

European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics 2021

6th Edition

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Key Findings

**Key Findings of the
European Sourcebook
of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics
2021
Sixth edition**

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Foreword

The European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics is a data collection initiative that started in 1993 under the umbrella of the Council of Europe and has been continued since 2000 by an international group of experts (the European Sourcebook Group) associated with the European Sourcebook of Criminal Justice e.V. and who are also members of the European Sourcebook working group of the European Society of Criminology.

The goal of the European Sourcebook data collection is to present comparable information on crime and criminal justice statistics in Europe. The data collected are presented in books published at regular intervals (1999, 2003, 2006, 2010, 2014 and 2021) as well as on the website <https://wp.unil.ch/european-sourcebook>. The sixth edition of the European Sourcebook is composed of six chapters with data from 42 European countries. The first five cover the main types of national crime and criminal justice statistics –police, prosecution, conviction, prison, and probation statistics— for the years 2011 to 2016, providing detailed analysis for 2015. The sixth chapter covers national victimization surveys, providing rates for their main indicators at intervals of five years from 1990 to 2015.

Data are collected by means of a questionnaire sent to a network of experts across the continent. The experts act as national correspondents for their respective countries. They have access to the main national statistical sources, collect data and metadata (i.e., information on the legal definitions of offences and the statistical counting rules applied when compiling the data), and adapt as much as possible the available figures to a standard definition of each offence developed by the

members of the European Sourcebook Group. The latter are often national correspondents of their own countries and also act as regional coordinators for groups of several countries. The information collected is introduced in a database located at the University of Lausanne and goes through a process of validation that allows detecting inconsistencies, both from a cross-sectional and a longitudinal perspective, and improving the overall quality of the collection. This process usually implies contacting again the national correspondents to update the figures received or provide explanations for the remaining inconsistencies, which are often due to irreconcilable differences between criminal justice systems. Finally, the data are presented in the form of tables with rates per 100 000 inhabitants, percentages, means and medians in each edition of the European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics, whose chapters are written by the members of the European Sourcebook Group. A separate publication with the original data and comments received from the participating countries is also available on the website mentioned above. This Executive Summary provides some excerpts of the information available in the 6th edition of the European Sourcebook, which was made possible through a collaboration with the Council of Europe in the framework of the LINC project (Linking International Criminal Statistics) –implemented by the Council of Europe and funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe— as well as through the support of the University of Lausanne, the University of Greifswald, the Georg-August University of Göttingen, and the University of Portsmouth.

DISCLAIMER: This Executive Summary provides a short overview of data available in the sixth edition of the European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics 2021. For further information and for an in-depth knowledge of technicalities, download the full edition scanning this QR Code.



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How to use the statistical information contained in the Sourcebook

The basic aim of the European Sourcebook data collection is to present comparable information on crime and criminal justice statistics in Europe.

However, the issue of whether or not it is feasible to use official criminal justice statistics for decision-making in crime policy or for conducting scientific studies is one of the classic debates of criminology.

The problems involved are even more serious when it comes to international comparisons, because nations differ widely in the way they organise their police and court systems, the way they define their legal concepts, and the way they collect and present their statistics.

The lack of uniform definitions of offences and sanctions, of common measuring instruments and of common methodology makes comparisons between countries extremely hazardous. This is the reason why criminologists over the last decades have developed alternatives to complement the existing official statistics: international comparative victimisation studies, on the one hand, and international comparative self-report studies on the other.

To facilitate the use of the data contained in this European Sourcebook, comprehensive additional information concerning the definition of offences and sanctions, the data collection and processing rules were collected.

Chapter 1

Police Statistics

Police statistics are collected in every country but for several reasons they do not offer a comprehensive measure of crime. Victims may choose not to report the crime to the police (e.g., depending on how serious they view the offence, their previous experiences or trust in the police) or they may not be aware that they have been a victim of crime. In addition, reporting may be self-incriminating (e.g., when a victim is also an offender) or humiliating or the victim may think that nothing will be gained by reporting (e.g., the victim thinks that the police will not be able to solve the crime).

Not all crimes are reported to the police by a victim or a witness. The police themselves may record violent crimes, for example homicide and 'victimless' offences (such as illegal possession of arms, drink-driving and drug offences). Even when a crime is reported to the police, it may not be recorded in the official statistics. This may occur if the police believe that the event reported did not actually constitute a crime. Petty offences are not always recorded in police statistics. Also, countries differ in the way they consider certain offences as petty (e.g., theft of low-value items).

Total offences

There are large differences between countries in the number of total criminal offences. More than half of the countries providing data show a decrease in the number of total offences between 2011 and 2016 and 22% show an increase in the same period. The largest reductions are reported in countries in the Eastern part of Europe e.g. Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Estonia and Slovenia. The same pattern emerges when looking at changes in the number of suspected offenders since 59% of countries that could provide data are reporting a decrease between 2011 and 2016 per 100 000 population.

Intentional homicide (attempts and completed)

The majority of the countries reported a decrease in the number of cases per 100 000 population, both in the regard of completed cases and including attempts. About 18% of the countries show an increase in number of intentional homicides both completed and including attempts compared to 2011. The largest increase is in Ukraine but in the same period there is a decrease in the number of suspected offenders there. This increase in number of intentional homicide is due to a new Criminal Procedural Code of Ukraine that came into force in 2012. The large decrease shown for Norway is due to the terrorist attacks of Anders Breivik in 2011 which are included in the figures for intentional homicide that year.

Bodily injury

The majority of countries report a decrease in the number of bodily injury cases and aggravated bodily injury cases registered by the police in 2016 compared to 2011. There are large differences in the number of cases per 100 000 population reported but many of the countries reporting the highest number of cases report that they cannot exclude assaults only causing pain from the number of bodily injury cases. This applies for example to Belgium, Finland, Romania and Sweden (who report the highest number of cases per 100 000 population for bodily injury).

Fig. 1 - Trends in police data (% change of the rates between 2011 and 2016 per 100 000 population). Total offences, Intentional homicide, bodily injury.



Sexual Assault

Most countries which provided information regarding sexual assault show an increase in the number of reported cases to the police between 2011 and 2016. The variation in the number of cases per 100 000 population is large, ranging from less than five cases in many countries in the Eastern part of Europe such as Ukraine, Montenegro, Armenia, Albania and Serbia to over 100 cases per 100 000 population in UK: England & Wales, UK: Scotland, Sweden, UK: Northern Ireland and in Iceland.

Robbery

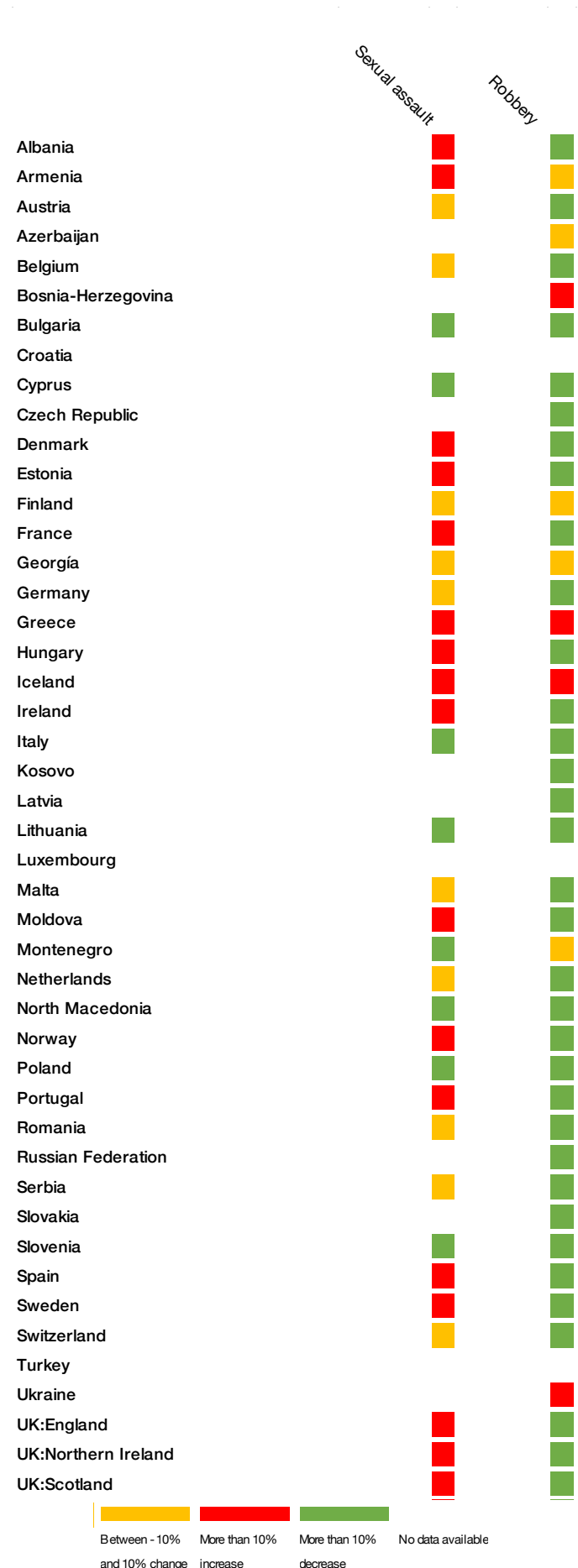
Almost 80% of countries reported a decrease between 2011 and 2016. As with most other types of offences the variation of the number of offences per 100 000 population is large, from under 10 cases per 100 000 in Albania, Azerbaijan, Malta and Russia (reporting a large decrease between 2012 and 2013) to more than 100 per 100 000 population in Portugal, Spain, France and Belgium. The mean rate is 41 robberies per 100 000 population.

