 2 or 3 or even 10 times. Consequently, more than 30% of the interviewees were victimised in *5.5 years* once or more than once. As we asked for detailed data about the crimes for 2002–2003, we can narrow the interval we examine and we can say that in 2002 and in the first half of 2003 altogether 2007 adults were victims of crime once or more than once, that is, 20% of the interviewees. This is a much higher proportion than the official statistics, since during these one and a half years — for lack of data from *2003*, according to estimations, calculating with a constant number of cases — *347,161* crimes were committed against adults, which, if projected to 10 million inhabitants, is a somewhat higher 3.5% rate of victimisation, although still seems quite low.

These data, of course, cannot be directly compared, owing to several reasons. First, *official victimisation statistics* include only *the victims of certain types of crimes* and only the *natural persons* among them. This means that the number of victims in the statistics is definitely smaller than in reality. Also, beside the data from the given year, the victims of crimes committed in the previous years but detected only later are also shown, which can also distort the overall picture. It is partly due to this that there are only 243,582 victims for the approximately 420,000 crimes committed in 2002.

In contrast to this, our survey worked with a different definition of victims. That is how it happened, for example, that an interviewee talked about a crime against "not natural persons" that is not included in the statistics, because they considered the theft of the company car they used as a crime committed against them. It is also possible that the incident they considered to be a crime but not reported to the police was actually only a minor offence and does not come under the jurisdiction of criminal law just as overcharging the customer with a small amount in the shop, which is an incident that happens daily. So we evaluated the data received in view of the above and their comparison with official statistics serves only the purpose of interest. Table 1. shows the data from the official Unified Police and Prosecution Crime Statistics (UPPCS) for the five whole years we examined.

7 See the two studies by József Kó in this volume (p. 27., 59.).

Table 1.
The number of the victims of crimes that became known on the basis of UPPCS
(1998–2002)

the type of crime	1998	1999,	2000	2001	2002
against persons	13,269	12,930	13,123	12,849	13,723
traffic offences	6,162	5,711	5,466	4,971	5,625
against marriage, family and youth	1,130	1,010	1,151	1,120	1,122
against sexual morals	347	332	855	837	813
against state administration — the administration of justice	711	785	790	728	779
against public order	7,569	7,721	7,804	8,291	9,097
against property	289,849	267,244	231,904	234,429	212,423
victims in total	319,037	295,733	261,093	263,225	243,582

On the one hand, this table contains more comprehensive data, since it deals with incidents not included in the present survey (for example, crimes against public administration, public order, and marriage, family and youth). On the other hand it contains only some of the crimes that actually happened owing to the reasons outlined above. As we can see, the data clearly show the continuous decreasing of crime in the past few years. The question is, what is actually behind this tendency; that is, a drop in the number of crimes or perhaps some other reasons play the main role in this definitely positive trend. One of my aims in this study is to try to find the answer to this question based on the answers of the 10 thousand people we contacted in the survey.

## The socio-demographic characteristics of the interviewees

Victimisation and the type of the crime suffered by the victim

As we have mentioned above, we contacted altogether *10,020* adults in the survey from the whole of Hungary and 6,694 of them said that in the past five years (1998–2003) *they were not the victims of crimes*, while 3,326 said that in this period they were *victims once or more than once*.

The crime they suffered was, similarly to the data of the UPPCS, usually crime against property, in more than 80% of the cases mentioned (87.4%). Various crimes were included in this category, from car theft to burglary, theft and even to different kinds of fraud. Violent crimes, on the other hand, take place much more rarely according to the interviewees: robbery in 1.7%, violent crime against a person in 6.5% and crime against sexual morals in 1% of the cases. This distribution more or less corresponds to the proportions in the official statistics — although not in its volume but in its proportions —

according to which crimes against property take place in around 80% of the cases and crimes against persons, for example, are much less frequent compared to this.

However, if we narrow down our perspective to the year 2002 and the first half of 2003, we can see that the proportions have changed to some extent. They are somewhat different primarily among crimes that are considered less serious, for example in the categories of damaging, stealing, attacking or deceiving, where the number of cases published has increased significantly. Thus, for example, among the so-called attacks, the interviewees mentioned 156 cases in four years, while in the past one and a half years, the number of cases published in 2002 was 104 and in the first half of 2003 it was 87, which would implicate at least 400 cases for four years. The interviewees mentioned 229 cases of damaging in the period between 1998 and 2001, while they mentioned 119 such cases in 2002 alone (this exceeds the average number of cases broken down to the earlier years by more than 50%) and they mentioned an even higher number of 106 cases in the first half of 2003. The situation although not the same, is very similar in the two other groups of crimes. In contrast to this, there are no such differences in the proportions of more serious crimes, such as car thefts or robberies (Chart 1.).

Chart 1.

The frequency of mentioning car thefts and attacks
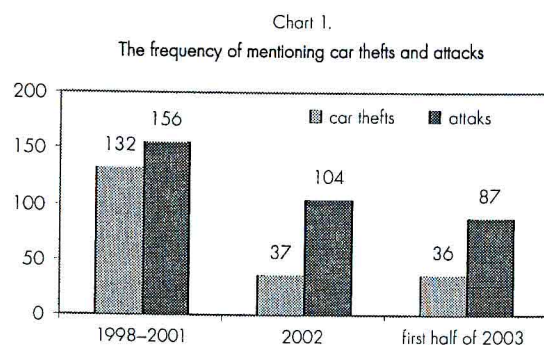
One may ask what the cause of this difference is; whether the number of less serious crimes has increased so much compared to earlier years. The answer, however, is not to be found in this, rather in the characteristics of human memory: People tend to forget about the less serious incidents that did not cause so much harm to them more easily after a few years. So, for example, if one had one's wallet stolen four years ago, in the course of a survey one will more easily forget about this incident than about a car theft. It means that the longer period a survey reaches back, the more the interviewees are characterised by this selective memory, which can be regarded as natural.

Besides, as memory is personal and is related to the interviewee's physical-mental state, the data cannot be taken as the reflection of objective reality[8]. Owing to these considerations, the so-called "B" sheet with more detailed questions about the incidents had to be filled only with regard to the crimes suffered in the shorter period (2002–2003).

In the same way, the answers to the question *"How many times in your life have you been a victim?"* serve only the purpose of interest because they look back on a too long and not definite period. Owing to this, we cannot compare them with each other and the faults of human memory distort the answers to an even greater extent. It is interesting to note, however, that altogether 5,701 people answered "never", which means that 57% of the interviewees and 41.5% of the people contacted have been *victims* some time in their lives. In comparison to it, 2,320 people (23.2%) answered "once", 664 (6.6%) answered "twice" and the number of people continued to decrease with number of instances (Table 2.). 199 people (2%) became victims more than ten times. Among these people there are a few who mentioned more than 90 incidents. We might question the trustworthiness of their statements but it is also possible that the concept of crime the interviewees have is basically different from the actually tenable legal concept of crime. Thus, the incidents presumably did take place but probably they could not be rightly interpreted as crimes. These answers were handled separately in the following.

Table 2.

How many times in your life have you been a victim?

no answer	162
do not know	93
more than 10 times	199
9	4
8	23
7	21
6	50
5	208
4	174
3	401
2	664
1	2,320
never	5,701

If we compare the answers given to the previous question to the data about victimisation in the five whole years our question referred to, we can see that the number of people who marked the no. 6,694 answer to be found there – *"have not been a victim in the past 5 years"* – was higher only by 993. These 993 people are the ones who presumably were victims beyond the five-year period at some other time in their lives. This questionnaire, however, owing to the above-mentioned faults of memory, did not want to go into details about it. It cannot be ruled out, however, that the "have never been a victim" answer was also marked by people who have been the victims of some minor incidents at some time in their lives, which they would have mentioned concerning a one and a half years' period but they cannot remember it now looking back for so many years.

8 Korinek, L.: op. cit. 31. o.

On the basis of all this, it seems that in the part showing the *general characteristics* of the victims, in order to draw more reliable conclusions from a higher number of answers, it is worth working from the data of people who claim to have been victims in the past five years. Of course, there may be questions here that we included in the questionnaire to be filled by the interviewees themselves owing to their special character and consequently the proportion of the answers we received is much smaller. Later, however, at the survey related to *latency*, we analysed the 2002–2003 victimisation data in more detail because the scope of the detailed questions about this topic is much wider there for that period with respect to this question.

The distribution of genders
and ages among the interviewees and the victims

If we examine the data of all the interviewees, it turns out that nearly half of them (3,034) were men and somewhat more than half of them (3,660) were women. This proportion is similar both among the people who were not victimised during the five years (3,034 men and 3,660 women) and among the people who were the victims of crimes, where there were 1,609 men and 1,691 women among the interviewees, which means that the proportion of women corresponds to the distribution of genders among those who have not been victimised. There is a difference compared to the official victimisation statistics, according to which women are victimised much more rarely than men and the proportion of men is twice as much as that of women (Chart 2.). This, of course, may be due to different factors. Maybe women become victims of "the special type" of crimes not shown in the statistics more often. Or maybe latency is higher among them, that is, they are more reluctant to report the incidents that happened to them. These questions will be clarified later.

The distribution according to age was basically even in the case of people below 60. Thus, 19.6% of *all the interviewees* (1,962) were between the ages of 18 and 29; 16.7% (1,677) between 30 and 39; 18% (1,808) between 40 and 49; 17.4% (1,753) between 50 and 59. A slightly higher proportion,
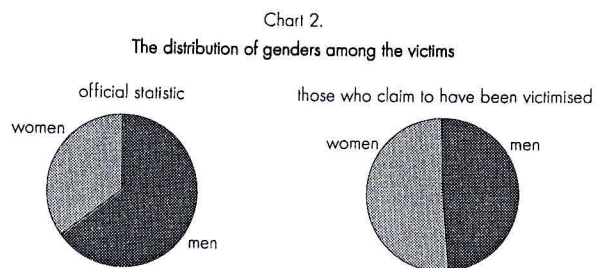
27.4% (2,746) of people over 60 were among the interviewees, which is obviously due to the fact that those elderly people who are not so active and had more time to answer the questions of the survey belong to this group.

