

# **CRIME TRENDS IN BULGARIA**

**2000 – 2005**



**CENTER FOR  
THE STUDY OF  
DEMOCRACY**

The present report was developed by a team of Center for the Study of Democracy researchers:

**Tihomir Bezlov**, Senior Analyst, Sociological Program, Center for the Study of Democracy

**Philip Gounev**, Research Fellow, European Program, Center for the Study of Democracy

**Hristo Hristov**, Analyst, Vitosha Research

And with the cooperation of:

**Alexander Stoyanov**, Director, Vitosha Research

**Maria Yordanova**, Director, Law Program, Center for the Study of Democracy

**Dimitar Markov**, Project Coordinator, Law Program, Center for the Study of Democracy

The Center for the Study of Democracy would like to acknowledge the valuable comments, suggestions and support of the following persons:

**Boyko Kotzev** Deputy Minister of Interior

**Gen. Valentin Petrov** Director, National Police Service, Ministry of Interior

**Danail Petleshkov** Head of Coordination, Information and Analysis Division, National Police Service, Ministry of Interior



This publication has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the Center for the Study of Democracy and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.

**ISBN-10: 954-477-140-9**

**ISBN-13: 978-954-477-140-9**

© 2006, Center for the Study of Democracy  
All rights reserved.

5 Alexander Zhendov Str., 1113 Sofia  
Telephone: (+359 2) 971 3000, fax: (+359 2) 971 2233  
[www.csd.bg](http://www.csd.bg), [csd@online.bg](mailto:csd@online.bg)

## CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY . . . . .	5
1. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	11
2. GENERAL TRENDS . . . . .	17
2.1. Police Statistics and Victimization Surveys Compared . . . . .	17
2.2. Crimes against Businesses . . . . .	18
2.3. International Perspectives . . . . .	19
3. DYNAMICS OF CRIME IN BULGARIA . . . . .	23
3.1. Demographic Changes . . . . .	23
3.2. Social and Economic Factors . . . . .	25
3.3. The Role of Law-Enforcement Agencies and the Judiciary . . . . .	26
3.4. Crime “Export” . . . . .	32
3.5. Security Measures . . . . .	34
3.5.1. Security at Companies . . . . .	34
3.5.2. Home-Security Measures . . . . .	37
4. PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME . . . . .	39
5. UNRECORDED AND UNREPORTED CRIME . . . . .	43
5.1. Unrecorded Crime . . . . .	43
5.2. Unreported Crime . . . . .	46
5.3. Unreported Crime against Companies . . . . .	48
6. ANALYSIS BY OFFENSE CATEGORY . . . . .	51
6.1. Intentional Homicide . . . . .	51
6.2. Robbery . . . . .	53
6.3. Car Theft . . . . .	56
6.4. Theft from Cars . . . . .	59
6.5. Burglary . . . . .	60
6.6. Theft of Personal Property, Bicycle Theft and Pickpocketing . . . . .	63
6.7. Business Victimization . . . . .	64
6.7.1. Frauds and Thefts by Customers and Outsiders . . . . .	66
6.7.2. Frauds and Thefts by Employees . . . . .	67
APPENDIX 1: TOPICS IN THE NATIONAL CRIME SURVEY . . . . .	71
APPENDIX 2: STATISTICAL ANALYSES . . . . .	73
CSD PUBLICATIONS . . . . .	77

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>APD</b>	Area Police Department
<b>CSD</b>	Center for the Study of Democracy
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUICS</b>	European Union International Crime Survey
<b>Europol</b>	European Police Office
<b>Eurostat</b>	Statistical Office of the European Communities
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>ICBS</b>	International Crime Business Survey
<b>ICVS</b>	International Crime Victims Survey
<b>IMEI</b>	International Mobile Equipment Identity
<b>Interpol</b>	International Criminal Police Organization
<b>Mol</b>	Ministry of Interior
<b>NCS</b>	National Crime Survey
<b>NSI</b>	National Statistical Institute
<b>NSSI</b>	National Social Security Institute
<b>PWC</b>	PricewaterhouseCoopers
<b>RPD</b>	Regional Police Directorate
<b>SEESAC</b>	South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNECE</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
<b>UNICRI</b>	United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

---

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Toward the end of the 1990s and, particularly after the year 2000, as the prospect of EU membership became more likely, greater political stability and economic prosperity in Bulgaria led to a gradual decrease in crime. **This trend, which was most perceptible in the period 2000–2005,** was the result of several factors. Declining unemployment, rising incomes and economic growth provided alternatives to many individuals with criminal incomes. Demographic processes and emigration also contributed to the reduction in crime. Further strengthening of the judiciary and the law-enforcement systems, in an attempt to meet EU-set requirements, revived the criminal justice system, which in 2004 issued six times more sentences than it did in 1993.

### *Police Statistics and Victimization Surveys*

During the past decade, just like in other transitional democracies (and even in some EU member states), crime in Bulgaria has been on the top of most political parties' agendas. This situation has created an even greater need for an assessment of crime through internationally accepted standards and approaches. The Bulgarian public remains **suspicious or distrustful of official crime statistics**. The Ministry of Interior (Mol), which collects these statistics, is considered very important and is usually headed by key members of the political party in power. Therefore, the messages it sends are often politicized. The public deems the falling crime rate as one such message. They are also skeptical towards the various Mol services that have their own institutional interests to demonstrate a falling crime rate, in order to prove their own efficient work. Thus, the collection and interpretation of crime data is more than a criminological issue.

The present report of the Center for the Study of Democracy (CSD) for a second consecutive year presents information about Bulgaria's crime rate from an alternative source—**victimization surveys**—and attempts to make a systematic comparison of the crime level according to victim-reported crime and police crime data. The crime situation in Bulgaria is also compared to crime in a number of European countries. The findings of three national crime victims surveys, referred to throughout this report as **National Crime Surveys (NCS)**, offer an opportunity to assess street crime in Bulgaria in the period 2000–2005.

The first NCS 2002 and NCS 2004 examined only **11 categories of offenses against households and persons, while NCS 2005 also incorporates 11 categories of offenses against companies**. The 11 categories of offenses included in the NCS correspond to about 80% of all police-registered crimes in Bulgaria. The report does not cover corruption, drug-related or organized crime offenses, as they are the subject of other CSD analyses.

### *Main Findings*

The findings of NCS 2005, which was conducted in December 2005, corroborate what police statistics have captured: compared to 2004, **the number of crimes and crime victims in 2005 went down**. The **decrease** that police statistics registered in 2005 (**8.6%**) is **twice** the annual decrease for the period 2001–2004, when it ranged between 3.4% and 4.9%. NCS 2005 also reveals a record **drop in the number of crime victims—compared with 2004, they fell by 18%** in 2005. The annual decrease that NCS had registered in the four years preceding the 2005 survey ranged between 4% and 12%, which means that the share of people above 15 years of age who became victims of crime fell by nearly 4 percentage points—from 17% in 1999 to 10.6% in 2005.

A comparison of the NCS 2005 with the *European Union International Crime Survey* (EUICS) shows that **Bulgaria's level of street crime has remained lower than the average level of EU countries**. Whereas in 2004 the average EU prevalence rate for the eleven crime categories among citizens above 15 was 15.6%, the prevalence rate in Bulgaria was 12.9%. The dynamics of some types of crimes, however, calls for special attention:

- Although the frequent **contract killings** have received much media, as well as domestic and international political, attention (particularly in light of EU accession), the level of **homicides** in Bulgaria in 2005 was 2.4 per 100,000 of population, lower than that in 1990 (2.7 per 100,000) and twice as low as the peak year, 1994 (5.8 per 100,000). The overall homicide rate remains higher than the average European rate, but the firearm homicide rate (0.34 per 100,000) is similar to the level in many EU member states.
- In 2005 the numbers of **car thefts** continued to decrease, but a considerable portion of vehicle theft victims used extra-judicial or informal approaches to recover their car, usually by paying a ransom for it. Nearly one third of the victims were asked to pay ransom (of €1,100 on average) for getting their stolen car back. Over half of them (56%) paid it.
- One of the crimes that increased in 2005 was **burglary** (2.2% of all households were victimized, up from 2%). **This trend diverges from police data, which registered a decrease in burglaries**. The main reason for the discrepancy is that in 2005 more burglaries were not reported to the police than in 2004.
- NCS shows that between 1999 and 2005 **crimes against businesses** and crimes against individuals were decreasing at almost the same rate. Whereas in 1999 the share of companies based in Sofia that reported to have been victimized was 32%, in 2005 only 19% of them were victims of crimes, while their nationwide share was 22%. However, in the same period there was **a growth in fraud by employees, as well as an increase of threats and extortions against companies**.

### *Financial damages from street crime*

Despite the falling rate of street crime from 2000 to 2005, it continued to inflict serious damages on both households and companies. Costs included losses from stolen and damaged property, emotional and psychological trauma, loss of potential income and medical, protection and insurance expenses.

NCS 2005 allows for estimating the **cost of lost property from thefts and robberies of persons, households and companies. The total amount for the year 2004 was somewhere between €107 and €127 million, or around 0.6% of GDP.** These estimates, however, do not take into account the financially most damaging crimes, such as financial fraud against citizens and companies and thefts of municipal or state property.

### *Unrecorded and Unreported Crime*

When juxtaposing the **NCS findings and police crime data**, it becomes evident that the police register only **a small portion of the crimes that are actually committed.** For instance, in NCS 2005 citizens declare to have been victims of 542,161 crimes, while the police registered only 101,806 crimes during the year. There are two basic reasons for this disparity:

- Victims of crime report criminal incidents to the police but the police do not register them, i.e. they apply various police **filters** and the **reported crime goes unrecorded.**
- For a variety of reasons (lack of trust in the police, insignificance of the incident, etc.), citizens fail to report crimes to the police, thus leaving part of the **crimes unreported.**

During the period 2000–2005, **the impact of unrecorded and unreported crime continually diminished, but the unreported crime rate became progressively important,** reaching a level where more than half of all crimes are never reported to the police. **In contrast to many EU countries,** where unreported crime is slowly falling, **since 1998** (when victimization surveys in the country were first conducted) **Bulgaria has experienced a steady growth of unreported crime.**

Unlike households or individuals, during the period 1999–2005, **the number of unreported crimes in the business sector went down considerably for all crime categories** covered by the NCS. The reporting increased particularly in cases of thefts by outsiders and customers (from 16.7% to 52%) and thefts from employees (from 7.1% to 50%).

### *Dynamics of Crime*

The present report aims to attract public attention to some **demographic, social and institutional factors** that could have impacted Bulgaria's crime rate. Without attempting to assign particular weights, the following

factors are considered to have contributed to the change of the crime rate in Bulgaria between 2000 and 2005:

- **Decrease in the total population as well as the young male population** in risk age (15–29 years old). The risk-age group in the period fell by 5% due to high emigration and low birth rates after 1989.
- **Migration of criminally active individuals:** according to crime data from some EU countries and the observations of Bulgarian police officials, the removal of the Schengen visas in 2001 led to increased migration of criminally active individuals.
- **Fall in unemployment:** lower youth unemployment rates have led not only to a decrease in property crimes but possibly to a fall in homicides and rapes.
- **Increase in the prison population:** in the period 2001–2005 the prison population went up by 27%, taking many repeat offenders off the streets.
- **Growing number of effective penalties as a result of fast-track police investigations and trials:** the growing number of fast-track investigations and trials (a fourfold increase between 2001 and 2005) has led to a growth in effective penalties which are generally considered to have a preventive effect. In 2002 only 15% of all sentences announced by the courts concerned crimes that were perpetrated in the same year. In 2004 the sentences imposed for same-year crimes reached 25% of the total.

Given the crime trends in the period 2000–2005 and the problems they pose, two types of measures are both feasible and necessary:

#### 1. Systematic and professional use of victimization surveys as an additional tool in the formulation and implementation of national crime prevention and law enforcement policy

- **Annual victimization surveys.** Effective victimization surveys require much greater resources and in the future appropriate budget allocation should be made by the Ministry of Interior budget. Victimization surveys in Bulgaria have so far used a sample of only 1,000–2,000 households; in the UK, 46,000 households are surveyed several times per year. Extended National Crime Surveys would provide opportunities for an adequate monitoring of the overall crime situation. A public-private partnership mechanism that has brought forward the debate on these issues has already been created through the National Crime Prevention Commission.
- **Strengthening the analytical capacity of law-enforcement institutions in regards to victimization surveys.** Surveys can be used to enable the development of community and victim-oriented crime prevention and reduction programs. Victimization surveys have been conducted in Bulgaria for nearly nine years but they have not been used in the work of law-enforcement institutions.



## **2. Development and implementation of measures for increasing crime reporting**

The adequacy of current criteria for police work effectiveness—“clear-up rate” and “number of registered crimes”—should be reevaluated. New mechanisms increasing the motivation of local police chiefs to record reported crimes should be implemented. Possible approaches include: public accountability regarding the ratio between reported and registered crimes; introduction of a single registration number for registering reported crimes; awareness-raising campaigns on the ways of reporting a crime and the benefits of reporting. Only in this way could initiatives such as the *Community Policing Program* promote closer contacts between the public and the police.



---

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Before 1989, Bulgaria's crime rate was lower than that in most European countries and the US. For most of the 1990s, political, demographic and social crises in Bulgaria contributed to higher levels of crime. At the end of the 1990s, though, and particularly after the year 2000, a gradual fall in the crime rate commenced. Each of these three periods was marked by specific socio-economic, political and demographic factors, as well as government policies that impacted the general level of crime.

Before 1989, Bulgaria was a police state with a large security apparatus and numerous informants. In addition, full employment, and low but stable incomes, as well as healthy demographic growth, created conditions for social stability and a low crime rate.

During the early 1990s the system of repressive political control was dismantled, which led to the removal of the communist party's monopoly on power and the privatization of enterprises and services nationwide. The exodus of Bulgarian Turks to Turkey in 1985 and 1989, as well as the several waves of *en masse* emigration between 1989 and 1991 came at a time when birth rates fell significantly while mortality rates increased. Record-high unemployment reached 80% in some areas, affecting vulnerable groups, such as the Roma ethnic minority. Incomes continuously declined, by 1996 leaving most Bulgarians below the poverty line. The dissolution of some, and the transformation of other, law-enforcement and security services brought the criminal justice system to a virtual grind when in 1993 courts issued 3.2 times less sentences than in 1989, while the crime rate more than doubled for the same period.

Toward the end of the 1990s and, particularly after the year 2000, as the increasingly likely prospects of EU and NATO membership led to greater political stability, economic growth, declining unemployment and rising incomes gave individuals alternatives to criminal incomes. Demographic processes and emigration also contributed to the reduction of crime. In addition, the strengthening of the judiciary and law-enforcement systems, in an attempt to meet EU-set requirements, revived the criminal justice system, which in 2004 issued six times more sentences than it did in 1993.

During the past decade, just like in other transitional democracies (or even in some EU member-states), crime in Bulgaria has been at the top of the political agendas of most political parties. This fact has created an even greater need for **assessment of the crime situation through internationally accepted standards and approaches**. The Bulgarian public remains suspicious or distrustful of official crime statistics. Therefore, society tends to greet the latest estimates of falling crime during 2005 with skepticism. Therefore, the present report not only suggests an alternative source of information about the crime rate—the victimization

survey—but highlights some demographic, economic and legal changes that could explain Bulgaria's falling crime rate.

Public **distrust in official crime statistics** is usually explained by the fact that the Ministry of Interior (Mol) collects, processes and announces this data. Being a very hierarchical and closed institution, the Mol is considered very important and is usually headed by key members of the political party in power. Therefore, the messages it sends are often politicized. The public deems the falling crime rate as one such message. This cynical reception also occurs in regards to the various Mol services that have their own institutional interests in demonstrating a falling crime rate—that is, to prove their work is efficient. Thus, the collection and interpretation of crime data is more than a criminological issue.

Apart from political conditions that could bring about biased crime data, another issue is the limited administrative and statistical capacity underlying the crime registration process. These only add to broader facts that could distort the real picture of the crime situation, such as: 1) that victims of a crime might not always be aware of it; 2) even if they become aware, they do not always report it to the police; 3) and even if they report it, the police filter out some of the crimes. In Bulgaria, it is the second (**unreported crime**) and the third factor (**police "filters"**) that mostly could hamper the veracity of police-registered crime data.

Nearly in all categories of crimes, some offenses remain unreported. It depends on the seriousness of the crime, the kind of response given by the police—whether their relations with citizen are satisfactory—and the public's perceptions of whether law-enforcement bodies are effective. Unreported crime is particularly high in cases of crimes that could embarrass the victim (e.g. sex-related crimes or corruption), and when the public does not trust the police or finds them ineffective. When a bribe is given, for instance, both parties are often equally involved and as a result close to 100% of corruption-related crimes go unreported. **Police filters** involve deliberate actions on the part of police officers either to dissuade citizens from reporting a crime, or to apply certain administrative tricks that leave a reported crime unrecorded.

As unreported or unrecorded crime are problems in most countries, **victimization surveys** have been employed as an instrument to overcome this issue for over 30 years. They are regarded as an accurate tool for measuring actual crime levels with reasonable accuracy. In Bulgaria, they are carried out through household surveys based on random representative population samples and using face-to-face interviews. Moreover, they can be conducted by independent institutions, such as non-government organizations. Thus, they are simultaneously a trustworthy measuring tool and a tool preventing the manipulation of crime data for institutional or political ends.

The United Nations Institute on Criminal Justice Research (UNICRI) conducted the first victimization survey in Bulgaria in 1997 in Sofia. Following the political and economic crisis in late 1996 and early 1997, a Center for the Study of Democracy (CSD) team, participating in

UNDP's Early Warning project, included in its monthly surveys a set of victimization questions.<sup>1</sup> Bulgaria's experience supports the thesis that victimization surveys are a reliable and politically neutral crime analysis tool that is not burdened by the political opinions and attitudes.

The report *Crime Trends in Bulgaria: Police Statistics and Victimization Surveys*, published by the Center for the Study of Democracy in 2005, attempted to make a systematic comparison of the crime level according to victim-reported crime and police crime data. The crime situation in Bulgaria was also compared to the situation in a number of industrialized countries. The present report compares police crime data with the findings of the national crime victims surveys conducted by Vitosha Research—they are referred to throughout this report as **National Crime Surveys (NCS)**. Such comparative analysis provides grounds for discussing the crime situation and trends based on sound and objective criteria.

The present report presents an assessment of street crime in Bulgaria in the period 2000–2005. It does not consider organized crime and corruption insofar as they are the subject of other CSD analyses.<sup>2</sup> The main objective of this analysis is to start a debate on **the actual crime problems that affect the everyday life of almost every Bulgarian family**. It also aims to compare the level of crime in Bulgaria and to contrast the specific features of the Bulgarian crime situation to other European countries.

The report compares the crime data from police statistics with victims' experiences recorded by NCS (table 1). The NCS draws on the methods of the International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) as well as the International Crime Business Survey (ICBS).<sup>3</sup>

The first two surveys in Bulgaria using the ICVS methodology were conducted by Vitosha Research in July 2002 and in November 2004, while the third one was completed in December 2005, when 1,202 households were interviewed nationwide.<sup>4</sup> The ICVS methodology examines respondents' experiences with 11 crime categories. These crimes constitute 80% of all police-registered crime categories in Bulgaria and therefore could be considered representative of the crime situation in the country. The three NCSs allowed for the analysis of the 2000–2005 period.

---

<sup>1</sup> UNDP Early Warning Report, Sofia 1998, pp. 93-96.

<sup>2</sup> Center for the Study of Democracy (2004), *Corruption, Trafficking and Institutional Reform*, Sofia; Center for the Study of Democracy (2003), *The Drug Market in Bulgaria*, Sofia; Center for the Study of Democracy (2004), *Partners in Crime: The Risks of Symbiosis between the Security Sector and Organized Crime in Southeast Europe*, Sofia; Center for the Study of Democracy (2004), *Transportation, Smuggling and Organized Crime*, Sofia; Center for the Study of Democracy (2005), *Anti-Corruption Reforms in Bulgaria 2004*, Sofia; Center for the Study of Democracy (2006), *On the Eve of EU Accession: Anti-Corruption Reforms in Bulgaria*, Sofia.

<sup>3</sup> ICVS and ICBS have been developed and implemented by the United Nations Institute on Criminal Justice Research (UNICRI) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

<sup>4</sup> In addition, there was a sample booster of representatives of the Roma minority of 534 households, but it is not analyzed in the present report.

The report also incorporates for the first time the findings of a national crime victims survey of the business sector. A business victimization survey was conducted by Vitosha Research in 2000 under the supervision of UNICRI as part of an international comparative survey carried out in the capitals of eight other countries: Albania, Croatia, Belarus, Lithuania, Hungary, Romania, Russia and Ukraine. Based on the UNICRI methodology, the Center for the Study of Democracy and Vitosha Research conducted in September 2005 a national business victimization survey using a representative sample of 308 companies from all over Bulgaria.

The present analysis draws on two main measurements to analyze the NCS—*prevalence* and *incidence*. **Prevalence rates** are the share of respondents who experienced a certain crime once or more in a given year. **Incidence rates** express the number of crimes experienced by each 100 people in the sample in a given period. These count all incidents against victims who may have experienced more than one incident during a given year. When comparing the NCS data with the police statistics the present report uses the prevalence rates.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> As NCS is nationally representative, it is accepted that its data and indicators refer to the population over 15 years of age.

TABLE 1. POLICE STATISTICS AND VICTIMIZATION SURVEYS

	Mol statistics	Victimization surveys
Goals	Assist all Mol agencies in their law-enforcement practice by providing crime statistics.	Provide more comprehensive information by including crimes not recorded by or reported to the police.
Types of crime	<p><b>All crimes included in the Criminal Code:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Crimes against the person</b> (murder, rape, bodily injury, etc.);</li> <li>• <b>Household crimes</b> (burglary, etc.);</li> <li>• <b>Crimes threatening the public</b> (vehicle theft, arson, transport and drug-related crimes, etc.)</li> <li>• <b>Financial crimes.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Crimes against households and persons—11 crime categories:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car-theft, theft <i>from</i> cars, car vandalism;</li> <li>• Motorcycle/bicycle theft;</li> <li>• Burglary and attempted burglary, personal property theft;</li> <li>• Robbery, sexual incidents, assault/threat.</li> </ul> <p><b>Crimes against companies—11 crime categories:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theft by employee or outsider;</li> <li>• Fraud by employee or outsider;</li> <li>• Robbery;</li> <li>• Threats/Racketeering.</li> </ul>
Data collection methods	<p><b>The police record:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crimes reported by citizens;</li> <li>• Crimes reported in the media.</li> </ul>	<p><b>A household survey based on interviews:</b> data on victimized persons and households is gathered, irrespective of whether the crimes were reported to the police or not and, respectively, whether police recorded it or not.</p>
Crime level indicators	Number of crimes per 100,000 of population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share of persons victimized (prevalence);</li> <li>• Number of incidents per 100 persons (incidence).</li> </ul>
Representative value	Substantial: the annual number of registered crimes is usually over 100,000.	In Bulgaria, such surveys use a nationally representative sample with at least 1,100 households. In the US, the sample size used is 60,000 households and in the UK it is 46,000 households. ICVS and EUICS are based on samples with 1,200–2,000 people.
Frequency of data collection	Continuous	Annual since 1997. National representative surveys were conducted in 2001 and 2005 (National Statistical Institute), in 2002 (UNICRI), in 2003 (NCPOS), 2004 and 2005 (CSD). Surveys for Sofia were conducted in 1997 and 2000 (UNICRI) and for Varna in 2004 (Varna Free University).
Differences	Record data on crimes against private companies, public institutions, and minors (below 15).	Do not include data on crimes against state or municipal property, against minors (below 15), and crimes by police and armed forces personnel.





## 2. GENERAL TRENDS

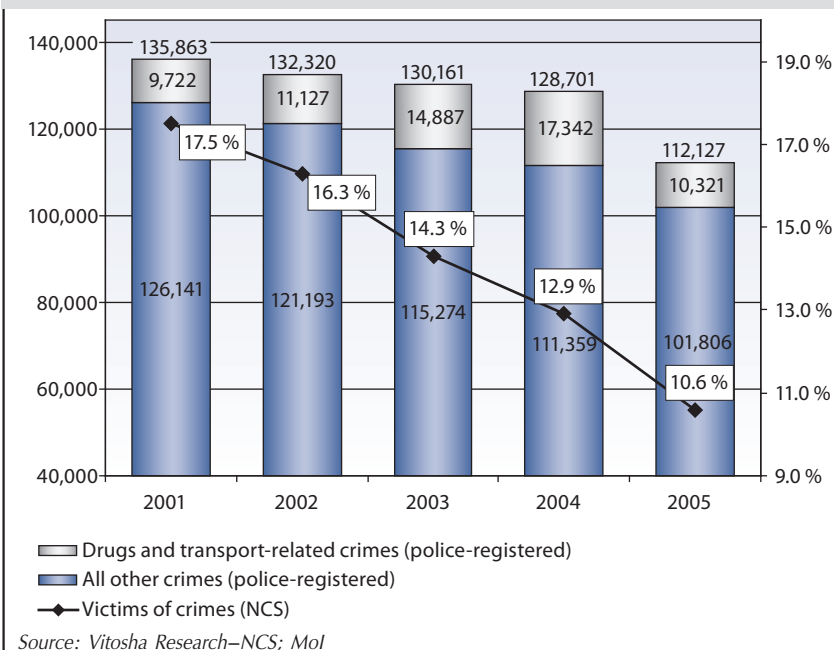
### 2.1. Police Statistics and Victimization Surveys Compared

NCS findings corroborate what police statistics have captured: compared to 2004, **in 2005 the number of crimes and crime victims went down** (figure 1). The **decrease** that the police statistics registered in 2005 (**8.6%**) **is twice** the annual decrease for the period 2001–2004, when it ranged between 3.4% and 4.9%.

