Criminology in Bosnia and Herzegovina: history, recent trends and research

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Abstract

Purpose:
This paper reports an overview of publications, education and scientific research projects in key areas of criminology in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Design/Methodology/Approach:
The authors examined and evaluated all surveys, books and primary criminologists in the Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences and Law Faculty University of Sarajevo. The sample consisted of surveys, where the subject was victimization, fear of crime, self-report delinquency, corruption, police, domestic violence and private policing. Each survey was evaluated and categorized into one of the following categories: applied, evaluative, fundamental or technological research.

Findings:
Quite surprisingly for such a small country with such a short academic tradition, Bosnia and Herzegovina successfully produced a fairly large amount of criminological research, although just a part of it is internationally disseminated and visible. Focusing narrowly on a few selected studies, we decided to provide a rather broad overview of criminological research in Bosnia and Herzegovina reflecting its diversity and scope. Recent research has particularly focused on organized crime, violent crime, juvenile delinquency, xenophobic violence. In closing, we provide recommendations encouraging criminological research in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the entire region of the western Balkans.

Practical implications:
The evaluation of the surveys on criminology and security studies conducted in the Faculty of Criminal Justice Science at the University of Sarajevo is useful for further planning of research and other efforts at the University. There is a large quantity of evaluative and applied surveys that can be used as initial bases for the comprehensive fundamental research on more core question of the BH authority and legitimacy of police, prosecutors, courts and law enforcement in general in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Originality/Value:
The value of the paper is primarily useful for the young criminologists in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and other criminologists who could use this information for possible cooperation for future research efforts in Criminology.
1 BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) lies between Croatia and Serbia-Montenegro. It is 51,129 sq km and has 4,025,476 inhabitants. The capital is Sarajevo. The main national groups are Bosniacs (48%), Serbs (37%), and Croats (14%). In relation to Croatia and Serbia-Montenegro, religion plays the most important role in the daily lives of the inhabitants of Bosnia & Herzegovina, and many different religions are represented, including: Muslim (40%), Serbian Orthodox (31%), Roman Catholic (15%), and other (14%). Second to Macedonia, Bosnia & Herzegovina was the poorest republic in the old Yugoslav Federation. The GDP is US$26.21 billion and the GDP per capita is US$6,500, the real growth rate is 5% and inflation is 1.1%. The unemployment rate is officially 44%; however, a ‘grey’ economy exists that may reduce actual unemployment to near 20%. The major industries are mining, vehicle assembly, textiles, tobacco, wooden furniture, tank and aircraft assembly, domestic appliances, and oil refining. Most of the industries were heavily damaged or in some cases completely shut down because of the 1992 war, which began in Bosnia & Herzegovina as a result of a disputed vote for independence. Bosnians and Croats were driven from their homes by the Serbian forces in a deliberate campaign of territorial conquest and ethnic purification.

The war devastated the country’s infrastructure and the already deflated economy, leaving refugees numbering in the millions. The war officially ended in December 1995, but the country is still dealing with the effects of the war. There are still numerous unexploded landmines which threaten community safety, and petty crime brought on by the high unemployment rate is on the rise. In 1995-96, a NATO-led international peacekeeping force (IFOR) of 60,000 troops served in Bosnia & Herzegovina to implement and monitor the military aspects of the agreement. IFOR was succeeded by a smaller, NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR) whose mission was to deter renewed hostilities. European Union peacekeeping troops (EUFOR) replaced SFOR in December 2004; their mission was to maintain peace and stability throughout the country. Bosnia & Herzegovina is still in transition and is an emerging democratic state (http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bk.html).

2 CRIMINOLOGY IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Despite over hundred years of independence, response to criminology continues to be somewhere between acceptance arising from the real needs of modern societies and refusal to recognize it as an independent academic discipline. The development is hampered by constant dilemmas about its origins, legal and sociological roots. However, one thing is certain; criminology has recently been developing with
great speed and primarily as an empirical discipline which treats its subject matter both inter- and multi-disciplinary. It is a multi-methodological, descriptive and empirical academic discipline, because it describes the phenomena, observes them as they develop and contributes to the pool of knowledge, primarily by researching and generalizing the facts it gathers.