The distribution according to age of *the people who were not victimised* during the five years was similar, so *18.5%* were between 18 and 29, *15.2%* were between 30 and 39; *17.7%* were between 40 and 49; *17.4%* were between 50 and 59; while *31.2%* of these interviewees were over 60.

The distribution of those who claimed to have been victimised according to age was the following: 22% of all the victims were between 18 and 29, 20% were between 30 and 39; 19% were between 40 and 49; 18% were between 50 and 59; while the proportion of people over 60 was 20%. It can be seen that among the young people those between 18 and 29 and between 30 and 39 were victimised in a relatively higher number than those older than that (Chart 3.). The difference is especially noticeable in the case of people over 60, where the frequency of victimisation is strongly decreasing according to official statistics as well. The results of the research also confirm this. Obviously, this is partly due to the fact that the frequency of daily activities outside the home is decreasing in the old age and partly to a higher tendency among elderly people to avoid conflicts in contrast to the younger generation and especially the men among them. Victimisation among this generation is more often due to thefts, pickpockets and the frauds classified as swindles in the survey. Some of these are probably mentioned more rarely regarding the five years' period by the elderly so this can also be the cause of decrease.

The schooling of the interviewees and those victimised among them

Most of the people among *all the interviewees* finished secondary school as their highest level of schooling. *23.8%* of *them* finished trade school; *17.2%*

Chart 2.
The distribution of genders among the victims

official statistic

those who claim to have been victimised

Chart 3.
The distribution of the victims and those who have not been victimised according to age
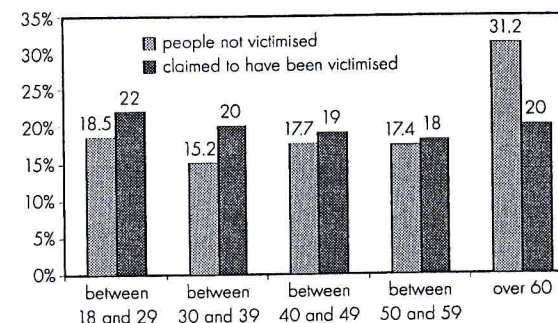
finished vocational secondary school and 16.2% finished grammar school, which means that 57% had secondary schooling, while 28.6% of them said that they finished the eight years of primary school or less and 14.1% said that they had a degree in higher education.

Among the interviewees who *were not victimised* in the five years' period 33.6% finished the eight years of primary school or less, 55.3% had secondary schooling and 11.1% had a degree in higher education. The level of schooling among those *who were victimised* was the following: most of these people (61%) said they had secondary level of schooling, just as in the previous group, while 19% said they finished only the eight years of primary school or less and 20% said they had a degree in higher education. This means that the victims had a *higher level of schooling* than those who have not been victimised and than the whole sample (Chart 4.).

Chart 4.
Schooling among the victims and those who have not been victimised
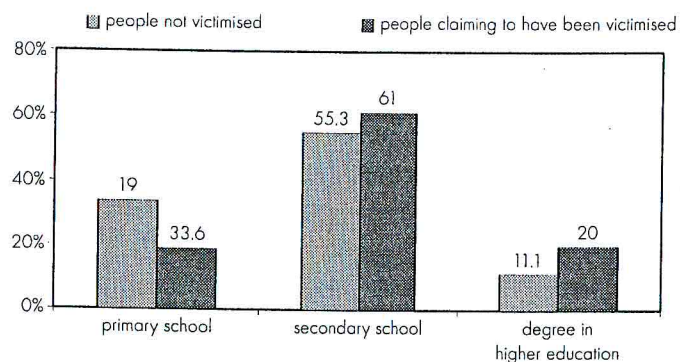
The marital status of people victimised and not victimised

60% of the 10,020 interviewees (6098 people) answered that they lived in marriages or in cohabitation. As for the other 40%, most of them lived together with their parents (about 14%) or lived alone for different reasons — they were single, widowed, divorced, etc. (21%).

The distribution of *people who were not victimised* according to their marital status was not different from the above; there was a similarly high percentage (60%) of people living in marriages or in cohabitation and the proportion of people living with their parents was also higher than 13%. As for the rest of the people, most of them (22%) lived alone for some reasons.

The distribution of *people who were victimised* according to their marital status was also very similar; most of them (62%) lived together in a relationship,

while 15% lived with their parents and somewhat more of them, 22%, lived alone for some reasons (Chart 5.). We can conclude from this that marital status does not play a special role in victimisation in most of the crimes.

Chart 5.
The marital status of the victims and those not victimised
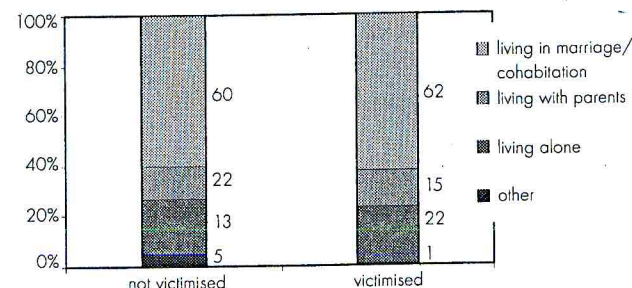
We should note here that 51% of all the interviewees said that they lived together with one or more than one child. We did not find a more significant difference between the victims and those who have not been victimised in this respect.

The working conditions of the interviewees

44.7% of all the interviewees (4,477 people) answered that they worked full-time, 2.5% said that they worked part-time and 1.4% said they worked temporary jobs, while 51% said they did not work. This can be only partly explained with the relatively high proportion of elderly people among the interviewees (the proportion of people between 50 and 59 was 18%, while the proportion of those over 60 was 20%). Unemployment obviously plays a part in it together with the lack of special qualifications since, as we have seen above, about 60% of the interviewees had only secondary level of schooling.

The situation was similar in the case of people *not victimised*; 41.5% of them answered that they worked full-time, 2.3% said they worked part-time and 1.2% worked temporary jobs, while most of them, 55%, chose the "don't work" category. A higher percentage of the *victims* proved more active in work: 52% of them work full-time and nearly 3% of them work part-time. 1.7% of them live from temporary jobs and 44% do not work at all (Chart 6.). The connection is significant in this case; there is a relationship between victimisation and being in employment or not, since there is a higher

Chart 6.
The working conditions of the victims and those not victimised

■ people not victimised   ▨ people claiming to have been victimised
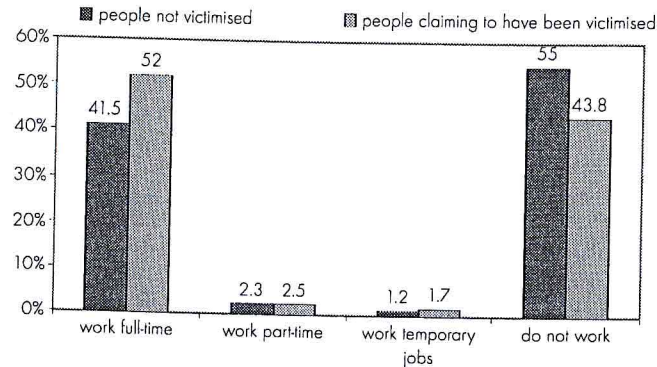
proportion of people who work among the victims than among those who were not victimised during the five-year period.

The connection between victimisation and the higher proportion of employment can be approached from many aspects. First, going to work daily results in continuous interaction between people who drive to work or use the public transport to get there. This situation may create a good chance for pickpockets, for example, or travelling to work may create dangerous situation in traffic. There are also some added risks of victimisation in certain professions, for example, postmen or taxi drivers.

In order to cast light on the causes behind the relatively high proportion of "don't work" answers (Chart 7.) we also asked why the interviewees did not work. Only 371 of the people who were not victimised, that is, only about 10% of the interviewees said they were unemployed. Most of the people in this group (more than 70%) said they were old-age or disability pensioners. Besides, nearly 10% were on maternity leave, had the status of "full-time mothers" or were housewives and about 6% were students. Among the victims, 60% of the interviewees were pensioners, 11.4% were on maternity leave, etc. and 12% were students. 11.25% of them said they were unemployed. This means that there was no significant difference between the different groups of interviewees.

Place of residence

Among the questions about the place of residence we asked about the type of the interviewees' places of residence and homes and we also examined what legal title they had to live in the given place. Most of the homes were detached houses with a garden (33%), detached houses with a garden in a

Chart 7.
The proportion of the victims and those who have not been victimised among those who answered „don't work"

▨ people not victimised   ■ people claiming to have been victimised
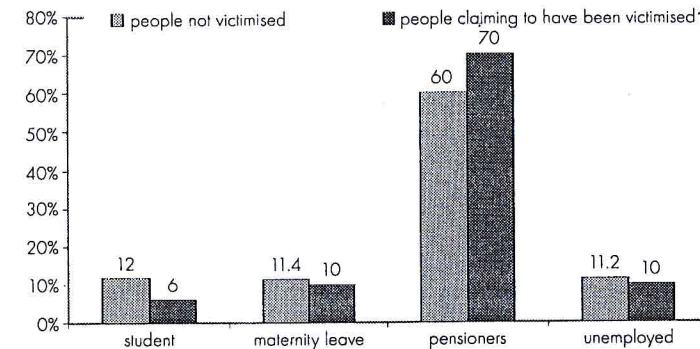
city or town (26%) and flats in housing estate prefab blocks (17%). The remaining 24% were divided between different types of homes (condominiums, old middle-class flats, rental flats in blocks only with the basic comforts, modern condominiums, etc.); there was only a very small proportion (below 1%) of temporary flats or farms. The high number of answers mentioning houses with gardens is not surprising since we included interviewees from the territory of the whole country and only 17.5% of the interviewees were from Budapest. Thus, living in a house with a garden does not necessarily mean a better than average financial situation. It is noticeable, however, that there are such a small number people who live in circumstances that can be considered bad although the small number of temporary flats is obviously due to the relatively low number of people from Budapest among the interviewees.

