



European Crime Prevention Network

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Priorities in crime prevention policies across Europe

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Priorities in crime prevention policies across Europe

Abstract

In the European Crime Prevention Monitor 2012/2 (EUCPN, 2012b), the EUCPN Secretariat collected information from the Member States on their main priorities in the crime prevention policy/strategy in their countries. Obviously, each country has its own strategy and approach regarding crime prevention. Whereas some countries pay specific attention to certain crime types in their prevention strategy, others – like e.g., the Czech Republic, Denmark and the United Kingdom – have a broad and general preventative approach at the national level, with more room to focus on local crime prevention priorities. Overall, the crime types which were considered most in the various prevention policies are: 1. Property crimes (i.e. burglaries, theft); 2. Crimes against the person (i.e. violence, domestic violence); 3. Juvenile delinquency; 4. Drug use; and 5. Violent crime.

In this third Monitor, we will have a closer look at some of these crime types which are currently prioritised by the Member States and which were identified in the previous Monitor (EUCPN, 2012b). For this, we will draw upon some of the findings of the International Crime Victimization Survey of 2005 and 2010 (ICVS), Eurostat's Statistics in Focus 2013, the Statistical Bulletin 2013 of the European Monitoring Centre for Drug and Drug Addiction and the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs 2011 (ESPAD).

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1. Introduction

Looking back at the results of a small consultation round with the EUCPN National Representatives, conducted in the framework of the second report in the *European Crime Prevention Monitor series* (EUCPN, 2012b), this third European Crime Prevention Monitor report (simply referred to as 'monitor report' below) will focus on some of the crime types which were identified by the Member States as priorities in their crime prevention policy. These include: property crime, crime against the person, drug use and violent crime.¹

Similar to the first monitor report (EUCPN, 2012a), various data sources will be used to examine these crime types more closely.

For a long period of time, crime estimates have only been available in the form of figures that were the result of the counting activities of criminal justice agencies, such as the police. On the one hand, **police figures** are a good measure for very rare and serious crimes, like e.g., homicide. On the other hand, they suffer several limitations. Firstly, they do not include the unreported or undiscovered crime, the so-called 'dark figure' of crime. Second, these figures rather reflect the policing efforts and priorities than the actual crime. Recorded crime is strongly affected by the scale and effectiveness of policing activities. Finally, recorded crimes are also mostly based on aggregate statistics and therefore cannot provide information on the characteristics of the incidents or the victims involved (Van Dijk, 2009).

Since the second half of the 20th century, next to police recorded crimes, alternative measurement methods were developed based on general population surveys. These included the victimisation surveys, the self-reported crime and deviance surveys and the surveys that measure the sense of insecurity/fear of crime. (Robert & Zauberman, 2009).

Victimisation surveys are better at assessing the level of stereotypic volume crimes, e.g., burglaries and petty theft. However, victimisation surveys have to deal with several limitations. Firstly, surveys among households omit victimisation of minors, business, tourists and other non-residents. Also, they have a limited potential to measure rare and serious crimes, due to their modest sample size. Furthermore, they have a limited capacity to produce estimates of complex and victimless crimes. Surveys also struggle with correctly measuring multiple or serial victimisations. Studies revealed that they tend to undercount the prevalence of violence in a domestic setting. Lastly, they also suffer from measurement problems inherent in all survey research such as memory decay of respondents asked to report on past events, forward time telescoping, biases in sampling designs and in net samples due to non-response, and subject of statistical sampling error (Van Dijk, 2009). **Fear of crime or sense of insecurity surveys** are often part of victimisation surveys, but can also be devoted specifically on this topic (Zauberman, 2008).

Other studies that try to estimate crime are the **self-reported crime and deviance studies**. These studies ask people, usually juveniles, to reveal information about their delinquent behaviour. However, attention needs to be paid to the terminology, because the questions in these surveys usually do not only concentrate on delinquency, but also focus on life-style in general, attitudes towards different subjects, and many other socio-

¹ The detailed overview response per question can be found in Annex 2 of the previous monitor (EUCPN, 2012b).

demographic factors. Also, not all of the behaviours are criminal offences in all European countries and some are status offences. Status offences are offences that are related to the personal condition of the offender, for example, consumption of alcohol is only an offence if it is committed by a minor (Aebi, 2008).