Most contemporary experts from the West Balkan region perceive criminology as a non-legal science (Horvatić, 1993; Petrović, Meško, 2004; Muratbegović, 2008), which relies heavily on crime policy to fulfill its mission of crime reduction. The primary way to achieve this is by contributing its knowledge to development of an efficient, social and human crime policy. Criminology is not limited to providing information about the source of problems and efficiency of crime prevention programs. It can also act “ante delictum” by predicting and preventing crime. This aspect of criminology is reflected in its contribution to shaping and evaluating the system of norms, institutions, instruments and measures pertaining to social reaction to crime. It is thus that we can say that modern criminology reaches far beyond traditional criminal law science which once enjoyed the exclusive right to academic study of crime.

Criminal law science is a normative discipline. While some of the methods of contemporary criminology can be also described as such, criminology has not generally moved beyond normative as neither real nor ideal methods of law can properly address the complex problem of antisocial and especially deviant behavior. Only criminology with its special methodological system (self-reported delinquency, victimization surveys, clinical methods, undercover observation, for example) can achieve this. Finally, with the above in mind we will present the history of this academic discipline in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

3 CRIMINOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITIES IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Development of criminology in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be traced through development of the scientific-research work and overall functioning of higher education institutions in the country. The above is in reference to undergraduate and post-graduate university programs, production of textbooks, articles and discussions, as well as conducting surveys, initiating scientific conferences and pursuing specific scientific research projects. Two University Handbooks of Criminology were: Introduction to Criminology (1972) by Rajka Mladenović, published by the Faculty of Law at University of Sarajevo, and Criminology, by Borislav Petrović and Gorazd Meško (2004, 2008), published by the Faculty of Law at the University of Sarajevo. Criminology was initially studied only at the Faculty of Law of Sarajevo University before penetrating other law faculties in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since recently it had also been introduced in some other institutions of higher education.

The Faculty of Law at the Sarajevo University, the oldest such educational institution in Bosnia and Herzegovina (founded in 1946), included a criminology course in its curriculum. It is an elective, one-semester course with two lecture
hours and two practical training hours per week in the third or the fourth year of undergraduate studies. Development of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina included establishment of law faculties in all major urban centers, primarily in Banja Luka and Mostar which continue to be university centers and in recent period, that is, over the past ten years also in Bihać, Zenica, Tuzla and Eastern Sarajevo. Since the above faculties had been established under patronage of the Sarajevo’s Faculty of Law they nearly copied its curriculum. The criminology courses in the above faculties are thus similar to that provided in Sarajevo.

Over the sixty years that it has been studied in Bosnia and Herzegovina, criminology was both a core and an elective subject. Today it is a core subject in the first year of study at the Faculty of Law administered in accordance with the so-called Bologna process to include three lecture hours and one practical training hour per week. Some aspects of criminology are studied in elective courses such as Criminal Law Clinic, Abuse of Drugs, Ecology related Crime and Organized Crime.

It is necessary to stress that criminology had always been a core subject in the post-graduate program of the Sarajevo’s Faculty of Law. Criminology was among the studied disciplines in each of eight post-graduate courses offered by the Sarajevo’s Faculty of Law. This is in reference to post-graduate program in the field of criminal law which regularly included selected chapters from the following subjects: criminal law, criminal procedure law, criminology, criminal investigation, international criminal law and penology. The same is true for current postgraduate course which includes criminology as part of etiology and phenomenology of organized crime courses. Situation is similar in postgraduate programs of other law faculties in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Seven PhD thesis had so far been successfully defended at the Faculty of Law of the Sarajevo University. Also, five Masters Thesis had been defended. Finally study papers of postgraduate students also represent a modest contribution to development of criminology.

4 RECENT TRENDS IN BOSNIAN CRIMINOLOGY

Limiting the subject of criminology only to crime is clearly outdated (the so-called narrow or legal scope of criminology). Contemporary criminology explores all punishable acts (delinquency) and not only criminal offenses, and deals with all crime-related behaviors, which are perceived as deviant (Siegel, 2006).