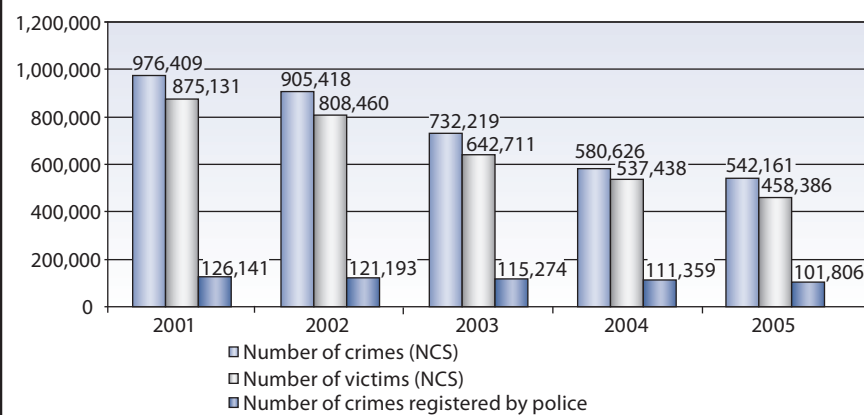
The NCS also reveals a record **drop in the number of crime victims—compared with 2004, they fell by 18%** in 2005. The annual decrease that NCS had registered in the four years preceding the 2005 survey ranged between 4% and 12%.

To make the data more comparable, *figure 1* separates out the drugs and transport-related crime data. These two groups of crimes do not always have a victim (e.g. drunk driving) or if they do, the victim and the perpetrator could be one and the same person (e.g. a drug user). Similarly to corruption-related crimes, they are almost never reported and therefore are recorded in police statistics when the police uncover a crime.

FIGURE 1. POLICE AND NCS-REGISTERED CRIME (NUMBER OF CRIMES AND SHARE OF VICTIMS)



The compared data shows a marked discrepancy between police statistics and NCS findings—the number of crimes as measured by the NCS **is much greater than the number of crimes registered by the police** (figure 2). The gap between the number of crimes actually committed and those registered by the police has nonetheless been narrowing over the period 2001–

FIGURE 2. NUMBER OF REGISTERED CRIMES AND NUMBER OF VICTIMS<sup>6</sup>

Source: Vitosha Research–NCS; Mol

2005. The crimes that remained unrecorded by the police in 2001 were 850,000, while in 2005 their number was around 440,000.

The above discrepancies are grounded in two practices. First, people are **reluctant to report** crimes when they have been victims, i.e. **unreported crime**. Second, the police have their own strategies, which they use to **“filter”** reported crimes before officially recording them. Police filters differ for the different crimes and are described in detail in part 5 of this report.

## 2.2. Crimes against Businesses

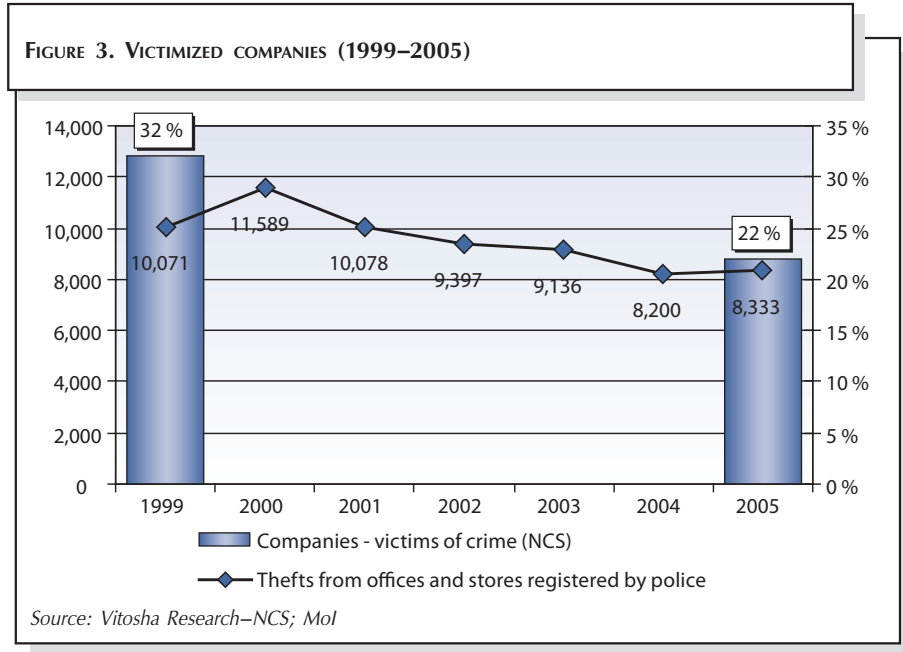
In its second component, the NCS surveys businesses that became victims of crimes in 2005. A comparison of NCS data and the data from the 2000 UNICRI business victimization survey in Sofia indicates that **between 1999 and 2005, crimes against businesses and crimes against individuals were decreasing at almost the same rate**. Whereas in 1999 the share of companies based in Sofia that reported to have been victimized<sup>7</sup> was 32%, in 2005 only 19% of them were victims of crimes, while their nationwide share was 22%.<sup>8</sup> No comparative national data was gathered for 1999. Lacking a special statistical category for crimes against companies, police statistics are comparable with victimizations surveys only in respect to a few crimes, such as thefts from stores or offices. Comparing data from both sources reveals that NCS and police statistics register a similar trend of a falling crime rate.

In contrast to the crimes against households or individuals, **the number of unreported crimes in the business sector is much smaller**. Unreported crime in the business sector has been on the decrease in the past five years. The fall of unreported crime rates, therefore, is one possible explanation why police statistics register a smaller decline in business-sector crime (17%) than does the NCS (31%).

<sup>6</sup> Mol data on transport and drug-related crimes are not taken into account in this figure.

<sup>7</sup> In 2000, the respondents were asked: “In 1999 (January 1–December 31), was any crime against your company committed at this particular site?”

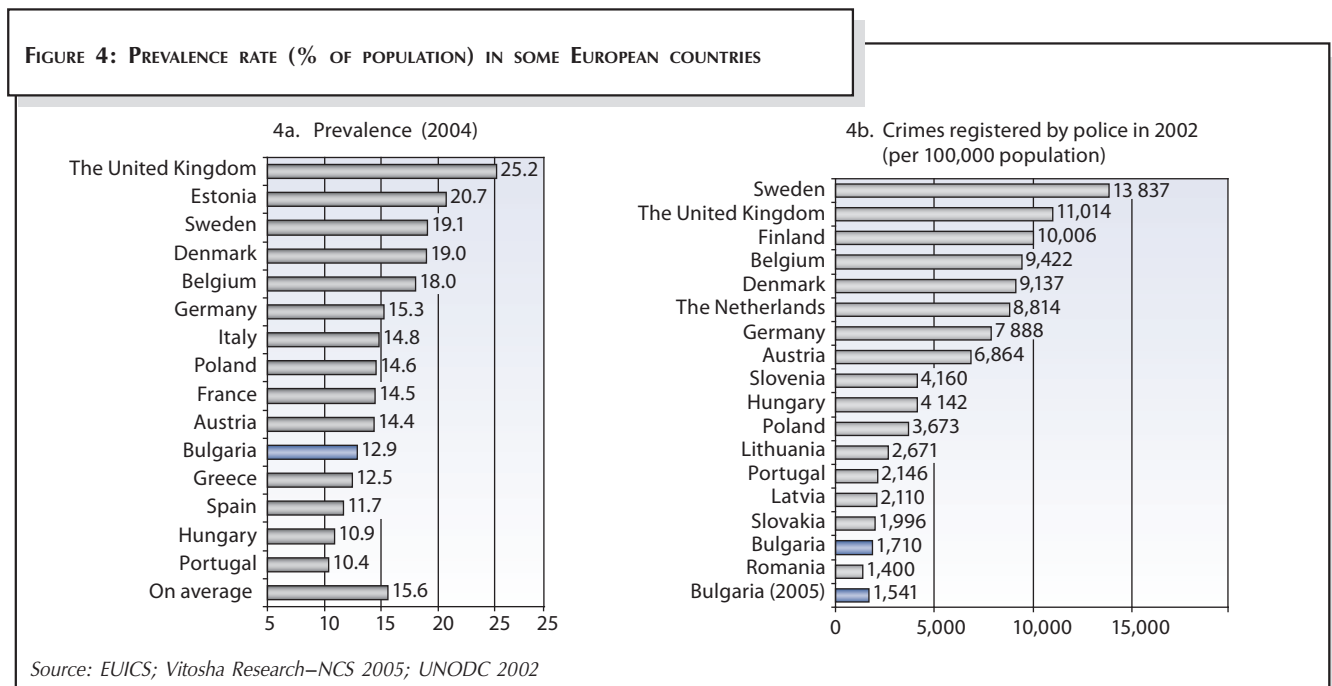
<sup>8</sup> In the 2000 survey the question referred to a period of one year—“In 1999 (January 1–December 31), was any crime against your company committed at this particular site?”, while in 2005 it covered the period between January 1 and September 30—“In 2005 (January 1–September 30), was any crime against your company committed at this particular site?”. As the timeframes differed, the data for 2005 was recalculated and estimated for 12 months. These questions did not include frauds.



### 2.3. International Perspectives

The NCS presents evidence that **Bulgaria’s crime rate remains slightly lower than the average rate for European countries.** Over the past five years, the country’s prevalence rate has fallen by nearly 4 percentage points—from 17.5% in 2001 to 12.9% in 2004 (figure 4a).

**In the 1999 to 2004 period, though, crime rates have also dropped in most EU countries.** There are some countries where the decrease is bigger than in Bulgaria, such as in Poland, where the share of victims among the population fell from 23% to 14.6%, or in Sweden, where it went



from 25% down to 19%. The UK, however, had a negligible decrease from 26% to 25.2%.<sup>9</sup>

International comparisons of crime data often encourage speculation. First of all, police statistics and victimization surveys are different instruments. Apart from that, the measuring methods they use vary across countries. Thirdly, police statistics differ in quality and precision in the separate countries. Finally, the same crime may be classified in a number of different ways depending on national legislation.

**To solve part of these problems, an overall methodology of conducting International Crime Victims Surveys (ICVS)<sup>10</sup> was developed.<sup>11</sup> The ICVS was first conducted in 1989. All participating countries used questions about the same crime categories and time periods. The NCS uses a methodology and questionnaires comparable with those of ICVS. The use of the ICVS methodology (figure 4a) makes it possible to compare countries as disparate as Bulgaria and Sweden. Thus, it is evident that the crime rate in Bulgaria is slightly lower (6.2 percentage points) than that of Sweden. A comparison of police statistics in the two countries, instead, reveals the number of registered crimes in Bulgaria to be 7.5 times less than in Sweden (figure 4b). This discrepancy best illustrates the difficulty of comparing police statistics internationally.** Several reasons for that can be listed:

- 1. The criminal justice systems of the various countries** criminalize different types of acts.
- 2. There are different methods of recording crime:** some countries record minor offenses (misdemeanors) as administrative violations, while others register them as criminal offenses (therefore making them part of the police statistics).
- 3. Variation in the quality of collected data:** some states have police data of poor quality, as they do not apply adequate quality control over data collection, lack computer equipment (in offices, let alone police vehicles) and have low computer literacy among police staff.
- 4. Varying levels of unreported crime.** In many developing countries where trust in police is low, this is of particular concern.

**Nevertheless, there are categories of crimes in police statistics that can safely be compared.** An example is intentional homicide (completed), which has turned into a standard measurement for the level of crime across countries.<sup>12</sup> This report uses only police data that is internationally

<sup>9</sup> International data throughout the report is quoted as “EUICS” and refers to **analysis of data** (not a publication) from the EUICS Consortium database (<http://eb.gallup.hu/webview/index.jsp>), last accessed on April 17, 2006.

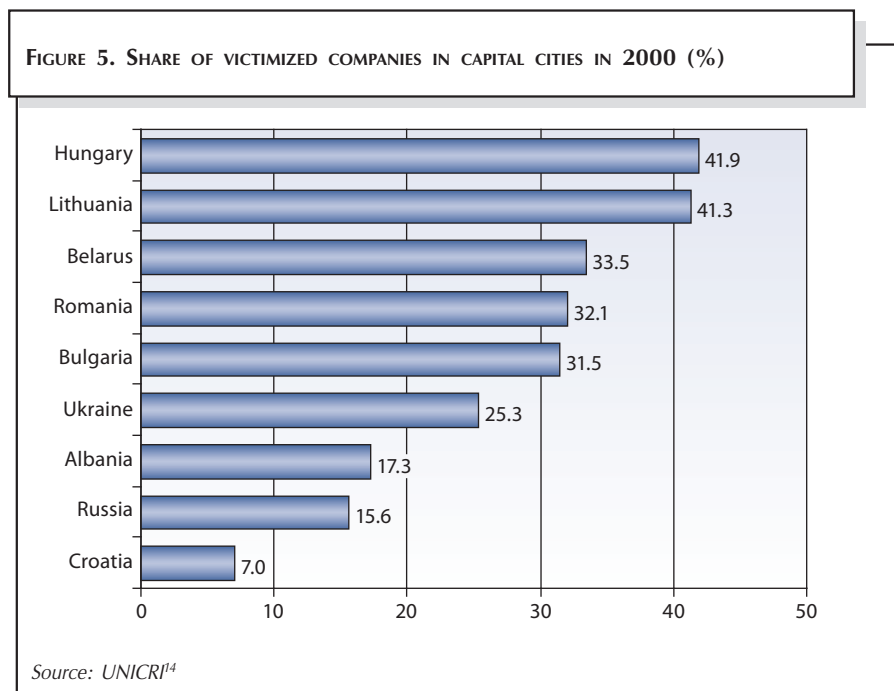
<sup>10</sup> International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) has been followed up by the EU International Crime Survey (EUICS).

<sup>11</sup> Comparison between victimization surveys can also pose certain problems since the various countries have adopted different models of victimizations research. Most prominently, 1) surveys refer to different timeframes—respondents are either asked about the last 12 months or the last calendar year; 2) the frequency of surveys differs—they may be done annually, monthly, etc.; 3) different questionnaires are used in the surveys.

<sup>12</sup> This measure can only be questioned by those willing to speculate that in some countries corrupt policemen might record murders as suicides.

comparable (with the exception of figure 4b). The data used is taken from the UNODC biannual criminal justice statistics compiled from UN member states.<sup>13</sup>

There is fairly little data from other countries allowing for an international comparison of victimization of **businesses**. The last International Crime Business Survey (ICBS) that included Bulgaria was conducted in 2000 in several Central and East European capitals. As the survey indicated, the rate for crimes against businesses in Sofia (31.5%) did not deviate significantly from that of other capitals.



Bulgaria also took part in a survey of companies conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) in 2005. This survey, however, studied only part of the crime categories covered by NCS—those involving frauds of employees and outsiders. PWC surveyed mainly companies whose staff exceeded 200 employees.<sup>15</sup> NCS 2005 confirmed the trend that employee fraud is growing—a trend captured by the PWC survey as well.<sup>16</sup> According to the PWC findings, Bulgaria's level of crimes against businesses is close to that of most central and east european countries.

Despite its falling rate in the period 2000–2005, crime continued to inflict serious damages on both households and companies. Those damages are manifold, ranging from stolen and destroyed property (table 2) to the victims' trauma or potential income loss. Companies, on the other hand, suffer from reduced productivity. Moreover, crime leads to extra expenses such as those for medical, protection or insurance services sought by citizens or the companies' costs of repairing damages, buying security and insurance.

NCS 2005 for the first time presents the chance of estimating the direct costs of thefts and robberies for persons, households and companies. **Their total amount for the year 2004 was somewhere between €106**

<sup>13</sup> United Nations Surveys on Crime Trends and the Operations of Criminal Justice Systems, [http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crime\\_cicp\\_surveys.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crime_cicp_surveys.html).

<sup>14</sup> The information presented in this graph is based on analysis of data (in SPSS format) presented to CSD by UNICRI.

<sup>15</sup> PricewaterhouseCoopers (2005), *Global Economic Crime Survey*.

<sup>16</sup> The NCS registered twice as many crimes as did the PWC survey because the questionnaires covered different time periods. PWC asked about crimes committed in the preceding two years, whereas the NCS 2005 referred to the preceding 9 months. The recall frame of both citizens and companies tends to be no longer than a year, which provides a plausible explanation for the disparate results of the two surveys.

and **€132 million**. These values, however, do not take into account much of the financially most damaging crime, such as large-scale fraud against companies either by employees or outsiders (see sections 5.7.1 and 5.7.2 of the present report).

**TABLE 2. DAMAGES BY CRIME IN 2004 (MILL. €)**

Crime category	Stolen property value	
	Minimum	Maximum
Robbery	0.65	0.65
Theft of car	10.5	12.5
Stolen car ransom	1.25	1.75
Theft from car	12.5	13.5
Burglary	20.0	30.0
Attempted burglary	0.7	0.7
Bicycle theft	1.05	1.05
Pickpocketing	8.5	8.5
Theft from company (2005) <sup>17</sup>	51.5	64.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>106.65</b>	<b>132.65</b>

Source: Vitosha Research—NCS 2005

<sup>17</sup> Calculations for this crime were made on the basis of the **average value** of the damage as reported by the victims, amounting to €6,000. This estimate takes into account all crimes without the cases of fraud and does not include replacement costs. This figure was obtained on the assumption that there are around 45,000 companies in Bulgaria. The number of registered companies is 1.2 million, but in 2004 only 370,000 companies paid taxes, nearly 45,000 of which had annual revenues exceeding €25,000 (according to interviewed tax officials). Finding out the actual number companies is made difficult by the fact that there are individuals owning several companies which they register either to be exempt from VAT, to commit financial fraud, or to reduce the payable taxes as much as possible.

### 3. DYNAMICS OF CRIME IN BULGARIA

Ever since crime became a matter of public debate in 1990, there has been little discussion as to the factors that bring about changes in the crime rate. As crime was considered to be within the competency only of the Ministry of Interior, it has been the ministry's own actions that have been scrutinized in an attempt to explain the changes in the crime rate. The present report aims to attract public attention to some demographic, social, and criminal justice factors that could have impacted Bulgaria's crime rate. As these issues have not been examined at any depth in Bulgaria, the report draws on theoretical and empirical studies from other countries. Without attempting to assign particular weights, the following factors are considered to have contributed to the change of the crime rate in Bulgaria between 2000 and 2005:

1. Decrease in the total population as well as the young male population;
2. Fall in unemployment;
3. Institutional and legislative changes;
4. Strengthened capacity of law enforcement institutions and the judiciary;
5. Increase in the prison population;
6. Migration of criminally active individuals;
7. Improvement of security measures taken by companies and households.

#### 3.1. Demographic Changes

Three demographic processes have contributed to the decline of crime over the past five years (2001–2005) in Bulgaria. First, between 2001 and 2005, Bulgaria's total population diminished by approximately 170,000 people.<sup>18</sup> A second factor is the shrinking of the male population in the **risk-age group**—comprising young males between 15 and 29 years of age. Between 2000 and 2004, the share of convicted persons belonging to this age group was 62–63%.<sup>19</sup> Since 1997, the male population from this age group has been in continuous decline, the trend being especially visible in the period 2001–2005 when the **males aged 15-29 decreased by 45,000 or 5% of the total number of this age group**.<sup>20</sup> It

<sup>18</sup> Estimate made based on NSI 2001 census, and recent mortality and births data, [www.nsi.bg](http://www.nsi.bg).

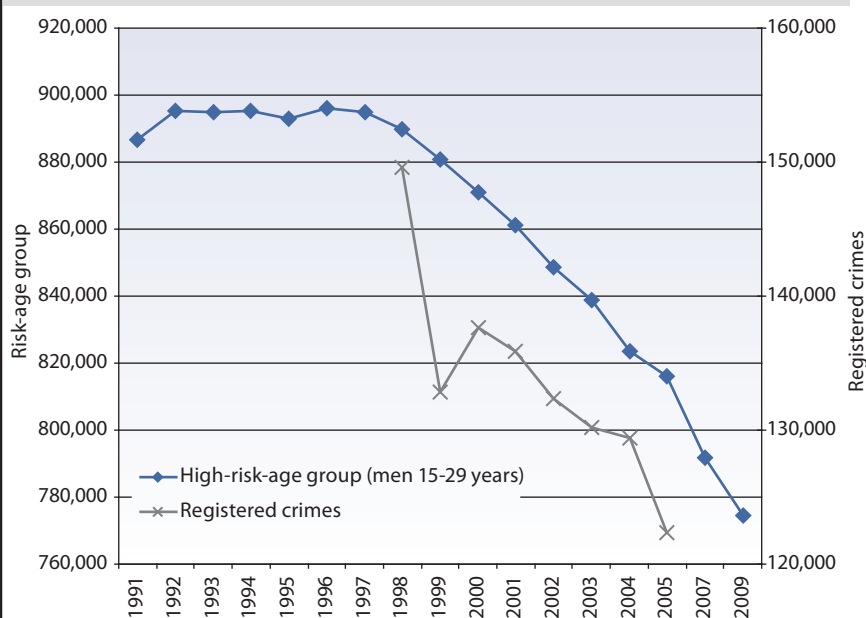
<sup>19</sup> Calculations made based on: National Statistical Institute, *Crimes and Persons Convicted*, data for the period 2000–2004, provided to CSD in electronic form.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* The figure 45,000 also includes an estimated 5,000 emigrants from this age group (based on data provided by the National Border Police Service). Surveys in the US have shown that large cohorts (cohort refers to people of the same age) are systematically related to higher rates of offending *per individual*. This is explained with higher chance for engaging in relations with criminals or with greater competition for jobs. (Levitt, S. (1999), *The Limited Role in Changing Age Structure in Explaining Aggregate Crime Rates*, *Criminology*, Vol.37:3.) The “back of the envelope” estimate for the case of Bulgaria could conclude that the number of offenders has roughly fallen by 2,850 individuals, if one assumes that around 6% of those 45,000 people would have engaged in deviant behavior—6% is the share of the sentenced individuals in the 15–29 age group relative to that age group (cohort) size.



is most likely that the shrinking size of this risk-age group will have even more pronounced impact on the crime rate over the next seven years (2006–2013), due to the sharp decline in birthrate in the years between 1990 and 1997.<sup>21</sup> **The third demographic process** due to accelerate in the next four years (2006–2009) is the change of the population's age structure due to emigration and low birthrates. The number of males from the risk-age group will diminish at a rate faster than that of the general population, so by 2009 the share of the risk-age group within the overall population will decrease from 10.5% (in 2005) to 10.2%.<sup>22</sup> These estimates, though, do not take into account expected **growth of immigrant population from developing countries after Bulgaria's entry into the EU.**

FIGURE 6. DEMOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE OF THE RISK-AGE GROUP<sup>23</sup>



Source: NSI<sup>24</sup>; Mol

<sup>21</sup> Children born in 1990 will be sixteen years old in 2006 and in the seven years to follow the cohort of sixteen-year-old males will continue to decrease.

<sup>22</sup> Estimate made based on NSI 2001 census, and recent mortality and births data, www.nsi.bg.

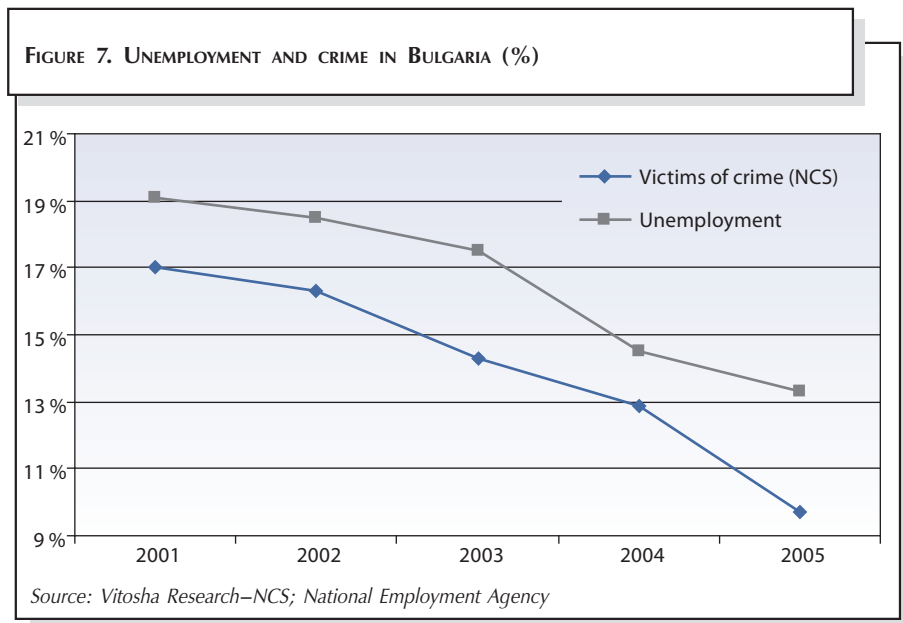
<sup>23</sup> Calculations are based on 1992 and 2001 census data. The data over the period 1993–2000 take into account death and emigration rates. The 2002–2005 estimates are based on the death rate in the period and a rough estimation of the number of emigrants after the removal of Schengen visa requirements in 2001, i.e. 5,000 people per year. Prognostic values for 2007 and 2009 are grounded in the 2001 census data, whereas the death rate used was that for 2004 together with an average of 5,000 emigrants annually.

<sup>24</sup> Calculations are based on data from the censuses made by the NSI, published in: National Statistical Institute (2005), *Population and Demographic Processes 2004*; National Statistical Institute (1995), *Population 1994*.