There was no difference among the people not victimised; most of them lived in detached houses in villages (37%) and in town or cities (25%) and in prefab blocks (15.5%). The proportion of people living in temporary flats and in farms was similarly below 1%.

In the case of victims the number of people living in detached houses in villages (23%) and in towns and cities (27%) was lower, while the proportion of those living in prefab blocks (20%) was higher. There were a similarly low percentage of people living among bad circumstances (temporary flats, farms). Against the decrease in the percentage of people living in detached houses there is an evenly distributed increase among the people living in other kinds of homes (Chart 8.).

Examining the legal title for the homes, we found that in the whole sample most people are owners (69%), spouses of the owners (5%) or relatives of the

Chart 8.
The homes of the victims and those not victimised
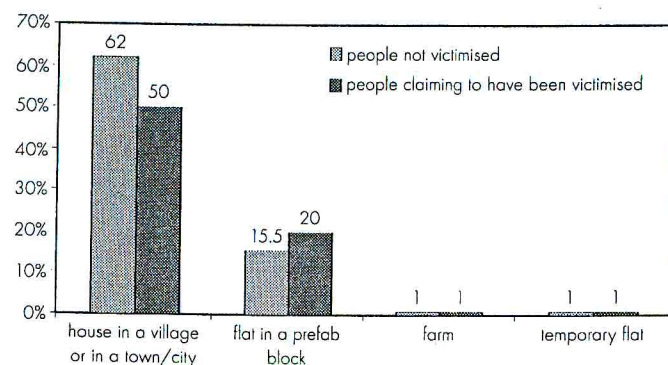
owners (18%). An approximately 3% rent a flat from the local government, while 1% rent their homes from private individuals. This distribution is typical of the present Hungarian situation where following the privatisation of the formerly government-owned rental flats nearly all flats were transferred to private ownership. Therefore owning a flat does not necessarily mean a good financial situation, since in many cases these flats are in quite a bad condition.

The distribution is practically the same among those *who have not been victimised*: nearly 70% of the interviewees are owners, 4.8% are spouses of owners and 18.4% are relatives. In the remaining 17% there are tenants of local government flats (3%), tenants of privately owned flats (1%) and the rest belong to the "other" category.

The figures are similar among *the victims* as well. 67% of them are owners, 4.7% are spouses of owners and 20% are relatives. 3.8% rent local government flats and 1.2% rent privately owned flats (Chart 9.).

Chart 9.
The legal title of the victims and those who have not been victimised for their homes
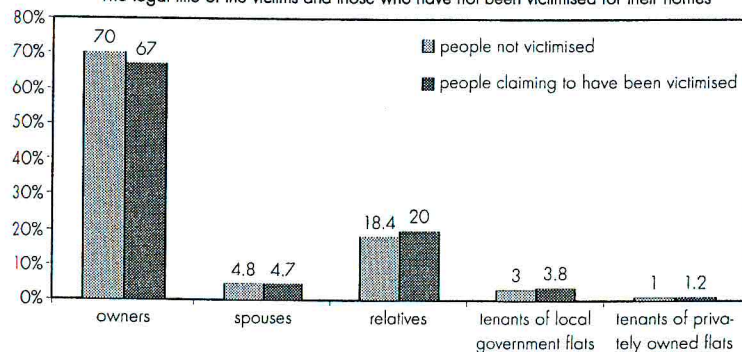
Financial situation

We used different questions to assess the financial situation of the interviewees. From the answers we learnt a fact that can be regarded as objective: the total net monthly income of the interviewees. Besides that, we also asked how satisfied the interviewees were with their present situations. We also took into consideration whether they had a car or a weekend cottage as these are marks of moderate well-being in Hungary now. We asked a question about the value of the car, too.

The highest number of interviewees in *the whole sample* were in the category of a net monthly income between 50,000 and 100,000 HUF (altogether 3,465 people – 34%). If it really means the income of the whole household and not just the income of the interviewee then it does not even reach the subsistence level for each family member. We should add, however, that the interviewees were usually reluctant to talk about financial issues and they tend to give underestimations. There were also a significant number of people in the category below 50,000 HUF (12%) and in the category between 100,000 and 150,000 HUF (18%). 1% of the interviewees said their income was between 150,000 and 200,000 HUF, 0.3% said between 200,000 and 250,000 and approximately 1.5% said that their income was higher than that (Chart 10.). The others refused to

Chart 10.
The net monthly income of all the interviewees
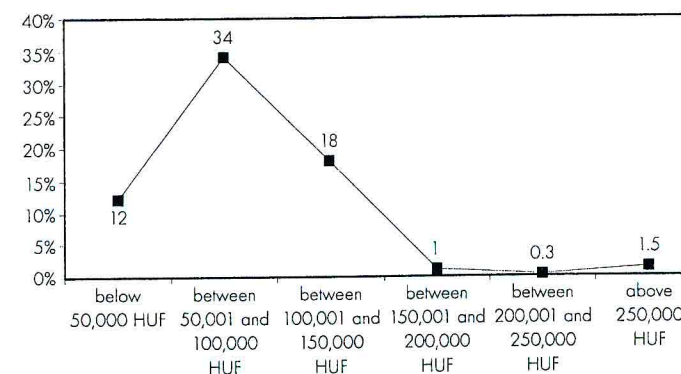
answer. We can see that the percentage of people with a higher income was decreasing drastically in reverse proportion of the increasing of the income.

We find a similar distribution among *the people who have not been victimised*: most of them (37%) also mentioned a monthly income between

50,000 and 100,000 HUF. An income under 50,000 HUF was mentioned by 14.3% of these people and an income between 100,000 and 150,000 HUF by 18.25%. 7.2% said their income was between 150,000 and 200,000 HUF, 2.6% said it was between 200,000 and 250,000 HUF and 1.3% said it was higher than that. In case of this last group – just as in the whole sample – the number of people was decreasing in reverse proportion of the increasing of the income. The rest of the people refused to answer.

The income situation of the *victims*, however, was somewhat different. 30% of them mentioned an income between 50,000 and 100,000 HUF, 9.3% mentioned an income lower than that, while about 20% said that their income was between 100,000 and 150,000 HUF. Therefore in this group the percentage of people with an income higher than that is 10% higher than in the other group. 12.2% of these households have an income between 150,000 and 200,000 HUF, 4.5% have an income between 200,000 and 250,000 HUF and 3.4% have an income higher than that. In contrast to it, only 1.3% of the people not victimised had such a high income. This can be regarded as a *significant relationship*; therefore we can say that a better financial situation is more characteristic of victims of crime than of those who have not been victimised. Their victimisation can be partly explained by the fact that in more than 80% of the cases the victims said they were the victims of crimes against property.

Chart 11.

The net monthly income of the victims and those who have not been victimised
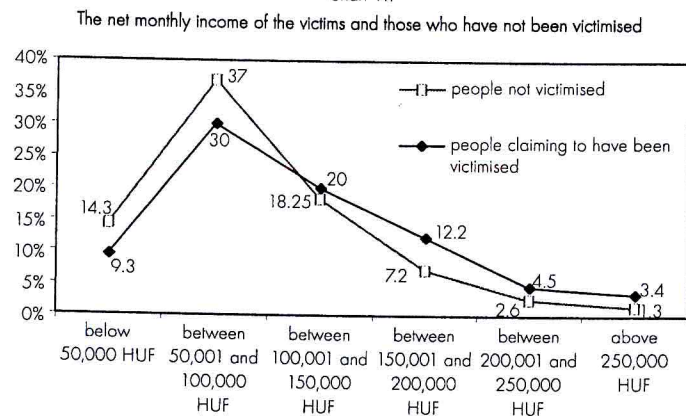
In connection with the financial situation we asked questions about ownership of a summer or weekend cottage. In this group the great majority of the interviewees (91%) gave a negative answer and only 7.1% said they had one. This proportion was even worse among *those who have not been*

victimised as only 5.2% of them had a summer cottage. The *victims* are in a better situation compared to this: 11.2% of them had a summer cottage.

In contrast to this, almost half of the interviewees (44.6%) had one or even more than one car although most of them (85%) had only one car. The proportion of car owners is similar among *those who have not been victimised*: 40% of them had one or even more than one car (87% of these had only one car), while 56% of the interviewees have at least one car among *the victims*, with 82% of these having only one car. Thus, a somewhat higher percentage of the victims own a car and more of them have more than one car, which may be related to a better financial situation although the value of the cars can be very different. The value of the cars most often mentioned both by the victims and those who have not been victimised is between 110,000 and 400,000 HUF, which indicates an old, outdated car stock. Besides, however, a relatively higher number of victims (19%) mentioned a value between 1.4 million and 2.2 million HUF, which clearly reflects a better financial situation, while this proportion is around 15% among those who have not been victimised. The proportions are similarly better among the so-called medium category cars, where in each category there is a higher percentage of victims. This difference is evened out only among the expensive cars worth more than 5.5 million HUF (11%). This may be due to the fact that those who are in a better financial situation have better means to protect their goods (as these people are mostly victims of crimes against property).

In answer to the question about how satisfied they are with their financial situation most of the interviewees said (45.6%) "not at all" or "a little", 40% were satisfied on average, while 14% answered "quite" or "perfectly". Similar opinions were characteristic of those who have not been victimised: 45.6% were a little satisfied, 40.5% satisfied on average and 13.2% were quite or perfectly satisfied. Among the victims altogether 45.6% said they were a little satisfied or not satisfied at all, 40% were satisfied on average, while 15% were quite or perfectly satisfied, which means that we got very similar answers as in the case people who have not been victimised (Chart 12.). It is true for both groups that the interviewees are much more dissatisfied than satisfied with their financial situations, which is supported by the data about their incomes as well.