Criminology is clearly not concerned with all deviant behaviors, but only those which are related to crime (prostitution, drug abuse, gambling, among others). Criminal law science only partially deals with these phenomena, leaving their further study to other scientific disciplines. That is exactly where the solution might be found to this dilemma about the nature of criminology.

Criminal law science focuses on criminal offences and sanctions, viewing them as normative phenomena. On the other hand, contemporary criminology, as an empirical discipline, must adopt a completely different approach to the problem of crime and is thus treating it as a real, living phenomenon. Added to this is social content of delinquent and deviant behavior which is not of much interest to the
criminal law science, but is at the heart of contemporary criminology. To paraphrase some of the best known criminologists of our time, Freda Adler, Gerhard Muller and William Laufer; the study of law is no longer sufficient to satisfy the needs of a scholar interested in studying and researching the phenomena of crime (Adler, Muller, Laufer, 2007).

Such understanding by contemporary science undoubtedly led to the establishment of academic institutes within the world’s leading universities where criminology is studied in detail, as both a theoretical and empirical discipline. It is in that context that one needs to observe the phenomenon of the establishment of the Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences at the Sarajevo University. The Faculty was founded in 1993, and as outlined in its curriculum, criminology reaches beyond the framework of legal studies. The above curriculum includes all criminal justice subjects as does the curriculum of Sarajevo’s Faculty of Law. Due to the enthusiasm of contributing professors of the Criminal Justice Department of the Sarajevo’s Faculty of Law, “Criminal law” and “Criminal procedure law” are studied in as much detail as in the law faculties in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In addition to legal disciplines, the curriculum of the Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences also includes about ten more disciplines directly related to the social, real content of delinquent and deviant behavior. It is necessary to mention here disciplines, such as: sociology of violence, social anthropology, social pathology, victimology, penology. Of course, criminology is also included and outlined in five inter-related but separate criminology modules: Criminology 1 - Introduction to Criminology, Criminology 2 - Criminological Theories, Criminology, 3 - Applied Criminology, Criminology 4 - Crime Prognosis and Prevention and Criminology, 5 - Research Methods in Criminology.

Starting this year, “criminology” transformed into an independent department which administers eight-semester bachelor’s degree and two-semester master’s degree programs under the name “European Criminology, Criminalistics and Criminal Justice”. Some of the most distinguished criminologists from nine different (European Union & South-East Europe) countries lecture the students of this department.

One doctoral thesis in the field of criminology has so far been defended at the Faculty while two more are currently in process; both in criminology. At this point, four Master’s theses in the field of Criminology also deserve a mention. However, nothing contributes more to development of criminology in Bosnia and Herzegovina as do the scientific-research projects some of which will be presented in the following chapter.

Further on, it is necessary to mention that the Faculty of Political Science of the Sarajevo University had in 1995 also included criminology in its curriculum; a one-semester course with two lecture hours and two practical training hours per week in the fourth year of study. We believe that the above introduction of criminology course was fully justified given the interdisciplinary nature of study at the above faculty. Given the conceptual base of the Bologna process, criminology will like other subjects be organized as a one-semester course with two lecture hours and one practical training hour per week.
Finally, beginning in the 2005/06 school year, criminology had also been introduced at the Education-Rehabilitation Faculty of the University of Tuzla as a core one-semester course in the third year of study, with two lecture hours and two practical training hours per week. Until 2005 this faculty functioned under the name “Faculty of Defectology”. The faculty had been renamed, but its curriculum was just slightly changed; broadened by a few more courses such as criminology, penology and basis of criminal law and procedure.

5 SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF CRIMINOLOGY

The first criminology institute in Bosnia and Herzegovina had been established as early as 1955 under the name “Criminology Institute of the Faculty of Law of the Sarajevo University.” Work of this institute included: empirical research, establishment of its own library with a substantial collection of periodicals, not only in the field of criminology, but also from other fields of criminal justice related sciences such as criminal law (material and process), criminalistics, penology, among others. Empirical research included important projects such as “Homicides in Bosnia and Herzegovina (for the 1962–65 period),” published in 1971 by the Faculty of Law of the Sarajevo University; “Racial discrimination and models of fight on its eradication” published in 1972 by the Faculty of Law of the Sarajevo University and “Juvenile crime in industrial areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina (for 1968 – 72 period)” Published in 1984 by the Faculty of Law of the Sarajevo University.