Police staff

The ratio of police officers (excluding civilians) per 100 000 population is here referred to as police density. Most countries report between 300 and 399 police officers per 100 000 population but the rate was from 58 police officers in Romania per 100 000 population to 573 officers in Cyprus. In total the mean police density was 337 police officers per 100 000 population. Eleven countries reported police density below 300 and eight above 399.

In 2016, 20 countries were able to provide information on the number of civilian employees in the police force. The share of civilians was the highest in Sweden and England & Wales but lowest in Malta and Portugal. From the countries providing data, it is most common that the percentage of civilians is between 20 and 39%.

Fig. 2 - Trends in police data (% change of the rates between 2011 and 2016 per 100 000 pop.). Sexual assault & Robbery.



Theft

The standard definition of theft is “depriving a person or organisation of property with the intent to keep it”. Included are minor thefts, thefts committed by means of burglary, theft of motor vehicles and thefts by employees. Attempts are also included here. In total, close to 70% of countries showed a decrease in number of cases between 2011 and 2016. Five countries report an increase in the number of thefts during the period, Armenia showing the greatest increase (45%), followed by Azerbaijan (35%) and Belgium (27%), Ukraine (20%) and Greece (17%).

Burglary and domestic burglary

Approximately 70% of the countries provided data for cases of theft by means of burglary with 77% of them reporting a decrease and only three countries reporting an increase between the years 2011 and 2016. There are large variations in the number of cases ranging from less than 100 cases per 100 000 population in Albania, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia and Moldova to more than 600 cases per 100 000 in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands, Sweden and the UK: England & Wales. Variations in definitions can explain these differences but only partly. The majority of countries also report a decline in the number of thefts by means of domestic burglary between 2011 and 2016, or more than 59% of countries that were able to provide data. Nine countries reported an increase and five a stable situation during this period.

Fraud

Little more than half of countries reported an increase in the number of frauds between 2011 and 2016 per 100 000 population, but only 24% reported a decrease. The increase might indicate a growth in cyber fraud. There are huge variations in the number of reported cases, with the lowest numbers in the Eastern part of Europe and the highest numbers in the Northern part (Sweden, Denmark, Germany and Belgium reporting the highest numbers).

Fig. 3 - Trends in police data (% change of the rates between 2011 and 2016 per 100 000 pop.). Theft, Burglary, Domestic burglary, Fraud.



Chapter 2

Prosecution Statistics

Once an offence has been reported to the police or another law enforcement authority and a suspect identified, the decision has to be taken on whether or not to prosecute, i.e. to bring the case before a court. In a narrow sense, the term prosecution refers only to carrying out a case in a criminal court.

Here, the term is used in the broader sense of processing/disposing of cases (decision-making) by the prosecuting authorities, thus including the decision to drop proceedings or to impose a sanction or measure, where this possibility is available to the prosecuting authorities. The term prosecuting authority refers to the legal body which has as its main task to institute criminal proceedings, i.e. to decide, depending on national legislation and practice, whether or not to prosecute. The actual functions and denominators vary widely between countries. In most European countries, the prosecution of suspected offenders is dealt with by a special prosecuting authority: either a public prosecutor and/or an investigating judge.

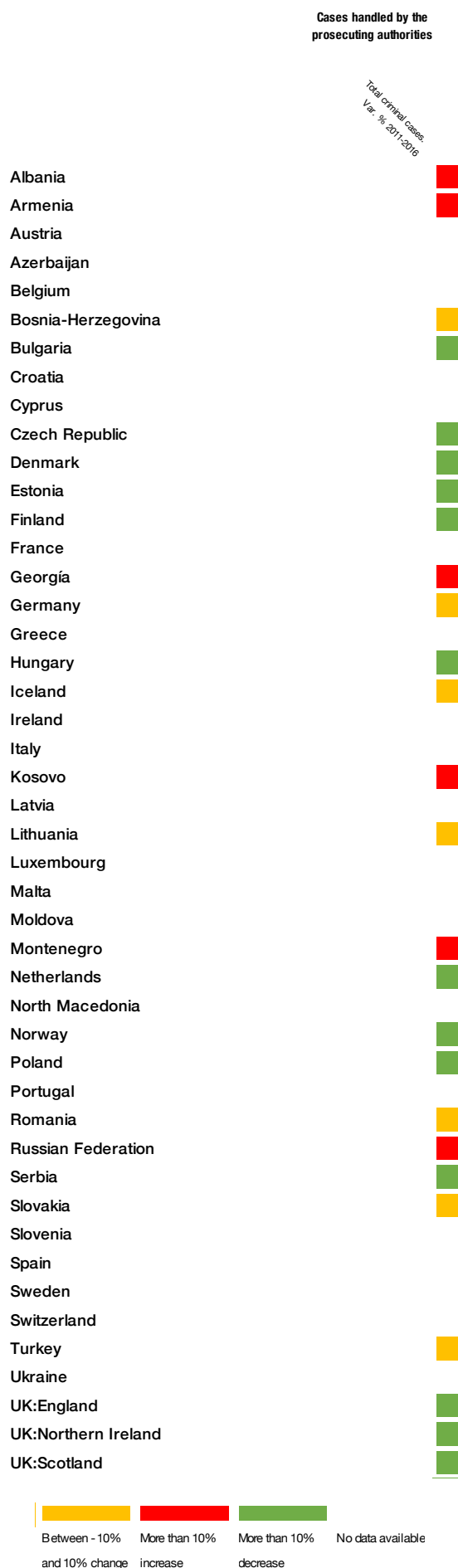
Cases disposed by prosecuting authority

Wide variations can be seen in the total rates of cases disposed of by the prosecution authorities from 477 disposals per 100 000 population in Georgia to 6 466 in France for 2015. Similar differences can be found on the police level. According to the different workload of the national prosecution authorities different modes of handling the cases can be seen. Concerning the development of figures between 2011 and 2016 the picture is diverse. Only in a few countries the rates of all cases disposed of by prosecution authorities appear to be stable between 2011 and 2016, i.e. to show an increase or decrease in case numbers of less than 10 %. Other countries present a strong increase (between 10 and 50 %), on the one hand: Balkan and South-Eastern countries like Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Georgia, but Denmark as well; Albania and Armenia show an even higher increase (more than 50 %). On the other hand, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic and the UK demonstrate a strong decrease of between -10 and -50 % (see table 2.2.1.1). These trends on the prosecution level are only partly compatible with those on police level.

A word of caution/1

The structure of prosecuting authorities varies from country to country. We developed some categories for disposals in order to make figures comparable: number of cases brought before a court, number of cases ended by a sanction imposed by the prosecutor that lead to a formal verdict and count as a conviction, number of conditional disposals, number of proceedings dropped in combination with a cautioning of the suspect, number of proceedings dropped unconditionally due to lack of public interest or for efficiency reasons, number of proceedings dropped for legal or factual reasons, number of proceedings dropped because offender remained unknown, number of other disposals. Some of these categories may not apply to every country considered.

Fig. 4 - Cases handled by the prosecuting authorities. Var. % 2011-2016 of total criminal cases.



The relationship between caseload and percentages of cases brought before a court

Where a prosecution authority has to deal with a relatively low number of cases the percentage of cases brought before a court tends to be high, e.g. in Hungary, and where the total of cases is high the percentage tends to be low, e.g. in Germany. There are only two countries which clearly deviate from this trend; in Turkey the percentage of cases brought before a court remains relatively high although the number of cases disposed of is also high, and in Armenia both the caseload and the percentage of cases brought before a court are low.

Tab. 1 - Percentage of cases brought before a court by rate of all cases disposed of.