Religion and culture

At the question about *religion* the interviewees had the chance to tell us how often they go to some kind of religious meeting. The answers of the whole sample show that there are fewer people who go to such meetings

Chart 12.

The satisfaction of the victims and those who have not been victimised with their financial situation
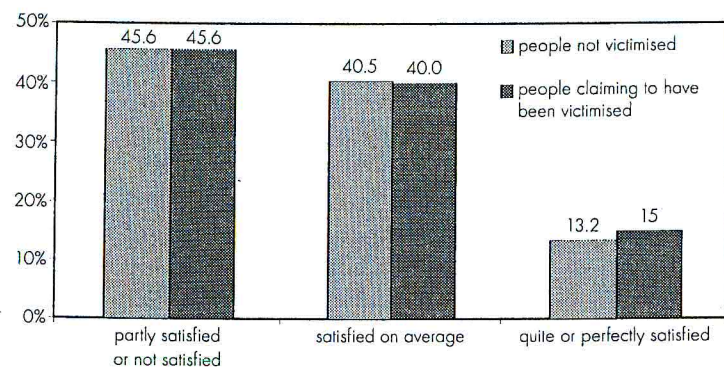
occasionally or regularly (about 40%) and more people who never go to religious meetings (59.3%). Most of the people practicing their religion said they do it "occasionally" (24.5%) and some of them said monthly (5.4%) or weekly (7.6%). Among those who have not been victimised a very similar proportion of 58.6% gave a negative answer to this question. Besides, 25% of the interviewees practice their religion occasionally, 8% of them once a week and 5.2% monthly. These proportions are true for the victims as well: 61% of them gave a negative answer, followed by those who visit religious events occasionally (23%), once a week (7.2%) or a few times a month (5.6%). It means that there is no difference in this respect between the victims and those who have not been victimised.

Concerning culture, the majority of the interviewees said they belonged to the Hungarian cultural community. As the questions were of an especially sensitive kind, they were not asked by the questioners but the interviewees had to fill the questionnaires themselves. We received altogether 5,792 answers, which means that somewhat more than half of the complete sample marked some of the answers. The second and the third most frequent answers were Romany (1.5%) and German (1.2%). The other categories were usually mentioned by less than 1% of the interviewees. With a distribution like this, it does not seem to be justified to compare the victims and those who have not been victimised.

Deviances

Among the different forms of deviance primarily alcoholism and previous conviction is worth examining among the interviewees. At these questions the number of answers is smaller as the interviewees answered the questions

themselves on the questionnaire, in the same way as at the question about culture.

The question we asked in connection with alcoholism was how often the interviewees have drunk alcohol in the past one month. Altogether 5,767 people, 57% of the interviewees answered this question. The most frequent answers were "rarely" (34%) and "never" (40%). This can be regarded as quite a good proportion, especially in view of the fact only 5.3% said "every day". The other answers were in the categories of "once a week" or "a couple of times a week". The proportion of answers among those who have not been victimised were similar. 32% said "rarely", 42% said "never" and 5.3% said "every day" (Chart 13.). Thus, it seems that alcoholism as a form of deviance does not play a significant role in victimisation.

Chart 13.

The alcohol consumption of the victims and those who have not been victimised
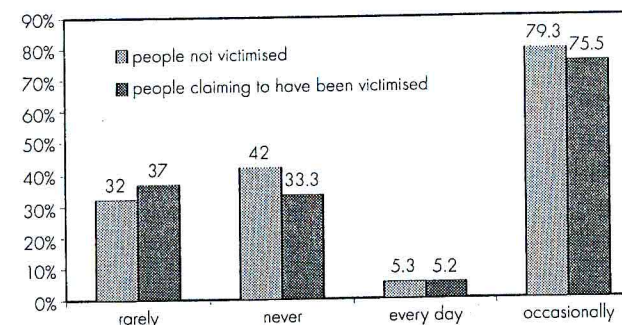

As our second choice among the different forms of deviance we wanted to assess participation in the earlier criminal procedure as suspects. Altogether 5741 people answered this question in the questionnaire to be filled by themselves. Very few of them had been suspects before: only 6.3% answered "yes" to this question.

The proportion of "yes" answers is 4.6% among those who have not been victimised, while interestingly, it is twice as much, 9.2%, among the victims. This relationship is definitely worth paying attention to since it means that the proportion of those who have been suspects as offenders in another criminal procedure is twice as much among those who claimed to have been victimised (Chart 14.). Although we cannot draw far-reaching conclusions, this is probably due to a peripheral group in society that is falling behind the rest and where crime is more frequent and perhaps more accepted.

A related issue was the examination of whether the interviewees had been convicted. Only a few of the interviewees, 3.2%, had earlier convictions. This

Chart 14.

The involvement of the victims and those who have not been victimised

in earlier procedures as suspects
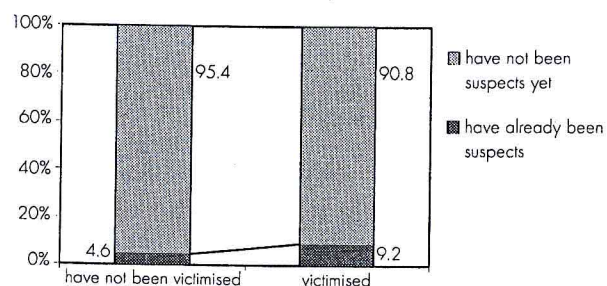
proportion was 2.6% among *those who have not been victimised,* while it was 4.3% among the victims (Chart 15.). These answers strengthened the trustworthiness of the answers given to the earlier question and confirmed that the some of the procedures against the victims were closed with a sentence convicting them. The number of such judgements *among the victims* was approximately 60% higher than among those who have not been victimised.

Chart 15.

Earlier convictions of the victims and those who have not been victimised
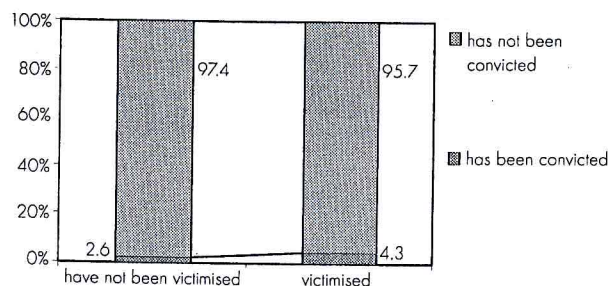
Latency

As we mentioned when we discussed the hypotheses of the research, one of our goals was to determine how many people are victimised annually in Hungary and how many cases are reported to the police. Based on the results of international and Hungarian research we had reasons to suppose that this figure is much higher than the ones in the official statistics.

The extent of latency

3,326 of the 10,020 answered that they were the victims of crimes between of 1998 and the first half 2003 once or more than once. Table 3. shows the distribution of crimes and years.

Table 3.

The number of crimes

crime	1998–2001	2002	first half of 2003	total
car theft	132	37	36	205
theft from cars	446	169	85	700
damaging cars	437	260	177	874
damaging	299	119	106	524
bicycle theft	695	161	70	926
robbery	102	36	12	150
stealing	282	123	74	479
theft	676	356	223	1,255
burglary	419	169	100	688
abuse	105	66	66	237
sexual abuse	39	25	15	79
sexual assault	4	7	3	14
assault	156	104	87	347
swindles	1,234	558	405	2,197
road accident with injury	153	64	28	245
other crimes	32	22	17	71
total	5,211	2,276	1,504	8,991

As we can see, there is a clear tendency for human memory to be more selective against less serious cases and people tend to remember the more serious cases after a five years' period and tend to forget the less serious cases. Of course, we must not forget that it is not sure that all the incidents mentioned here actually count as crimes or result in criminal procedures. Table 4., which contains the answers to the question "Have you reported the case to the police?", shows the situation concerning concrete cases well.

Table 4.

The number of cases reported to the police

crime	1998–2001	2002	first half of 2003	total
car theft	118	30	28	176
theft from cars	266	81	38	385
damaging cars	272	47	53	372
damaging	86	31	23	140
bicycle theft	355	81	23	459
robbery	60	23	7	90
stealing	110	51	21	182
theft	224	130	44	398
burglary	327	126	66	519
abuse	34	19	20	73
sexual abuse	2	7	3	12
sexual assault	0	1	1	2
assault	42	23	23	88
swindles	63	30	13	106
road accident with injury	80	46	18	144
other crimes	16	13	7	36
total	2,055	739	388	3.182

It seems that there is a very significant difference between the number of crimes suffered by the interviewees and the cases they reported. According to this, during the given period the victims reported only 3,182 of the 8,991 incidents to the police. This is an astonishing number since it means that hardly more than 35 percent of the crimes become known and nearly two-third of them are disclosed. If we examine this proportion in relation to the given year, we see that in 2002, for example, 1,206 victims out of the 10,020 interviewees mentioned 2,276 crimes in the survey, out of which they reported only 739 cases, that is, slightly more than 32%. In practice, it can mean that the figures in the official statistics reflect only a small proportion of the actually committed crimes, while more than 60% of them remain hidden for the authorities and the public. An important purpose of our survey was to disclose these cases that were not reported to the police and to identify their causes.

Considering that owing to the faults of human memory often it is very difficult to reconstruct a case, we tried to identify the causes of not reporting cases to the police focusing on relatively recent events. As the survey was conducted in 2003 and the most recent data were about 2002–2003, in our questionnaire we asked for detailed answers about the crimes suffered in this period and their consequences in a separate block. These questions examined all those circumstances that could influence people's willingness to report the incidents to the police: the seriousness of the case, the size of the damage, the relationship between the offender and the victim, distrust of the authorities, the issue of complicated procedures, fear of the offender, self-accusation and the settlement of the incident arbitrarily. Coming to know these issues plays a crucial role in coming to know latent crime – as László Korinek writes[9], since the citizens decide what unlawful actions they report to the level of the administration of justice when considering these factors, in this peculiar selection phase.