Doctoral and Masters Theses form a significant share of criminology research. It is particularly true at the Faculty of Law and Criminal Sciences of the Sarajevo University. Future plans of the Faculty of Political Sciences University of Sarajevo and Educational-Rehabilitation Faculty of the Tuzla University include conducting more scientific research projects in the field of criminology. The Education-Rehabilitation Faculty in Tuzla introduced a post-graduate course in the 2006/07 school year covering selected chapters of criminology with focus on drug abuse, prostitution and alcoholism.

The analyses of post-1991 scientific research projects in the field of criminology in Bosnia and Herzegovina reveal a radical shift in the approach to the research subject. The shift is, of course, from the dialectic-material approach to a more modern approach of the new “west oriented criminology.” Social transformation obviously provided an impetus to criminologists here to independently change the discourse of their research projects. Another reason for this might be found in the fact that the criminology was not developing with sufficient dynamics prior to 1991 but was instead studied in larger venues within the former Yugoslavia. However, and as we intend to outline further in the text, an increasing number of young researchers of different educational backgrounds became interested in criminology following the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The growing trend of socio-pathological phenomena in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina, and particularly in the urban centers, generated a need for a more
systematic approach to the problem: analyses, prognosis and prevention of asocial and antisocial behaviors. We are to present only a segment of the total pool of scientific research projects conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina in this period.

Most scientific research projects in the field of criminology are doubtlessly conducted by the researchers of the Institute of Criminalistics, Criminology and Security Studies of the Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences in Sarajevo. A team of young lecturers and researchers: Elmedin Muratbegović, Muhamed Budimlić, Almir Maljević, Darko Datzer, Irma Deljkić, Eldan Mujanović and Marija Lučić-Ćatić from this Institute has conducted a number of studies in a relatively short period (between 5 and 10 years). Young criminologists here are slowly winning the acceptance of the “European Criminology” as confirmed by publication of their papers in relevant European magazines and their cooperation with the leading names of the contemporary European Criminology.

We will mention only the most significant projects by these young enthusiasts who are today standing on par with their European colleagues despite the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina has not provided a “single Euro” for support to criminology research regardless of the fact that the country is considered since 1991 a “large socio-pathological market.”

Considering that these researchers’ childhood and youth were set against the background of the “cataclysm of war in Sarajevo”, the above can serve as the best proof that “success incidents” in the form of independent development of quality individuals are possible even in a quite disorganized country.

Later in this text, we will present the most significant criminology projects conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina over the past five years.

“Comparing the Moral Values of Slovenian, American and Bosnian Criminal Justice Students, Police Officers and jail Officers” (Meško et al., 2001)

This was the first International Criminological Project in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project was implemented by researchers from the Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences of the Sarajevo University and the Faculty of Criminal Justice of the Maribor University.

Keeping in mind the global nature of this study and the cultural differences between Michigan, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, researchers judged it best to use pre-tested, standardized measurements. Statements within the administered surveys were from standardized scales designed to measure values, human rights and moral behavior. In this case, researchers used Harding and Phillips’ morally debatable behaviors scale. This instrument was very adaptable for this kind of research, because it assesses the justifiability of behaviors reflecting contemporary moral issues that adults confront in their lives and have an opinion about. (Harding, Phillips, 1986: 741)

The inventory of the project comprised twenty-two morally debatable behaviors. Each statement item was rated on a 10-point scale ranging from (1) – meaning the behavior is never justified, to (10) – meaning the behavior is always justified. The inventory measured three aspects of moral behavior: (I) personal – sexual morality (focusing on matters of life and death as well as sexual relations); (II) self
– interest morality; (III) legal – illegal morality (it was defined by behaviors that are formally prescribed by law).