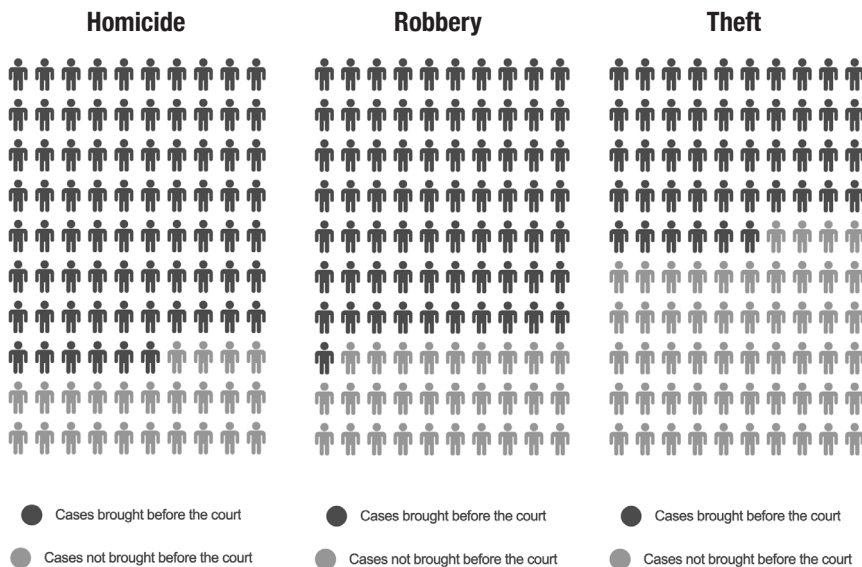
	Cases brought before a court per 100,000 population in 2015				
	low ¹	middle ²	high ³		
Cases disposed of per 100,000 population in 2015	low: up to 1500	Armenia*	Albania* Serbia*	Czech Republic Denmark Georgia* Hungary* Latvia* Lithuania Lu*embourg Montenegro* Netherlands	
		middle: more than 1500 up to 5000	Austria* Estonia* Portugal* Romania*	Bulgaria* Finland Poland* Slovenia* UK: Scotland	UK: England & Wales Iceland* Lithuania*
			high: more than 5000	Belgium* France* Germany	Sweden

¹ up to 25% of total cases disposed of
² more than 25% up to 50% of total cases disposed of
³ more than 50% of total cases disposed of

The percentage of cases brought before a court broken down by some offences

One indicator of attrition between the police and court level can be seen in the percentage of cases brought before a court by the public prosecutor. One might assume that this percentage not only depends on the workload of the public prosecution but differs in terms of the offences concerned. The public prosecutor has broader possibilities to drop cases of minor offences because of a lack of public interest or to discontinue criminal proceedings after the defendant has voluntarily fulfilled a condition, such as community service. On the other hand, these possibilities shrink for serious offences. Fig. 5 shows the percentage of cases brought before a court broken down by some offences: Most serious ones, i.e. intentional homicide, seriousness of middle range, robbery, and lower-level range, theft. As only a minority of countries could provide data on that the results cannot be generalized, but show some evidence for the assumption made: The percentage of homicide cases brought before a court is much higher than that of theft cases. On the other hand, the minimum and maximum value show a huge range.

Fig. 5 - Percentage of cases brought before a court by homicide, robbery and theft in 2015 (average of 17 countries (robbery), 18 countries (homicide), 19 countries (theft)).



Staff of the prosecuting authorities

Twenty countries could provide data on the number of prosecutors/employees of the prosecuting authorities. The rates of public prosecutors per 100 000 population in these countries for the year 2015 show a wide variation from 25 in Bulgaria to 3 in France. More than 50 % of the prosecutors are women. Between 2011 and 2016 the numbers of prosecutors mostly remain stable. Only in Bulgaria and Slovenia is there an increase of more than 10%.

The structure of prosecuting authority

The structure of prosecuting authority varies from country to country. However, three basic structures are possible.

(1) There are countries in which the prosecuting authority has neither the power to drop a case nor to impose conditions / sanctions upon an offender; in accordance with a strict principle of legality, the prosecuting authority merely has the function of preparing a case for court.

(2) In most of the countries, the prosecuting authority has the power to decide whether or not to prosecute (i.e. to drop a case completely). In some countries the prosecuting authority has not only the power to decide whether to prosecute or not, but also the possibility of dropping the case under conditions, i.e. to bind or sanction the suspected offender (only possible if he agrees to the measure -otherwise the case will go to court), usually to pay an amount of money.

(3) There are a few countries where the prosecutor can impose penal sanctions, that lead to a formal verdict and count as convictions.

Fig. 6 - Staff of the prosecuting authority per total of employee and prosecutors. (% change of the rates between 2011 and 2016 per 100 000 pop.).



Chapter 3

Conviction Statistics

The definition of 'persons convicted' included sanctions/measures imposed by a prosecutor based on an admission of guilt by the defendant. However, this definition did not include cases where (a) a prosecutor imposed sanctions/measures not based on the admission of guilt by the defendant, (b) the sanctions were imposed by the police and (c) other state authorities imposed the sanction/measure.

Interpretation of such information is more difficult than for police statistics because conviction statistics closely reflect the different criminal justice systems in each country. Data cover convictions for the period 2011-2016 and sanctions/measures for the year 2015. The commentary draws on the definitional material collected in this survey although a full analysis would require additional research in each country.

Convictions

Total crimes. The number of convictions shows a decrease over the period 2011–2016, with an increase in a few countries only (Albania with 60%, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Spain with 23% and 8 other countries with lower percentages). The largest decreases were found in Cyprus (-48%), Ukraine (-47%) and Croatia (-42%). Cyprus, Finland and Norway show the highest number of convictions (6 387, 3 321 and 5 026 per 100 000 inhabitants in 2015). England & Wales also had a high number of convictions (2 158), while Armenia (94 in 2015) and Azerbaijan (138 in 2015) had the lowest levels. Many of the differences reflect both the way that major traffic offences and minors are dealt with within the formal criminal justice system and whether they are recorded in the court statistics. Because of the high number of traffic convictions in Norway and Finland, when these are excluded the rates would be comparable with many other countries.

Homicide. Since the numbers of homicides in most countries are relatively small, conviction rates may fluctuate substantially. Turkey showed the highest levels of total homicide convictions (this included attempted homicide) at 20 per 100 000 population (in 2015), but provided no data for homicides when attempted homicides were excluded. With 4.5 convictions per 100 000 population, Georgia had the highest level for completed homicide. Many countries had conviction rates of about 1 per 100 000 population for completed homicide.

Aggravated assaults. As with total crime, the majority of countries show a decrease in the number of convictions over the period 2011–2016. In 2015 the highest conviction rates for aggravated bodily injury were in Hungary (45 per 100 000), Montenegro (25) and Germany (23), while very low rates were recorded in Turkey, Albania, Armenia, and Poland (under 3).

Sexual assaults. Conviction rates for sexual assault (which include rapes) vary from about 1 (or even less) per 100 000 in Ukraine (0.4), Albania (1.1) and Bulgaria (1.8) to more than 15 in Norway (15.5), Scotland (21.4) and Turkey (25.9). The trend over the period 2011–2016 is slightly increasing. Typically about one third of the sexual assaults refer to sexual abuse of a child (minor).

Robbery. Almost all countries showed a considerable decrease in the number of convictions in the period 2011–2016. The highest numbers of robbery convictions per 100 000 population were in Lithuania (29), Turkey and Moldova (28) with the lowest rates in France (0.8), Armenia (3.3) and Azerbaijan (3.4).

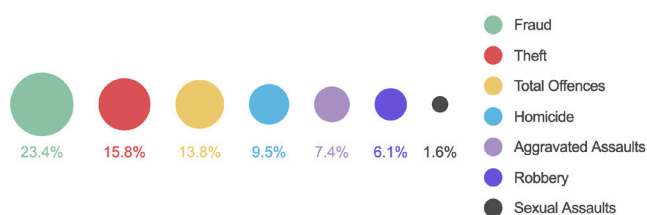
Theft. In general, the number of theft convictions has decreased a little over in the period 2011–2016. The highest rates for theft convictions were found in Finland (545 per 100 000 population), a much higher rate than in the next group with Denmark (297), Turkey (226) and Scotland (233). Very low levels of theft convictions were found in Armenia (17) and Azerbaijan (20).

Fraud. There was no clear trend over the period 2011–2016. The highest rates for fraud convictions were found in Germany (110), Finland (84) and Turkey (83), with very low levels in Ukraine (6), the Netherlands (5) and Armenia (3).

Convictions of women

Traditionally, women commit less crimes than men and so they are underrepresented in the conviction population. For total crimes, the percentage of women ranges between 5.4% (Turkey) and 29.5% (England & Wales). On average about 10% of the convicted offenders for homicide were women. In the majority of countries, less than 10% of aggravated assaults were committed by women with Finland (15.2%) and Portugal (14.7%) among the exceptions. The average number of women convicted for robbery was somewhat under 6%. A much higher proportion (15%) of theft offenders were women than for most other offences, in particular in Finland (30%), Scotland (29%), Spain (38%) and Sweden (33%).

Fig. 7 - Percentage of women, among convicted persons in 2015 for a selection of crimes (average).



Conviction of foreigners

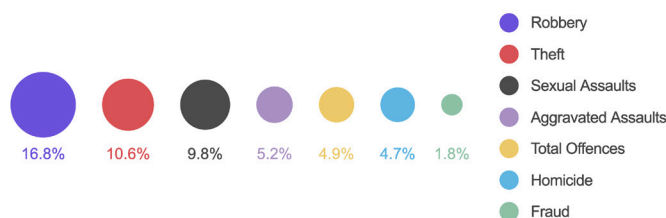
Different migration patterns are reflected in the proportion of foreigners among those convicted, with Luxembourg, Switzerland and Austria having the highest proportions. Thirteen countries could identify those foreigners with EU citizenship. In some countries, it is the ethnic origin of the suspect rather than nationality that is recorded for court decisions. In view of such variations, there is no discussion in this chapter of conviction rates for foreigners.

Conviction of minors

There are wide variations in the percentage of minors measured under total crimes. These variations reflect how the criminal justice system in each country deals with minors. In many countries criminal offences of minor seriousness are handled by welfare authorities or family courts outside the criminal justice system. In some countries all offences of minors have to be handled within the criminal justice system but the public prosecution can end minor cases themselves. Thus, only a minority of offences of minors are brought before a court. On the one hand, the percentage of minors is about 5% or a little lower in most countries. On the other, England & Wales (42%), France (22%) and Turkey (21%) show very high proportions of minors.