The characteristics of crimes

Among the interviewees who marked the years 2002–2003 as the time when the crimes were committed against them, we asked further questions about the follow-up of the case. Altogether 2,007 victims said that they had been the victims of crimes during this one and a half years' period, many of them on more than one occasion. This meant 3,780 cases for this period out of which 1,127 (about 30%) were reported to the authorities. In our questionnaire we examined the questions related to the instance of reporting separately

9 Korinek, L.: op. cit. p. 68.

concerning each type of crime. We received the highest number of answers (1,734) for the crime mentioned in the first question. These answers are shown on Chart 16.

Chart 16.
Thy type of crimes suffered by the victims
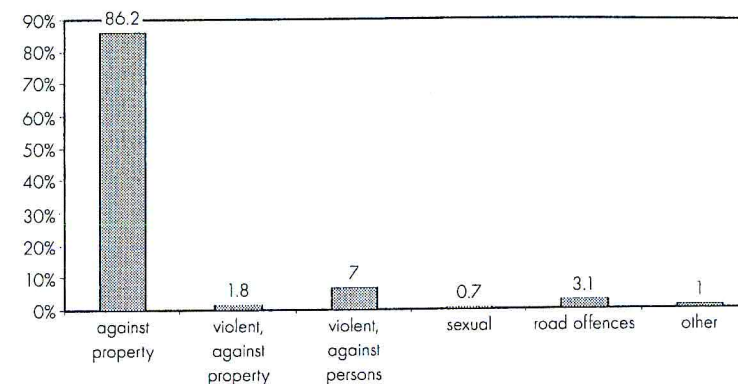
Most of the cases the interviewees mentioned (just as for the five years' period), similarly to the data of the UPPCS, were crimes against property (86.2%) and violent crimes against property (1.8%). The others were violent crimes against persons (7%), sexual crimes (0.7%), traffic offences (3.1%) and other crimes (1%). The crimes, owing to their nature, involved personal injury only rarely (5%), and the healing took longer than eight days only 1.7% of the cases. Financial loss, on the other hand, was much more frequent; it characterised about 87% of the cases.

Latency

Based on all the answers *the proportion of cases not reported was around 55% on average among the crimes examined first,* which means that this proportion was better than the average of five years. The extent of latency was quite different on the basis of different groups of crimes (see *Table 4. and Chart 16.).*

It can clearly be seen that an exceptionally high proportion of cases of car thefts (96%), burglaries (82%) and road accidents with personal injury (81.2%) were reported. These good proportions, however, are not due to the personality of the victims and their attitude towards the crime. In the first two types insurance obviously plays a significant part in the high proportion of cases reported. A high percentage of cars and properties are insured and reporting the crime to the police is the condition of receiving compensation

and this fact clearly dominates in the "selection phase" of the victims. In the case of road accidents with personal injury it is compulsory to call the police, so here it is the cases that are not reported that demand an explanation. Behind these there are probably the cases in which the parties involved "settle things among themselves", that is, the one who caused damage enters into an agreement with the victim[10].

In contrast to the exceptionally high proportion of the cases reported, latency is low among the incidents of car damaging (73%), thefts (more than 63%) and swindles (89.6%). The explanation is to be found mainly in the less serious nature of these incidents or in the fact that the offender is usually not found and/or the victims would not be compensated for the damage. Thus, for example, in the case of car damaging, which can involve serious financial loss, the victims can be practically sure that the offender will never be found. If they have insurance covering damage, they will get some compensation and there is no point at all in adding the nuisance of an official procedure to the damage. By stealing the interviewees meant thefts by pickpockets causing "smaller" damage, where they usually cannot find the offender and reporting the incidents to the police is necessary mainly because of the loss of documents, certificates and bank cards. Finally, the so-called swindles are usually not so serious; the victims mainly meant minor instances of cheating by this and being cheated in shops, which does not even constitute a crime. They are incidents that cause everyday nuisances and damage to a broad circle of victims and cause problems for them but they are not worth the trouble caused by the official procedures. Most of the crimes are between these two extremes of the scale, with an average of 50-50% of "reported" and "not reported" answers.

Concerning latency we also examined if there is a connection between *the willingness to report the crime, the gender of the victims and their ages.* However, no such connection was found either among people who were victimised only once or among those who were victimised more than once. Thus, there were no significant differences between those who report and those who do not report the incidents concerning their ages. It is worth noting, however, that willingness to report crimes in the age group of 45 to 60 seems higher and in the age group 26 to 35 seems lower. There was no such difference between men and women.

The survey also examined whether *being a suspect* in an earlier criminal procedure influenced the victims in failing to report the crimes they suffered, that is, whether an earlier negative encounter with the authorities kept the

10 For a more detailed analysis of the accidents, see the part containing the different crimes.

victims from turning to the police when they were victimised themselves. However, no such connection was found.

"Why didn't you report it?"

In the case of all the crimes reported by the victims we examined why the victims failed to report the given crime. Most of the answers belonged to the crimes in the first group; therefore this is the group that is worth dealing with the most thoroughly. Besides, the interviewees could mark more than one answer, so failing to report the crime may have had different reasons.

Among the crimes we enquired about in the first place, the most often mentioned reason for failing to report was *dissatisfaction* with the work of the police and *distrust,* with 43%. Besides that, "there was no damage" and "there was only little damage" were also often (28.6%) mentioned as reasons.

Besides that, the answers "I solved it myself", "the offender was an acquaintance" and "the family solved it" were also mentioned at a high proportion (8.7%), which shows that the people concerned settled the issue among themselves. There are a relatively higher number of "could not prove it" answers (6.8%) and "the nuisance involved in the procedure" is also mentioned (4%) (Chart 17.).

Chart 17.
"Why didn't you report it?" (%)
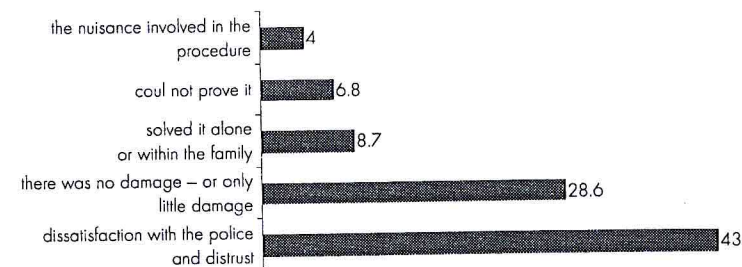
In comparison to this, among the reasons mentioned in the second place, that is, where the victim has already mentioned another reason (125 answers), there was also a considerably high proportion of answers indicating *dissatisfaction* with the police and *distrust* (45.6%).

Some of the victims, however, were *victimised* not only once but *on more than one occasion.* We asked these people the question about *latency* again and were given answers in 228 cases. The proportions of the answers about reporting the incidents were very similar to the proportions in the previous group of crimes. Thus, altogether 35% of the cases of victimisation were

reported to the police by the victims – about *one third* of the cases, while the other two-third was not reported. The proportions of different crimes were similar to the earlier cases we looked at. The examination of the reasons also brought about similar results. The main reasons for failing to report the crimes were again *distrust of the work of the police* (47.4%), "the damage wasn't serious", "there was no damage" or "there was only little damage" (21%) or the problem was solved by the victims themselves or by their families (8.3%). It is also worth mentioning the answers "could not prove it" (7.5%) and "the complicated procedure" (3%). Besides, "fear of the police" was also mentioned here at a similar proportion, while it was mentioned only very rarely in the first place (below 0.5%). Among those who gave more than one reason for failing to report the crimes "distrust to the work of the police", "there was little damage" and "the complicated procedure" continued to be frequent answers. We do not discuss the questions about the third crime owing to the small number of answers (52 people answered them) although they show similar tendencies.

As we can see, at present in Hungary *the main reason for failing to report crimes is dissatisfaction with the police and distrust.* This, however, is a very complex feeling, in which several factors may have a role. First, there can still exist certain attitudes among the victims that regard the police as *an alienated* organ that is above the citizens, supervising them without their control[11]. An image projected by the media and the bad PR activity of the police may also add to this. At the same time, in a paradox way, it may also be caused by the damaged reputation of the police, which was the result of the surge in crime in the 1990s and has not been restored ever since. Obviously, the personal *experiences* of the victims have also played a significant part in bringing about this situation – experiences of earlier victimisation or indirect experiences collected among their relatives, friends and acquaintances concerning police procedures. This tendency, however, is different from the earlier results of research into latency (for example the 26-29% proportion described by László Korinek).

The characteristic answers, however, remained the same in the present research as well; the victims chose the answers referring to the small damage and to a solution by themselves or by their families in the above-mentioned proportions. Here, presumably, the parties concerned reached an unofficial agreement and compensation was provided. This answer included the special relationship between the victim and the offender, that is, the cases when they had already known each other and therefore the case was not

reported to the police. (Nearly 50% of the victims in 2002 and 2003 had known the offender before.) Another option for the answer included reference to this special relationship when the interviewees mentioned fear of the offender as the reason for failing to report the crime. Although it does not necessarily mean that they had already known the offenders, presumably this may be the reason behind the fears in most of the cases. Interestingly, this answer was marked only by few of the interviewees, with a proportion usually below 1%. Besides, latency owing to the difficulties of providing evidence was also present in a few percent of the cases, although in a smaller proportion compared to the earlier results – the cases when the victims, considering the possible outcome of reporting the crime choose not to report it, although the crime actually happened. This is obviously related to the fact that most of the cases were crimes against property because in the case of crimes against persons the victims can prove their cases against a concrete offender more easily than in the case of crimes against property[12]. Finally, the complicated procedure was also mentioned, although by few people only. This is related to the issue of dissatisfaction with the work of the police as well, and similar tendencies may play a part in it as in the case of distrust as reporting a crime to the police cannot be regarded as a complicated procedure in itself and if citizens still consider it to be as such, it may raise doubts concerning the work of the police.