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the research was conducted on a sample of 156 students of the Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences University of Sarajevo, 165 police officers from the interior ministries of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Sarajevo Canton and 76 prison officers from the FB&H prison in Zenica. The part of the survey in Bosnia and Herzegovina was conducted in 2001, and the main findings were presented in Publication: Visions of Slovenian Criminology by the Faculty of Criminal Justice in Ljubljana.

“Fear of Crime – Case Study: Canton Sarajevo” (Muratbegović, 2008)

Aware that research and theory-building about the fear of crime were among principal activities of international contemporary criminologists, Bosnian criminologists decided to also launch it in their home country. The research on variations in fear levels has been dominated by sociological and socio-demographic variables, and social-psychological models of fear of crime in residential environments. The project included a comparison of two research projects of fear of crime in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sarajevo). The research was conducted during 2002 and again in 2006. After the war in Bosnia & Herzegovina, only one crime and victimization survey has been undertaken to date (in 2001) by researchers from the University of Lausanne as part of the United Nations Mission of International Police Task Forces in Bosnia & Herzegovina.

The model for explaining fear of crime originally proposed and tested by Van der Wurff et al. (1989) using data collected in the Netherlands consists of two submodels: the socio-demographic model and the social-psychological model. The socio-demographic model consists of the variables age, gender, household income, friendship networks, length of residence, earlier victimization experiences, etc.

The social-psychological model is based on the assumption that the fear of crime is associated with four social-psychological components: attractively (how attractive participants think they are to others as victims and/or how attractive they think their possessions are to a perpetrator); evil intent (degree to which participants assign someone intent to do harm to others); power (how powerful participants think they are relative to a perpetrator); and criminalisable space (how safe or unsafe a given area is perceived to be).

Data on fear of crime in Sarajevo were collected during 2002 (First research) and in winter of 2006 (second research). The data for Sarajevo came from a survey of people living in Canton Sarajevo, the biggest and the most socially and economically developed region in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A stratified random sample included 1000 residents (200 from each of the five “urban municipalities”) selected by their home address and interviewed face to face by trained third-year undergraduate students of the Sarajevo’s Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences.

Sarajevo’s data came from a survey of people living in the above-mentioned municipalities (Old Town, Center, New Sarajevo, New Town, and Ilidža). Face-to-face interviews were conducted in December, 2006 and January and February, 2007 by students in their second year within the elective course: Crime Prognosis and Crime Control at the undergraduate program of the Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences.
Sciences of the Sarajevo University. A random sample of 911 people had been
selected from the list in official phonebook of Sarajevo and 862 of them agreed to
participate in the study (Meško et al., 2006).

Partial results of those projects were: Respondents from Sarajevo were more
fearful of crime in 2006 than in 2002. Citizens of Sarajevo were more fearful than
those from other European Capitals (Ljubljana, Glasgow, Zagreb, among others).
They also more easily imagine that someone will obstruct their path and feel less
able to chase a potential assailant. Respondents from Sarajevo were more fearful of
being in forests and walking alone.

In addition, fear of crime in Sarajevo is much more related to real crime figures
than in the cities of Germany, United Kingdom, USA, and the Netherlands. Fear of
crime in Sarajevo seems to be very significantly related to crimes against persons
and property. The socio-demographic model reveals that the fear of crime is lower
among participants of a higher socio-economic status and higher education level. It
is assumed that well situated participants have no difficulties in ensuring their own
safety, because they can choose a safe living environment and provide themselves
with better technical equipment or pay for private security services.

"Trafficking in Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (Obradović, 2004)

The US Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina financed this research project
with the aim to gain more insight into the phenomenon of trafficking in women in
the country. The project was conducted by the Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences
of the Sarajevo University (Institute of Criminalistics, Criminology and Security
Studies) under the supervision of Professor Vladimir Obradović. The project was
conducted from April, 2003 through the end of the year.

The findings of the project were based on empirical data obtained from 691
respondents who were the victims of trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina in
the 1999-2003 period. The sample included all registered victims of trafficking
in Bosnia and Herzegovina and was divided into two sub-samples. The first was
used for social analyses (N = 457 victims) and the second for social-psychological
analyses. Quantitative analyses was supplemented by a qualitative approach based
on analysis of verbal life-stories provided by the victims themselves, a number
of semi-structured interviews with five convicted traffickers, six taxi drivers
and “dancer girls” in night clubs. Naturally, this project also included analyses
of available police and judicial documentation conducted as part of “secondary
analyses”.