According to scholars, rational criminal policies should be based on reliable data, e.g., on information on the magnitude and development of crime, incarceration, police expenditure and other law enforcement components (Entorf & Spengler, 2002). In the previous monitor report, the Member States indicated that most of their priority setting in crime prevention is indeed based on statistical data. This is supported by the correspondence between the priorities at the policy level and the prominent crime problems in their countries: three out of the five most prominent crime problems were also listed as policy priorities (EUCPN, 2012b).

The data which are mainly relied upon by policy-makers in the EU Member States are *national* police records, surveys and administrative data. The use of *European* data in the decision-making process of the Member States is rather scarce. Only one Member State indicated the use of European data, i.e. for fatal road accidents. Comparisons between national statistics are difficult, due to the methodological problems, e.g., differences in definitions, reporting and recording practices and different counting rules (Vermeulen, 2012). Therefore, more focus is put on the change estimates, rather than on the level estimates and more attention is devoted to analyse convergence and divergence between victimisation rates and measures of fear of crime (Van Dijk, 2009).

2. Existing databases at the EU level for the illustrated crime types

In the following paragraphs, an overview will be given of some of the relevant existing data at a European level, before describing the main cross-national research findings regarding the Member States' priorities in section 3.

2.1. International Crime Victimization Survey²

The International Crime Victimization Survey (ICVS) conducts fully standardised victimisation surveys looking at citizens' experience of crime in different countries. The aim is to compare levels of crime across countries and in time independent of police records in the age group of 16 and over. The most recent rounds of surveys took place in 2005 and 2010. The round of 2005 (with information on victimisation in 2003/2004) covered 19 EU Member States and the round of 2010 was a pilot conducted in five EU Member States.³ Changes were introduced in the questionnaire and the fieldwork. Therefore, the result of the ICVS 2010 cannot be compared with previous ICVS editions.

Ten crimes are measured during all ICVS sweeps: car theft, theft from a car, theft of motorcycles, bicycle theft, burglary, attempted burglary, robbery, theft of personal property, sexual incidents and assault and threats. Additionally, information is collected

²Information and data on the ICVS 2005 included in this paper and under this heading come from: VAN DIJK, J., VAN KESTEREN, J. & SMIT, P. (2007). *Criminal victimisation in international perspective, key findings from the 2004-2005 ICVS and EU ICS*. Den Hague: Boom Juridische Uitgevers, while all the ICVS 2010 data included in this paper and under this heading come from: GHAUHARALI, R., MEULDIIJK, D & SMIT, P. (2011). *ICVS 2010 pilot – Project report*. Den Hague: NICIS. http://www.crimevictimsurvey.eu/Products/Project_report.

³See also the first European Crime Prevention Monitor 2012/1. http://www.eucpn.org/download/?file=20120905_CrimePreventionMonitor_Final.pdf&type=13.

on safety feelings. Information on victimisation is available about the country and its capital city and is divided into one year prevalence-, five year prevalence- and one year incidence victimisation rates. The prevalence rates indicate which percentage of the population has been victimised at least once by a type of crime and incidence rates indicate the number of times a person was victimised by a type of crime during a year. Because the results of 2005 are already somewhat outdated, they will be complemented with the information of the ICVS 2010, where feasible.

2.2. Statistics in focus (Eurostat)⁴

The Statistics in focus of Eurostat reports mainly on the number of offences recorded by the police. The latest available data cover the period 2007-2010. Eurostat publishes these statistics for a set of specific offences, i.e. domestic burglary, robbery, theft of a motor vehicle, violent crime and homicide.⁵ Direct comparisons of crime levels in different countries should be avoided, because of different legal and criminal justice systems, differences in the rates at which crimes are reported to and recorded by the police, differences in the moment at which crime is measured (e.g., at the moment the crime is reported by the police or a suspect is identified), differences in the rules by which multiple offences are counted and differences in the list of offences that are included in the overall crime figures.

Therefore, comparisons between police recorded crimes should be based upon trends rather than upon nominal levels, because the characteristics of the recording system within a country remain fairly constant over time. Even here, however, there are many exceptions since methods change, causing breaks in the series. An exception to this rule is the crime type homicide, where the figures are more readily comparable.

2.3. Statistical bulletin (EMCDDA)⁶

This monitor report will primarily focus on the general population surveys and on the drug law offences, which are covered in the Statistical bulletin 2013. The general population surveys provide information on the prevalence and patterns of drug use in the general population. The prevalence of illegal drug use (cannabis, cocaine, amphetamines, ecstasy and LSD) in the general population is estimated by the EMCDDA on standard periods of time, i.e. lifetime-, last 12 months- and last 30 days prevalence before the survey. The subjects under study are all adults (15-64 years), youth (15-24 years) or young adults (15-34 years). On the basis of these data, the EMCDDA also calculated the continuation rates for the different types of drugs.