### 3.2. Social and Economic Factors

The average annual GDP growth for the past five years has been 5% (after an average fall of 3% for the 1990s), while unemployment has dropped from 19.3% in 2001 to 10.73% in 2005.<sup>25</sup> Of all macroeconomic factors, the latter is likely to have produced the strongest impact on crime (figure 7).



The impact of employment on crime rates has been a debated issue but the correlation between the two is generally acknowledged. Some studies in the US have demonstrated the relation between unemployment and crimes such as burglary, robbery or theft, arguing that a 1% drop in unemployment rates results in a 1% drop in property crimes.<sup>26</sup> As property crimes are the most widespread type of crime, part of the fall of the crime-rate in Bulgaria may well be attributed to the falling unemployment rate.

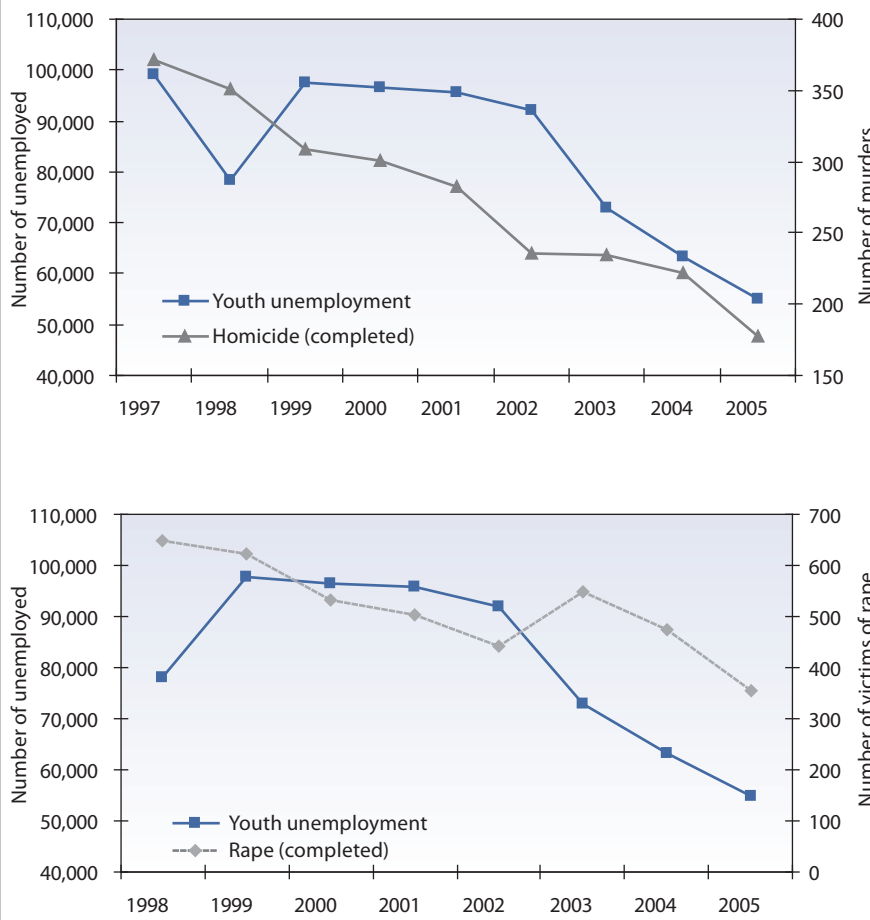
Studies from other countries show that the level of violent crime (murder, rape or assault) does not depend on the level of unemployment.<sup>27</sup> In Bulgaria, however, the correlation between unemployment and murder or rape seems to be strong. The judicial statistics show that about 60% of all murder and rape perpetrators are unemployed men. Data from 1997–1998 also confirms these observations (figure 8).

<sup>25</sup> Data of the Ministry of Economy and the National Employment Agency.

<sup>26</sup> Levitt, S. and Dubner, S. (2005), *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*, Harper Collins Publishers, p. 80.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

FIGURE 8. YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND CRIME



Source: National Employment Agency; Mol

### 3.3. The Role of Law-Enforcement Agencies and the Judiciary

The role of law-enforcement agencies and the judiciary in crime reduction is hard to assess in Bulgaria because political overtones usually dominate public discussion of this issue. There have not been any studies and analyses of official criminal justice data on this issue. In this section an attempt is made to briefly discuss the main factors that are a matter of public debate in Bulgaria and that law enforcement or the judiciary have pointed to as indicators of effective crime fighting strategies.

#### *The Role of the Police*

**There have been few changes in the police force structure and operations that could explain the fall of the crime rate.** The size of the police force, considered to be one such factor,<sup>28</sup> has reportedly remained unchanged (the actual size of the police force is classified). Neither have there been significant shifts in policing methods or crime

<sup>28</sup> Steven Levitt, "Using Electoral Cycles in Police Hiring to Estimate the Effect of Police on Crime," *American Economic Review* No. 87.

reduction techniques (comparable, for instance, to the introduction of the CompStat system in New York City or zero tolerance policies<sup>29</sup>). The task of evaluating the law-enforcement agencies' role is compounded by the fact that in Bulgaria the Ministry of Interior and its agencies do not monitor and assess the impact of their policies. This makes it difficult to assess or demonstrate the effect of existing law-enforcement policies and initiatives. Nevertheless, there are two criteria for effectiveness that police usually point to: (1) the number of detentions and (2) the number of fast-track trials.

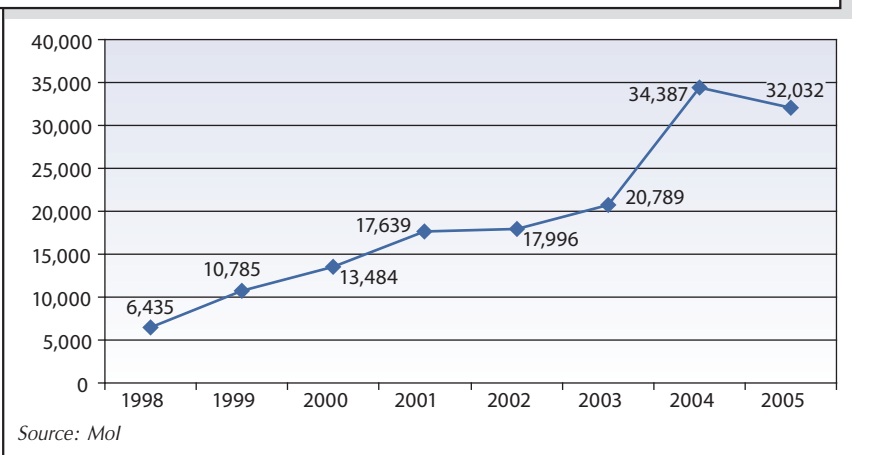
### Detentions

There are no publicly available data for a detailed analysis of police detentions. It is neither clear what caused the sharp 65% increase of detentions between 2003 and 2004, nor why in 2005 there were 25,000 more detentions than in 1998 (figure 9). Some general information about special police operations,<sup>30</sup> though, sheds some light on the inefficiencies of increased detentions. For instance, between October 26, 2005 and March 9, 2006 52,833 individuals were stopped during such operations. Of them, 37,908 were individuals with criminal records, 14,358 were "individuals of interest to the police"<sup>31</sup> and 567 "leaders and members of organized crime groups". During these stops, 9,531 individuals were detained for up to 24 hours but only 327 of them were detained for up to 72 hours—for which a prosecutor's official order was required. Only 130 remained in custody beyond the 72 hour period.<sup>32</sup>

It is not clear which one of these indicators could be considered a "hit rate" and therefore be an efficiency indicator. Short-term detentions of up to 24 hours could be largely arbitrary, as they are often carried

out to establish the identity of the person stopped (if they do not have an ID on them) or simply to "intimidate" the arrested individuals. Detention for up to 72 hours and beyond requires the police to present evidence that the arrested individuals are crime suspects, and therefore the prosecutor should issue a 72-hour detention order. Thus, one could conclude that the police "hit rate" even for targeted stops was 0.6% (for 72-hour detentions) and 0.3% for longer-

FIGURE 9. NUMBER OF DETENTIONS



<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> These are usually 2-3 day sustained police actions with mass stop and search operations, aimed at detaining wanted criminals or simply to intimidate what are known to be "criminally active individuals".

<sup>31</sup> These are individuals without criminal records, but whom the police suspect of being criminally active, or who are known to be close to individuals with crime records.

<sup>32</sup> Ministry of Interior data provided to CSD.

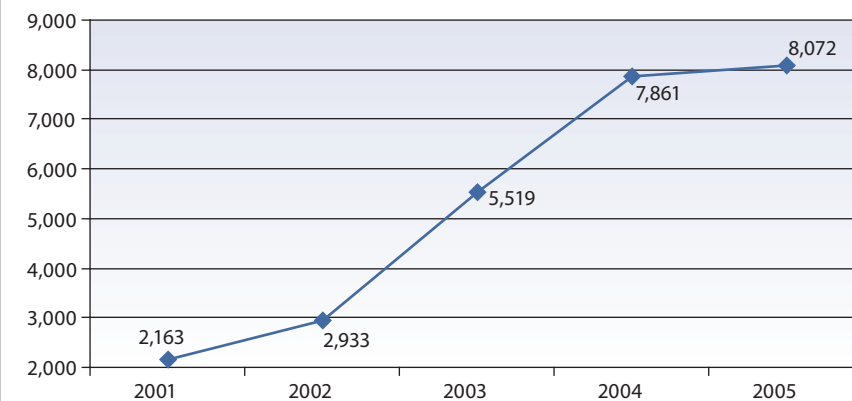
term detentions. In comparison, hit rates for police stops in New York City or London average 11%.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, it is unlikely that **the growing number of detentions could have been a significant factor for the reduction of crime.**

### *Fast-track Investigations and Trials*

**Fast-track investigations and trials**<sup>34</sup> are another measure that allegedly impacts crime levels (figure 10). According to police, “the fast-track investigations and trials most fully provide for a general prevention of the active offenders, limiting their criminal activities or removing them from a criminogenic environment if they are imprisoned”.<sup>35</sup> Judicial statistics show that fast-track police investigations have, indeed, changed the structure of court sentences. In 2002, only 15% of all sentences announced by the courts concerned offenses that were perpetrated in the same year. In 2004 the sentences imposed for same-year offenses reached 25% of the total.<sup>36</sup>

fast-track investigations and trials most fully provide for a general prevention of the active offenders, limiting their criminal activities or removing them from a criminogenic environment if they are imprisoned”.<sup>35</sup> Judicial statistics show that fast-track police investigations have, indeed, changed the structure of court sentences. In 2002, only 15% of all sentences announced by the courts concerned offenses that were perpetrated in the same year. In 2004 the sentences imposed for same-year offenses reached 25% of the total.<sup>36</sup>

**FIGURE 10. FAST-TRACK TRIALS THAT ENDED WITH A SENTENCE**



Source: Mol

Nevertheless, the total of criminal trials ending with effective punishments between 2000 and 2004 has dropped from 16,283 to 16,043. The number of persons convicted for crimes that have markedly decreased (such as thefts) has not changed significantly, and in some cases has even fallen. Therefore, the effect of fast-track trials on crime remains to be analyzed further. To demonstrate its impact, the police would need to provide evidence that recidivism decreases among those on whom effective penalties were imposed through fast-track trials or that the area police departments that apply fast-track trials register a more substantial fall in the crime rate than the ones that do not.

<sup>33</sup> NYPD and London Metropolitan Police data quoted by Deborah Ramirez in *Racial Profiling Data Collection: Promising Practices and Lessons Learned*, presentation at the seminar *Addressing Ethnic Profiling and Discrimination in Policing in Europe*, 27-28 January, 2006 in Budapest, Hungary.

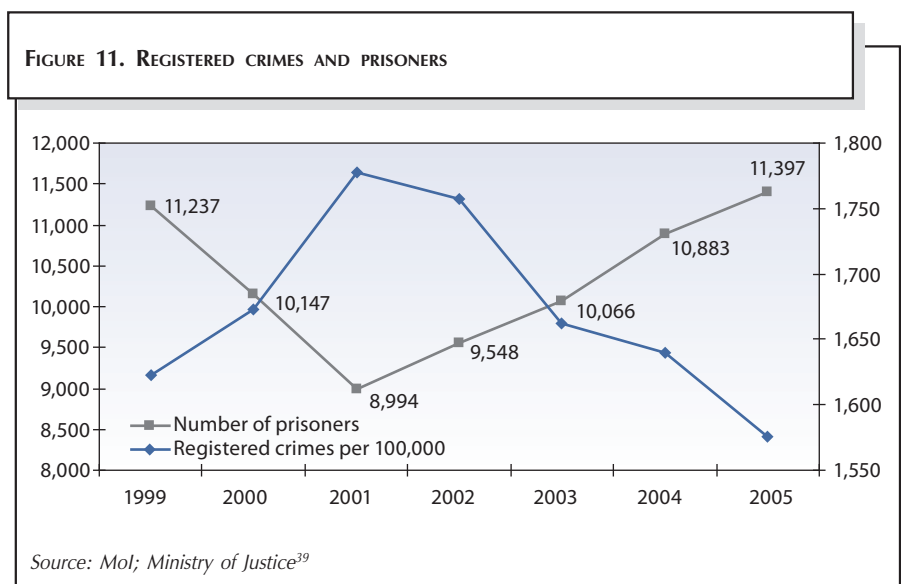
<sup>34</sup> These types of trials were introduced in 2001. A crime could be investigated and prosecuted on a fast track only if the crime took place in specific circumstances (for instance, if the police detain the suspect while committing the crime). When a fast track is chosen, both the police investigation is completed and the first-instance court sentence is issued in less than one month. (Criminal Procedure Code, Part V.24).

<sup>35</sup> National Police Service (2002), *Report on Police Investigations in 2002*.

<sup>36</sup> National Statistical Institute (2005), *Crimes and Persons Convicted 2005*.

### Prison population

Although it is a matter of debate whether the size of the prison population influences the crime rate, between 1999 and 2005<sup>37</sup> the dynamics of the prison population in Bulgaria seems to correlate with the crime rate (figure 11). Between 1999 and 2001 there was a 20% fall in prison population, which coincides with an increase in the crime rate. Half of this fall is explained with amendments in the Criminal Procedure Code that were introduced in 1999. These amendments reduced maximum allowed periods of detention without charge and obliged the prosecutor to issue an order for the release of the suspects after the expiration of these periods. As a result, in 2000 the pre-trial detention center population fell almost by half (from 2,627 to 1,457) On the other hand, along with the 25% rise of the prison population between 2001 and 2005, the crime rate in Bulgaria fell significantly.<sup>38</sup>



In comparison to the EU average, incarceration is much more widely applied by Bulgaria's judiciary, partly due to the lack of adequate alternatives (probation was just introduced in 2004, while public service is not used as a penalty) and partly due to a repressive model, widespread in former communist countries in eastern Europe, which on the average have higher imprisonment rates than the rest of Europe (figure 12).

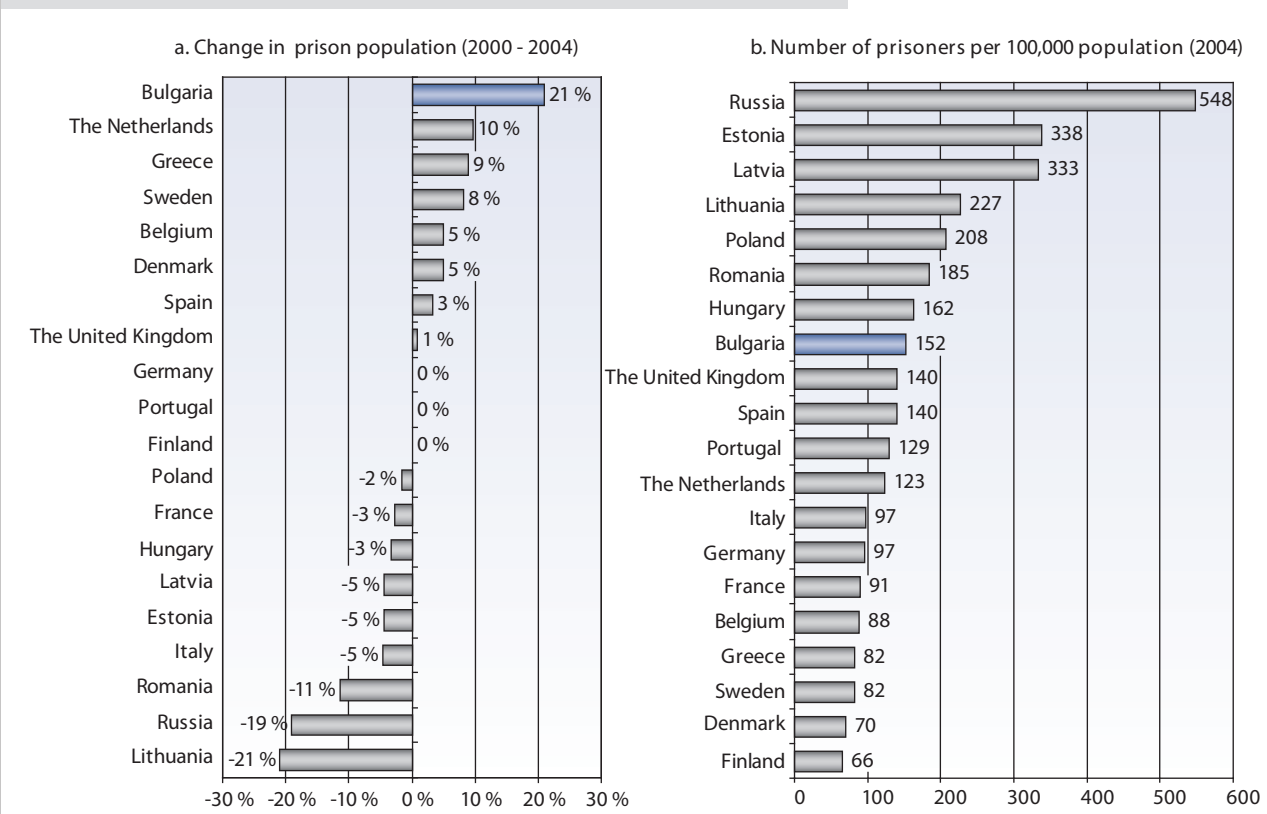
Even though Bulgaria's per capita prison population approximates that of other east European countries, between 2000 and 2004 **Bulgaria's prison**

<sup>37</sup> The analysis spans the period 1999–2005 since after 1999 economic or political instability was affecting to a lesser degree the law-enforcement and judicial systems.

<sup>38</sup> Since there are multiple zones of overlapping in the work of the police and the judiciary, it would require a special study to find out which institution contributed most to the increase of prison population. The number of crimes recorded by the police decreased in the period 2000–2001, which lead to a smaller number of suspected and incriminated persons. It is thus evident that the more numerous prison population was not the result of a higher crime rate.

<sup>39</sup> Ministry of Justice, *Annual Activity Report of the Ministry of Justice*, July 2001–July 2005, [http://www.mjeli.government.bg/publications/Dokladi/Report\\_2001-2005.pdf](http://www.mjeli.government.bg/publications/Dokladi/Report_2001-2005.pdf) (in Bulgarian).

FIGURE 12. PRISON POPULATION IN BULGARIA AND THE WORLD



Source: Council of Europe Penal Statistics, Survey 2004

population grew most considerably compared to any other European country—by 21% (figure 12a). It comes as no surprise then that, on average, Bulgaria’s prisons are overpopulated by 30.4%.

**Sentences**

The severity and length of penalties is another factor that could influence crime levels. For most of the **period 2000-2004 there was little change in the structure of sentences**. Bulgaria remains second only to Romania in Europe with one of the longest average incarceration sentence, which is 19 months.<sup>40</sup> In 2004, though, there was a marked move towards less strict penalties (table 3). As the number of sentences imposing up to 6 months of imprisonment increased by 5 percentage points, the imprisonment terms between 6 months and 3 years decreased correspondingly.

On the other hand, the share of suspended sentences dropped from 43.1% in 2002 to 38.8% in 2004. Sentences with prison terms between three and five years increased from 2% to 3% of all sentences. This increase was related to the newly introduced Criminal Code provisions enhancing the severity of punishment for some crimes, most of them drug-

<sup>40</sup> Council of Europe Penal Statistics, Survey 2004.

TABLE 3. SENTENCES 2000–2004 (%)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total number of sentences	30,405	28,729	27,771	28,617	29,646
Public censure or fine	39%	41%	34%	34%	39%
Imprisonment	61%	59%	66%	66%	61%
up to 6 months	39%	42%	40%	39%	44%
6 months–1 year	32%	30%	32%	30%	28%
1–3 years	25%	24%	24%	26%	23%
3–5 years	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%
more than 5 years	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%

Source: NSI<sup>41</sup>

related crimes and car thefts. The Criminal Code amendments towards stricter penalties (see box 1) create situations where prosecutors and judges are willing to change the category of the offense with which they have charged the suspect.<sup>42</sup> For instance, initially the prosecutor might charge the suspect with robbery. If strong evidence is absent, though, and there are extenuating circumstances, he/she could reach a plea bargain agreement with the defense for changing the charge to pick-pocketing. Thus, the offender receives a lighter sentence while at the same time the prosecutor registers another effective punishment. Such practices seem to have become more widespread after 2001, when the number of plea bargain agreements skyrocketed. While **in 2002 the share of sentenced individuals who were convicted following a plea bargain agreement was 25%, in 2004 this portion had already reached 41%.**

In addition, between 2000 and 2005 an increasing number of sentences used Art. 78a of the Criminal Code to amend the criminal charge into an administrative offense (misdemeanor). While in 2000 a mere 1% of all defendants were released from criminal liability, in 2004 their share was 18% (equal to 20% of all crimes). As the latest Criminal Code amendments further expand the scope of Art. 78a, including even more crimes for which criminal liability may be lifted, an even greater proportion of crimes punished by administrative penalties could be expected.

#### BOX 1. THE TOTAL PROHIBITION OF DRUGS

Criminal Code amendments do not always produce a desired effect and this is exemplified by the annulment of Art. 354a, item 3 of the Criminal Code in April 2004. This change made the possession of any amount of drugs, even what has been called the “personal use dose” punishable by 10 years of imprisonment. Law-enforcement agencies

<sup>41</sup> National Statistical Institute (2005), *Crimes and Persons Convicted 2005*.

<sup>42</sup> Interviews with judges from courts in Varna and Sofia, February 2006.



**BOX 1. THE TOTAL PROHIBITION OF DRUGS (CONTINUED)**

were thus put in a difficult situation. On the one hand, the number of recorded drug-related offences and offenders continued to grow. On the other hand, studies showed that the levels of drug use **not only remained unchanged** in the period after the ban (2004–2005), but **drug use patterns became riskier** as users tried to avoid arrest in all possible ways.<sup>43</sup> In addition, criminalizing entirely drug use deterred many users from enrolling in drug-treatment programs. At present, new amendments to the Criminal Code are expected, which will put an end to the criminalization of such great number of people, particularly young people.

### 3.4. Crime “Export”

The transfer of criminal activities and the influx of criminals from Eastern Europe into the EU has been a politically important issue for many years.<sup>44</sup> Little analysis has been done on this issue due in part to the difficulty in conducting cross-border research, as well as absence of data in many countries. The removal of the Schengen countries’ visas for Bulgarian citizens in 2001 resulted in increased levels of emigration to EU member states.<sup>45</sup> Along with economic emigrants there has been an increased migration (seasonal and permanent) of the criminal population, who are searching for more profitable criminal opportunities. This phenomenon could be observed in the crime statistics of some EU countries (figure 9). In addition, Bulgarian police officials observe that a substantial number of repeat offenders, well known to the police, have emigrated or are migrating seasonally to “work” in Western Europe.<sup>46</sup>

In 2002 the number of crime suspects with Bulgarian nationality in only five<sup>47</sup> EU countries—Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, and Austria—was **7,882**—more than Bulgaria’s own prison population, which during the same year numbered 7,393.<sup>48</sup>

Belgium, Spain, and Austria for instance, saw a sharp increase in such crimes between 2001 and 2002, but the number of suspected Bulgarians stabilized at lower levels after 2004. It remains uncertain, however, whether this is an actual decrease in crime or a consequence of the successful adaptation of Bulgarian criminals who have become less vulnerable to police detection.

<sup>43</sup> Bezlov, T. (2005) *Heroin Users in Bulgaria: One Year after Outlawing the Dose for Personal Use*, Sofia: Open Society Institute–Sofia; Initiative for Health Foundation, p.10.

<sup>44</sup> National Police Agency/National Crime Squad, Unit North and East Netherlands, Department Eastern Europe/Intelligence, “Crime without Frontiers: Crime Pattern Analysis Eastern Europe 2002–2003”, September 2004.

<sup>45</sup> The most significant Bulgarian immigrant communities in EU member states are estimated to be in Spain (around 100,000 individuals), Germany, Austria, Italy, and the United Kingdom.

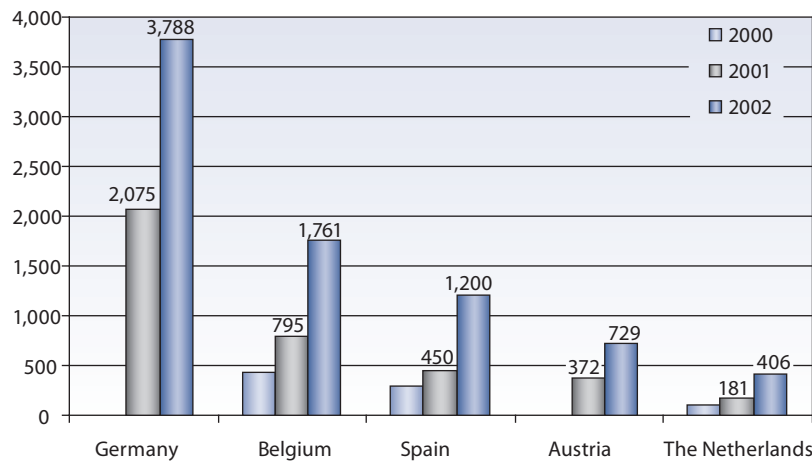
<sup>46</sup> Interviews with police officers at local police departments in Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Kyustendil, Sliven, Kazanlak and Botevgrad.