The evaluation of the work of the police

As a result of all this, it became interesting to review the opinions of *the persons who have been victimised on the police procedure.* Although we could not relate failures to report a crime to negative experiences that the victims may have gained earlier or in another procedure, it is obvious that such experiences may be behind the high number of answers mentioning dissatisfaction with the work of the police and also with the complicated procedure as the reasons for latency.

Altogether 750 of the people who were victimised in 2002 and 2003 answered the questions about it. This number in itself can indicate a certain level of distrust as it is approximately 33% of the victims and the proportion of cases not reported is around one-third as well. There must be obvious overlaps here, that is, there are people who failed to report a crime after they had reported another crime earlier.

11 The role of the police is discussed in another study (p. 87.).

12 Korinek, L.: op. cit. p. 77.

First we asked the interviewees *how satisfied they were with the work of the police*. Most of them said "not at all" (33%) or "satisfied to small extent" (about 10%). These proportions are in perfect harmony with the 43% of people who are dissatisfied and distrustful. In comparison to it the proportion of people "quite" and "fully satisfied" together was 34.4%, which is not bad, especially in view of the 21% proportion of those who are satisfied on average (Chart 18.).

Chart 18.
The evaluation of the work of the police
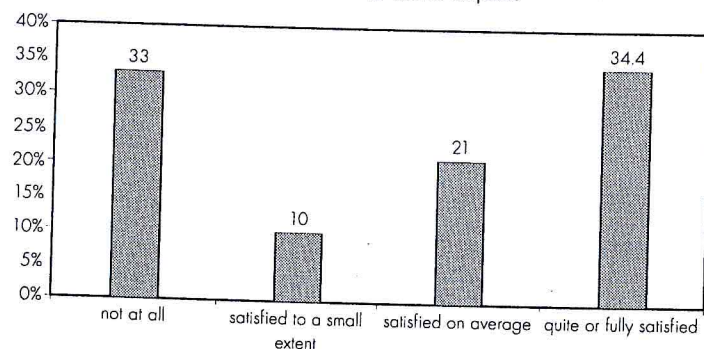
Besides, we asked questions about *the professionalism of police actions,* where the proportion of people who were dissatisfied or satisfied only to a small extent seemed to improve was only *31%* in contrast to the 22.4% who were satisfied on average and the 40% who were quite or fully satisfied. The interviewees also had a similarly more positive opinion on *the professionalism of the police* (satisfactory: 37%; better, much better: 63%), and the preparedness of the police (satisfactory: 33.2%; better, much better: 39%). The answers to the questions about the handling of victims – about the way they are dealt with and about the helpfulness, politeness and the discretion of the people dealing with them and about the speed of the administrative procedures – clearly tended to be average or better as well.

This may obviously raise the question why the interviewees were still dissatisfied, if they tended to have a much more positive opinion of the police procedure. We can find the answer through the use of another variable because 65% of the victims answered *no* to the question *"Did it turn out who the offender was?"* concerning the first crime. Besides, 20% said that although it did turn out, *it was not through the police procedure* and the proportion of *offenders identified through the police procedure is only 6.2%* (Chart 19.).

Chart 19.
"Did it turn out who the offender was?"
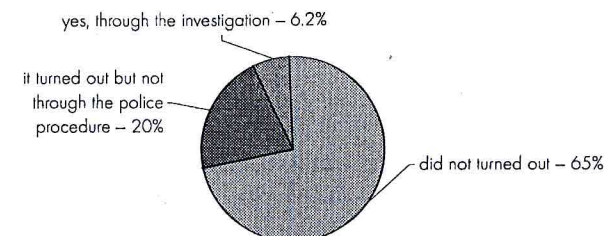
The people who were victimised on more than one occasion reported a 6% detection indicator in the case of the other crimes as well. This seems to be a very low proportion although the police cannot be blamed for the "this turned out in another way" answers. It seems clear, however, that one of the important indicators of the efficiency of the work of the police is identifying the offender and if they fail to do so it may result in dissatisfaction and distrust on the part of the victims. If they should be victimised again, this will probably play a very important part in the phase when they are considering whether to report the case to the police or not.

Sense of security — anxieties — increasing security

When examining the personal sense of security of the individuals we started with the hypothesis that victimisation *has a negative impact on the interviewees' subjective sense of security* and increases their anxiety in general and their anxiety of being victimised again in specific as well. This proposition was confirmed by our research in 2003 that examined the sense of insecurity and fear in cities of Europe (InSec)[13]. Now we examined the components in the sense of security of the victims and the persons who were not victimised from different aspects. Thus, starting from the *Korinek*-type theoretical foundation we were curious whether being victimised influences the sense of security of the victims and if yes, in what respects and whether it has an impact on the life and the mental state of the victims in the future. We also examined whether those victimised earlier did anything to increase their security and if yes, what. Two groups: those who were victimised in the past five and a half years and those who were not served as the basis of the comparison.

13 Irk, F. – Kovács, R. – Barabás, T. – Kó, J.: Bizonytalanság Európa nagyvárosaiban. Összefoglaló (Insecurities in the Cities of Europe. A Summary). Manuscript, 2003

Sense of security in the immediate environment

We used several variables to measure the general feelings and the sense of security among the interviewees. We can regard the question concerning *the security of the living environment* as the most essential. The interviewees could choose from answers ranging from "not at all secure" to "perfectly secure".

The answers of *the people who were not victimised earlier* (6,694) clearly show a positive attitude. Thus, only 7% of *them* marked the "not at all secure" and the "secure to a small extent" answers, while 23% of *them found security average* and nearly 70% of *them* found it "perfectly secure". In contrast to it, 11% of *the victims* were *dissatisfied*, 29% of *them* were satisfied *on average* and 56% of *them* were even *more satisfied*. There was a lower proportion of those who were perfectly satisfied (16%) in this group than in the other (28.5%). Thus, the answers show that the group of those who were victimised earlier *tended* to find the security of their environment *worse* than *those who were not victimised* (Chart 20.).

Chart 20.
The sense of security at present
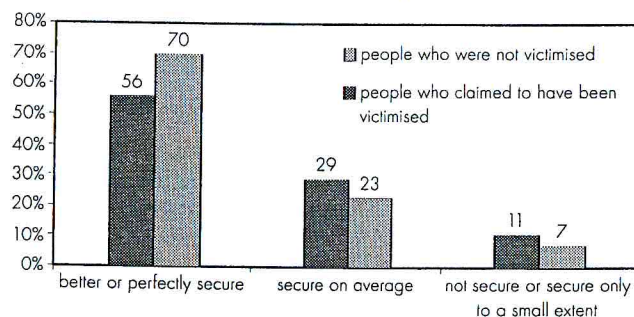
The next question that is closely related to this topic concerned the *changes in the security of the housing environment.* Interestingly, the opinions in both groups were more negative here. More than 19% of *the victims* and 11% of those *who were not victimised* chose to answer "got a lot worse" or "got quite a lot worse". An equal percentage around 49-50% in both groups found it *average,* while 36% of *those not victimised* and 26% of *the victims* found an improvement. Thus, it can be seen that those who were victimised has a more negative view of the past than those who were not victimised. Besides this, most people see neither improvement nor deterioration (Chart 21.).

Compared to this, the expectations concerning security for the next five years are also optimistic to some extent. 6% of the people who were not victimised and nearly 11% of the victims said in answer to this question that

Chart 21.
Sense of security in the past five years

public security in the next five years would be much worse or worse. 31% of the victims and 36.7% of the people who were not victimised had average expectations and 40% or 37% of them thought it would be better or it would be much better (Chart 22.).

Chart 22.
**Sense of security in the next five years**
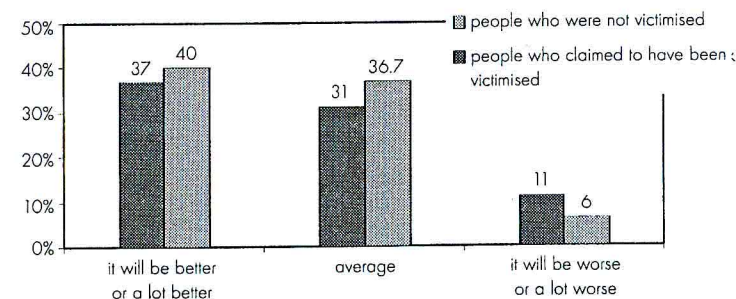
In order to compare this relatively favourable picture to attitudes towards crime, we asked direct questions about it. The answers to our question about *how much of a problem crime is* in the neighbourhood of the interviewees were the following (Chart 23.):

32% of the *people who were not victimised earlier* found crime not a problem at all and 23% of them did not find it an especially big problem. 20% of them found it average and an equal percentage of 11% found it a bigger or a very big problem.

21% of the victims marked the "not at all" answer, 20% of them marked "not really", which is 11% less than in the case of people not victimised. More of them (27%) thought it was average and altogether 30% thought it was a

big or a very big problem. Thus, there is a difference here again; people who were victimised tend to consider crime to be a bigger problem than those who were not.