The method used consists of interview surveys in the form of self-report of participants based on representative samples of the whole population under study. The estimates of country level prevalence are comparable across countries, but there are also some pitfalls given the range of methods used in the surveys, and the differing years when the surveys were completed. Additionally, some information on 'problematic drug use' and

⁴ Information under this heading was found on <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/>. All Eurostat data included in this paper come from Eurostat's Statistics in Focus 2013: CLARKE, S. (2013). Crime and criminal justice. Statistics in focus, 18/2013. Eurostat. European Union. http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-13-018/EN/KS-SF-13-018-EN.PDF.

⁵ For exceptions to the standard definitions, see the metadata files on the Eurostat website: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/crim_esms.htm#freq_diss.

⁶ Information under this heading was found on <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/>. All EMCDDA data included in this paper come from the EMCDDA Statistical Bulletin 2013 : <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/stats13>.

'youth and schools' will be provided. The drug law offences include the Member States' reports of offences against the national drug legislation (use, possession, trafficking, etc.), which are much less comparable due to a number of methodological problems, e.g., the stage within the criminal justice system at which data have been reported and recorded.⁷

2.4. European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD)⁸

The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) aims to repeatedly collect comparable data on substance use among 15–16 year old students in as many European countries as possible. The method used consists of surveys conducted with common questionnaires and according to a standardised methodology. Students can answer the questionnaires anonymously in the classroom with teachers or research assistants functioning as survey leaders. The first survey was conducted in 1995 and has been repeated every four years since.

The survey covers alcohol and drug-related issues such as illicit drug use. The most recent results come from the fifth round which were published in the 2011 ESPAD report that covers 36 countries, 24 of which are Member States of the EU.

3. Member States' policy priorities: main cross-national findings

3.1. Property crimes

11 of the 15 EU Member States, that identified their main crime problems and priorities in crime prevention in the previous monitor report (EUCPN, 2012b), considered property crime as their most prominent crime problem. Property crime can include burglary and/or theft both in the public as well as in the private sphere. Member States that indicated this as their most prominent crime problem were Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania & the United Kingdom. Four of these Member States had more than one property crime type in their top three of most prominent crime problems, with Malta taking the lead having their three most prominent crime problems related to property crimes (i.e. theft from vehicle, pick pocketing and theft from residence). Similarly, more than one third of the EU Member States who participated in the survey indicated property crime as their top priority in crime prevention policies. It concerns Belgium, Cyprus, Ireland (their listed priorities did not accorded any relative priority), Luxembourg (burglary), Malta (theft) and Romania.

According to the ICVS 2005, in almost all the Member States, the highest victimisation rates were found for personal property theft and theft from/out of a car. Lower victimisation rates were recorded for burglary and the lowest rates were found for theft of a car/car theft (with similar results in the ICVS 2010). Exceptions are Portugal and Spain, where higher numbers of burglary than theft of a car were recorded. Also, thefts from a car were as much recorded as burglaries in Greece and more burglaries than thefts from a car were recorded in Denmark.

⁷ For exceptions to the standard definitions of the general population surveys, the problem drug use, youth and schools and drug law offences, see <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/stats13>.

⁸ Information under this heading was found on <http://www.espad.org/en/Data-Collection/>. All included ESPAD data in this paper come from the EMCDDA Statistical Bulletin 2013: <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/stats13>.

- **Burglary**

The ICVS 2005 makes a distinction between incidents in which the burglar entered the house (burglary) and incidents in which the burglar tried to enter the house but failed (attempted burglary).