<sup>47</sup> Collecting crime data for Bulgarians abroad has been a slow and time consuming process and therefore there are only data for 5 countries.

<sup>48</sup> Not counting the individuals in pre-trial detention centers.

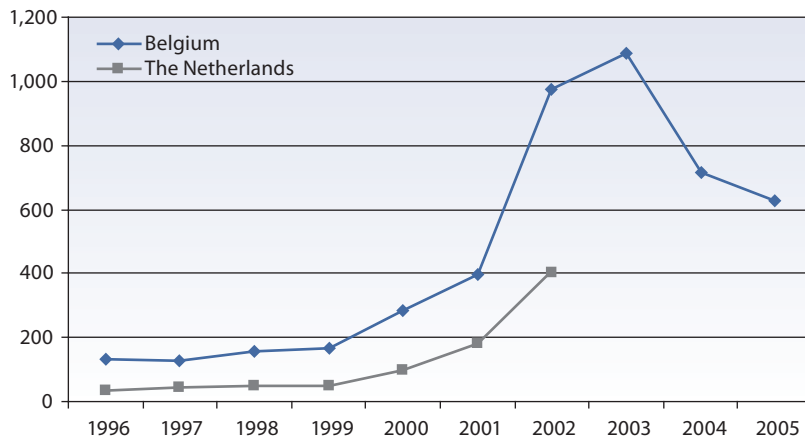


FIGURE 13: NUMBER OF BULGARIANS SUSPECTED OF CRIMES



Source: Bundeskriminalamt; Police Fédéral Belge; Ministerio del Interior; Bundesministerium für Inneres; Dutch National Crime Squad<sup>49</sup>

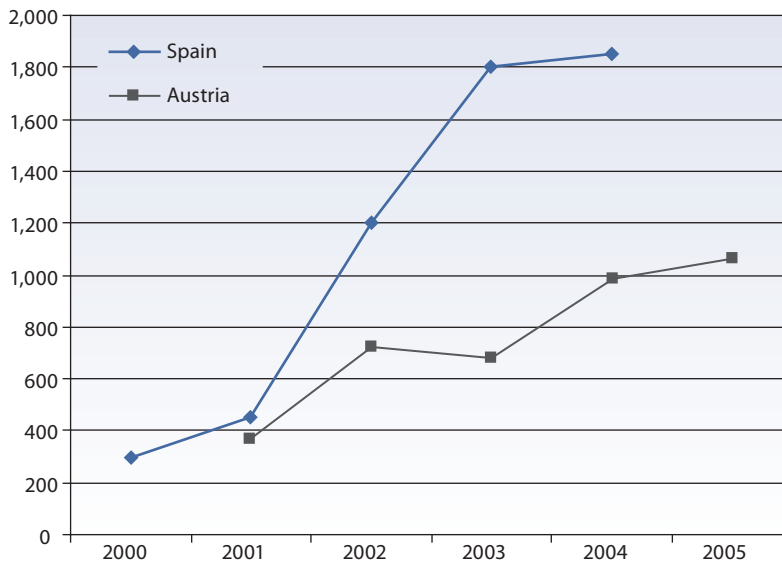
FIGURE 14. NUMBER OF CRIME SUSPECTS OF BULGARIAN NATIONALITY IN BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS



Source: Dutch National Crime Squad; Police Fédéral Belge (see footnote 49)

<sup>49</sup> **Belgium:** unpublished information of the Belgian Ministry of Interior; **the Netherlands:** National Police Agency/National Crime Squad, Unit North and East Netherlands, Department Eastern Europe/Intelligence (September 2004), p. 130; **Spain:** data quoted in Óscar Jaime Jiménez, "Transborder organized crime in the new Europe: a vision from Spain", a report presented at CSD's international conference *EU Prospects and Security in South Eastern Europe: Hidden Economy, Transborder Crime and Development*, Sofia, 28-29 October 2005, <http://www.csd.bg/fileSrc.php?id=1513>; **Germany:** data of the Federal Criminal Police Office (Bundeskriminalamt) quoted in "Bulgarian Criminals in Germany Grow in Number", *Dnevnik*, 28 July 2003; **Austria:** Bundesministerium für Inneres, official email communication from the Statistical Office of the Federal Ministry of Interior (25 March 2006).

**FIGURE 15. NUMBER OF CRIME SUSPECTS OF BULGARIAN NATIONALITY IN SPAIN AND AUSTRIA**



Source: Bundesministerium für Inneres; Ministerio del Interior (see footnote 49)

As Bulgarian immigrant communities are relatively small, **crimes perpetrated by Bulgarians in EU countries are a negligible share of all crimes committed by foreign nationals.** For instance, Bulgarians are accountable for 1.7% of *crimes by foreigners* in Spain and for less than 0.5% of those in Germany. Considering Bulgaria’s size, however, the number of criminals that have emigrated out of the country is substantial enough to claim that **the effect of crime export on the dynamics of crime in the country is comparable by significance to other factors, such as the increase of the prison population.**

Lack of reliable information on the size of Bulgarian immigrant communities makes it difficult to measure the crime rate per 100,000 Bulgarian immigrants in the destination countries. One issue to bear in mind is that the criminal behavior of immigrants is often influenced by the stressful social and economic circumstances to which new immigrants are subject. Therefore, crimes could be perpetrated by individuals without previous criminal history in Bulgaria.

**TABLE 4. CRIMES COMMITTED BY BULGARIAN NATIONALS**

	Violence	Robbery	Theft	Prostitution/ Women trafficking	Narcotics	Counterfeited currency	Other	Total
The Netherlands, 2002 (number of crimes)	37	11	549	59	19	*	65	<b>740</b>
Austria, 2005 (number of suspects)	72	9	830	25	23	63	72	<b>1,287</b>
Belgium, 2005 (number of crimes)	18	*	122	384	20	9	132	<b>685</b>

Source: Bundesministerium für Inneres; Dutch National Crime Squad; Police Fédéral Belge (see footnote 49)

### 3.5. Security Measures

#### 3.5.1. Security at Companies

Business crime rates underwent a considerable decrease between 1999 and 2005. Police data for the period confirms the proliferation of private security companies (PSCs) and the rising number of businesses that

installed burglar alarm systems. The question of the role these measures have played to reduce crime against business entities, therefore, is logical.

TABLE 5. "WHAT MEASURES HAVE YOU TAKEN TO PROTECT YOUR COMPANY?"

	Business Security		
	Country average	Sofia	The rest of the country
Burglar alarm system operated by a PSC	45.1%	58%	37%
Burglar alarm system operated by the police	30.8%	18%	27%
Building doorman	23.4%	21%	37%
In-house security	15.3%	10%	19%
Security guards from a PSC	11.4%	11%	12%

Source: Vitosha Research–NCS

According to the MoI and the National Social Security Institute in 2005 there were 130,000 private security guards in Bulgaria.<sup>50</sup> NCS 2005 indicated that most of these guards are employed at companies' in-house security teams. According to NCS 2005 26.7% of all companies in Bulgaria rely on guards for their protection (table 5). A total of 12,000 companies have around 117,000 security guards, 70,400 of which are hired as in-house security. The number of PSC guards hired by businesses is about 46,500. In addition, PSC guards are hired by private individuals, municipalities or government institutions, adding at least

TABLE 6. NUMBER OF PRIVATE SECURITY GUARDS

Company size	Security guards
In-house security teams (NCS 2005)	70,400
<b>Private security guards–total</b>	<b>54,616</b>
Corporate clients of PSCs (NCS 2005)	46,500
Individual clients of PSCs (NCS 2005)	2,000
<i>Estimated number of PSC guards at public and municipal sites<sup>51</sup></i>	<i>5,816</i>
Municipal or state owned security companies (NSI)	4,984
<b>Total (NSSI)</b>	<b>130,000</b>

Source: Vitosha Research–NCS; NSSI/MoI; NSI

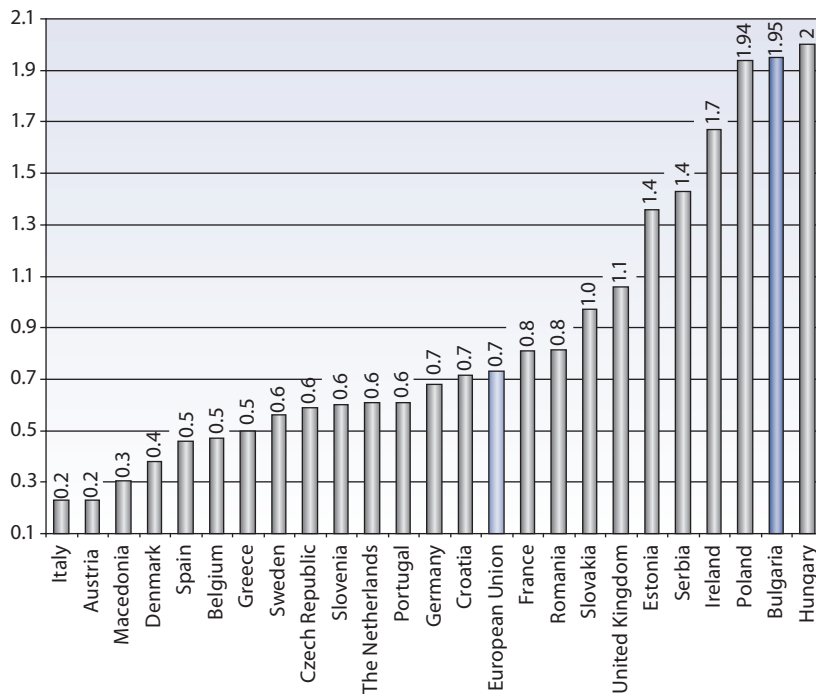
<sup>50</sup> Official letter of the Ministry of Interior to the Center for the Study of Democracy, March 2005. Further talks have made it clear that the data is based on information provided by the National Social Security Institute, rather than on any register kept by the MoI.

<sup>51</sup> This estimate is made based on the figure 130,000, quoted by the NSSI, i.e. by subtracting from 130,000 all the other categories for which there is data from the NCS 2005 and the NSI data, all of which are included in this table.

another 7,800 guards. Some municipalities and government institutions also own security companies, whose personnel according to the National Statistical Institute (NSI) is 4,984. According to the NSI data, the number of security companies in Bulgaria at the end of 2004 was 952, while the number of their employees was 42,733.<sup>52</sup>

The total number of guards at PSCs, as estimated by the NCS (54,616), shows a proximity to some East European countries, but still places Bulgaria at the top of the European list of per capita PSC guards. Thus, for each Bulgarian police officer there are two guards employed by private security companies.<sup>53</sup>

FIGURE 16. RATIO BETWEEN PRIVATE SECURITY GUARDS AND POLICE OFFICERS



Source: Confederation of European Security Services; UNODC, Vitosha Research–NCS

One way of determining the crime prevention effect of private security companies is to evaluate the victimization risk of a business.<sup>54</sup> It is worth noting at the start that companies that hire security guards probably do so because of the greater initial risk of victimization. The present study demonstrates how private security guards lower the risk for several categories of crime and delineates a few important trends. Companies that use the services of a security firm have a **smaller chance** of burglary. However, they are 3.2 and 3.6 **times as likely to be** victims of thefts from outsiders and employees respectively **as** unguarded businesses, and **equally at the risk of threats and extortion as the latter**.

<sup>52</sup> Official letter of the National Statistical Institute to the Center for the Study of Democracy, 1 February 2006.

<sup>53</sup> Previous surveys (such as Page, M. Rynn, S., Taylor, Z., Wood, D. *SALW and Private Security Companies in South Eastern Europe: A Cause or Effect of Insecurity?*, Belgrade: SEESAC, August 2005) based their measurements on the Mol/NSSI data and used 130,000 as the reference figure. Their conclusion was that the ratio between the guards at PSCs and police officers was 4.64:1. With such a ratio Bulgaria was considered the unchallenged leader in Europe. The present study, however, alters this perception.

<sup>54</sup> Victimization risk coefficients are calculated by the method used in Van Kesteren, J.N., Mayhew, P. & Nieuwebeerta, P. (2000), *Criminal Victimization in Seventeen Industrialised Countries: Key-findings from the 2000 International Crime Victims Survey*. The Hague, Ministry of Justice, WODC. It involves an assessment of the chances that a person from a definite social group (e.g. a big city resident) may or may not become a victim of a crime (see appendix 2). This coefficient is then divided by the victimization risk ratio of a person belonging to a different social group (e.g. small town/village resident).

**In-house security teams appear not to have a significant crime deterrent effect. Companies that do have such teams are 1.2 times as likely** to become victims of theft from employees or burglary and 2.9 times as likely to be victims of theft by outsiders, whereas the risk of threats or extortion is **slightly lower**. On the other hand, burglar **alarm systems operated either by a security company or the police lower the risk of burglary** twice. Thus, the growth of companies that install alarm systems or hire security guards has resulted in a **decrease of burglaries**.

### 3.7.2. Home-Security Measures

In comparison to households in the EU, Bulgarians still do not invest as much in home-security equipment. The measures they have taken have not led to a lower share of burgled homes or attempted burglaries. The portion of homes equipped with security systems, building guards or doormen has undergone an insignificant rise in the period 2002–2005. The only important change is a serious rise in the purchase of high-security locks.

TABLE 7. SHARE OF HOUSEHOLDS TAKING SPECIAL SECURITY MEASURES

	2002	2004	2005	EU (2005)
Security alarm system (from private company) <sup>55</sup>	2.3%	2.85%	1.79%	20.7%
Security alarm system (from police)			0.80%	11.2%
Secure locks	19.7%	19.67%	24.06%	57.2%
Window/door bars	13.5%	11.06%	15.28%	21.5%
Building guard or doorman	0.3%	0.77%	0.23%	10.9%
Dog	40%	27.8%	23.6%	25.8%
Firearms	–	4.96%	1.59%	9.7%

Source: Vitosha Research–NCS; EUICS

In an international context, Bulgaria still compares badly in terms of shares of households taking any measures against burglary. An average 20.7% of EU households have installed security alarm systems. In Britain and Belgium this share reaches 58.2% and 29.4% respectively, while Finland's and Denmark's levels are fairly low—12.1% and 15.9%.<sup>56</sup>

International comparisons show that the countries where a larger share of households uses security alarm systems are those with an initially higher risk of burglary. **Homes equipped with alarm systems have a greater appeal for burglars**. On the other hand, **attempted burglaries fail more often** as compared to those in unprotected homes. The relatively low

<sup>55</sup> NCS 2002 and NCS 2004 featured questions about alarm systems without making a distinction between those connected to police departments and those handled by private security companies.

<sup>56</sup> Data by EUICS.

risk of burglary displayed by Bulgarian households, however, only partially accounts for the scarcity of homes protected by alarm systems in the country.<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>57</sup> Van Kesteren et al. (2000).

## 4. PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME

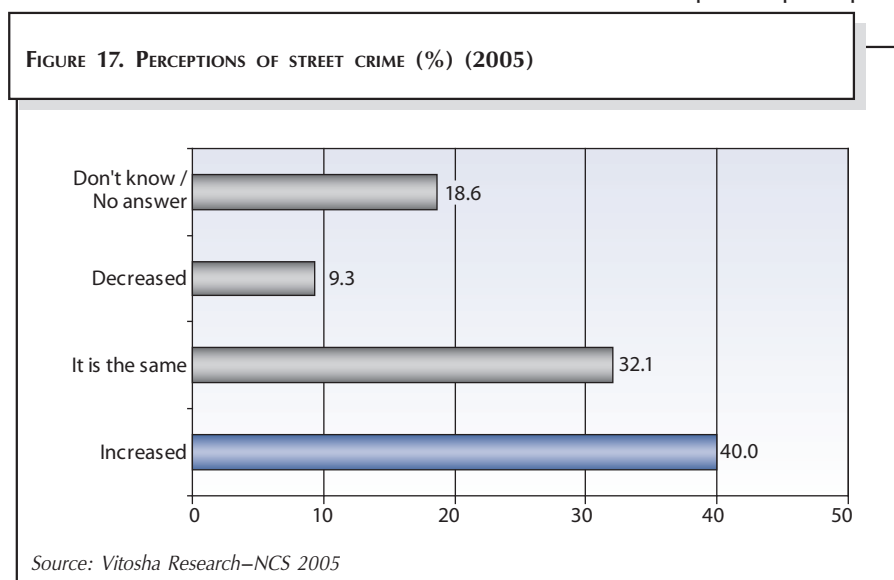
The findings of the NCS 2004 were first published in early 2005. The public and the media accepted them cautiously, as for a first time there was an attempt to present an alternative to police statistics. Rather than being surprising, such reactions bring attention to another aspect of the crime situation—the formative factors of Bulgarian society’s perceptions of crime.

The issue of public perception of crime has been well studied and the EU and in 2005 even sparked a major political debate in Germany. A recent study by the Criminological Research Institute of Lower Saxony showed that despite a continuous fall in crime registered by police statistics and victimization surveys in the period 1993–2003, the majority of the public believed that the overall level of crime was on the rise. The problem lied in the fact that these misguided public perceptions had fuelled a political agenda for stricter penalties and repressive approaches, despite the falling crime rate.<sup>58</sup>

The problem that Bulgarian society faces is quite similar to the German one, as it has become a politically advantageous position to call for tough measures against crime. A good example of such measures is the legislative amendments leading to long-term prison sentences for drug users (see box 1 on p. 31).<sup>59</sup>

Detailed studies on public perceptions of crime have not been done in

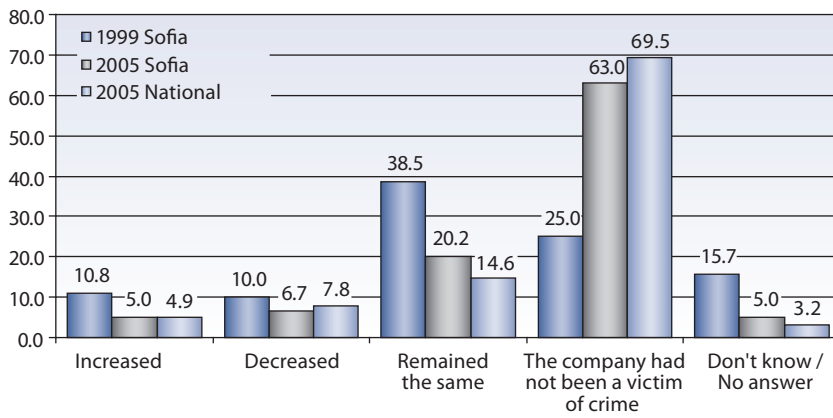
Bulgaria. But the more general questions about attitudes to street and organized crime included in the NCS could be used to analyze this issue. As NCS 2005 finds out, crime in Bulgaria in 2004 dropped by 40.5% compared to 2001. However, only 9.3% of the respondents thought that crime had gone down (figure 13). The pervasive opinion (of 40% of respondents) is that crime is growing, despite convincing evidence to the contrary.



<sup>58</sup> Schott, T., R. Loebmann, T. Goergen, S. Suhling, and C. Pfeiffer (2004), *Der Anstieg der Gefangenzahlen in Niedersachsen und Schleswig Holstein—Folge der Kriminalitätsentwicklung oder unterschiedlicher Strafharthe?* Unpublished final report. KFN, Hannover. Quoted in Pfeiffer, M. Windzio, M. Kleimann (2005), *Media Use and Its Impacts on Crime Perception: Sentencing, Attitudes and Crime Policy*, *European Journal of Criminology*, Vol. 2(3), pp.259-285.

<sup>59</sup> The change was initiated in view of the upcoming elections by a small parliamentary party (*Novoto Vreme*), which saw it as a populist move to introduce legislative amendments.

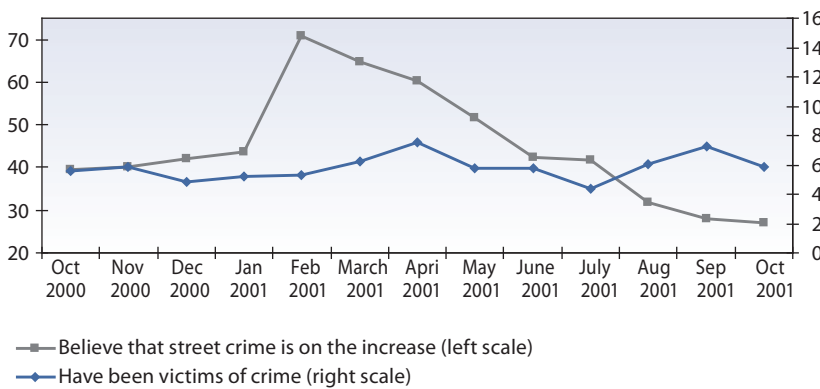
**FIGURE 18. "HOW DID CRIME AGAINST COMPANIES CHANGE IN THE PAST 2-3 YEARS?" (%)**



Source: Vitosha Research-NCS; UNICRI

A gap between the perceptions and reality of the crime situation could also be observed among business sector respondents. Although crime continued to fall in 2005, only 7.8% of business respondents declared they thought it was on the decrease (figure 18). This gap is best exemplified by the record-high levels for perceived street and organized crime registered in January and February 2001 (figure 19).

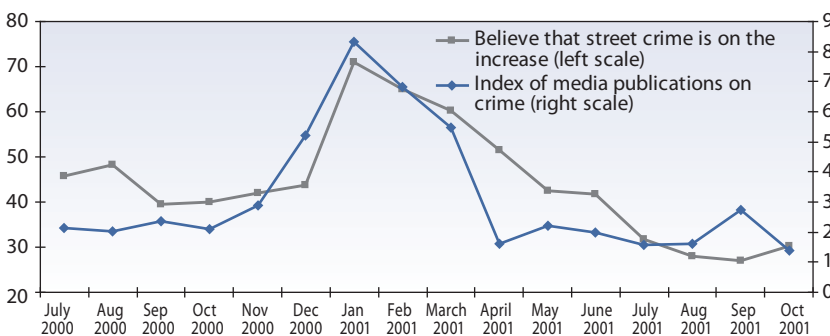
**FIGURE 19. PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME LEVELS AND SHARE OF ACTUAL CRIME VICTIMS**



Source: BBSS-Gallup

In January and February 2001, the issue of growing crime brought about a political crisis, involving a motion of no confidence and a blockade on the Parliament by taxi-drivers, who were angered by the murder of a taxi driver's child. In February 2001, 71% of respondents were of the opinion that crime was on the rise, while only 5 to 6% of them declared to have been a victim of crime in the preceding three months. The rise of crime-related articles during this period indicates that the media is the main contributor to these public misconceptions. During the same period (late 2000 and early 2001), several high-profile organized crime related crimes drew the attention of the media. Nevertheless, in the months that followed, public perceptions, which often conflate organized and street crime, retained high levels of the opinion that both categories of crime were on the increase (figure 20).

**FIGURE 20. MEDIA IMPACT ON PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME**



Source: BBSS-Gallup

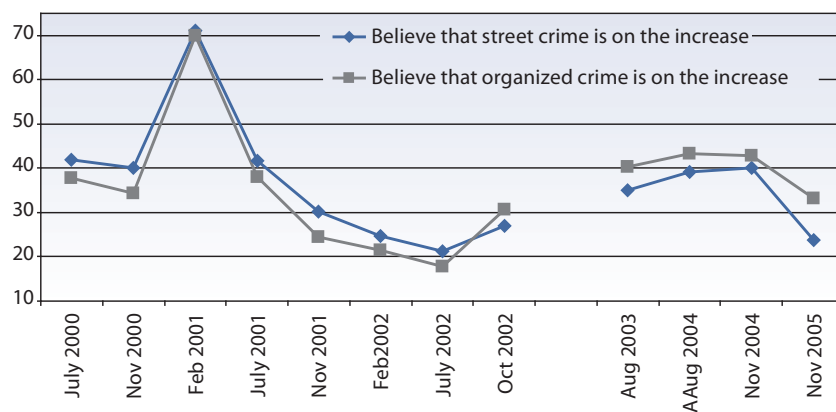


In the spring of 2001, organized-crime-related incidents did not abate. But in April the media’s focus shifted sharply to the upcoming parliamentary elections (in particular the entry into politics of the former king, Simeon Saxe-Coburg Gotha). As the media moved away from the topic of crime, public perceptions of growing crime also decreased.

The lack of monthly data hampers a detailed analysis of public perceptions of crime after October 2002. Annual data after the summer of 2002, though, indicates that the public slowly began to differentiate between organized and street crime. Since August 2002, perceptions of growing organized crime have remained consistently higher than perceptions of growing street crime (figure 21). The first factor contributing to these perceptions is the streak of contract killings and assassination attempts of organized crime figures after 2002. These acts usually happen during the day and in public places and attract significant media attention. For instance, the 2005 survey was carried out in late November and early December, soon after the assassination on 26 October 2005 of banker Emil Kyulev—one of the richest individuals in Bulgaria thought to have been involved in various illegal activities. This is the immediate reason why more respondents supported the opinion that organized crime was growing.

The second notable factor that explains the decreasing level of perceptions of high street crime is that in the fall of 2005 a new government (the Minister of Interior being a leading figure in it) was formed. In its first months it enjoyed strong public support, therefore resulting in public perceptions that crime was under control.