The mean percentage of minors among homicide convictions for all countries was a little under 5%. High proportions were found in the Netherlands (9.4%) and Austria (10.0%). For aggravated assaults, the average proportion of minor offenders was 5.2% with Germany (15.7%) well above this average. For sexual assaults, with an average of about 10%, the highest proportion of minors convicted were in Czech Republic (24.5%) and Switzerland (19.2%). With 16% the number of minors convicted for robbery was high compared to most other crimes. Austria (34%), Switzerland, England & Wales and Hungary (all 28%) were the highest.

Fig. 8 - Percentage of minors, among convicted persons in 2015 for a selection of crimes (average).



Sanctions and measures

Total crimes. For all countries, fines were the most frequently used sanction (38% of all sanctions), followed by suspended custodial sanctions and measures (25%). The highest proportions of unsuspended custodial sanctions can be found in Armenia (36%) and Latvia (34%). For minors, non-custodial sanctions were most frequently used (48%).

Homicide. For all countries, custody was the main sanction for completed and attempted homicides. Only in four countries, Belgium, Portugal, Switzerland and Turkey the rates for unsuspended custody in homicides were somewhat lower, where this reflects the use of alternative sanctions. Minors were mainly sentenced to custody as well.

Aggravated assaults. Custody and suspended custodial sanctions and measures were the main sanctions for aggravated assault, each with about 40% of the total convictions. Portugal (with 36% fines) and Switzerland (66% fines) were the exceptions. For minors, non-custodial sanctions were the main measure used (about 40% of the total).

Sexual assaults. About half of the sanctions and measures for sexual assault were unsuspended custodial sanctions and measures with little variations between countries. For minors suspended custodial sanctions and measures were used most often.

Robbery. About 60% of all offenders received unsuspended custodial sanctions. However this fell to about one third or lower in Germany, Portugal and Switzerland. For minors, unsuspended custodial sentences were the main sanctions used (37%)

Thefts. Unsuspended custody was the most frequently applied sanction for offenders (31%) followed by suspended sentences (28%) and fines (27%). Only Armenia, Finland, Germany, Norway and Switzerland showed a high use of fines, while non-custodial sanctions were applied most frequently in Croatia, Poland and Serbia. For minors, non-custodial sanctions were mainly used, although Bulgaria (40%) and Turkey (41%) had a high use of custody.

Fraud. Suspended sentences were the most frequently used sanctions for fraud offences, with unsuspended custodial sanctions the next most frequent. Armenia and Georgia have a high use of custody. The largest part (47%) of minors were given non-custodial sanctions.

Attrition and Punitivity

Several concepts may be used to compare criminal justice systems. Among the most important, we have the concepts of attrition and punitivity. Attrition is defined as the “loss” of cases or, more technically, the filtering out of cases during the criminal justice process. Punitivity is seen in two ways: in a broad sense it relates to prison sentences to recorded crimes, and, in a narrow sense, it is defined as the ratio between persons committed to prison and persons convicted multiplied by the average time served. We show below how the data collected in this edition enabled good estimates to be made of both the conviction ratio and the punitivity ratio for various countries for the year 2016. Not all countries were able to provide data needed for the calculation of such ratios. A small number of countries with conviction ratios over 1.0 were also excluded as this almost certainly meant a statistical misalignment between the definitions for suspects and convictions. For the punitivity ratio, the ratio may be greater than 1.

Tab. 2 - Attrition: Examples of conviction ratios for main offence groups: Europe, 2016.

	Conviction Ratio			Number of countries
	Low	Medium	High	
Intentional homicide	0.16 (Sweden)	0.45 (Ukraine)	1.00 (Hungary)	21
Total assault	0.11 (Portugal)	0.28 (France)	0.87 (Poland)	20
Rape	0.08 (Germany)	0.37 (Italy)	0.91 (Bulgaria)	19
Robbery	0.03 (France)	0.41 (Netherlands)	0.98 (Azerbaijan)	21
Total theft	0.10 (Austria)	0.46 (Moldova)	0.93 (Lithuania)	23

Tab. 3 - Punitivity: Examples of punitivity ratios for Total Crime: Europe, 2016.

	Punitivity Ratio			Number of countries
	Low	Medium	High	
Total crime	0.02 (Finland)	0.23 (Portugal)	1.12 (Ukraine)	35
	0.04 (Denmark)	0.25 (Poland)	1.51 (Armenia)	
	0.05 (Belgium)	0.25 (Hungary)	1.67 (Azerbaijan)	

Chapter 4

Prison Statistics

Data on prison populations can be described from two perspectives, which generate different but equally important results. The first perspective refers to 'how many persons are held in penal institutions on a given day' (stock). The second perspective refers to 'how many persons have been admitted into penal institutions during the course of the year' (flow of entries) and to 'how many people have left penal institutions during the course of the year' (flow of exits).

This chapter provides indicators of the use of imprisonment across Europe. These include the annual number of entries into penal institutions (prisons or any other detention facility) and the annual number of releases from them during the years 2011 to 2016 (known respectively as the flow of entries and the flow of releases), as well as the number of persons actually held in these institutions on 1st September of each of these years (stock of inmates) and the staff working in them on 1st September 2016. Inmates include pre-trial detainees and sentenced prisoners, and the latter are also presented according to the offence for which they were convicted. Most of the prison data included in this edition come from the Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics (SPACE).

Prison Population

The period 2011 to 2016 is characterized by a decrease of prison population rates in the vast majority of European countries. This decrease takes place during the financial crisis that started in 2008.

Prison population rate (stock). In 28 out of the 46 prison administrations that provided the data, the 2016 prison population rate was more than 5% lower than in 2011. In nine prison administrations, the rates were comparable (the 2016 was up to 5% lower or higher than that of 2011), and only in nine prison administrations, the 2016 rate was more than 5% higher than that of 2011.

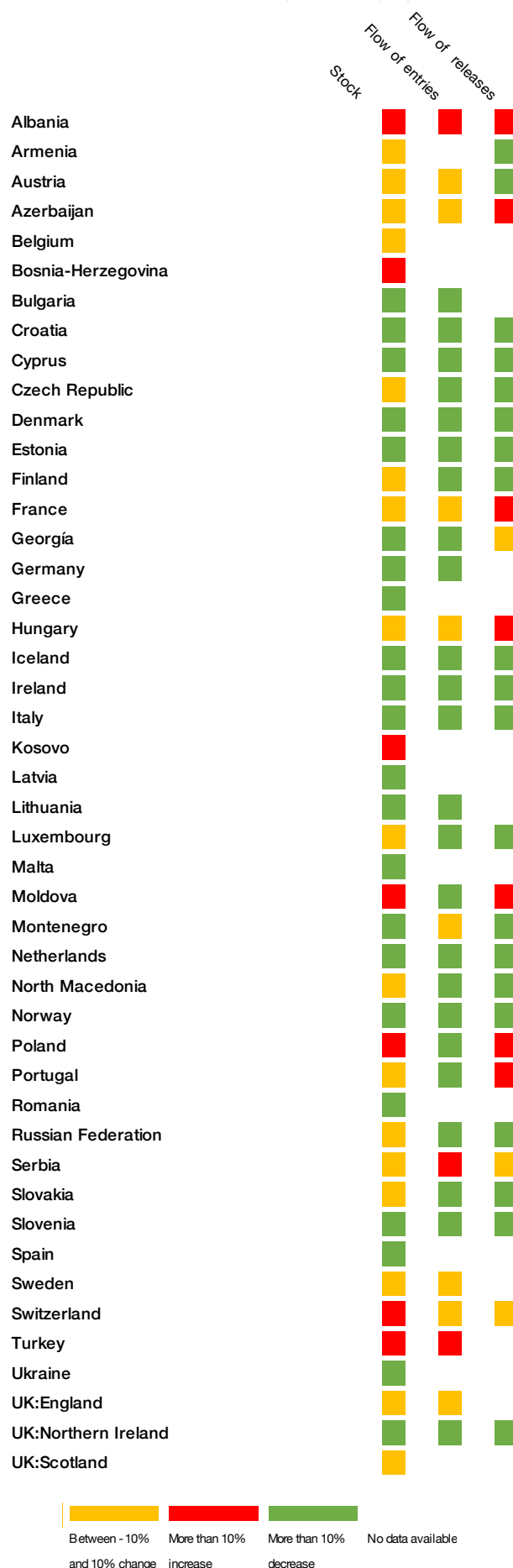
Flow of entries. Similarly, in 28 out of the 35 prison administrations that provided the data, the 2016 rate of entries was more than 5% lower than in 2011. In three prison administrations, the rates were comparable (the 2016 flow of entries was up to 5% lower or higher than that of 2011), and only in four prison administrations, the 2016 flow of entries was more than 5% higher than that of 2011.

Flow of releases. The decrease also concerned the rate of releases. In 20 out of the 30 prison administrations that provided the data, the 2016 flow of releases was more than 5% lower than in 2011. In three prison administrations the rates were comparable (the 2016 flow of releases was up to 5% lower or higher than that of 2011), and in seven prison administrations, the 2016 flow of entries was more than 5% higher than that of 2011.

A word of caution/2

In times of decreasing prison population rates, the interpretation of changes in the percentages of specific categories of inmates is particularly hazardous. For example, if the number of foreign inmates decreases at a slower pace than that of national inmates, the percentage of the former will increase even if their absolute number is decreasing. For that reason, the slight variations in the percentages of women (4.9% in 2011 and 5.2% in 2016) and foreign inmates (16.4% in 2011 and 16.7% in 2016) should be considered as reflecting a relative stability in the composition of prison populations.