Chart 23.
"How much of a problem crime is?"
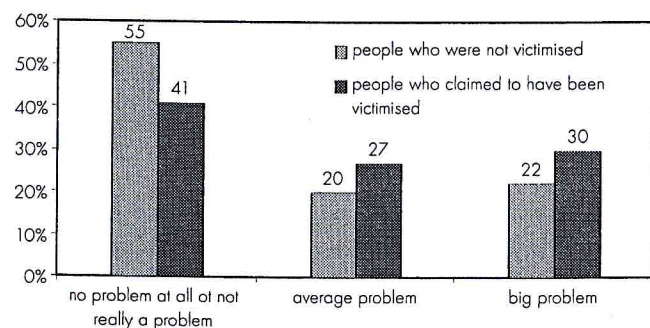
The opinions on public security are more favourable than *in the rest of the country;* most of the people both among those who were not victimised and those who were – 60% and 46% – say that a lot fewer or fewer crimes are committed in their neighbourhood. 23% and 27% think that the number of crimes is average, while 7% of those who were not victimised and 11% of those who were think that the number of crimes is more or much more. We can see that being victimised does not necessarily mean that one considers the security of one's neighbourhood and the problem of crime to be worse. There is no doubt, however, that victims usually see most of the problems magnified and find them worse than those who were not victimised. This also proves the statement that citizens' sense of security is influenced by a lot of different factors and crime (together with fear of crime) is only one of them but definitely not the primary factor[14].

Finally, in relation to their sense of security, we also asked the interviewees *how often they leave their homes after dark.* Interestingly, those who were not victimised answered "hardly ever" or "very rarely" (50.6%) more frequently than those who were victimised (40%). This, of course, is related to many other factors, such as the age, the gender and the marital status of the interviewees. This may mean that those who were not victimised are more cautious and perhaps that is exactly why they are not victimised. But it may

also mean that a higher percentage of the victims are from young age groups, who tend to leave their homes in the evening either to go out for entertainment or to work.

Anxieties

Experiencing crime directly has an impact on one's sense of security, that is, how secure they feel and besides it may have further impacts on their mental state. This can further influence their everyday actions in the future and in an extreme case it can even have a crucial influence in their lives. In order to assess this, we asked a question about *how much crime influences the everyday life of the interviewees.*

The answers show a clear tendency among *those who were not victimised.* Most of them (50%) are not influenced at all, 25% of them are influenced to a small extent and 17% of them are influenced on average. Crime has a stronger influence in the lives of only 4.8% of the interviewees, while 2% of them said that crime has a decisive influence on their lives.

Among the victims "not at all" (36%) and to a small extent" (28%) were also typical answers, while 23% said "on average" and a slightly higher percentage of people said the influence of crime was great (8.7%) or decisive (3.4%) than among the people who were not victimised. Here – similarly to the influence earlier victimisation had on the sense of security – we can see a difference in people's opinion on the influence crime has depending on the victimisation of the interviewees (Chart 24.).

Chart 24.
"How much does crime influence your everyday life?"
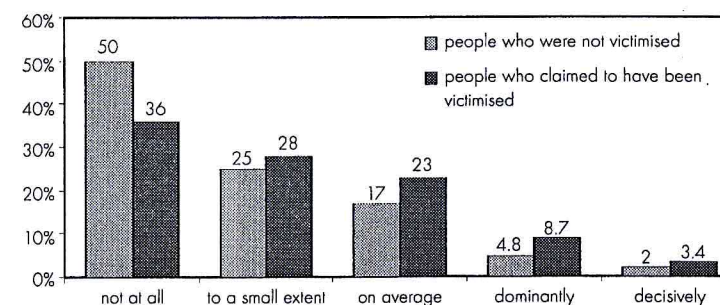
We also wanted to measure anxiety through questions that examined whether the interviewees were afraid of being assaulted in the street in their neighbourhood or in their homes or having their homes burglarised or how secure they find their neighbourhood during the day or at night.

14 Kó, József: Vélemények a bűnözésről (Opinions on Crime). Kriminológiai és Kriminalisztikai Tanulmányok, 35, OKKrI, Budapest, 1998, pp. 9–46.

The answers concerning the possibility of *being assaulted in one's home* were relatively favourable: only 8.5% of *those who were not victimised* and 12% of *the victims* thought physical violence possible in their homes. In contrast to it a much higher proportion thought it possible *in the street:* 22% of those who *were not victimised* and 35% of *the victims.* An even higher proportion (50%) of those who had been assaulted earlier thought an assault in the street possible. This means that earlier victimisation, especially a similar crime, influences the mental state of the victims and their expectations for the future. At the same time, the extent of this influence is not extreme; relatively few people answered "always" to the question about *how often they thought of being assaulted and beaten* (although earlier victimisation increased the frequency of the answers here as well) – 1.7% of those *who were not victimised* and 2.8% of *the victims* gave this answer, while 3.7% and 7% said "often".

In comparison to it, people are even more pessimistic about crimes *against property.* 41% of the people *who were not victimised* and 59% of the *victims* suppose that their homes may be burglarised. This proportion is even higher among those *whose homes have been burglarised* in the past five years (70%). This means that an especially high number of the interviewees think it possible that a crime of this kind may take place. This is probably related to the fact the crimes against property constitute the bulk of the totality of crimes (around 80%) and citizens can experience the frequency of crimes in their own families and among their acquaintants. This also shows that the police could conduct an especially good campaign in this area in order to make different methods of protection against crime more popular and to facilitate the spread of civil initiatives, for example the Neighbours for Each Other movement. A double proportion of *victims* (21%) answered that they very often or often think of the possibility of their homes being burglarised but this cannot be regarded an extremely high proportion among them.

One of the characteristic manifestations of anxiety is having doubts about *the security of going out to the street.* Most of the interviewees – independently of whether they have been victimised – are "never" (92%) or "rarely" (4%) afraid during the day, but this is different in the evening. *Only 69% of the people who were not victimised and 65% of the victims answered "no" to the question whether they are afraid to go out to the street in the evening* because they are afraid of crime. In contrast to it 11% and 12.5% answered "rarely", 8-9% answered "sometimes" and 8.7% of *those who were not victimised* and 11% of the *victims* said "even more often" or "always". It is interesting that the proportion of the answers in the two groups was similar and fear is clearly more frequent in the evening. We can see that this is a general tendency and

is not especially related to earlier victimisation, but rather to the deterioration of public security in the evening (Chart 25.).

Chart 25.
**"Are you afraid to go out to the street in the evening?"**
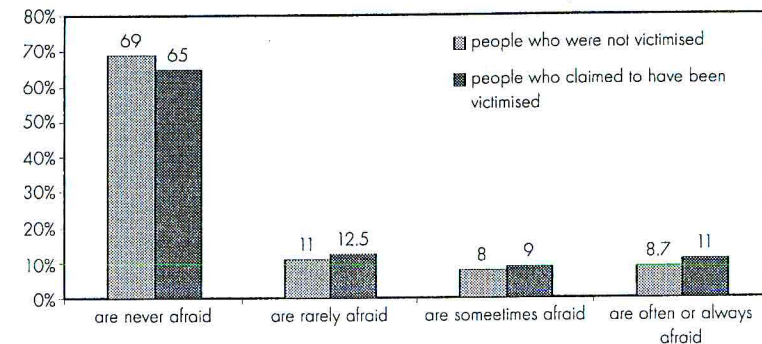
Emotions concerning the crime

We also wanted to know what emotions victimisation generated in the victims of crimes and how they look back on the crime now. We got an answer to this question from those who were victimised in 2002 and 2003 and here we will present the results received about the crimes mentioned in the first place (2,007 cases).

Thinking back on the incident generated *anxiety* in 31% of *the victims* and *fear* in 24.6% of them. More of them mentioned the more intensive feelings of *fury* (67%) and *anger* (57%). This is in conformity with the high number of crimes against property mentioned by the interviewees, which cause annoyance and damage and generate anger in turn rather than anxiety. Besides this, 40% of the victims feel *nervousness* even long after the incident, 46% feel *vulnerable* and 35% feel restless and 53% feel *helpless* (Chart 26.).

All this shows that the police procedure is unfortunately not a suitable instrument to help the victims to get rid of the tension in them, which they continue to have even after the offender has been caught. So it is worth looking for other solutions that help to solve the conflict that is the result of the crimes and to come to terms with the resulting negative emotions. An important instrument for this is regulating the procedures of the authorities that are in touch with the victims and treating the victims as equals and another is to introduce procedures that give the victims more freedom in solving their own problems. One example for this is the agreement between the offender and the victim, through which the victims can assert their claims to settle the issue, to solve the conflict, to receive compensation and to be asked their forgiveness.

Chart 26.
Emotions after the crimes
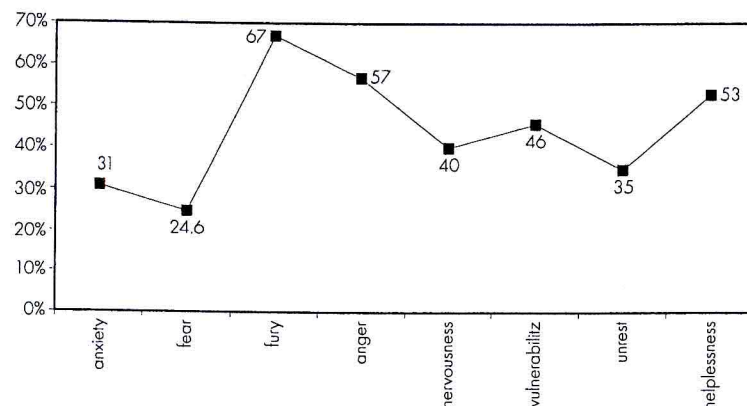
Increasing security

Finally, we wanted to know whether being hurt and having one's confidence shaken bring with them a certain tendency to increase security and what preventive measures are taken by the citizens after the crime has been committed.

There were several questions related to increasing security in a more general sense. Among crimes against property the most easily measurable attempts to improve security can be examined in an objective way at the instruments of defence against burglary. Moreover, as we have seen above, these are the kinds of crimes that even those people who have not been victimised before are afraid of (according to statistics rightly so).

With this in mind, concerning burglaries, we asked whether the interviewees had a security lock, a locking bar, bars on their windows and doors, local alarm or alarm connected to an emergency centre, a watchdog or some other special instrument. The answers were the following.