The research established that 93% of trafficking victims were natives of
Moldova, Romania and Ukraine. A consequent conclusion that Bosnia has become
a “destination country” for trafficking victims led to the assumption that there
existed well established routes for trafficking of women for different kinds of sexual
exploitation. Professor Obradović concluded that: the majority of victims (89.8%)
traveled down the route Moldavia – Romania – Serbia – Bosnia and Herzegovina,
and only (10%) down the route Moldavia – Romania – Hungary – Serbia – Bosnia
and Herzegovina.

More information about the results of this project can be found in a
publication by professor Vladimir Obradović: “Trafficking in Women in Bosnia

Borislav Petrović, Elmedin Muratbegović
“Domestic Violence Developing Study in Bosnia and Herzegovina” (Adžajlić et al., 2004)

This study was conducted by the Institute for Criminology and Security Studies of the Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences of the Sarajevo University in the period from January 2004, to January 2005. The purpose of this research was to upgrade cognitions on domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, identify approximate scope and factors that influence this form of violence, determine effectiveness of measures taken by the government institutions to protect victims of domestic violence and to analyze if the reform of the criminal justice system in Bosnia and Herzegovina has had any impact on reduction in this particular form of violence.

The methods used in this study were both quantitative and qualitative: survey, interviews, document analysis, content analysis, and a Case Study. The study was conducted in fifteen cities and towns, and in six villages. Target groups under this project were: citizens, prosecutors, judges, law enforcement officers, social workers and representatives of non-governmental organizations. The results show that domestic violence is widespread in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that possible factors that perpetuate domestic violence are: cultural definition of appropriate sex roles, expectations of roles within relationships, belief in the inherent superiority of males, limited access to education about equal rights of men and women for children and adults, unemployment, poverty, alcohol abuse, war and posttraumatic stress. Findings also indicate that the criminal offence “domestic violence” is not properly prosecuted because of the reduced efficiency of criminal procedure.

However, the study can be considered limited given that the official reports by state institutions were its main source of data (study also included information gathered from citizens about their perceptions and attitudes on domestic violence). Relying on official, institutional data excludes those victims of domestic violence who have not officially reported their cases. This means that the survey findings on approximate scope of domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina are based on official reports from police, prosecutor’s offices and courts. Future research in this area should address this limitation by including victim surveys, self-report studies, and by surveying victims of domestic violence on their experiences with this problem. The results of this study can be generalized only to a limited extent. Despite this limitation, the study contributed to the understanding of prevalence, structure and some characteristics of domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The research results were useful for education of individuals who participate in preventive and repressive actions against domestic violence. Some state institutions have already used the findings of this research in developing further measures and actions to fight against this complex social problem. Also, the research of this negative phenomenon was important for raising social awareness about the problem and to stimulate certain governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations to treat it more seriously. The sample comprised
1100 people from five largest cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sarajevo, Mostar, Tuzla, Banja Luka, Zenica) and villages in their vicinity. The authors presented the main findings of their study in the publication: “Domestic Violence Developing Study in Bosnia and Herzegovina”, published by the Faculty of Criminal Justice of the Sarajevo University & USA Embassy, Public Relations Department, B&H, Sarajevo, 2004.

„Role of the family in emergence and prevention of undesired behaviors of children and adolescents in the Sarajevo Canton – social support models (2005-2007)“

The project was organized in two interrelated stages: 1st stage - „Pre-delinquent behavior of primary and secondary school children in the Sarajevo Canton.” The research focused on the forms of socially undesired behavior occurring in schools and representing a risk of asocial behavior. Since families in Bosnia and Herzegovina are faced with numerous problems including difficult post-war syndrome, dysfunctional (quantitative and qualitative), economic hardships, addiction to various psychoactive substances and the change of the living environment (migration from rural to urban areas), the issue of social factors contributing to pre-delinquent (risk of asocial) behavior was extremely significant from both scientific and pragmatic point of view (Obradović, 2005).