FIGURE 21. PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZED AND STREET CRIME



Source: BBSS-Gallup; Vitosha Research–NCS



## 5. UNRECORDED AND UNREPORTED CRIME

When comparing NCS findings and police crime data, it becomes evident that the latter represents quite a small portion of the crimes actually committed (figure 2). For instance, in **NCS 2005 citizens declare to have been victims of 542,161 crimes, while the police registered only 101,806 crimes during the year.** There are two basic reasons for this disparity:

1. Victims of crime report criminal incidents to the police, but the police fail to register a significant share of them, i.e. they apply various police “**filters**” as a result of which much of the **reported crime goes unrecorded.**
2. For a variety of reasons (considering the incident too trivial, not believing that the police would be of help, etc.), citizens fail to report a number of crimes to the police, thus leaving part of the **crimes unreported** on which the **latency rate** depends.

**During the period 2001–2005 the impact of police filters continually diminished,** whereas latency became progressively important, reaching a level where half of all crimes are never reported to the police.

### 5.1. Unrecorded Crime

The most likely reason for keeping reported crime out of police records is that the police seek to demonstrate an effective performance since crime rates are a matter of close scrutiny by political parties. Political pressure on the police is not uncommon in any country, but a long tradition of crime recording tends to keep such demands at a low. This is not the case in Bulgaria, where it is still a significant consideration and the collection of crime data at the district level remains a problem. A comparison of crime statistics among local police departments in the period 1990–2000 reveals anomalies such as an increase or decrease of recorded crime between 200% and 300% within two consecutive years. When asked to identify the causes of such fluctuation, the police almost universally point to new appointments at the highest positions of the respective department.

Besides political pressure, career development considerations and related performance criteria also have an impact on crime recording. As democratic mechanisms in the country are consolidated, this factor is gaining in importance. The Ministry of Interior focuses on two criteria as conducive to officers’ career prospects:

1. the level of recorded crime;
2. the clear-up rate of recorded crimes.

On the one hand, the swelling of unrecorded crime is viewed as a sign of **police inefficiency.** On the other, the basic performance indicator—whose high values imply efficiency—is the **clear-up rate.** To measure

up to both yardsticks, many police departments turn either to recording less crimes, or to selectively recording the crimes with better chances of solution. This approach is also counterproductive from the perspective of community policing—a newly acknowledged priority of the police which involves a special program implemented in 2003. Nevertheless, the persistent filtering out of certain crimes discourages citizens to report and further increases latency levels.

Senior officials at the MoI are fully aware of the mechanics of deliberate crime rate lowering and clear-up rate boosting; the average citizen, though, is only vaguely familiar with them. This issue needs to be widely discussed to find appropriate methods for its resolution. To facilitate the process, some of the techniques and mechanisms used in police filtering of reported crime are described below.

Filtering starts at the territorial units (the Area Police Departments—APDs) of the MoI. Local APD chiefs do not like to stand out among other departments as regards crime rates. They would rather stick to the so-called “golden mean strategy”. APDs avoid becoming the focus of attention of higher ministry officials by keeping the recorded crime rates of their area neither at the top, nor at the bottom of the list. Both APDs and MoI’s Regional Police Directorates (RPDs) employ two main practices to that purpose:

1. Maintaining the number of recorded crimes at roughly the same level as the previous year, with possible slight decreases; any sharp falls in the crime level, albeit factual, would present the risk of inspections from the central level;
2. Approximating the level and trends of crime to those of neighboring APDs or RPDs with similar characteristics.

The particular **techniques that the police uses not to record offences** are as follows:

- The police discourages the victim reporting the crime by: a) persuading the citizen that the offense is a minor incident not worth reporting; b) keeping the victim from meeting with the competent officer as long as possible until he/she is dissuaded from reporting; c) demanding numerous supporting documents; d) referring the citizen to another APD.
- Receiving the written account without filing it. Some offenses are registered only after they are solved (to boost the clear-up rate) or when monthly or yearly statistics have to be “adjusted”. Several police department chiefs have been discharged for registering only crimes that have been cleared-up.<sup>60</sup>
- Recording more serious crimes as minor incidents, e.g. pickpocketing or robbery as lost documents. According to experts, such cases constitute 10 to 20% of all filed crime accounts.

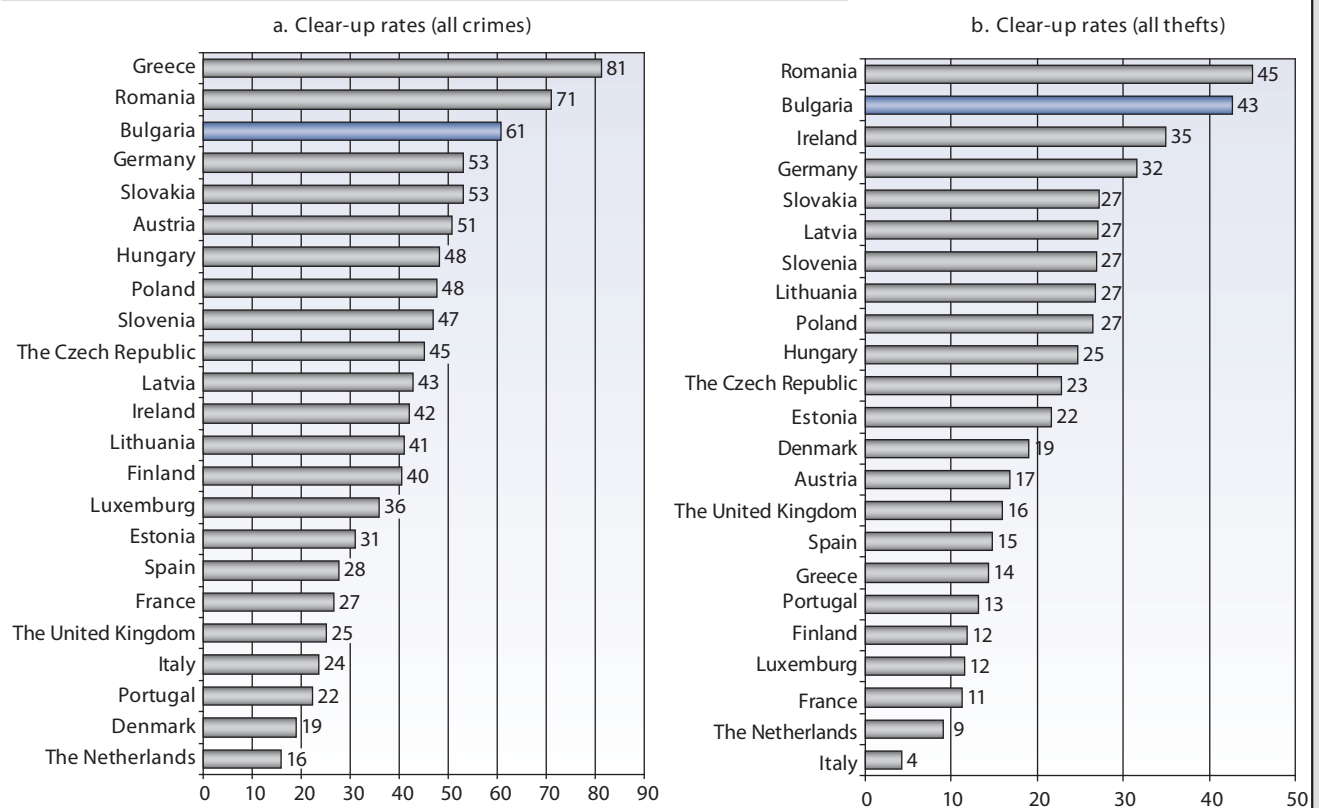
---

<sup>60</sup> “Dual Use Statistics”, *Politika*, 11 June 2004.

- Various procedures through which a prosecutor can rebuff the instituting of pre-trial proceedings (Art. 213 of the Criminal Procedure Code).

The tendency of APDs not to record crimes that would not be cleared up stands out even more when Bulgaria’s clear-up rates are compared internationally. For instance, according to Interpol data on European countries, Bulgaria ranks third in solved crimes after Romania and Greece (figure 19a) and is second only to Romania in solved thefts (figure 19b). Whether the Romanian, Greek and Bulgarian police services are the most effective in Europe is a matter of another evaluation; yet Bulgaria’s high clear-up rates point to the kind of statistical anomalies that a focus on a single police performance criterion can cause.

FIGURE 22. CLEAR-UP RATE,% (2000)



Source: Interpol; MoI

## 5.2. Unreported Crime

### Which groups report crime least often?

- young people—up to 24 years of age (65%);
- men (54%);
- Roma people (74.6%).

In pre-1990 Bulgaria, not to report a crime could easily be interpreted as complicity, so this was a rare, far from problematic practice. In the 1990s, Bulgarians reported fewer and fewer crimes, thus reaching by 2001 the average European level of unreported crime. The unreported crime rate has continued to grow after 2001, whereas in Europe it has been on the decline.

**The upward trend of non-reporting continued throughout 2005.** Most EU countries, however, experienced a decrease in unreported crime throughout the period 1999–2004 for nearly all offense categories. The level of underreporting varies across crime categories and is influenced by a number of factors. **Bulgaria's unreported crime rate is close to the one of Portugal, Spain and some of the new EU member states where only 40% of crimes are reported.**

TABLE 8. "DID YOU REPORT TO THE POLICE THE LATEST CRIME YOU BECAME A VICTIM OF?" (2001–2005)

	2002	2004	2005	2005 (EU)
Theft of car	94.7	94.9	95.7	92.0
Theft from car	46.1	50.4	40.4	64.7
Car vandalism	32.7	29.2	33.9	–
Motorcycle theft	82.3	100.0	–	81.8
Bicycle theft	40.4	47.4	41.9	53.4
Burglary	61.1	61.2	68.1	78.9
Attempted burglary	45.5	41.0	47.0	44.1
Burglary of summer house, attic, cellar	–	–	48.8	–
Robbery	55.1	38.8	31.1	54.4
Theft of personal property	23.7	31.3	29.7	50.7
Sexual assault	12.8	–	26.0	29.1
Assault/Threat	43.1	31.7	29.4	36.2
Average for 6 crime categories <sup>61</sup>	45.3	45.0	43.0	57.7

Source: Vitosha Research–NCS; EUICS

In a number of offense categories, Bulgaria's rate of underreporting is close to the EU average—car theft, attempted burglary, assault and threat (table 8); for others, the Bulgarian level far exceeds that of EU countries:

- 1. Theft from cars.** In the EU such thefts are reported nearly 25% as often. Their reporting in Bulgaria in the last five years was way below the EU average.
- 2. Burglary.** Non-reporting of this crime fell between 2001 and 2005, but still remains below the EU average, largely because of the increase between 2004 and 2005.

<sup>61</sup> Average values are calculated on the basis of six crimes: theft from car, bicycle theft, burglary, attempted burglary, robbery and theft of personal property. The rest of the crimes are either reported rather regularly, or are so small in number to make a statistically valid analysis impossible. Sexual offenses and assaults/threats are not included because of the use of violence involved in many of the cases.

3. **Robbery.** In Bulgaria, 70% of robberies remain unregistered, whereas in the EU their share is 45%.
4. **Theft of personal property.** Reporting figures for this crime have steadily been declining in the last five years.

**There are a number of reasons why citizens refrain from reporting to the police, depending on the type and severity of the crime.** As regards thefts from cars and burglaries, for instance, non-reporting is due to the public believing that:

- **The police will not do anything.** This shows a general mistrust in the police coupled with the conviction that the police are not interested in helping citizens. In 2005, this was cited more often as the reason for non-reporting than in 2004.
- **The police cannot do anything/do not have the necessary evidence.** That is, the police, even if they are willing, do not have the capacity to uncover the crime.
- **“It was not that serious” or “I did not lose much”.** This reason reflects the general trend of rarely reporting minor incidents to the police.

Lack of trust in the police, however, is associated with only some types of crimes. Victims of car theft and victims of assault or threat display more confidence that the police *would* and *are able to* help them. One important reason for not reporting robberies is that **victims are afraid of reprisal**. In the case of assaults and threats, victims often pick the answers “other reasons” or “it is not police business” as many such incidents have to do with interpersonal, familial or group relations.

**In the EU, the dominant reason why someone does not report a crime is that the incident and the damage done are considered insignificant.** In contrast, Bulgarians rank insignificance of the incident only as the third most important reason for not reporting. Unlike the EU, in Bulgaria mistrust of the police comes in first. In 2000, mistrust was the reason for not reporting crime in 11–14% of the cases in the EU and in 50% of the cases in Bulgaria (table 9).

TABLE 9. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE SURVEYS: REASONS FOR NON-REPORTING (%)

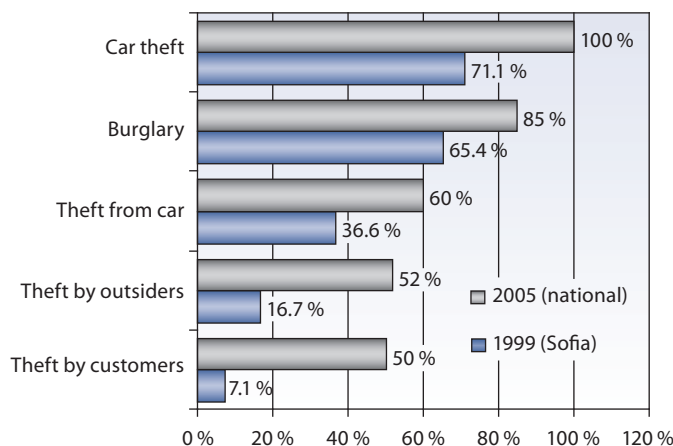
	Robbery	Assault/ Threat	Theft from car	Burglary	
				Bulgaria	EU
The police could do anything/There was no evidence	53.1	32.9	53.2	60.7	29.9
The police would not do anything	46.9	7.6	63.7	54.5	29.3
It was not that serious, I did not lose much	24.6	25.3	9.9	33.4	43.0
I solved it myself/I know the perpetrator	-	10.4	10.3	23.4	25.1
We (my family) solved it ourselves	9.3	0.0	28.4	18.0	15.7
I didn't dare report (fear of reprisal)	7.9	-	-	5.8	5.9
It was not police business/The police were not needed	-	37.4	8.1	3.1	28.7
Other	-	41.1	6.7	0.0	22.7

Source: Vitosha Research–NCS; EUICS

### 5.3. Unreported Crime against Companies

In contrast to households, **companies** in the period 1999–2005 **tended to report more often all categories of crime**. The largest growth was observed in the reporting of thefts by outsiders and customers (from 16.7% to 52%) as well as of thefts by employees (from 7.1% to 50%).

FIGURE 23. CRIMES REPORTED BY COMPANIES (%)



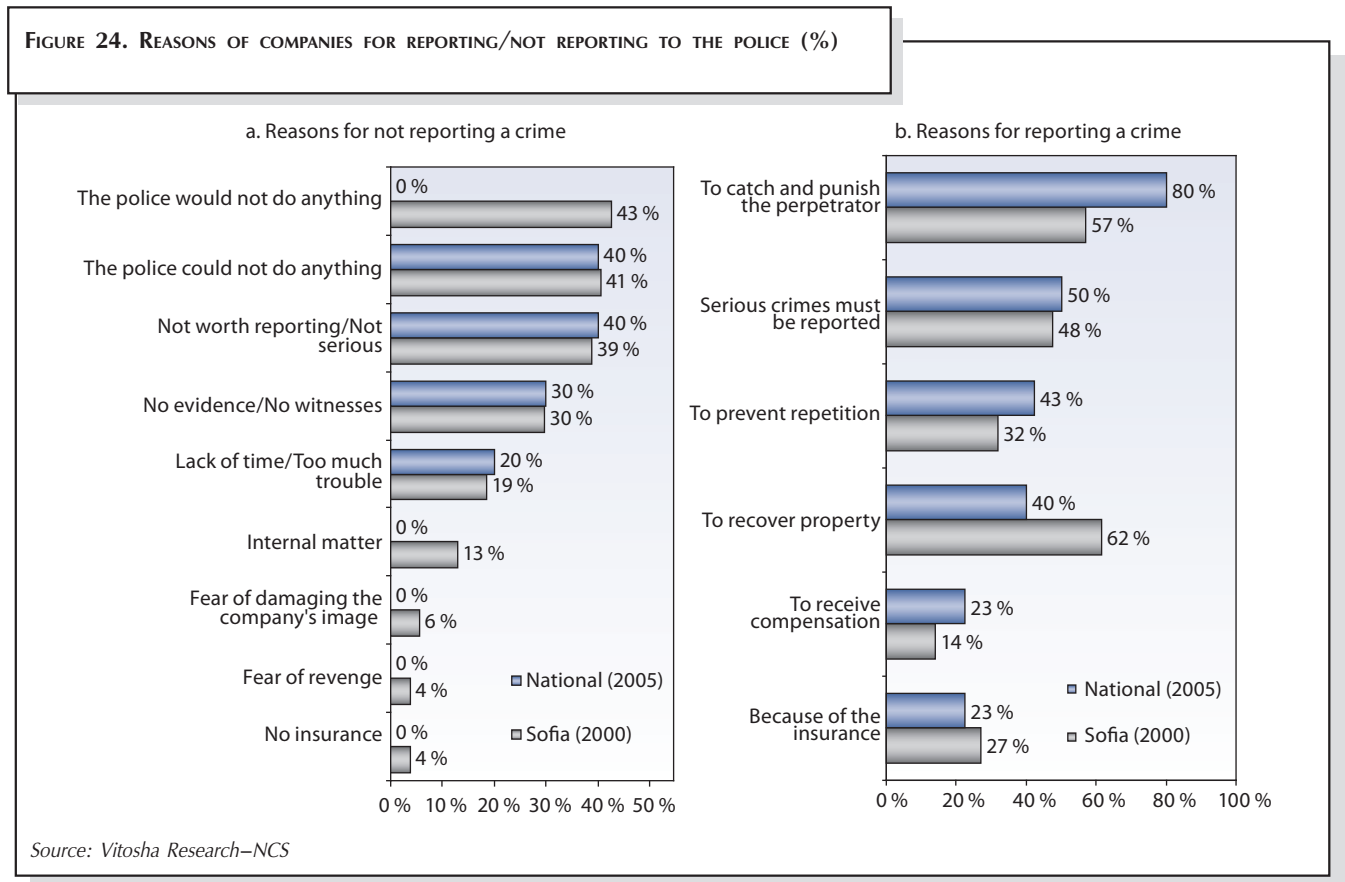
Source: Vitosha Research–NCS

This growth appears to be motivated by **the increasing trust of business in the police**. The top reason for non-reporting among the population—*“The police would not do anything”*—has declined significantly among business respondents. Whereas in 1999 43% of business representatives gave that answer, in 2005 not a single respondent mentioned it. Reporting to the

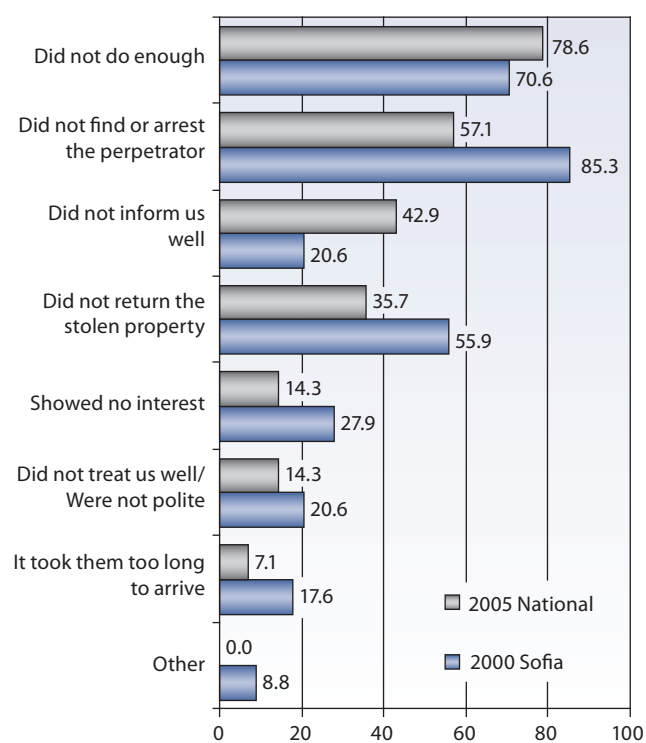


police has started to be viewed as a prevention measure as well (figure 24). The reasons, as stated by companies, behind reporting a crime were that the police will catch the perpetrator (80%), future crimes will be prevented (43%) and the victim will be compensated by the perpetrator (23%).

The decline of some crimes, such as racketeering and threats, which typically display high rates of unreported crime, also partially explain the drop in unreported crimes against companies.



Analyzing police conduct and attitude in the cases when companies reported a crime is another approach to understanding the dynamics of (non)reporting. The most common cause of dissatisfaction among companies with police work is that “the police did not do enough” (78.6%). Many business respondents also replied that their company was not properly updated on the progress of the investigation (42.9%). As it is unlikely that police practices of informing victims on the course of their investigations in 1999 were any better, the increase between 1999 and 2005 is probably due to the higher expectations of business to police services. A substantial decrease (of roughly 30%) of answers that the police had not found or arrested the perpetrator is also observed. Some other indicators such as: “the police did not recover our property”, “were not interested” and “were slow to arrive” also displayed lower values. This testifies that the quality of police service has indeed increased as has the efficiency of their actions.

**FIGURE 25. REASONS FOR COMPANIES' DISSATISFACTION WITH THE POLICE (%)**

Source: Vitosha Research–NCS

## 6. ANALYSIS BY OFFENSE CATEGORY

This chapter presents the trends in eight out of the eleven categories of offenses examined in NCS 2005.<sup>62</sup> It also offers an analysis of homicides, which are not included in the NCS. The eight types of offenses are divided in two groups:

1. Contact crime (in which the victim had a contact with the offender):
  - Intentional Homicide
  - Robbery
2. Non-contact crime (in which the victim did not have a contact with the offender):
  - Car theft
  - Theft from car
  - Bicycle theft
  - Burglary
  - Attempted burglary
  - Pickpocketing
  - Personal property theft

In addition to this data, there is a short review of crime against business. Wherever possible, four types of comparison have been made with statistical data from:

- The Ministry of Interior;
- Foreign police services (collected by Interpol or UNODC);
- Previous National Crime Surveys (from years 2002 and 2004);
- International victimization surveys (ICVS/EUICS).

### 6.1. Intentional Homicide<sup>63</sup>

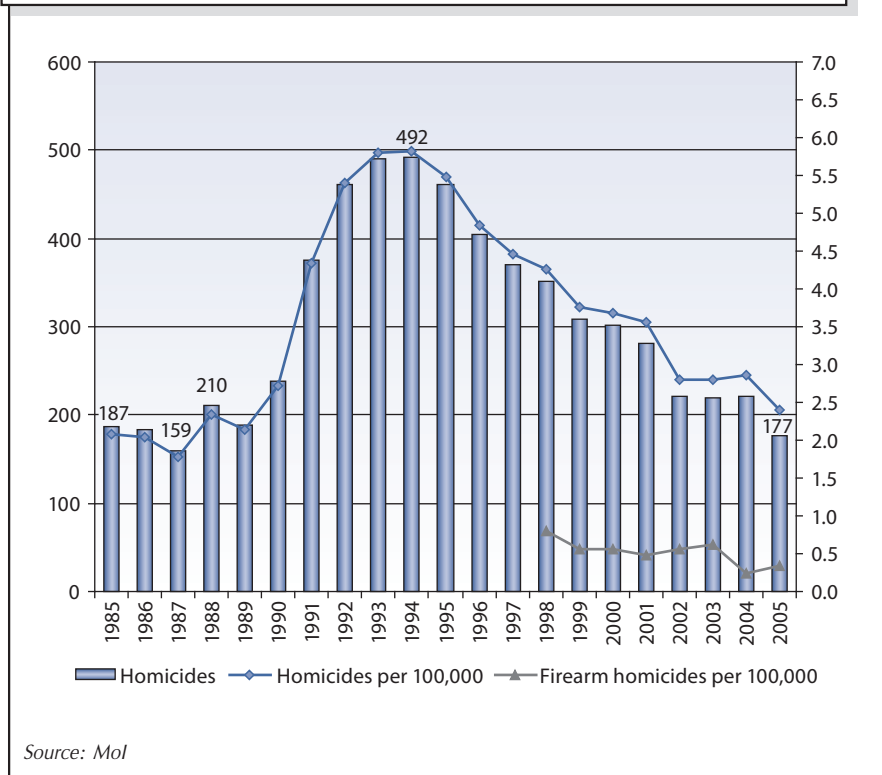
This crime category is analyzed only through police statistics as it is not part of the victimization surveys. Homicide data offers an additional perspective on what happened in the country after the rapid rise of crime since the early 1990s. Unlike other crimes, virtually all homicides are registered in the Mol statistics.<sup>64</sup> As a crime category, homicide has not been influenced by the methodological changes in 1991 and 1998, which is why the intentional homicide rate is a good indicator of the national crime situation.

<sup>62</sup> Appendix 2 contains data for the other three crimes.

<sup>63</sup> The provided data includes only completed intentional homicides, or what is categorized in the United States as "murder". Cases of manslaughter (killing of another person as a result of legitimate self-defense or due to negligence) are not included in the analysis. In 2002 there were only 2 cases of manslaughter in self-defense and in 2005 there were none (Mol data presented to CSD). Cases of homicides as a result of transport accidents are also not included. Attempted homicides are also excluded. Throughout the text the terms "homicide" and "murder" are used as synonyms.

<sup>64</sup> It is possible that due to corrupt practices by health officials some of the murders are registered as suicides, but this should not change significantly the overall statistics.