The proportion of those who protect against burglary with a security lock can be considered relatively good both among *those who were not victimised* (63%) and the *victims* (70%), where the proportion is a little higher. In contrast to this, only 17% of *those who were not victimised* and 28% of *the victims* have locking bars, which cost somewhat more but are still not very expensive (which means that more than 70% of the people do not even have this fairly simple instrument). This seems quite strange, considering the especially high anxiety in general concerning this kind of crimes. But after this, it can be no surprise that only 10% of those who were not victimised and 16% of the victims have bars on their doors and windows, 4.2% of the *former* and 9.8%

of the *latter* group have a local alarm, 0.8% of *those not victimised* and 2.7% of *the victims* have an alarm connected to an emergency centre and 1.8% and 2.8% have other instruments. These not very favourable proportions seem somewhat better among the victims, which is not surprising if we know that according to the answers more than 80% of the incidents suffered were crimes against property and this probably provides an incentive for the protection of property. The most frequent instrument of protection was a watchdog, marked by 49% of those not victimised and 45.6% of the victims. In view of the fact that the interviewees quite often said they lived in detached houses, this seems acceptable. The question is only the efficiency of the dog used for this purpose; how effectively it can perform the protection of property. In contrast to the above, it can be regarded as positive that 67% of the *people not victimised* and 72% of *the victims* have at least some kind of insurance for their homes (Chart 27.).

We specifically asked *the victims* whether they made some specific precautions to avoid further incidents and if yes what. We asked this question concerning the incidents that took place in 2002 and 2003. The answers we received were rather interesting. The most often marked categories were "changing the general behavioural patterns of the individual" (27.4%) and "paying more attention" (18.3%) and also "parking somewhere else" and "choosing another route" (7.1%). In contrast to this, concrete steps, such as installing and strengthening a security lock took place in 11.4% of the cases and the security of the house, the car, the garden, etc. was strengthened in 10.7% of the cases and a local alarm was installed at an even smaller

Chart 27.
Instruments of protection in order to increase security
among the victims and those who were not victimised
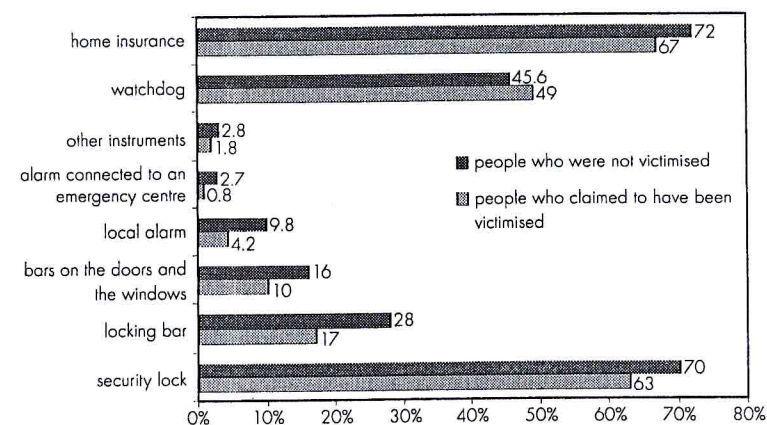
number of cases (6.9). It is interesting to note that victimisation brought about a change among those who were mainly victims of crimes against property (in altogether 58.7% of the cases) primarily concerning their ways of life and their behaviour but concrete steps were taken in fewer cases (39.4%) only. This trend became stronger after a second crime was suffered when about 63% of the interviewees changed their behaviour instead of taking some concrete action. If we compare this with the frequency of the use of the earlier, generally mentioned instruments of security, we can see that the interviewees do not like to use the available instruments of protection at all or only to a small extent. Of course, the applications of these are limited and they are obviously unfit to prevent certain types of crimes. Paying more attention and putting one's valuables to a better place, for example, are really effective instruments against pickpockets together with choosing a different route. Avoiding certain places in general or only after dark, at night, or changing certain habits can be equally effective against assaults. The mere fact that people tend to change their behaviour rather than applying instruments of protection that require some financial sacrifice on their part may indicate that the activities of the police aimed at providing information can be very important in the area of crime prevention. Thus, it may be worth conducting a press campaign that gives information about the most frequent opportunities for crime and analyses them thereby providing help for the citizens to avoid such situations.

Summary

At the end of our research, finally we managed to get a picture of a large group of persons who were victimised in Hungary. 3,326 of the 10,000 interviewees were victimised once or more than once during the five and a half years. By coming to know the characteristics of the victims we can draw conclusions about the traits of victimisation in Hungary. For this purpose we examined the age, the gender and other important qualities of the interviewees.

We found that, in contrast to official statistics, there is no significant difference between men and women concerning victimisation. But it happens more often among younger persons (between 18 and 39), which must be due to the fact that they tend to be more active. There were a higher proportion of highly qualified people with secondary school and higher education degrees among the victims. There were no differences between the victims and the people who were not victimised concerning their family situation and their places of residence but there were a higher proportion of people in active employment among the victims. The difference in the

financial situation may partly be related to this: a higher proportion of the victims were in a better or in an outstandingly high financial situation. This, of course, may be related to the fact the most of the crimes suffered (above 80%) were crimes against property both according official statistics and according to the results of the present survey.

We did not wish to draw far-reaching conclusions about what religious and ethnical-cultural group the interviewees belonged to because we received answers about it at a relatively lower number in the questionnaire to be filled by the interviewees themselves. Basically, it seems that belonging to a religious or cultural group does not influence significantly the possibility of victimisation.

Among the deviances we examined the issue of alcoholism first and we found no greater tendency for victimisation there. In contrast to it we received very interesting results among the victims about whether they had been suspected or convicted in a criminal procedure. On the basis of the answers we found the somewhat surprising fact that the proportion of people suspected earlier was twice as high among the victims and they had also been convicted before more often than those who were not victimised (2.6%, 4.3%).

Following the evaluation of the data we can come to the conclusion that our research proved our earlier hypotheses. First, it became clear that there are a high number of crimes that do not come to light in Hungary, too. Concerning the year 2002, about which human memory is not so selective, the interviewees mentioned 2,276 crimes they suffered, of which only 739 (32%) were reported to the police. The proportion is similar for the whole period of five and a half years and it shows an approximately 60% latency in the case of the 10,000 interviewees (which means that only 30% of the cases were reported). This seems to be an unacceptably high proportion even if we consider that presumably not each case mentioned would prove to be actually a crime and some would be considered minor offences or cases that come under the jurisdiction of the civil law. Our supposition concerning hidden crimes that people fail to report mainly the less serious cases, where the disadvantage of reporting to it far exceeds the benefits the police procedure may have was also proved. In contrast to it, in the cases where reporting the incident to the police is a requirement for some purposes (for example, in the case of a car theft to receive payment from the insurance company) the proportion of cases reported is very high and latency is low. We also asked the victims why they failed to report the crime. The most frequent answer here was distrust to and dissatisfaction with the police (43%), followed by an also significant proportion of "there was little damage" and "there was no damage" answers (28%). An obvious result of our research is

that the police can receive feedback on the demand for a change in the way the clients are treated, which may result in decreasing latency in the long term. We must admit, however, that distrust does not come to be formed overnight and it is not related to one single police action but rather to negative experiences of several decades. Therefore, this negative attitude cannot be changed overnight; positive experiences of a longer period are necessary to change it.

All this made it very interesting to examine what the victims thought of the police procedure following the reporting of the case. From the answers of the people victimised in 2002 and in the first half of 2003 it turned out clearly that satisfaction is not very high, that the proportion of "not at all" and "satisfied to a small extent" answers is about 43%, while 20% of the people were satisfied on average. This may be due mainly to the lack of the desired result, namely that in 65% of the cases it did not turn out who the offender was.

Finally, we dealt with the sense of security, the anxieties and the fears of the interviewees and those victimised among them. From this, it turned out that our hypothesis about *the sense of security of the victims* proved correct; it seems to be worse than the sense of security of those not victimised, similarly to the earlier results. This was clear from the answers they gave about the security of their places of residence and their opinions on the extent of crime. In the light of this, it is interesting that *the people who were not victimised* tend to choose to stay at home and not go out after dark more often than the victims. This can be explained by saying that the victims came to terms with the thought of crime more readily and also by saying that they belong to the younger generation that go out more often in the evening anyway. Looking at *anxieties,* we found that most of *the people who were not victimised* were not especially concerned about crime, while this proportion was worse among the *victims.* This can be seen well at the question about the possibility of assault, where those victims who had been victimised before tend to think another assault even more possible (35% of the victims in general think it possible, while 50% of those who were the victims of assault). The interviewees find the situation even worse concerning burglaries; even a high percentage of those who were not victimised earlier are afraid of this crime.

Crimes involve not only concrete material and immaterial damage but also hurts that influence the life of the victim in the future. Therefore we asked about the emotions of the victim after the act. This showed that thinking back to the act even after several years stirs up intensive emotions in them, such as fury, anger, nervousness, the feeling of vulnerability, unrest and helplessness.

In comparison to this, it seemed to be an interesting question to explore what the interviewees in general and the victims among them did in general

in order to increase their security. It showed — similarly to the results of the InSec survey — that the interviewees prefer some kind of a change in their behaviour as a means of protection rather than increasing their security actively.

The Széchenyi research, besides reinforcing the conclusions disclosed in the earlier research and in the similar international research, showed quite new results as well in the field of Hungarian victim-research. This is, however, only the first step in victimology. It would be worth making use of the results and the conclusions as soon as possible in the prevention of victimisation and in the treatment of victims. This is not the task of the police only, the representatives of the administration of justice; the courts and the prosecution offices have an equal responsibility. This should be followed in the future by regular research projects of this magnitude, which will make it possible to measure not only actual victimisation and citizens' sense of security but in the light of these the efficiency of the administration of the law in a more effective and humane way.

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