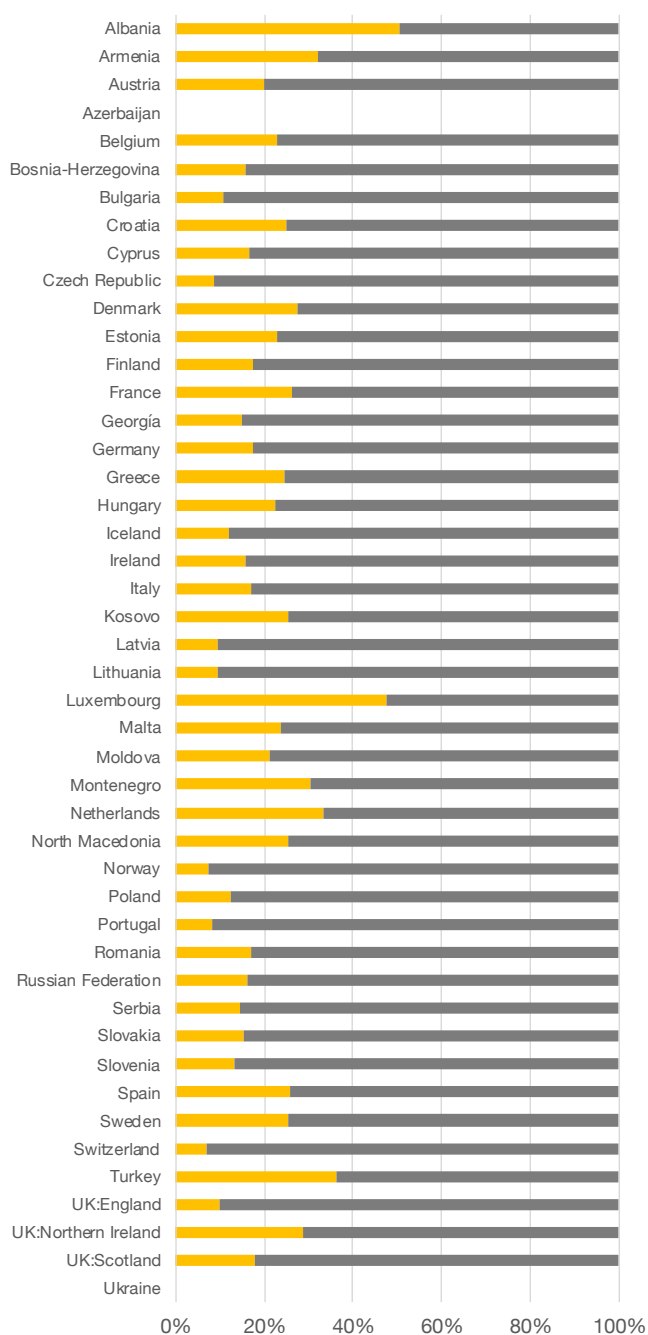
Fig. 9 - Percentage change (2016 compared to 2011) for three key indicators of imprisonment.



Pre-trial detainees in prison

Pre-trial detention refers to the time period during which people are incarcerated after being arrested but before the trial. Usually, pre-trial detention is supposed to be used to avoid escape or danger to other people. The percentage of pre-trial detainees in prison varies largely across countries. From a minimum in 2016 of 7% for North Macedonia to a maximum of 50% for Albania. During the period 2011-2016, the largest increase of the percentage of pre-trial detainees in prison is observed for Iceland and Georgia while the largest reduction is observed for Latvia, Cyprus and Bulgaria.

Fig. 10 - Percentage of pre-trial detainees in the prison population in 2016.



Women, minors and foreigners in prison

Women. Women represent a small fraction of prison population (on average 5%). During the period 2011-2016, the percentages of women in prison increased in some countries, while it diminished on others. In 2016, the countries with more than 8% of women over the total of prisoners were Latvia, Malta, Cyprus, Slovenia while Albania recorded a value lower than 2%.

Minors. They represent on average only 1% of the prison population, being of preference directed towards alternative sanctions. Overall, in the period 2011-2016 the percentages of minors in prison decreased in most of the countries with, on the contrary, some remarkable growth observed in Azerbaijan, France and Switzerland. In 2016, the percentage of minors in prison was over 3% in only three countries: the Netherlands (4.8%), Hungary (4.5%), and Kosovo (UN R/1244/99) (3.6%).

Foreigners. With reference to foreigners, their prevalence on the prison population is on average of approximately 16%, but there are large differences across countries. During the period 2011-2016, different trends may be observed. In 2016, the prevalence of foreigners was negligible (less than 2%) in many countries in Eastern Europe such as Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania while it is particularly strong in Switzerland (72%), Greece (55%) and Austria (54%).

Death and Suicide in prison

The rate of deaths in prison varies largely across countries. Fig. 11 provides the average values observed per country in the period 2011-2016. Fig. 12 provides the percentages of suicides among inmates.

About Recidivism

As in previous editions, data on recidivism were not collected. The reason is that the European Sourcebook aims to provide data as comparable as possible for the largest possible number of countries, but that goal cannot be reached for recidivism studies yet, because the methodology applied to measure recidivism differs considerably from one country to another.

Fig. 11 - Rate of deaths in prison per 10,000 inmates (average 2011-2016).

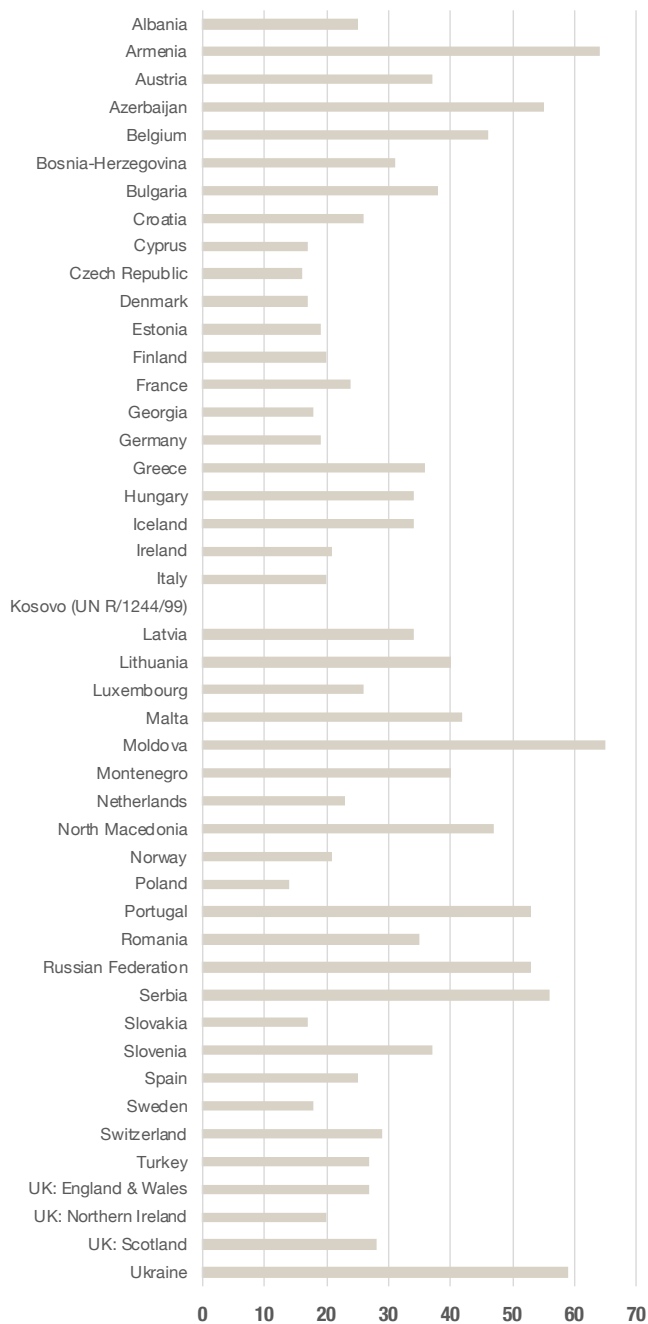
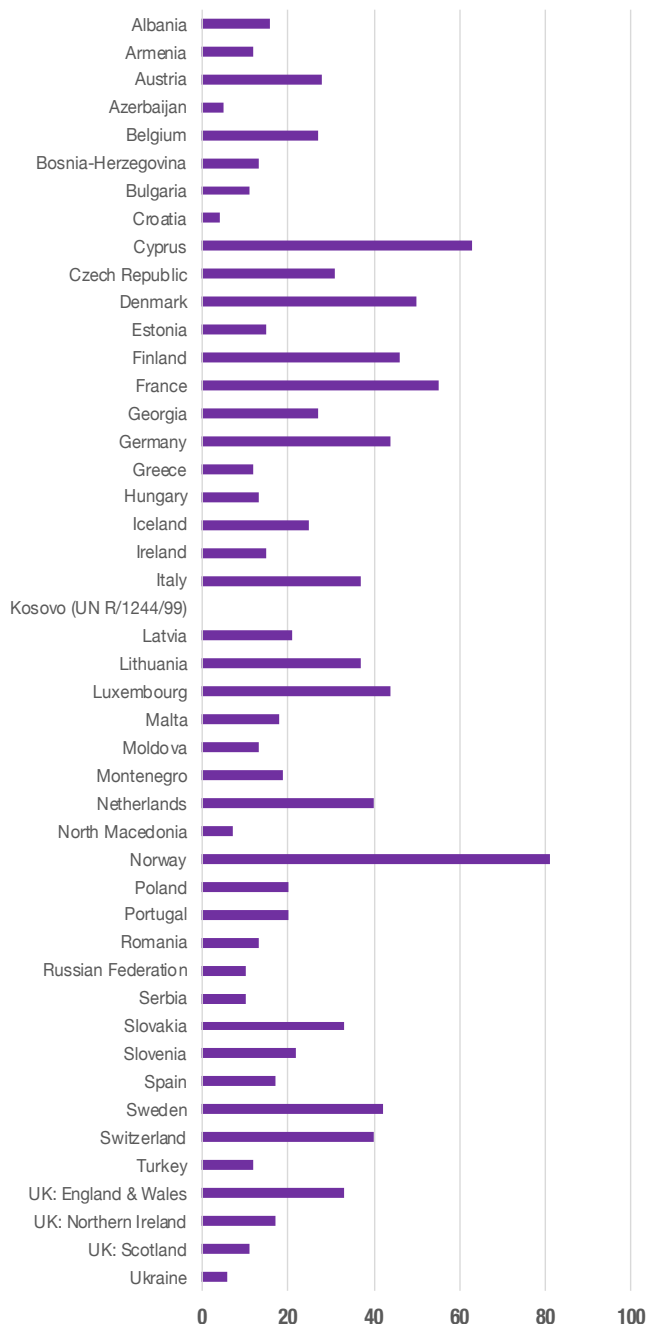