FIGURE 26. HOMICIDES IN BULGARIA (1985–2005)



The historical review of the dynamics of homicide shows several distinctive trends. Until the 1990s, the average annual number of murders was 185. Along with the overall crime growth and the socio-economic crisis in the period 1991–1993, the number of homicides grew and had its peak in 1994 when it reached the record 500 killings. During this period, the homicide rate was about 6 per 100,000 people—nearly four times as many as the EU average (in the period 1999–2001 the EU rate was about 1.6 per 100,000).<sup>65</sup> A steady decline in homicides began after 1994. **In 2005 the number of homicides in Bulgaria was 177, the fewest since 1987.**

When analyzing homicides, it should be taken into account that in the late 1980s the country had a population of almost 9 million, while in 2005 it was less than 7.5 million. Thus, the level of murders in 2005 was 2.4 per 100,000, which is lower than that in 1990 (2.7 per 100,000) and is very close to the rate from 1988, which was 2.34 murders per 100,000 people.

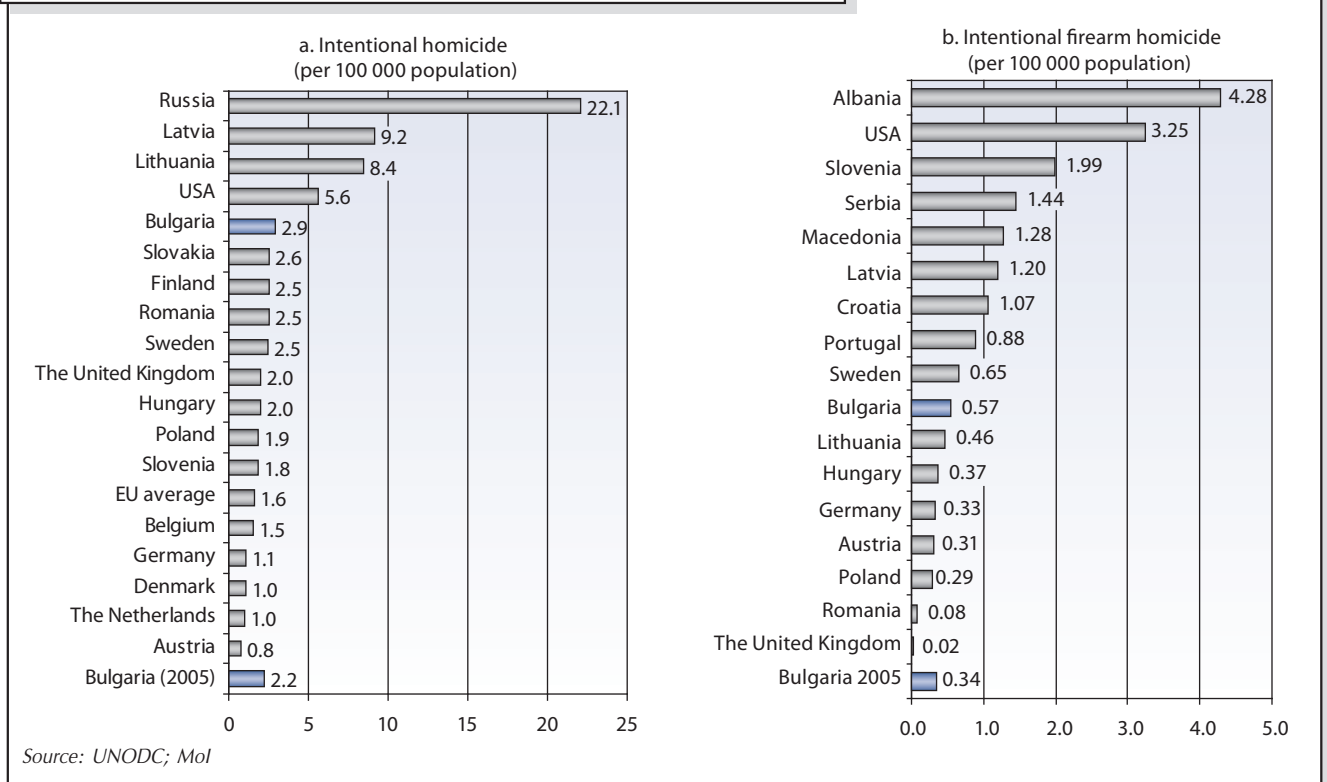
The homicide rate provides a good opportunity for comparing Bulgaria with other countries. International police statistics show that the level of murders in Bulgaria is above the European average. A comparison between Bulgarian and EU data for the years prior to 1990 changes the image that many Bulgarians hold of the country as an “island of tranquility” in contrast to West European countries. In 1990 the average homicide rate in Western Europe<sup>66</sup> was about 1.5 per 100,000 people, whereas the Bulgarian average in the 1980s was about 2.1 per 100,000 people.

Despite the relatively high overall murder rate and a number of public contract killings committed with firearms in the period 2000–2005, Bulgaria’s **firearm homicide rate significantly declined in between 2000–2005, which drew Bulgaria closer to the average European**

<sup>65</sup> Barclay G. and Tavares C. (2003), *International comparisons of criminal justice statistics 2001*, Home Office.

<sup>66</sup> United Nations European Commission for Europe (UNECE), *Statistical Yearbook of the Economic Commission for Europe 2003*, <http://www.unece.org/stats/trend/register.htm>.

FIGURE 27. HOMICIDES PER 100,000 OF POPULATION (2002)



**level.** In 2004 the coefficient dropped down to 0.27 per 100,000 people, lower than the level of many EU countries. In 2005, although it rose to 0.34, it was still comparable to many EU member states. The level of firearm homicides has declined significantly in comparison to previous years (1998–2003) when it varied between 0.49 and 0.81 per 100,000 of population. In that period the firearm homicide rate was almost twice the average European level and way above UK's or Romania's rate.

The decline of firearm homicides is difficult to explain. Previous studies of the Center for the Study of Democracy show that in those regions of Bulgaria with greater numbers of registered firearms per capita, more crimes with firearms are committed. Meanwhile, in the last five years there was a continuous growth of the number of registered arms amongst the population.<sup>67</sup> Although the majority of killings or other crimes involving firearms are done with illegally possessed guns, some of the crimes are committed with registered guns, which is why crimes committed with firearms are more numerous in districts with relatively more firearms per capita (e.g. Sofia, Lovech, and Haskovo).<sup>68</sup>

## 6.2. Robbery

Police data and NCS findings outline similar trends in the dynamics of robberies in the country. There was a growth of robberies in 2003

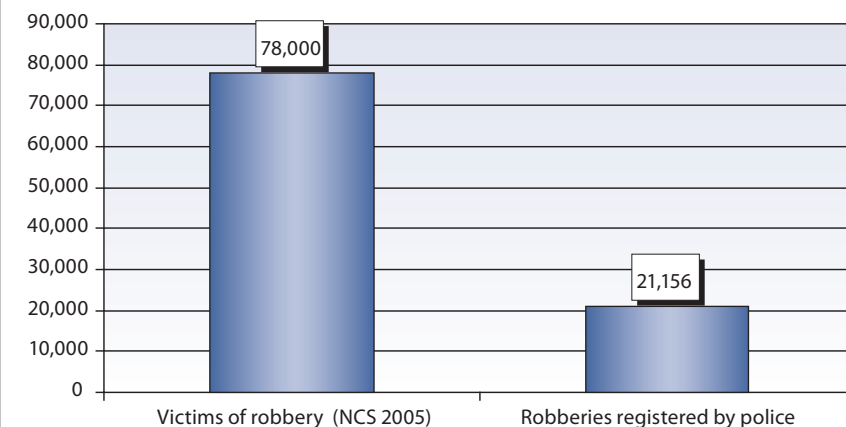
<sup>67</sup> Rynn, S., Gounev, F. and Jackson, T. (2005), *Small Arms and Light Weapons in Bulgaria*, SEESAC, Belgrade.

<sup>68</sup> Rynn et al. (2005).

as against 2001 and a decline in the period 2003–2005, which were registered both by the victimization survey and the police (figure 28).<sup>69</sup>

However, research shows that **robbery is the crime for which the gap between police records and NCS findings is widest.** The survey question was: “Have you been robbed of any property through use of violence or threat in the last five years? Has anyone attempted to rob you?” NCS reveals a nearly four times greater incidence than police records (figure 28).

FIGURE 28. ROBBERIES (2001–2005)



Source: Vitosha Research–NCS; Mol

One reason for the small number of police-recorded robberies is again the high level of non-reporting—the proportion of victims reporting to the police in 2003 was only 33%, and in 2004 it was even less—28%. Still, registered crimes should have been at least twice as many as those that the police had recorded. Such disparities are somewhat worrying, given that threat and violence during robberies are very common and that such serious crimes should be scrupulously investigated. The reluctance to invest greater effort makes

police officers record only a small proportion of robberies. The police use a range of filtering strategies—discouraging victims from reporting a crime or ostensibly recording an incident but without making an official entry in the police records. With robberies, the police also employ the strategy of registering the case as a pickpocketing incident when the value of the stolen property is low or there was limited level of violence involved.

### International Comparison

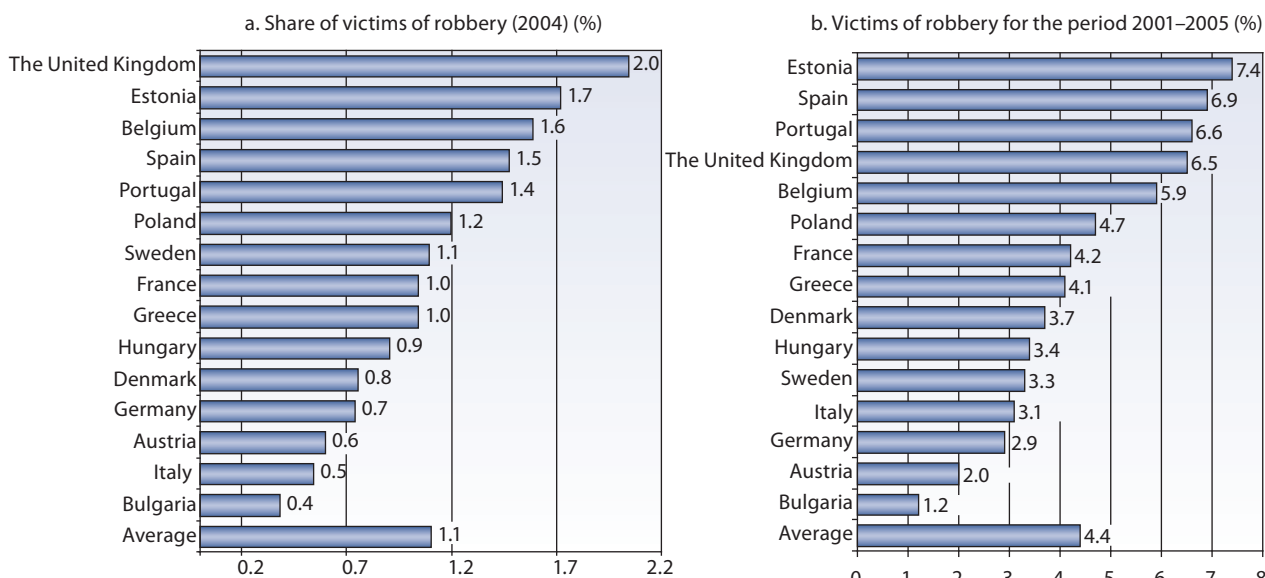
International victimization data shows that the rate of robberies per capita in Bulgaria is much lower than the average for Europe. In figure 29b the question “Have you been a victim of robbery in the last five years?” does not give a clear indication of the number of victims for a given year, but the data is fairly representative and allows a better international comparison.<sup>70</sup>

Robbery is a damaging crime inflicting various losses to citizens. As **NCS 2005** shows in 2004 **the cost of stolen property amounted to €0.65 million.** There are damages inflicted by such crimes, however, that are

<sup>69</sup> Data obtained on an annual basis should be analyzed with caution due to the small number of victims of this crime in the sample.

<sup>70</sup> The 1,200 sample used does not provide enough cases to adequately analyze solely 2004 data.

FIGURE 29. VICTIMS OF ROBBERY (2004)



Source: EUICS; Vitosha Research–NCS

much harder to calculate, as for instance medical expenses, psychological or emotional trauma.

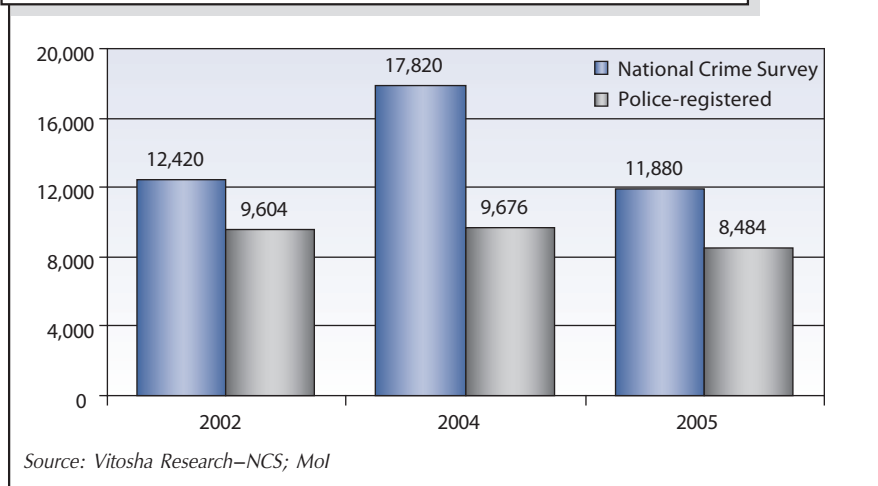
**BOX 2. REDUCTION OF MOBILE PHONE THEFTS THROUGH PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP**

About a third of robberies in the UK involve the stealing of mobile phones, so in the last two years the police have taken special measures to reduce those incidents. These measures could be applied in Bulgaria as well. The essential first step is to establish a shared database for stolen mobile phones. In case of robbery or theft, the victim calls his/her network operator to report the SIM card number and the IMEI number of the stolen phone. The mobile operator then blocks the SIM card and enters the IMEI number in the database accessible to all mobile operators in the country. In this way the phone is cancelled similar to a stolen credit card. It is worthless and non-sellable in the country because every attempt to insert a new SIM card in it will be recognized and automatically blocked by the mobile operator. However, the change of IMEI without authorization from the manufacturer should be prohibited, as should be the possession, supply or marketing of any equipment that can be used for re-programming mobile phones. In the UK, such offences are punished by five years of imprisonment, fines of any amount, or both. (UK Home Office)

### 6.3. Car Theft<sup>71</sup>

Both police data (figure 25) and the NCS record a decline in the number of car thefts for 2005. Nevertheless, in all the three periods compared, car thefts registered by the police were less than those recorded by NCS. Non-reporting is not the only factor that can possibly explain the difference, as 96% of the victims state that they sought help from the police. Influence by police filters is also unlikely because, with this crime, police officers easily risk being caught concealing data.

FIGURE 30. CAR THEFTS IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS RECALCULATED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS<sup>72</sup>



The differences between NCS and police data can partly be explained by the fact that **a portion of the stolen vehicles is recovered through private negotiation with the thieves.** Respondents state that in the period 2004–2005 around 55–58% of stolen vehicles have been found, whereas police statistics shows a 14 to 16% recovery rate. The most likely explanation is that **31% of the victims were asked to pay ransom and 56% of them paid it.** Ransoms are mostly demanded from owners of uninsured cars. It can be

surmised that the difference between the recovery rates cited by respondents and the police is due to the fact that in the last five years, about 1/3 of the cars were stolen for ransom and that even after recovery by the owner, the police still considers the case not cleared-up, which in the police statistics is identical to “not recovered”.

NCS results make it possible to estimate the market of stolen vehicles and the profits it generates. Police data, which register 6,000 to 7,000 stolen cars a year, could be taken as the minimum and NCS findings (8,000–9,000 cars per annum) as the maximum number of car thefts.<sup>73</sup> According to NCS, the average value of a stolen vehicle is about €3,050–3,100, while the average price of a car ransom is €1,100.<sup>74</sup> Thus,

<sup>71</sup> Minivans and trailers are also included in the car category. In 2004 motorbike owners were asked whether their motorbike had been stolen, but due to the small sample these thefts could not be adequately covered, so no questions about motorbike thefts were included in the 2005 survey.

<sup>72</sup> The comparison between the police-registered car thefts and NCS data on an annual basis is problematic due to the small sample. A possible solution when analyzing them is to compare the data over a five-year period (the answer to the question “Have you or a member of your household been a victim of a car/van/truck theft in the last five years?”) and to calculate an average for the period. In this way the sample will include a larger number of cases, but even then only the trend could be captured, and not the absolute number of thefts. The same approach has been used to police data. The data for 2005, for instance, are commensurate with the average annual values from the previous five years (2000–2005).

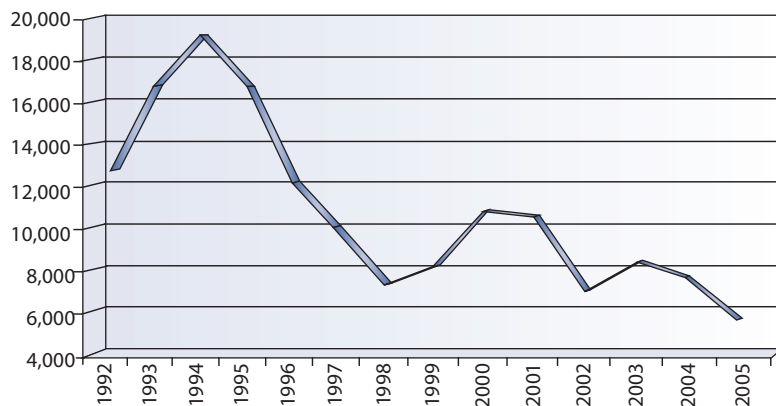
<sup>73</sup> This evaluation cannot include thefts from Bulgarian citizens living abroad and coming back for a short period of time, from foreigners coming to the country to visit friends, etc.

<sup>74</sup> Crime experts confirm this data. They believe that the average ransom is between €750 and €1,250. There are higher ransoms reaching €3,500 to €4,000 for cars priced more than €15,000, but these cases are very rare (interviews with police officers, 9 February 2006).



the total market value of the stolen vehicles would be between €24 and €27 million. The profit from ransoms is about €1.25–1.75 million per annum. Cars for which no ransom is demanded are probably exported or else their spare parts are sold at home. The total cost of car theft to owners amounts to €10–12 million per year.

FIGURE 31. VEHICLE THEFTS (1992–2005)



Source: Mol

Car thefts should also be analyzed in historical perspective. In the early 1990s, this type of theft was widespread. On average, 25% of the imported cars in 1992 were stolen, while in 1997, when Bulgaria was hit by a severe economic crisis, their share reached 35.5%. According to police statistics, in the period 1992–1996, the average annual number of stolen cars was 15,000 (figure 31). Considering that a large number of cars are recovered via bargaining through criminal networks, the number of stolen vehicles in that period has probably been even higher. With the decline of

the organized crime run racketeering, the car theft rate has steadily been falling, with the exception of a minor rise between 1999 and 2001.

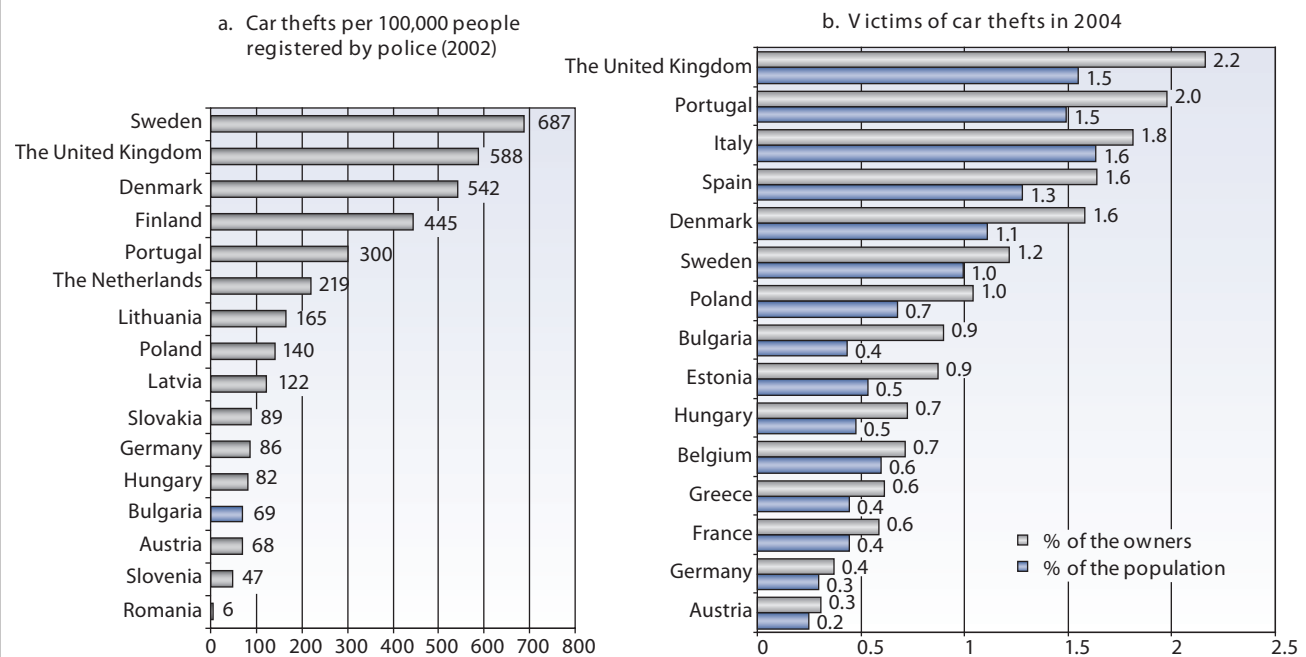
### *International Comparison*

With the establishment of the Schengen area and the growing freedom of movement of East Europeans in the 1990s, there was an increase in car thefts in Western Europe. This trend persisted until 1993 and was followed by a gradual decrease due to changed car insurance requirements and tougher police measures throughout the EU and Eastern Europe, where the demand for stolen cars was greatest. In Western Europe, car thefts are also mainly an organized crime business. Europol estimates that each year Eastern Europe imports about 700,000 stolen cars, by which the annual gains of organized crime reach about €10 billion (where the estimated average value of one car is €15,000). The majority of the vehicles are traded in Russia, but a huge part of them are still exported to other East European countries. The main stolen car channels originate in Belgium, Germany, France and Italy to supply Southeast Europe, including Bulgaria.<sup>75</sup> Bulgarian organized crime in Spain has become synonymous with “car-theft rings”, although the number of Bulgarian organized crime groups and suspects has gradually increased between 2001 and 2004.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Europol, *An Overview on Motor Vehicle Crime from a European Perspective*, 2003, <http://www.europol.eu.int>.

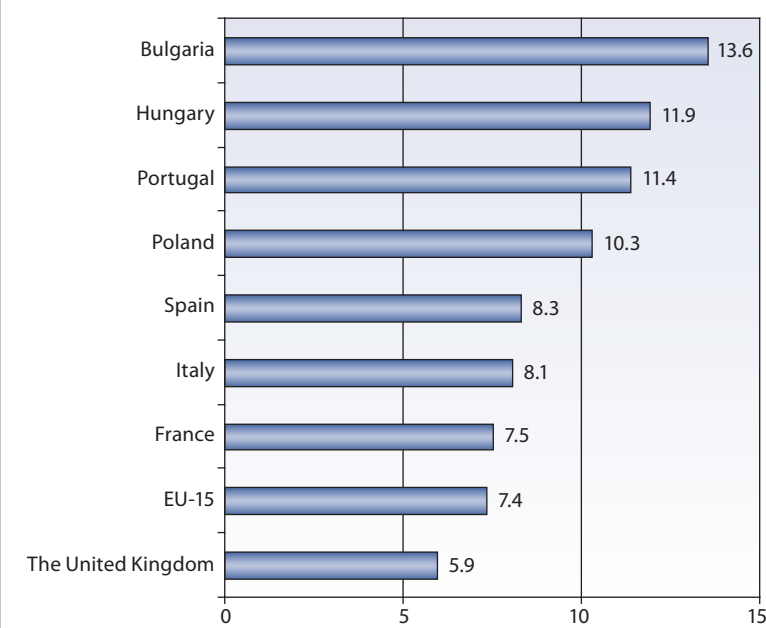
<sup>76</sup> Gómez Arrojo, L. (2005): *España connection: la implacable expansión del crimen organizado en España*. Barcelona, RBA; Jiménez, O., (2005) “Transborder organized crime in the new Europe”.