The aim of the second stage of this project called “Delinquent behavior” was to use a representative sample of delinquents to gather information about important elements for understanding of delinquent behavior and for scientific verification of the size and quality of influence of family situation and care, and its impact on the frequency and gravity of criminal offences committed by juveniles in the Sarajevo Canton in the period from the beginning of 2000 to July 2005.

“Overtly about Police and Corruption” (Maljević et al., 2006)

The project “Overtly about Police and Corruption” was the first research project that involved police officers from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina and evaluated their opinions about police and corruption. The projects was conducted in several stages: (I) Bosnia and Herzegovina’s international obligations in relation to fighting corruption; (II) National legislation and fighting corruption; (III) Results of the analysis of the official statistics on corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and finally (IV) Survey on police and corruption.

The findings presented within the “Survey on police and corruption” were based on solid scientific methodology: univariate, bi-variate and multivariate analysis of the data gathered through the survey. The above analysis clearly showed which organizational units of police in Bosnia were perceived by police officers as the most corrupt; how Bosnian police officers perceive corruption in their own ranks; what was the extent of knowledge of Bosnian police officers about (anti)corruption and what anticorruption measures needed to be taken as a consequence; police motivation to perform police work; what “reformed” police officers in Bosnia thought about corruption and when was taking a bribe deemed acceptable.

Research showed that the majority of citizens were quite aware that the police officers were required to report all citizens’ attempts to corrupt them. Six out of
ten citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina support this practice. Asked about their own and the experience of their colleagues with accepting bribes, a very small percentage (2.1%) of all surveyed police officers (N = 736) stated that they had been in position to accept bribes. However, this can hardly be considered a surprise given how unlikely the respondents were to admit to have participated in the crime of corruption. Astonishing (51%) of surveyed police officers were aware of cases of corruption in the police or they have themselves accepted bribe – which information provided a better insight into the extent of corruption in police. Findings also showed that older police officers (50 + years of age) were more dissatisfied with their work and status in police forces in B&H.

The original version of the final project report was published in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian and English under title: “Overtly about police and Corruption”, published by: Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Society of Graduate Criminalists, Sarajevo 2006.

„International Self-Reported Delinquency - ISRD 2” (Budimlić, Maljević, Muratbegović, 2007)

The aim of these studies was to gather more accurate data on delinquency, especially on forms of crime which typically go unreported. There are two important steps in conducting self-report studies: first to decide about target population, and second to design a proper sample.

As for the first step, the target population of the ISRD2 project were juveniles attending final classes of mandatory education. The second round of the (ISRD2) is the very first self-report delinquency study ever conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It has been conducted by the research team of the Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences, University of Sarajevo and funded by the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with professor Martin Killias, University of Lausanne. It was the second international criminological research in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina and the very first attempt to collect data on juvenile delinquency from around the country and without any political interference. The research aimed to evaluate the nature and dynamics of juvenile delinquency in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to try and provide an estimate of its dark figure.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina those were 7th and 8th grade primary school pupils. With research goals in mind, the researchers opted for a country-wide sample. Estimating that an average primary school class in Bosnia and Herzegovina numbered 30 pupils, the researchers decided to sample a total of 37 schools. This methodology was expected to produce a sample of 2,220 pupils. Using the table of random numbers, researchers selected for the sample 20 schools in the Federation B&H, 15 in the RS and 2 in the Brčko District. Final sample comprised 1,756 seventh and eight grade pupils. Fieldwork was carried out by the research team of the Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences, University of Sarajevo. It begun on November 22 and ended on May 17 2006.

Choosing what are presumably the most common forms of juvenile delinquency, researchers asked the respondents if they committed some delinquent acts such as: participating in group fight, carrying a weapon, beat someone (assault), pick pocketing/snatching, robbery/extortion, vandalism, shoplifting, theft of bicycle/
motor bike, car break, burglary, car theft, computer hacking, drug dealing, use of drugs.