Fig. 12 - Percentage of suicides among inmates who died in prison (average 2011-2016).



Prison Staff

From a comparative perspective, it is useful to observe the rate of the prison staff employed and not employed by the prison administration as well as the ratio of inmates per one member of prison staff. Data available for 2016 confirm the existence of huge variations across the countries analyzed.

The rate of the prison staff per 100 000 has an average value of 77. It shows the highest rates for the Russian Federation (205), Latvia (146), Albania (145), and Lithuania (134). The lowest

rates are in Iceland (35), Slovenia (40), and North Macedonia (41).

However, looking at the ratio of inmates, the situation changes substantially. While the average value is 1.9, the highest ratio is observed for North Macedonia (3.9), followed by Turkey (3.5) and Moldova (2.9). Data available suggest that the lowest ratio, with less than one member of prison staff per inmates, is registered in several Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Sweden, Norway) and in the Netherlands.

Chapter 5

Probation Statistics

The Council of Europe CM/Rec(2014)4 defines a probation agency as “a body responsible for the execution in the community of sanctions and measures defined by law and imposed on an offender. Its tasks include a range of activities and interventions, which involve supervision, guidance and assistance aiming at the social inclusion of offenders, as well as at contributing to community safety. It may also, depending on the national legal system, implement one or more of the following functions: providing information and advice to judicial and other deciding authorities to help them reach informed and just decisions; providing guidance and support to offenders while in custody in order to prepare their release and resettlement; monitoring and assistance to persons subject to early release; restorative justice interventions; and offering assistance to victims of crime. A probation agency may also be, depending on the national legal system, the ‘agency responsible for supervising persons under electronic monitoring’”.

As for prison statistics, data on probation populations can be described from two perspectives. The first perspective refers to ‘how many probationers are under the supervision of probation agencies on a given day’ (stock). The second perspective refers to ‘how many persons were placed under the supervision of probation agencies during the course of the year’ (flow of entries) and to ‘how many probation services ceased to be under the supervision of probation agencies during the course of the year’ (flow of exits).

Probation population

Trends in stock. From 2011 to 2016, the rate of probationers per 100 000 population increased in a majority of countries. In 17 out of the 29 probation agencies that provided the necessary data, the 2016 probation population rate (stock) was more than 5% higher than in 2011; in 11 the 2016 rate was more than 5% higher than that of 2011; while in Austria both rates were comparable.

Trends in flows of entries. Similarly, in 19 out of the 33 probation agencies that provided the necessary data, the 2016 rate of entries (flow of entries) was more than 5% higher than in 2011. In three prison administrations, the rates were comparable (the 2016 flow of entries was up to 5% lower or higher than that of 2011), and in 11 prison administrations, the 2016 flow of entries was more than 5% higher than that of 2011.

Data on 31 December 2015. There were considerable differences between the countries as regards the total number of persons under the supervision of probation agencies in 2015. The rates per 100 000 population ranged from 3 (Serbia) to 866 (Georgia). Such differences reflect the recent development of supervision by probation agencies in many countries as well as —to a larger extent— the different definitions of the concept.

A word of caution/3

The extent of what precisely means being under the supervision of an agency varies widely across countries. For example, when one compares the low number of probation staff to the high number of probationers observed in some countries, it seems clear that the level of the supervision cannot be the same as the one provided in countries where the ratio staff/probationers is lower. In particular, it would seem that, in some countries, inmates conditionally released are formally placed under the supervision of probation agencies, but that placement does not imply a personal follow up by probation staff. This corroborates that, as we mentioned in the introduction, cross-national comparisons of the rates of persons under the supervision of probation agencies are misleading.

Fig. 13 - Percentage change (2016 compared to 2011) for two key indicators of probation.



Women, minors and foreigners in probation

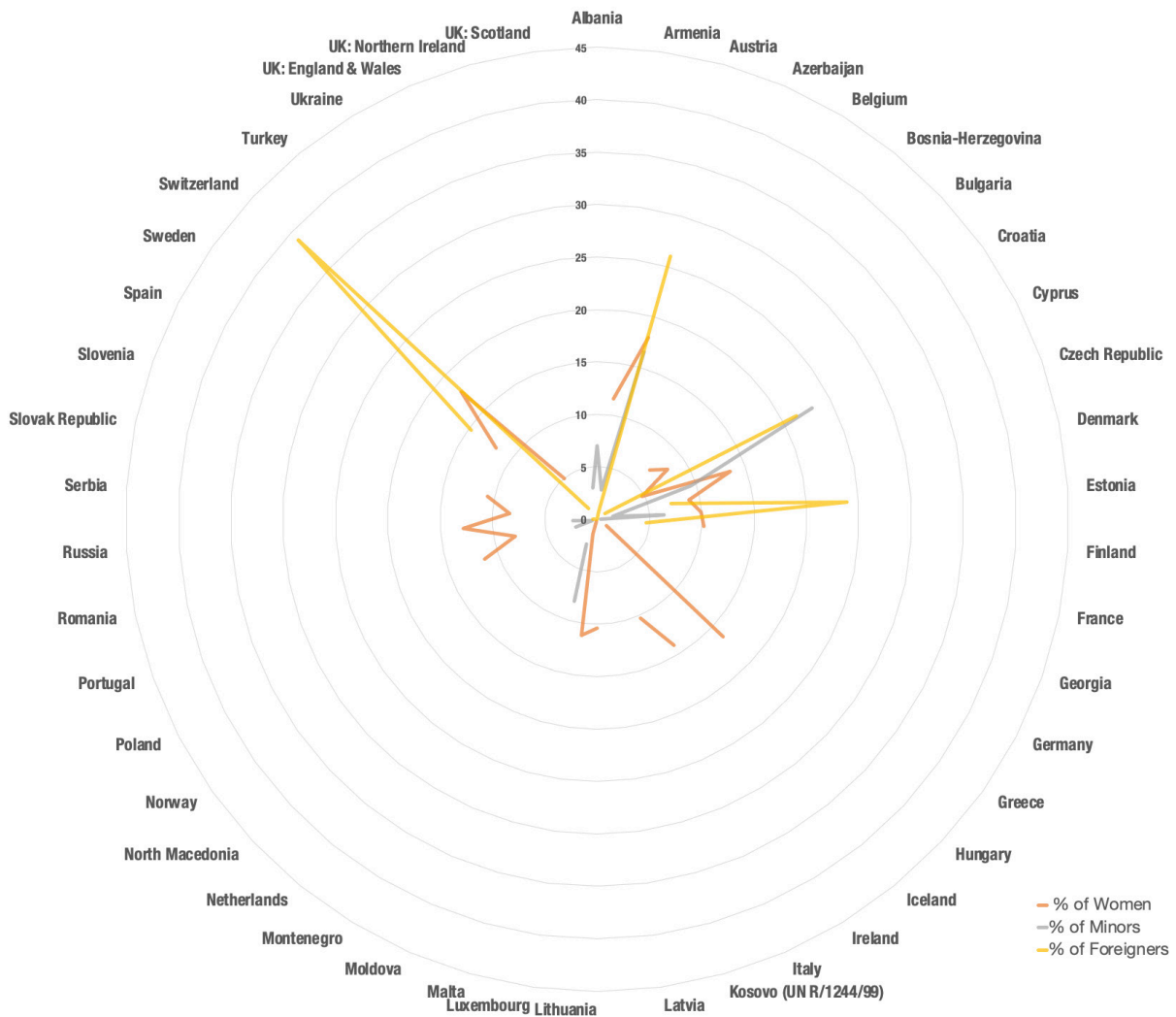
Women. The average percentage of women under the supervision of probation agencies is 10%. This is a low percentage, but it represents the double of the percentage observed in the prison population. In general, the percentage of women on probation corroborates the differential implication of men and women in delinquency. In particular, the difference between the percentage of women on probation and in prison corroborates that the difference comes mainly from the lesser involvement of women in violent offences, which are overrepresented among the prison population.