FIGURE 32. VICTIMS OF CAR THEFTS (2004)



Source: EUIJC; UNODC; Vitosha Research–NCS 2005

FIGURE 33. AVERAGE AGE OF CARS (2002)



Source: Eurostat

International comparison of car thefts faces two methodological problems related to measuring the share of households possessing a car and the age of these cars. International police statistics cannot be used since it does not take into account the fact that in countries like Bulgaria the share of car owners is smaller (figure 32b). Victimization surveys, however, count the victims in relation to the number of vehicle owners (figure 32a). Regarding the average age of vehicles, in the EU it is 7.4 years, while in Bulgaria it is 13.6 years (figure 33).<sup>77</sup> Only 10% of the cars in Bulgaria were manufactured less than five years ago, i.e. belong to the group of vehicles most attractive to thieves. The precaution

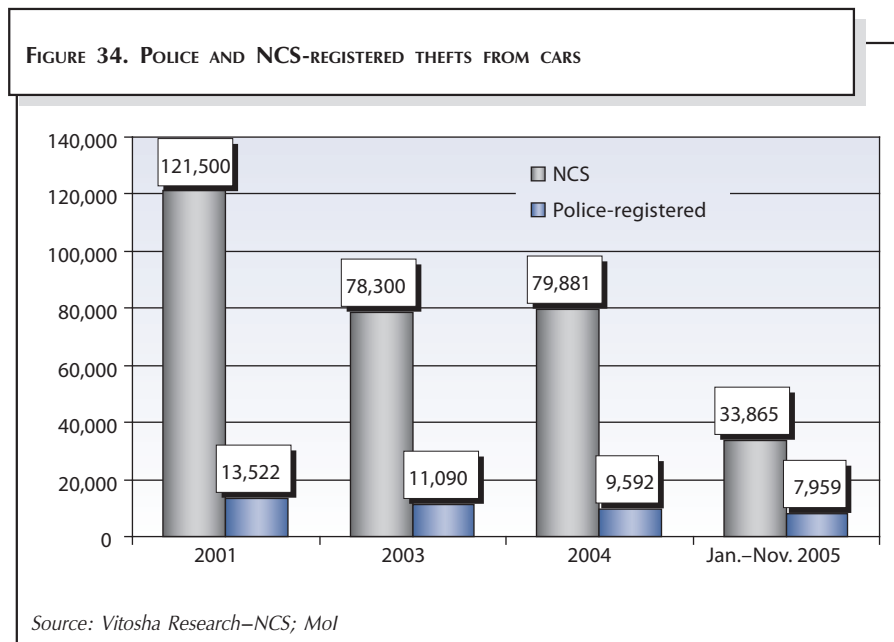
<sup>77</sup> Eurostat, <http://europa.eu.int/comm/Eurostat/>.

measures taken by car owners or the police, e.g. security alarm systems, GPS tracing systems, etc., are another factor that deters car thieves.

Besides the positive trends in Europe, there are two purely economic reasons for the decline of car thefts in Bulgaria. One is the car market saturation due to the growing import of second-hand cars after 2001. The other is the falling demand in markets like former Yugoslavia, Albania and the former USSR, which have coped with their car deficit in the last couple of years.

#### 6.4. Theft from Cars

The gap between police and victimization survey records is quite high where *theft of personal items or spare parts from cars* is concerned. The households that have been victims of this type of crime are four times as many as the thefts registered by the police (figure 29). If the cases when respondents state to have been victims of more than one theft are counted, it could be concluded that their approximate number in 2004 was 100,000. When comparing prevalence and incidence,<sup>78</sup> it is noticeable that the number of crimes increases because **about 1/3 of households become a victim of such thefts more than once**. In addition, about 2/3 of car owners that were victimized in 2005 had already been victimized between 2001 and 2003. Most probably, the perpetrators of this type of crime target specific groups of vehicles in specific areas. Therefore, preventive measures to protect the groups that are at highest risk of such thefts are very likely to improve the situation.



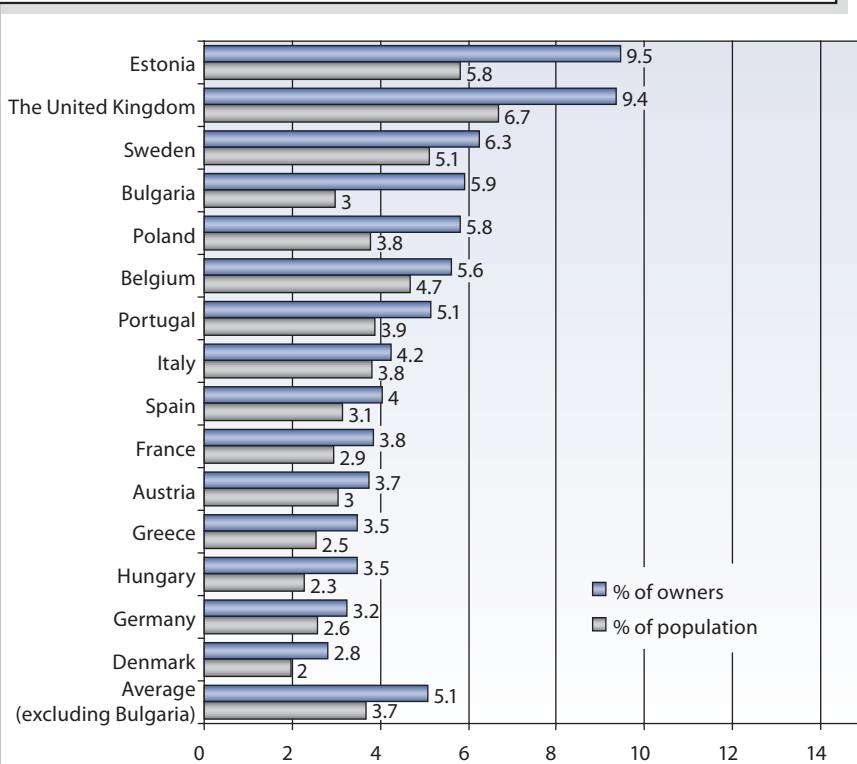
Almost half of the cases (48.7%) of stolen items from a car are audio/CD players. The second most attractive type of objects are spare parts: tires and wheel rims (9.2%), batteries (6%), mirrors (5.2%), lights (3.7%) and others (8%). The overall value of the stolen items is estimated at €8–8.5 million with an additional €4.5–5 million for the damages caused.<sup>79</sup>

NCS findings indicate that **underreporting of thefts from cars continued to increase in the last two years**. While in 2004, 55% of the victims did not report thefts from cars to

<sup>78</sup> **Prevalence rates** are the percentage of respondents who experienced a certain crime once or more in a given period of time. **Incidence rates** express the number of crimes experienced by each 100 people in the sample for the year preceding the survey. These count all incidents against victims who may have experienced more than one incident during a given year.

<sup>79</sup> The estimated average value of the stolen parts and property is €82–85, while the average value of the damages according to the victims is about €45–48.

FIGURE 35. VICTIMS OF THEFTS FROM CARS (2004)



Source: Vitosha Research–NCS 2005; EUICS

the police, in 2005 their share rose to 62%. Meanwhile, the police continue the practice of not registering all the reported thefts from cars. In 2004, about 30–35,000 of the thefts reported by victims were not registered by the police. However, in comparison to 2003, there is a decrease in the number of unrecorded thefts from cars. Nevertheless, this fall should be viewed against the overall decrease of this offense paralleled by growing **underreporting** which put lesser pressure on the police to find ways of not registering thefts from cars.

Unlike other offense categories, the volume of thefts from cars in Bulgaria is above the European average. In Bulgaria, about 5.9% of car owners are victims of theft from their cars. In Europe, the average is 5.1%, while in countries like Germany and Hungary those values are half of that. As stolen car parts are quite often resold, this type of crime is best prevented by restricting such marketing possibilities.

## 6.5. Burglary<sup>80</sup>

Burglary continues to be **the most politically sensitive crime in Bulgaria**. This type of crime has had and continues to have the most significant impact on a large number of households. For the last 15 years, between 50% and 70% of Bulgarian families have become victims of burglary or other theft from the house.<sup>81</sup> The decrease of burglaries contributed significantly to the overall reduction in recorded crime. The data obtained in the three NCS corroborate the trends registered by the police during the period 2001–2004 (figures 36 and 37).

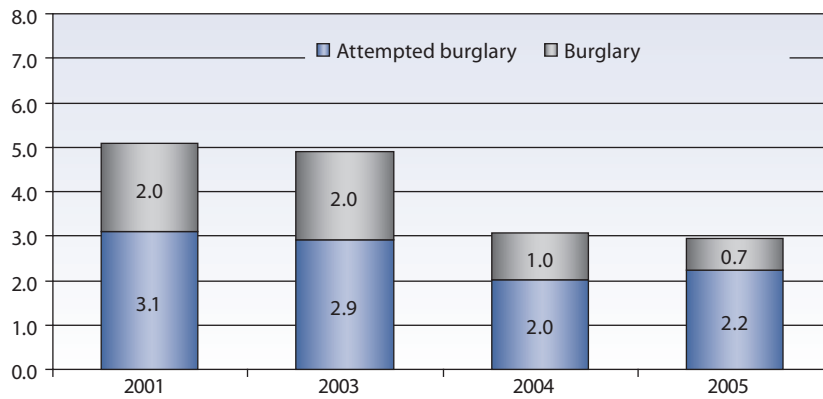
**Contrary to the police-registered decrease in the level of burglaries, the NCS finds that between 2004 and 2005 there has been a slight increase in burglaries** (figures 36 and 37). The discrepancy in the trends

<sup>80</sup> In the Bulgarian text “burglaries” is inclusive of all “thefts from homes” because the ICVS question asked comprises several offense categories of the Bulgarian police.

<sup>81</sup> The evaluation is made on the basis of MoI data and victimization survey findings in the period 1997–2005.

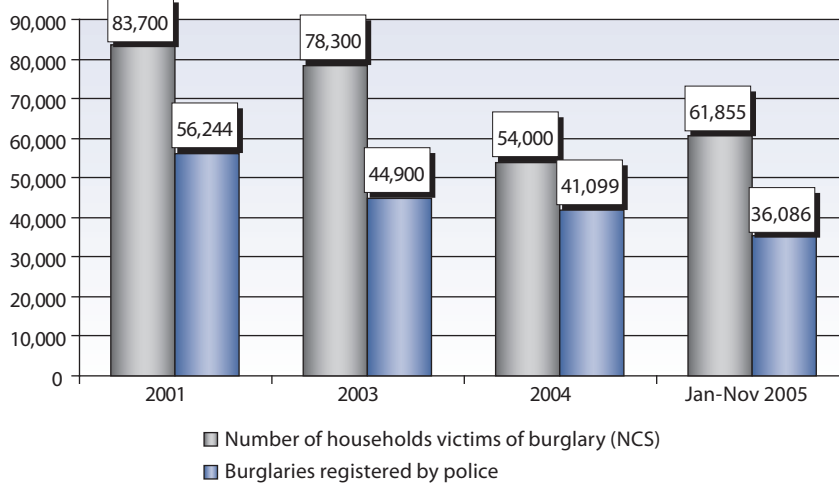
may well be explained with the growing number of unreported crimes. As NCS 2005 finds out, in 2004 nearly 75% of citizens reported burglary of their homes to the police, whereas in the first eleven months of 2005, the share of reporting burglary victims dropped to 53.1%.

FIGURE 36. SHARE OF HOUSEHOLDS VICTIMS OF BURGLARY (%)<sup>82</sup>



Source: Vitosha Research–NCS

FIGURE 37. NCS AND POLICE-REGISTERED BURGLARIES<sup>83</sup>



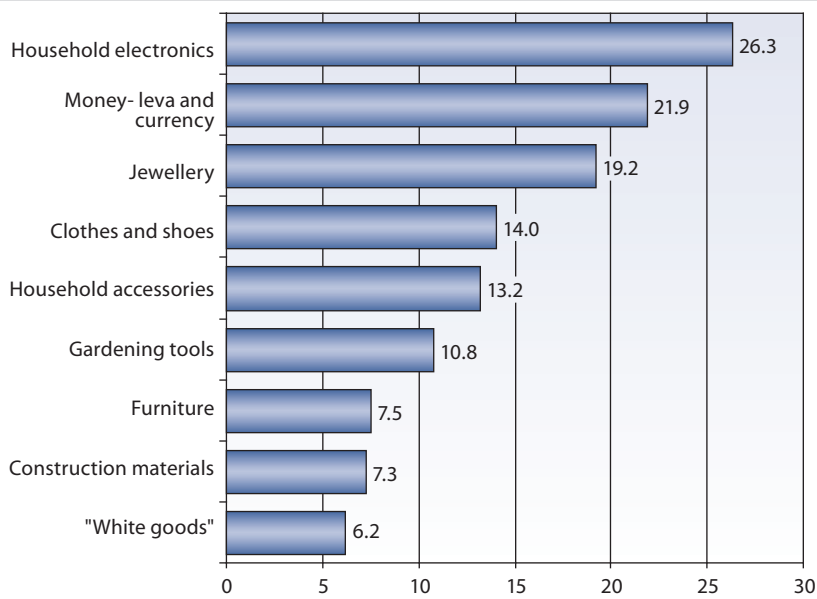
Source: Vitosha Research–NCS; Mol

NCS findings also point to the damages caused by this type of crime. In 2003, the average value of stolen and damaged property was calculated at about €450 per offense. In 2004, it was estimated at €300, whereas that of damaged property was €110 per offense. Thus, **the total value**

<sup>82</sup> The 2005 data are an estimate based on records for the first eleven months.

<sup>83</sup> Comparisons with police statistics should take into account the fact that some burglaries have not occurred at people’s homes.

FIGURE 38. TYPE OF STOLEN PROPERTY (%)

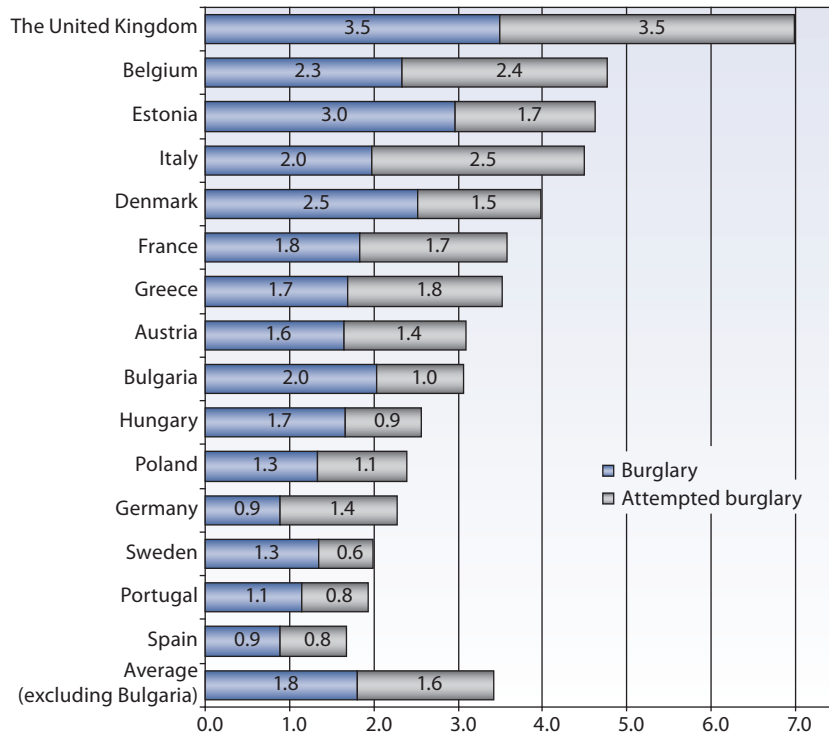


Source: Vitosha Research–NCS 2005

of the stolen and damaged property in 2004 was between €20 and €30 million (€7.5–10 million of which account for the damaged property). Attempted burglaries also inflict damages. Their estimated cost for 2004 was approximately €0.77 million. The types of possessions most frequently stolen by burglars are household appliances, cash, valuables and clothes (figure 38).

International comparison of burglaries shows that the victimization level in Bulgaria in 2004 was 3.0, while the average level in the other 18 countries researched by EUICS was 3.4 (figure 39). This places Bulgaria amongst the countries with a relatively low risk of burglaries.

FIGURE 39. HOUSEHOLDS VICTIMS TO BURGLARY OR ATTEMPTED BURGLARY IN 2004 (%)



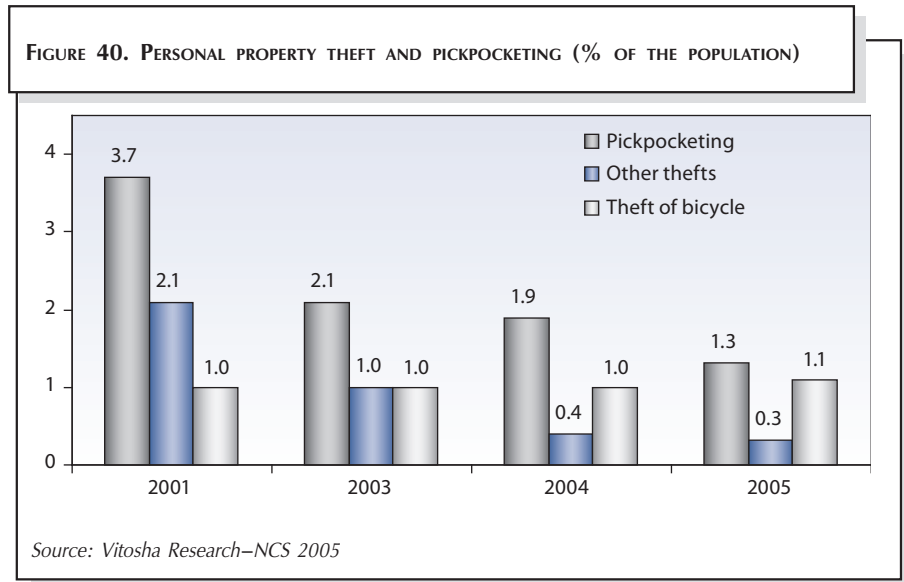
Source: EUICS 2005; Vitosha Research–NCS 2005

Comparisons may be drawn for attempted burglary as well. Generally, a large share of attempted burglaries suggest that homes are well protected by security devices and the police are fast to react, so that burglars fail to gain entry and the crime is registered only as an attempt.<sup>84</sup> In the United Kingdom for example, about 60% of the homes are equipped with security alarm systems and the ratio between attempted and successful burglary is 1:1. In comparison, in Bulgaria, where merely 3% of the households have a security alarm system, the ratio is 1:2.

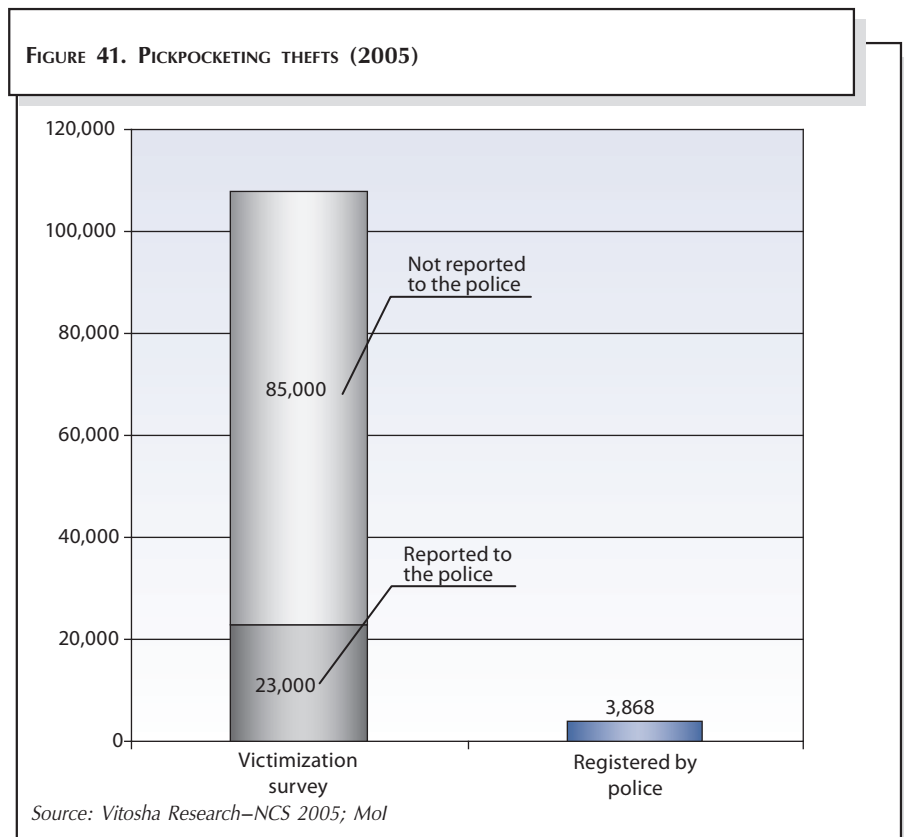
<sup>84</sup> Van Kesteren, J.N., Mayhew, P. & Nieuwbeerta, P. (2000), *Criminal Victimization in Seventeen Industrialised Countries: Key-findings from the 2000 International Crime Victims Survey*, the Hague, Ministry of Justice, WODC, p. 31.

### 6.6. Theft of Personal Property, Bicycle Theft and Pickpocketing<sup>85</sup>

Apart from burglary and car theft, ICVS collect data about a third group of thefts, which are regarded by most citizens as petty crimes. They include bicycle thefts, and the more general category of theft of personal belongings. According to NCS, there has been a decline in this type of crime for the last four years, except for bicycle thefts.



Theft of personal property refers to a quite diverse group of offenses, so for the sake of comparison, pickpocketing was singled out. Pickpocketing is defined as an incident where the victim carries the items that are later stolen, e.g. wallets, handbags, jewelry, etc. This crime is also typically the least reported—about 73% of the victims did not seek help from the police. Comparison with police data demonstrates that **pickpocketing incidents recorded by the police are five to six times fewer than the number of reported incidents** (figure 41). This shows that police filtering strategies are applied most pervasively with this type of offenses.

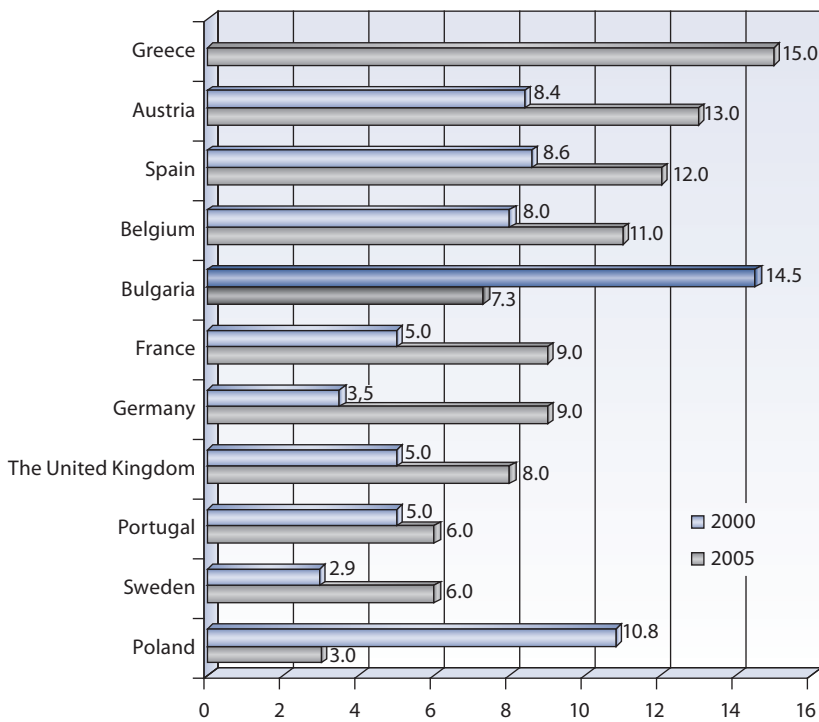


For methodological reasons, the comparison of victims of pickpocketing across countries is done by comparing the prevalence rates for a 5-year period. Two different trends have been captured for European countries (figure 42). **While in western Europe there has been a growth of pickpocketing between 2000 and 2005, in countries like Bulgaria and Poland it has been on the decline.** For example, in Bulgaria there was an almost twofold decrease according to NCS—in 2001, 14.5% of respondents stated that they had been a victim

<sup>85</sup> These two types of theft differ. In the case of pickpocketing respondents are asked whether they were carrying the stolen possession—wallet, handbag, etc. Theft of personal belongings occurs outside the home, e.g. items left on the beach or in the street.



FIGURE 42. COMPARATIVE DYNAMICS OF PICKPOCKETING,% (2000 AND 2005)



Source: EUICS; Vitoshka Research—NCS 2005

of pickpocketing, while in 2005 their share was 7.3%. The comparison between Eastern and Western Europe supports the hypothesis of “crime export” developed in section 3.4. Some countries like Austria and Greece have reported the participation of Bulgarians in pickpocketing incidents.<sup>86</sup> Some Bulgarian crime experts believe that only the youngest children of well-known Roma pickpocket clans have remained in Bulgaria (notably, to be trained in pickpocketing).<sup>87</sup>

The level of bicycle thefts has been relatively steady for the past five years—about 1% of respondents have been a victim of this type of crime (figure 40), which they define as moderately serious or serious. About 30% of households in Bulgaria possess at least one bicycle. 12.4% of

the bicycle-owners have been a victim of bicycle theft in the period 2001–2005. This means that **in the studied period, one in eight bicycles was stolen**. Most probably there is a well-developed market for stolen bicycles that has not been seriously affected by police actions in the past five years. Since this crime concerns a third of Bulgarian households, the police should take better preventive measures against bicycle theft, mainly by targeting the market for stolen bikes.

Thefts of personal property incurred costs. According to NCS 2005 data, the total value of stolen **bicycles** in the preceding year 2004 **was nearly €1 million**. The cost of stolen property from pickpocketing incidents **was almost €8.5 million**.

## 6.7. Business Victimization

Several specifics of the business victimization analysis need to be explained. First, the Bulgarian police do not record crimes against companies or legal entities separately. Instead, they use a category called “economic crimes”, which includes a wide range of financial and administrative offenses against companies, organizations and state institutions. Although the police record whether the victim is an individual or a legal entity, this information is not processed and is not presented in a form that

<sup>86</sup> According to the Austrian police, in 2005 alone 540 Bulgarian pickpockets were arrested in Vienna (“Bulgaria Makes a Last Attempt to Stop Child Pickpockets in Europe”, *Sega*, 14 February 2006). It is not clear, though, whether the pickpockets held might have been fewer in number, while detained several times.