When asked about actual illegal activities, 20.4% of delinquent groups’ members reported having been involved in them. A total of 17% of delinquent groups’ members considered their group to be a gang (correlation coefficient between perceiving group as a gang and reporting its involvement in illegal activities was low $r = 0.368$, $N = 165$).

On the other hand, only 1.7% of non-delinquent groups’ members reported their group’s involvement in illegal activities and 1.5% perceived their groups as gangs despite the fact that they did not fulfill even the most basic criteria for being defined as such.

Delinquent groups (informants about delinquent groups included 58.7% males and 41.3% females) are slightly more likely to be boys-only whereas non-delinquent youth groups (informants about non-delinquent groups included 48.4% males and 51.6% females) are more likely to be girls-only. Obviously, members of delinquent groups reported very high prevalence of alcohol use and involvement in violent delinquent behaviors such as vandalism and group fights as well as carrying weapons. Also, they were very frequently involved in shop-lifting. The use of beer/wine and spirits was reported by one third and one tenth of non-delinquent groups’ members respectively and only one in eight of them had ever been involved in a group fight. The second most common delinquent behavior in both groups was illegal downloading moves and video games. The project report is to be written and published in 2008 as “Self-Reported Delinquencies – ISRD 2” (in English).


The aim of this research was to compare the nature and scope of opinions, orientations and views about youth gangs in the following countries: Germany, Netherlands, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Great Britain. This project was conducted by Eldan Mujanović, Muhamed Budimlić, Almir Maljević and Elmedin Muratbegović all researchers and lecturers at the Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences - University of Sarajevo with the assistance of students trained specifically for this research project.

It attempted to provide answers to the following questions: How similar, that is, different are relevant opinions of young people of the same age in researched countries? How useful are the definitions of youth gang membership developed in USA when applied in Europe? What is the correlation between ethnicity, gender and other factors and attraction to youth gangs? What is useful for comparing the views and behaviors of young people in researched countries? How applicable in Europe are theories developed in the USA for the purpose of researching youth gangs? The last question was considered particularly significant since most preventive and intervention programs are based on these theories. In fact, responses to all the above questions should be essential for adoption of a relevant policy in all countries covered by this research. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the research is to be conducted by senior assistant professors at the Faculty of Criminal
Justice Sciences who were properly trained in using the standard methodology adapted for all countries involved.

"European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice (2007/2008)"

This project was the beginning of a new era in crime registration in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Crimes to be subjected to statistical analyses were defined based on European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics, a project involving 29 European countries; FBI Uniform Crime Report, Part I crimes, a statistical instrument for monitoring of crime developed in the USA and EU Statistical Apparatus for Measuring Organized Crime. Information about crime and law-enforcement services would include data gathered by police structures, prosecution offices, courts and penitentiaries (Muratbegović, 2008).

6 INSTEAD OF CONCLUSION – CRIMINOLOGY „TOMORROW“

The above summary indicates a rapid development of criminology in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Considering how marginalized criminology is by government structures one has to conclude that this development is due to personal efforts and enthusiasm of some individual people.

How do we see the future of B&H criminology? Our first hope is that the research efforts will extend to include other aspects of interest of contemporary criminology relevant for the needs of B&H society. This is primarily in reference to research of etiology and phenomenology of occurrences such as organized crime, ecological crime and all other deviant behaviors covered by the third pillar of the European Union (Justice and Home Affairs). This is of particular importance because it involves problems which slowdown Bosnia and Herzegovina’s progress on the path to the European integrations. Criminology studies dedicated to the problems of migration, xenophobia, crimes against children, visa requirements and asylum and other problems B&H faces on its way to joining the European Union would be useful for B&H society in general including for its criminology.

The merger of separate criminology departments of individual faculties will become inevitable after the implementation of the Bologna Process. It is reasonable to expect further improvement in the quality of criminology education once single departments are created at the university level.

Finally, we must stress that Bosnia and Herzegovina is unfortunately still an interesting market for criminologists. Because of that, it will be necessary to involve the country in many of the international criminology research project. It is only in that way that we will be able to join the developed world which bases its crime policy on scientific methods and proven facts. Past practice was obviously not productive.

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