Minors. The percentage of minors on probation is slightly higher than that of minors in prison, but that can be explained by the fact that, in most countries, minors are not in-

cluded in the prison population. At the level of probation, there are also several agencies that do not include minors and, among those that include them, the differences are sometimes striking.

Foreigners. The average percentage of foreigners on probation is 11%, which corroborates that it is much more difficult for them than for nationals to be placed on probation. The main reason is that quite often foreigners do not have a stable residence in the country where they were sentenced. This interpretation is corroborated through a comparison with the higher percentage of foreigners among inmates (roughly 16% on average). It must be mentioned, however, that the majority of probation agencies (28 out of 46) were unable to provide information on the nationality of their probationers.

Fig. 14 - Percentage of women, minors, and foreigners in the flow of entries in probation during 2015 (with available data).



Probation Staff

The ratio of probation staff per 100 probationers varies from less than one member of staff per 100 probationers (in Greece) to 10 or 12 per 100 in some Nordic countries. The average number of reports produced by that staff during 2015 differs considerably from one country to the other, ranging from one

to 86, which corroborates that figures are not comparable because the tasks of probation agencies are not equivalent as far as the production of reports is concerned. Tab. 4 provides a synthesis of type and competency of the probation agencies (or equivalent bodies) among the countries analysed in the European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics.

Tab. 4 - Type and competency of the probation agencies (or equivalent bodies).

	Type			Competency			
	Public	Non-profit/ state subsidised	Private enterprise	Minors	Adults	Pre- sentence stage	Execution stage
Albania	•			•	•	•	•
Armenia	•			•	•	•	•
Austria		•		•	•	•	•
Belgium	•	•		•	•		
Bulgaria	•			•	•	•	•
Croatia	•				•	•	•
Cyprus	•			•	•	•	•
Czech Republic	•			•	•	•	•
Denmark	•			•	•	•	•
Estonia	•			•	•	•	•
Finland	•	•		•	•	•	•
France	•				•	•	•
Georgia	•			•	•	•	
Germany	•	•		•	•	•	•
Hungary	•			•	•	•	•
Iceland	•			•	•	•	•
Italy	•			•	•		•
Kosovo (UN R/1244/99) (UNR)	•	•		•	•	•	•
Latvia	•			•	•	•	•
Lithuania	•			•	•		•
Malta	•			•	•	•	•
Moldova	•			•	•	•	•
Netherlands North Macedonia		•		•	•	•	•
Norway	•			•	•	•	•
Poland	•			•	•	•	•
Portugal	•			•	•	•	•
Romania	•			•	•	•	•
Russian Fed.	•			•	•	•	•
Serbia	•			•	•	•	•
Slovak Republic	•			•	•	•	•
Slovenia	•				•		•
Spain	•			•	•		•
Sweden	•	•		•	•	•	•
Switzerland	•				•		•
Turkey	•			•	•	•	•
UK: Eng. & Wales	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
UK: N. Ireland	•			•	•	•	•
UK: Scotland	•				•	•	•

National Victimisation Surveys

Victimisation surveys started in the 1970s to give another estimate of crime experienced in a country to enhance the figures of crime recorded by the police. However, since then they have developed extensively to give estimates of many other aspects of how the population of a country interacts with social conditions and with the criminal justice system. Originally directed at households only, they have also developed to research prevalence of crime and use of crime prevention measures in business and government agencies. They have proved particularly useful in looking at the experience of new types of crime such as cybercrime and computer fraud. Readers should keep in mind that the results of national victimisation surveys conducted in different countries cannot be directly compared because of the differences in methodology.

An overview on victimisation surveys

Not all countries answered the questionnaire about national victimisation surveys and those that answered did not always reply for each sweep of the ESB. Of the 38 countries who replied five (Greece, Kosovo, Malta, Russian Federation and Slovak Republic) had never conducted a national victimisation survey. Fourteen others conduct a national periodical victimisation survey (Tab 5.). Another 19 countries do not conduct a periodical survey but have conducted one or more national or regional victimisation surveys.

Tab. 5 - Countries with periodical national victimisation surveys and frequency of such surveys.

Belgium	Belgium has resumed conducting victimisation surveys on a regular basis, starting with 2018 data, although the gap between surveys has not yet been finalised. The previous survey was in 2008/9. Prior to that surveys were conducted normally every 2 years
Denmark	Annual surveys have been carried out since 2005
Finland	Annual surveys have been conducted annually since 2012
France	Annual since 2007
Germany	Surveys were conducted in 2012 and 2017. There are plans to conduct surveys every two years starting in 2020
Iceland	Annually for the whole country since 2011
Italy	About every 5 years
Netherlands	Annual
Norway	Surveys were conducted in 2004, 2007, 2012, 2015 and 2018
Sweden	Annual
Turkey	Annual
UK: England & Wales	Continuous (with annual results)
UK: Northern Ireland	Continuous (with annual results)
UK: Scotland	Every two years

Completeness and quality of the data

Up to 23 countries answered the questions on the wording of the different questions and the methodology of the surveys.

Regarding the completeness of the surveys:

- a) Bodily injury is the offence with the highest number of countries reporting data (23 on its prevalence, 10 on its incidence and 17 on its reporting to the police);
- b) Domestic burglary (22, 11 and 17 countries);
- c) Theft of a motor vehicle (18, 10 and 16 countries);
- d) Sexual assault (15, 9 and 10 countries);
- e) Corruption (4, 1 and 1 country).

The indicator most commonly used by countries was the prevalence of victimisation: e.g., the percentage of households/individuals victimized) followed by the percentage of victims that reported the offence to the police, while the incidence of victimisation was reported less frequently. Seventeen countries provided data on the answers to the questions on trust in the police and the quality of the job of the police and 21 provided data on feelings of safety.

A word of caution/4

Readers should keep in mind that the results of national victimisation surveys conducted in different countries cannot be directly compared because of the differences in methodology. Indeed, even in the same country, methodologies and sample sizes do not remain the same since many countries are developing their victimisation surveys in an attempt to measure new types of crime, cover new types of victim and measure new aspects of their criminal justice systems. Such developments are often hampered by shortages in resources. To appreciate the extent to which comparisons can be made, the original documents for each country should be consulted.

Standard wording questions

Here we provide the standard wording inspired by the ICVS questionnaire.

Bodily injury

Have you been personally attacked (e.g. someone hit you with his/her fists, kicked you, or used force or violence in any way?)

Sexual assault

Has anyone grabbed you, touched you or assaulted you for sexual reasons in a really offensive way?

Robbery

Has anyone stolen from you by using force or threatening you?

Theft of personal property

Have you personally been the victim of a theft of personal property such as pickpocketing or theft of a purse, wallet, clothing, jewellery, sports equipment, etc.?

Theft of motor vehicle

Have you or other members of your household had any of their cars, vans or trucks, stolen?

Domestic Burglary

Has anyone actually got into your house or flat without permission and stolen or tried to steal something?

Corruption

Has any government official, for example a customs officer, a police officer, or inspector in your country asked you or expected you to pay a bribe for his or her services?

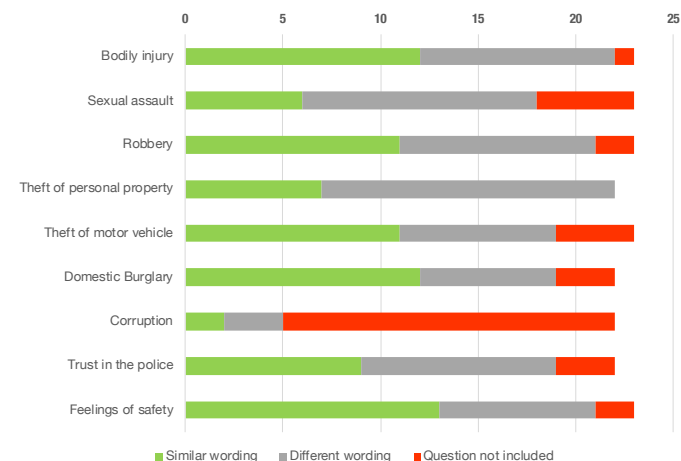
Trust in the police

Taking everything into account how good a job do you think the police do in your area in controlling crime? Do you think they do a very good job, a fairly good job, a poor job or a very poor job?

Feeling of safety

How safe do you feel walking alone in your area after dark? Do you feel very safe, fairly safe, a bit unsafe or very unsafe?

Fig. 15 - Questions included in national victimisation surveys. Numbers of surveys with similar wording, different wording and question not included by offence/topic.



As shown in Fig. 15, a similar wording is used in approximately half of the national surveys considered for bodily injury, robbery, theft of a motor vehicle, domestic burglary, and feeling of safety. Different wording is prevalent for offences such as sexual assault and theft of personal property. The wording which defines the topic of trust in the police is also different. Additionally, it should be noted that the offence of corruption is often not included in the national victimisation surveys considered.