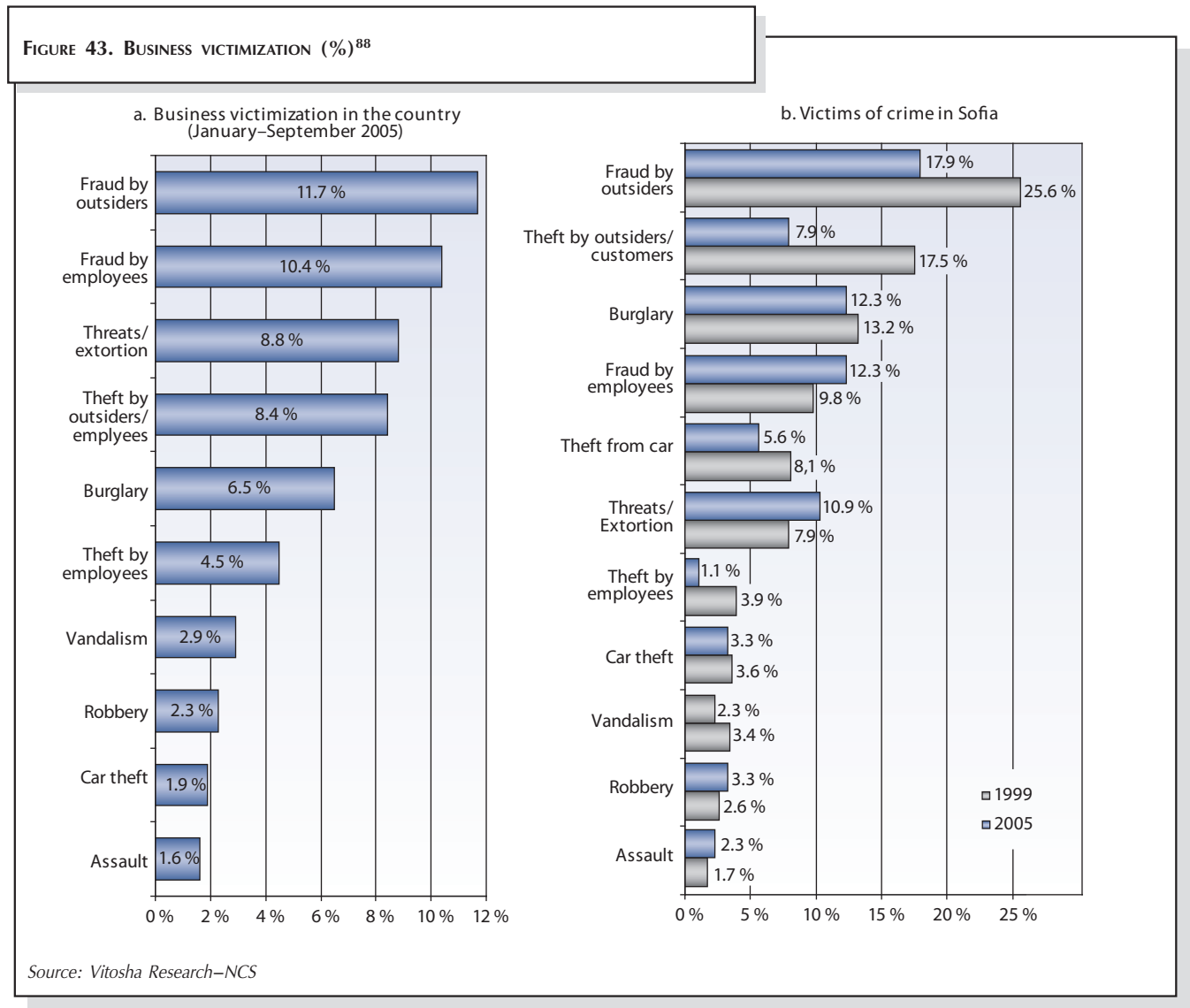
<sup>87</sup> Interviews with criminal police offices in ten local police departments (July 2005).



could make it possible to assess crime against companies. This study provides an opportunity to identify the crimes that affect the companies most seriously.

Crime against businesses differs from crime against individuals and households also with respect to the factors that influence its level. Socio-economic and demographic factors, as well as police actions, can only partially account for the dynamics of crime against business. For example, the number of males in the high-risk age group (15–29 years old) or unemployment may influence various types of theft, robbery or violence, but they could not be used to account for, say, fraud by employees.

Due to these characteristics, the business crime survey, which followed the methodology of the 2000 UNICRI survey, focused on crimes different from those considered in the case of individuals and households.



<sup>88</sup> The 2000 UNICRI survey covered only companies based in Sofia, so a comparison between 1999 and 2005 levels of crime against business is only possible for those companies. The second figure (b) presents estimates of the crime level in 2005 in Sofia based on the reports of victims for the first nine months of the year.

The business crime section of the NCS does not include questions on bicycle/motorcycle theft or pickpocketing, but it includes some additional crimes:

1. Frauds by employees or outsiders;
2. Thefts by customers or employees;
3. Threats, extortion and racketeering;
4. Vandalizing of property.

Corruption and crimes related to corporate governance (for instance, issues related to disregard of the interest and rights of minority stakeholders by managers or majority stakeholders) are topics that have been analyzed by CSD in other studies<sup>89</sup> and are not dealt with in this report.

### 6.7.1 Frauds and Thefts by Customers and Outsiders

Frauds and thefts by customers and outsiders are amongst the most common crimes against business. However, there has been a significant decline in both types of crime in the period covered by this report. This trend coincides with the decline in frauds<sup>90</sup> and thefts against individuals and households. While in 1999 the share of companies based in Sofia that were victims of fraud by outsiders was 25.6%, in 2005 it dropped to 17.9% and was 11.7% for companies throughout Bulgaria. Smaller companies are more vulnerable to this type of crime.

There is an even bigger decline in **thefts by outsiders and clients**. In 1999, about 17.5% of the businesses in Sofia were victims of theft by outsiders or customers, while in 2005 their share dropped to 7.9%. The nationwide proportion of companies that became victims of such thefts was 8.4%. Companies from the restaurant and hotel sector are at highest risk. They are 2.2 times as likely to be victims of this crime as the rest of business sectors. Another high-risk group of companies are wholesale traders (1.8 times more likely to be victims) and retailers (1.3 times more likely).

**Another crime for which declining values were recorded is burglary.** In 1999, the share of businesses that were victims of burglary in Sofia was 13.2% (while in 2005 they were 12.3%) with 6.5% overall for the country. This decline is reflected in the way victim companies regard burglary. In the year 2000, 39.1% of them defined burglary as the crime with the most disastrous effect on their business. In 2005, the share of

<sup>89</sup> Center for the Study of Democracy (2006), *On the Eve of EU Accession: Anti-Corruption Reforms in Bulgaria*, Sofia; Center for the Study of Democracy (2005), *Anti-Corruption Reforms in Bulgaria 2004*, Sofia; Center for the Study of Democracy (2004), *Corruption Assessment Report 2003*, Sofia.

<sup>90</sup> This report does not analyze in detail frauds against citizens. NCS 2005 did not include questions on this topic, either. In NCS 2002 and NCS 2004 respondents were asked the following question: "Have you been a victim of consumer fraud in the last calendar year (2001 or 2003), i.e. when buying goods or services have you been cheated about their quality or quantity?" The findings indicated a significant decline: from 30.7% in 2001 to 22.4% in 2003. It is likely that consumer fraud has continued to decrease during 2004 and 2005 and has approached but remained above EU levels (For the 18 countries surveyed in EUICS the prevalence of consumer fraud is 11.9%).

companies that described it as the most serious crime against them was 32.6%. Despite this decline, burglary remains the crime that inflicts the greatest damages on business.

Small businesses with up to 10 employees are most vulnerable to burglary, having an odds ratio 7.2 times as high as that of bigger companies. The likelihood for companies that have 11 to 50 employees is 9.3 times as high. As to the type of business, wholesalers have an odds ratio of 4.7 followed by retailers (2 times as likely to be victims of burglary).

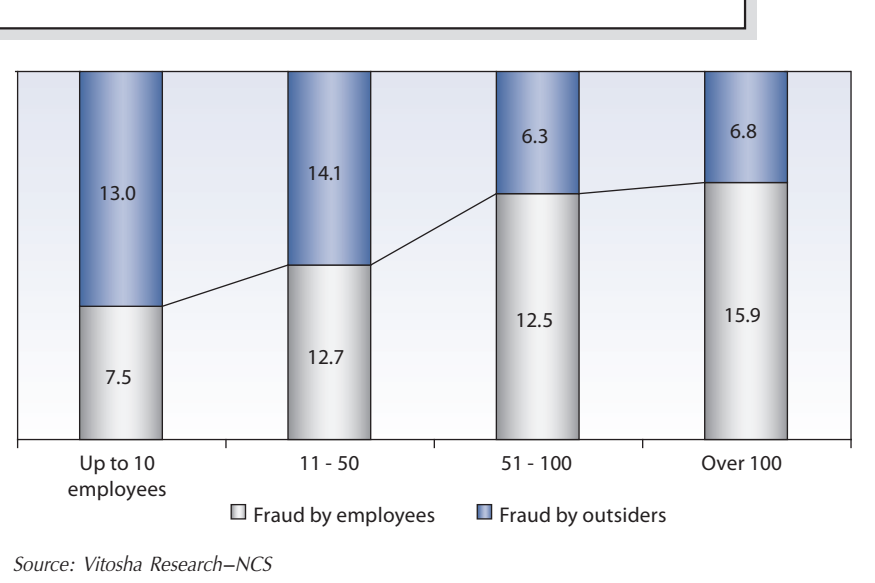
The survey found out that **insured companies are at a high risk of burglary** due to either the relatively wide spread of insurance frauds (i.e. staging fraudulent burglaries to collect insurance payment), or the fact that companies that buy insurance do so precisely because they are at a higher risk.

#### 6.7.2 Frauds and Thefts by Employees

Employee fraud is among the offenses that have been on the increase. It mainly affects larger companies (figure 44). This finding is demonstrated by the results of an international crime business survey conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC), which also captured a rise in fraud in larger companies (with more than 200 employees) in the period 2001–2005.<sup>91</sup> The PWC survey finds several reasons for this trend. First, responsibilities in big companies are divided among a greater number of people, which provides individual employees with greater anonymity. Quite often employees do not consider their actions harmful

to the organization, as they don't believe such actions could have a significant effect. In addition, the financial operations and transactions at large companies are quite complex, which makes the companies more vulnerable. Another risk is that such companies often venture into new, unknown markets (local or international). On the other hand, larger firms have well-developed internal control systems and risk management strategies, which increases their chances of revealing the frauds (and reporting them in the survey).<sup>92</sup>

FIGURE 44. DISTRIBUTION OF FRAUD VICTIMS IN 2005 BY COMPANY SIZE (%)



<sup>91</sup> PricewaterhouseCoopers (2005), *Global Economic Crime Survey*.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

As far as theft by employees is concerned, victimization among Sofia-based companies has fallen. In the period 1999–2005, the share of victims dropped from 3.9% to 1.1%. However, this problem persists for businesses in the rest of the country, where the share of victims is 4.5%. This type of crime is more likely to occur within larger companies, especially in the wholesale business.

Crime inflicts a range of serious damages to companies. It places a financial burden on companies far beyond the one directly caused by the criminal incident itself—this burden involves property protection costs, insurance expenses, bribes and financial losses due to reduced productivity or spoilt chances for potential income. The **direct damages alone that companies sustained due to thefts in 2005, are estimated at nearly €50 million.** Fraud, on the other hand, is even more damaging. According to the PWC survey cited above, the average cost of fraud amounts to €150,000. This estimate, however, relates mainly to large companies, which were disproportionately represented in the PWC survey of Bulgaria.

\* \* \*

The analysis of crime trends in 2000–2005 and the problems outlined in the present report call for two types of measures:

1. Systematic and professional use of **victimization surveys** as an additional tool in the formulation and implementation of national crime prevention and law-enforcement policy.

1. **Annual victimization surveys.** Effective victimization surveys would require much greater resources which should be provided for in the Ministry of Interior budget. Victimization surveys in Bulgaria use a sample of 1,000–2,000 households; in the UK, 46,000 households are surveyed several times per year. Extended National Crime Surveys will provide opportunities for an adequate monitoring of the overall crime situation, rather than just police-registered crime. A private-public mechanism for bringing forward and debating these issues has already been created through the National Crime Prevention Commission.<sup>93</sup>

2. **Capacity-building at law-enforcement institutions as regards victimization surveys.** Surveys can be used to extend police analysis by focusing on the victims of crime in addition to their perpetrators. This will enable the development of community and victim-oriented crime prevention and reduction programs. Victimization surveys have been conducted in Bulgaria for nearly nine years, but until recently they have been somewhat sporadic. Thus far, however, they have not been used on a regular basis in the work of law-enforcement institutions.

2. Development and implementation of **measures for increasing crime reporting:**

The current criteria for police work effectiveness—the clear-up rate and the number of registered crimes—should be reconsidered to increase the incentive of local police department heads to record all reported crimes. Possible approaches include: public accountability regarding the ratio between reported and registered crimes; introduction of a single registration number for registering reported crimes; awareness-raising campaigns on the ways of reporting a crime and the benefits of reporting. Only in this way could initiatives such as *Community Policing* practically promote closer contacts between the public and the police.

---

<sup>93</sup> Decree № 125 of 24 June 2005 on the Establishment of National Crime Prevention Commission. Art. 5.4 of the Decree stipulates that the Commission “shall propose the implementation of periodical victimization surveys and reports to assess the level of crime and the crime trends in Bulgaria”.



## APPENDIX 1: TOPICS IN THE NATIONAL CRIME SURVEY

<i>Overview of questions in the survey</i>								
Have you been a victim of any of the following crimes in the last five years?	When (last/this year)?	How often (last year)?	Where?	Reported to the police?	Details of report	Victims support	Seriousness	Additional crime-specific questions
Theft of car	•	•	•	•			•	•b
Theft from car	•	•	•	•	•		•	
Car vandalism	•	•	•	•			•	
Motorcycle/scooter theft	•	•	•	•			•	
Bicycle theft	•	•	•	•			•	
Burglary	•		•	•	•	•	•	•c
Attempted burglary	•		•	•			•	
Robbery	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•d
Theft of personal property/pickpocketing	•	•	•	•			•	•e
Sexual offences	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•f
Assault/threat	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•f

- a. *Details of reports to the police are: why did you report; why did you not report; were you satisfied with the way the police dealt with the matter; why were you not satisfied.*
- b. *Was the car recovered?*
- c. *Was anything stolen; value of property stolen; was something damaged; value of damage.*
- d. *Was anything stolen; number of offenders; whether offender known; whether weapons used; what weapon.*
- e. *Whether pickpocketing.*
- f. *What happened; was it considered a crime; number of offenders; whether offenders known; who was offender; was weapon used; what weapon; what was the offender's ethnicity.*

### **Other offenses referred to in the survey:**

Consumer fraud, corruption, drug abuse.

### **Questions on police, prevention and protection:**

1. Do the police do a good job in your local area?
2. Were the police helpful when you contacted them?
3. Recommended sentence for burglar and length of prison sentence.
4. Firearm ownership, type of firearm and reason for ownership.
5. Security measures against burglary.

### **Personal and household information:**

Age, gender, household size, town size, type of house, vehicle ownership, occupation, years of formal education.





## APPENDIX 2: STATISTICAL ANALYSES

TABLE 1. SHARE OF POPULATION (OVER 15 YEARS OF AGE) OR HOUSEHOLDS THAT HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF CRIME (%)

	2001	2003	2004	January–November 2005
Burglary	3.1	2.9	2.0	2.1
Burglary of summer house, attic, cellar, etc.	-	-	2.8	1.8
Theft of personal property	5.8	3.1	2.3	1.5
Car vandalism	2.0	1.3	1.8	1.4
Assault/threat (including domestic violence)	2.1	1.7	0.6	1.3
Theft from car	4.1	2.9	3.0	1.3
Sexual offenses (rape, molestation, harassment) <sup>94</sup>	0.2	0.1	-	1.1
Bicycle theft	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Theft of car	0.4	1.1	0.4	0.7
Attempted burglary	2.0	2.0	1.0	0.6
Robbery	0.7	1.0	0.4	0.3

Base: NCS 2002 N=1,615; NCS 2004 N=1,101; NCS 2005 N=1,202

### Odds Ratio Analysis

The following tables compare the odds of a certain business (table 2) or individual (table 3) of becoming a victim of crime. Four groups of crimes have been selected to survey the odds ratio of businesses—those that affect them most frequently. With individuals, data for all eleven crime types included in the NCS have been presented. The odds ratio of companies was calculated on the basis of the following formula:

$$\frac{\frac{p}{100-p}}{\frac{q}{100-q}}, \quad \text{where}$$

$p$  is the surveyed indicator in%  
 $q$  is the base indicator in%

<sup>94</sup> Only female respondents were asked a question about sexual offenses, formulated as follows: "First, a rather personal question. People sometimes grab, touch or assault others for sexual reasons in a really offensive way. This can happen either at home, or elsewhere, for instance in a pub, the street, at school, on public transport, in cinemas, on the beach, or at one's workplace. Over the past five years, has anyone done this to you?" This question was asked by predominantly female inquirers (85% of them on average were women). The question was not analyzed due to the insufficient number of such cases in the sample.

The figures obtained after this formula demonstrate the odds of a certain business or household (individual) of becoming victim of each of the group of crimes surveyed. Coefficients higher than 1.0 mean that the company is at a higher victimization risk, while values below 1.0 express a lower victimization risk. For instance, table 2 reveals the effect that the factor “company size” has on a company’s odds of burglary: smaller firms with up to 10 employees are 7.2 times as likely to become victims of burglary as the larger companies with over 100 employees (which are taken as a base, i.e. reference group). Table 3 shows, among other things, the factor “town size” and the way it influences the odds of an individual of becoming a victim of car theft. In 2005, large town residents’ car theft odds ratio was 2.15 times as high as that of small town dwellers.

TABLE 2. ODDS RATIO OF COMPANIES

	Threat/Extortion related to the business	Theft by outsiders and customers	Theft by employees	Burglary of premises
<b>Company size</b>				
Up to 10 employees	0.9	0.4	0.1	7.2
11–50 employees	1.1	0.6	0.2	9.3
51–100 employees	1.0	0.4	0.3	4.8
Over 100 employees (base)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
<b>Business sector</b>				
Agriculture	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hotels/restaurants	1.3	2.2	0.0	0.0
Services	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Construction	0.4	1.2	0.8	1.2
Transport	1.3	1.1	0.3	1.8
Wholesale trade	1.3	1.8	1.5	4.7
Retail trade	0.5	1.3	0.5	2.0
Community services (water, electricity supply)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Manufacturing (industry) (base)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Healthcare	8.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
IT sector	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.0
<b>Is your property insured against loss or damage?</b>				
Yes	1.6	2.0	0.8	1.7
No (base)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
<b>Security system of private security company</b>				
Mentioned	2.1	2.3	2.6	0.4
Not mentioned (base)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
<b>Security system of local police department</b>				
Mentioned	0.7	1.9	1.0	0.8
Not mentioned (base)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
<b>High-security locks</b>				
Mentioned	0.9	2.1	0.8	1.3
Not mentioned (base)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
<b>Bars on windows and doors</b>				
Mentioned	0.8	0.9	2.3	0.9
Not mentioned (base)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
<b>High fence</b>				
Mentioned	1.0	2.8	2.2	0.3



TABLE 3. ODDS RATIO OF RESPONDENTS IN THE FOLLOWING 12 MONTHS (CONTINUED)

		<i>Bicycle theft</i>				<i>Burglary</i>				<i>Attempted burglary</i>				<i>Burglary of summer house, attic, cellar, etc.</i>	
		2001	2003	2004	January–November 2005	2001	2003	2004	January–November 2005	2001	2003	2004	January–November 2005	2004	January–November 2005
Town size	Large town	1.12	11.33	4.73	0.06	0.65	1.85	1.26	0.52	0.90	4.65	1.46	2.10	2.17	0.75
	Small town (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Income	Low income	1.95	0.44	0.00	0.59	0.65	0.58	0.38	1.23	0.83	1.09	0.38	0.60	1.10	1.46
	High income (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Going out	Goes out often	0.85	2.35	1.75	1.30	0.39	0.55	1.34	1.08	1.68	1.19	2.23	0.77	0.59	0.54
	Goes out rarely (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Married	Married	0.73	0.47	0.73	0.72	1.15	1.20	0.44	0.61	0.81	0.50	0.96	0.39	1.45	1.29
	Not married (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Age	Up to 24	0.65	2.40	5.27	0.83	0.24	0.18	2.32	1.92	1.57	1.88	2.99	3.96	0.25	0.24
	25–54	0.43	0.88	2.02	0.42	0.65	0.64	1.45	1.46	0.74	1.86	1.87	1.66	0.29	0.62
	55+ (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Education	Low	0.60	1.01	0.52	2.62	1.03	0.58	0.71	0.48	2.15	2.22	0.61	0.36	0.62	0.19
	High (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Sex	Male	0.91	1.83	14.57	2.05	0.76	0.73	1.20	1.43	1.62	1.26	2.13	0.23	0.84	0.71
	Female (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

		<i>Robbery</i>				<i>Theft of personal property</i>				<i>Assault/Threat</i>			
		2001	2003	2004	January–November 2005	2001	2003	2004	January–November 2005	2001	2003	2004	January–November 2005
Town size	Large town	2.26	2.87	1.44	-	1.65	1.35	3.21	2.05	0.70	1.43	2.12	0.76
	Small town (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Income	Low income	2.82	0.12	1.07	0.61	1.10	0.47	0.39	0.54	1.16	1.21	-	0.56
	High income (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00
Going out	Goes out often	1.41	1.63	0.82	2.61	1.15	1.12	1.04	1.35	0.48	1.49	2.01	2.09
	Goes out rarely (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Married	Married	3.68	0.32	0.33	0.32	1.54	0.92	0.37	0.38	0.99	0.59	0.13	0.15
	Not married (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Age	Up to 24	1.04	2.27	0.00	-	1.20	1.31	4.54	2.24	1.00	2.23	2.57	25.57
	25–54	1.24	1.00	0.50	-	1.26	0.67	3.60	0.69	0.70	0.32	0.72	6.40
	55+ (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Education	Low	0.18	0.87	0.30	-	0.50	0.87	0.88	0.42	1.07	2.30	1.30	3.26
	High (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Sex	Male	0.74	1.55	0.44	0.00	0.62	1.58	1.01	0.73	1.22	1.38	0.21	1.16
	Female (base)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

Base: NCS 2002 N=1,615; NCS 2004 N=1,101; NCS 2005 N=1,202

## CSD PUBLICATIONS

- Corruption and Trafficking: Monitoring and Prevention, second revised and amended edition**, Sofia, 2000.  
ISBN 954-477-087-9
- Velchev, Boris and Gruev, Lazar. Criminal Law Issues in Combating Corruption (in Bulgarian)**, Sofia, 2000.  
ISBN: 954-477-090-9
- Smuggling in Southeast Europe**, Sofia, 2002.  
ISBN 954-477-099-2
- Anticorruption Education Manual, second revised and amended edition**, Sofia, 2003.  
ISBN 954-477-109-3
- Corruption Assessment Report 2003**, Sofia, 2004.
- The Ombudsman Institution in Europe and Bulgaria (in Bulgarian with summary in English)**, Sofia, 2003.  
ISBN 954-477-110-7
- Corruption and Anticorruption (in Bulgarian)**, Sofia, 2003.  
ISBN 954-477-102-6
- The Drug Market in Bulgaria**, Sofia, 2003.  
ISBN: 954-477-112-3
- Ombudsman Institution in Europe and Bulgaria: Legal Nature and Practice (in Bulgarian)**, Sofia, 2004.  
ISBN 954-477-122-0
- The Hidden Economy in Bulgaria (in Bulgarian)**, Sofia, 2004.  
ISBN 954-477-120-4
- Corrupt Practices and Prevention of Corruption (in Bulgarian)**, Sofia, 2004.  
ISBN 954-477-113-1
- Partners in Crime: The Risks of Symbiosis between the Security Sector and Organized Crime in Southeast Europe**, Sofia, 2004.  
ISBN: 954-477-115-8
- Weapons under Scrutiny: Implementing Arms Export Controls and Combating Small Arms Proliferation in Bulgaria**, Sofia, 2004.  
ISBN 954-477-117-4
- Transportation, Smuggling and Organized Crime**, Sofia, 2004.  
ISBN 954-477-119-0
- Ombudsman Institution in Bulgaria (in Bulgarian)**, Sofia, 2005.  
ISBN 954-477-130-1
- Anticorruption Reforms in Bulgaria**, Sofia, 2005.  
ISBN 954-477-128-X
- Pashev, Konstantin. Corruption and Tax Compliance. Policy and Administration Challenges**, Sofia, 2005.  
ISBN: 954-477-132-8
- Crime Trends in Bulgaria: Police Statistics and Victimization Surveys**, Sofia, 2005.  
ISBN 954-477-126-3
- Yordanova, Maria and Dimitar Markov, eds. Judicial Reform: The Prosecution Office and Investigation Authorities in the Context of EU Membership**, Sofia, 2005.  
ISBN: 954-477-134-44
- The Courts, Prosecution and Investigation in the EU Member States and Accession Countries (in Bulgarian)**, Sofia, 2005.  
ISBN 954-477-129-8
- On the Eve of EU Accession: Anticorruption Reforms in Bulgaria**, Sofia, 2005.  
ISBN-10: 954-477-138-7  
ISBN-13: 978-954-477-138-6