Some findings

Among the offences included, theft of personal property showed the highest prevalence in Europe in 2015 and sexual assault the lowest one. Figures 17, 18 and 19 present data on prevalence of victimisation and percentage of victims reporting to the police for the offence/topic which have the most similar wording: bodily injury (assault), domestic burglary, and feeling of safety. For all the three offence/topic considered, it may be observed a common declining trend which started in 2005, and it continued in 2010 and 2015. In the same period, for the two offences considered, data suggest a slight decline of victims reporting to police.

The (missing) relationship between fear of crime and trust in the police. The percentage of respondents feeling unsafe or very unsafe on the street after dark varies widely across countries; but, with only a couple of exceptions, it was lower than 50%. Also, with a couple of exceptions, the percentage of respondents thinking that the police were doing a good or very good job in controlling crime in the local area was higher than 50%. However, data showed no direct correlation between confidence in the police and unsafety in the streets after dark (Fig. 16).

Fig. 16 - Percentage of the respondents feeling unsafe or very unsafe on the street after dark and Percentage of the public who believe the police are doing a good job or a very good job in controlling crime in the local. Scatterplot.

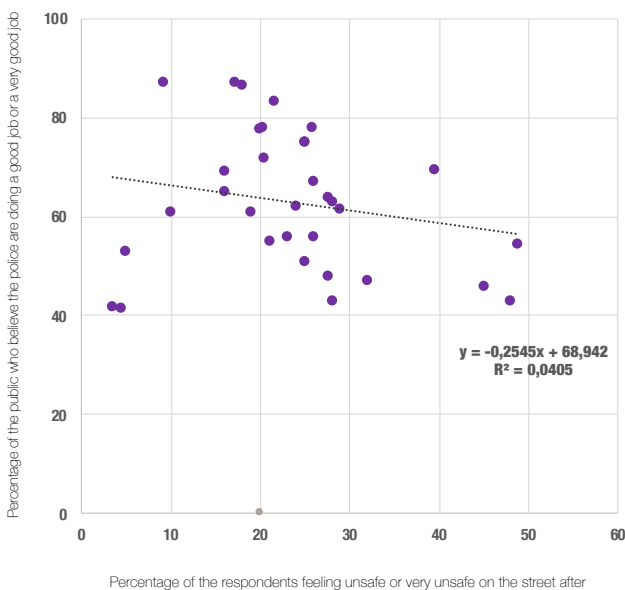


Fig. 17 - Prevalence of bodily injury (assault) victimisation during the last 12 months according to national victimisation surveys and percentage of victims reporting to the police (average on 22 countries).

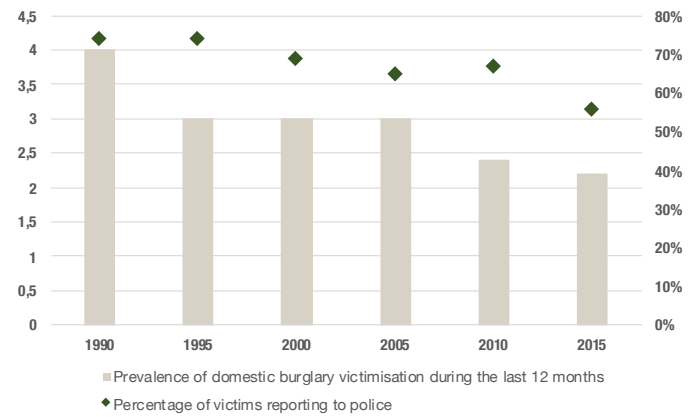


Fig. 18 - Prevalence of domestic burglary victimisation during the last 12 months according to national victimisation surveys and percentage of victims reporting to the police (average on 19 countries).

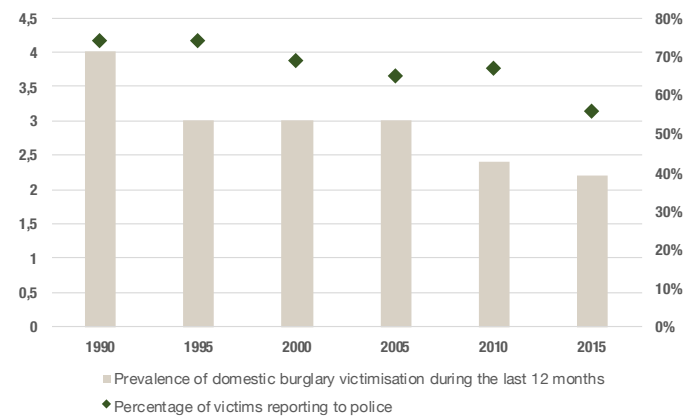
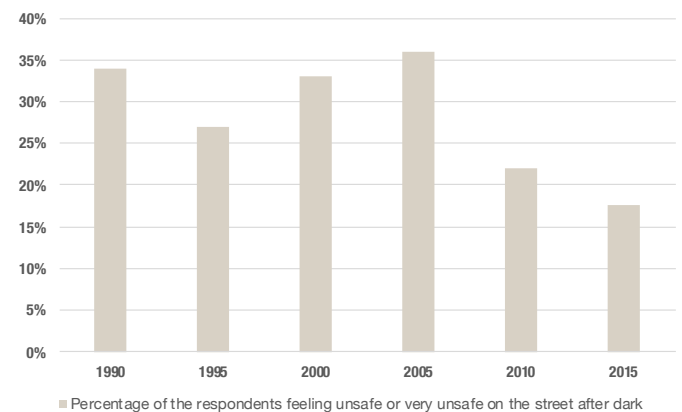
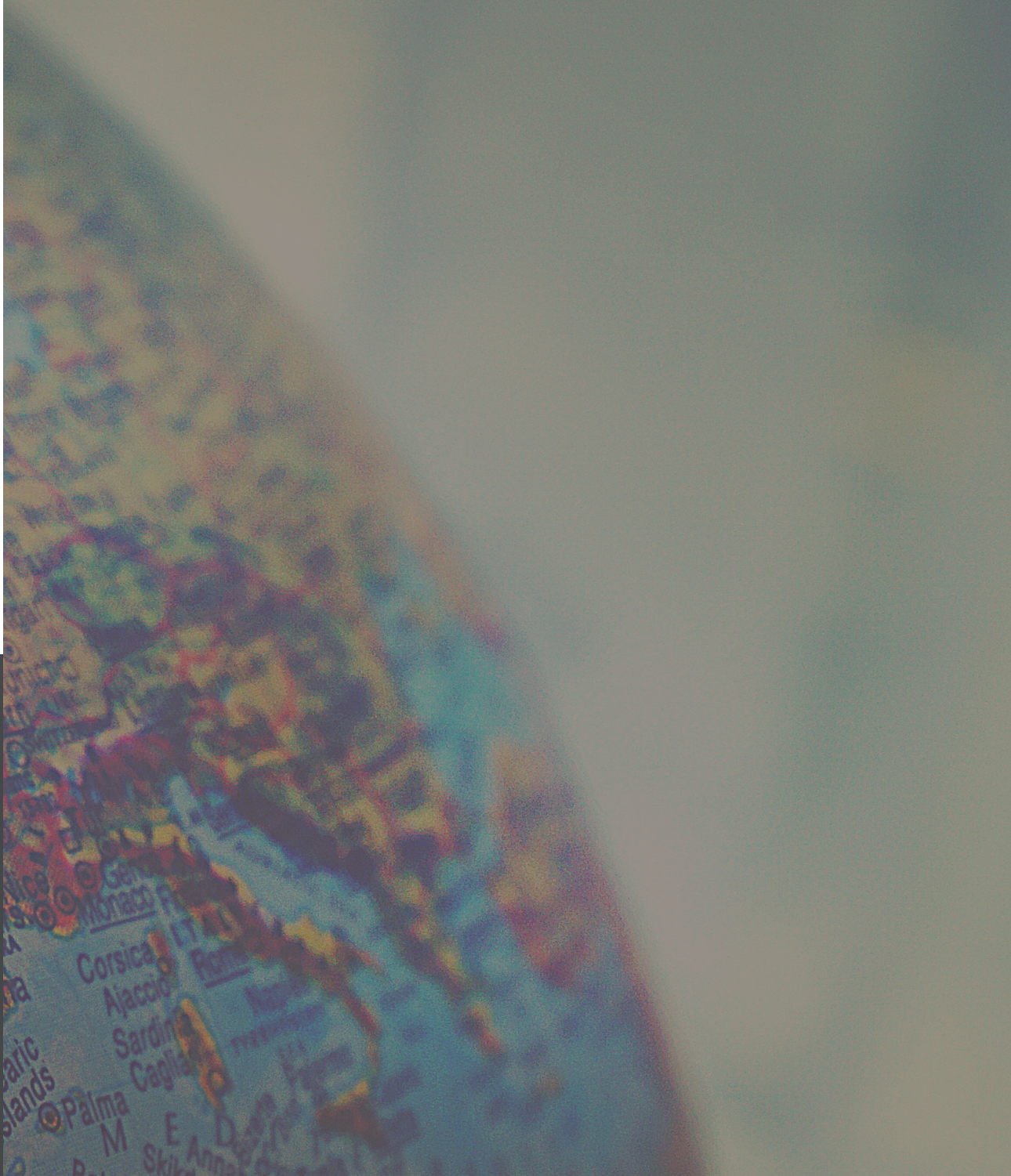


Fig. 19 - Feelings of safety: Percentage of the respondents feeling unsafe or very unsafe on the street after dark (average on 21 countries).





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