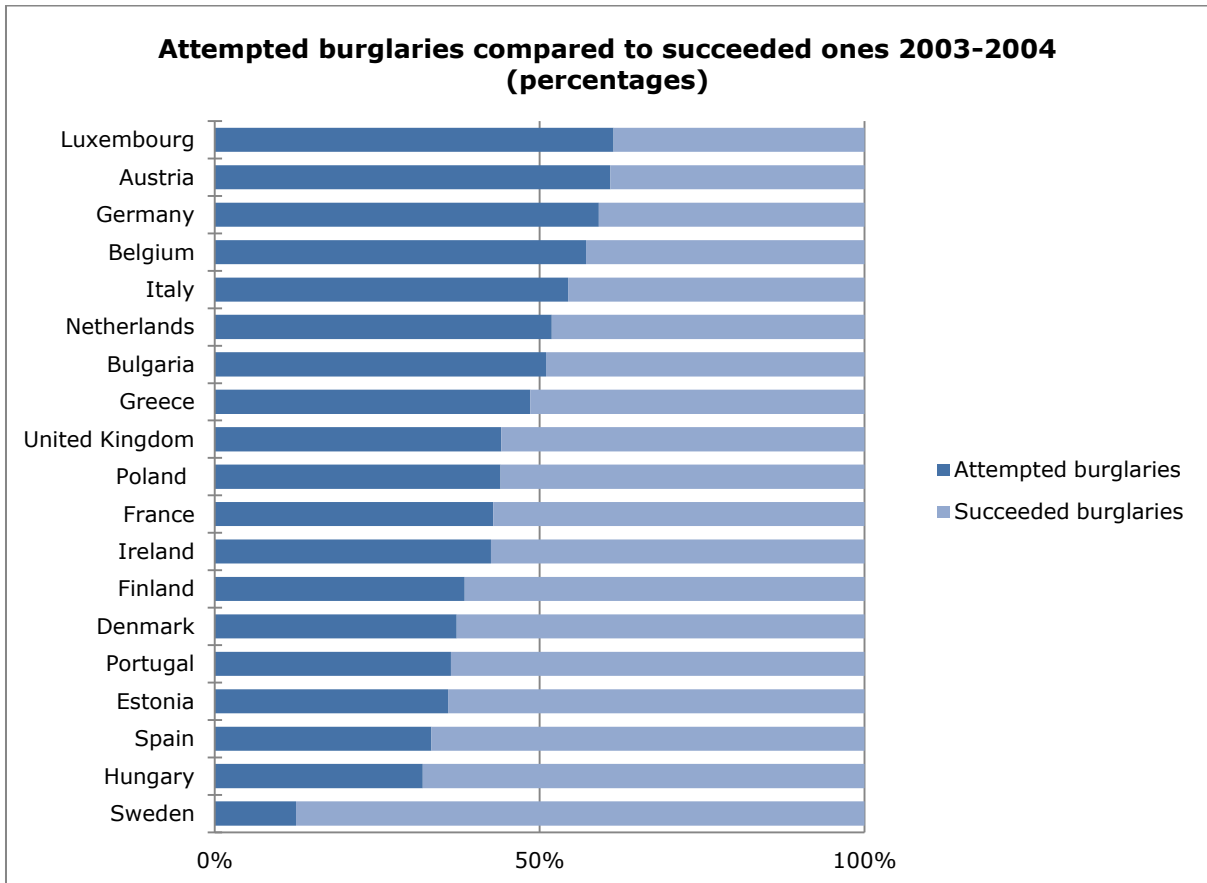


Figure 1: Attempted burglaries compared to succeeded ones 2003-2004 (percentages)
 Source: International Crime Victimization Survey 2005 – own calculations

Overall, slightly more burglars were able to enter the house (1,7 % succeeded while 1,5% failed). Figure 1 shows that 12 out of 19 Member States had a higher number of succeeded burglaries in comparison to the attempts. This ratio was the highest in Sweden. The other 7 Member States experienced more attempts than succeeded burglaries, with the highest percentages in Belgium, Germany, Austria and Luxembourg. The ICVS 2010 confirmed these findings for the 5 Member States which were included, with the exception of the United Kingdom who experienced in 2010 more failed burglaries than succeeded ones compared to 2003-2004.

In the ICVS 2005, one-year prevalence rates range in the EU Member States between 0,7 and 3,3% (and up to 13,6% for five year prevalence rates). Member States with high one-year prevalence and incidence victimisation rates of burglary do not necessarily have high five-year prevalence victimisation rates. High five-year prevalence rates were found in Estonia, Luxembourg, Denmark, Belgium, Italy and Greece (10% and more). High one-year prevalence were recorded in the United Kingdom, Denmark, Bulgaria and Estonia (2,5% and more). The lowest one and five-year prevalence levels and incidence levels of burglary were found in Austria, Germany, Finland, Spain and Sweden. In the ICVS 2010, Denmark has a remarkable higher prevalence and incidence victimisation

rate for burglary compared to the other Member States, while the Netherlands and Sweden have the lowest rates.

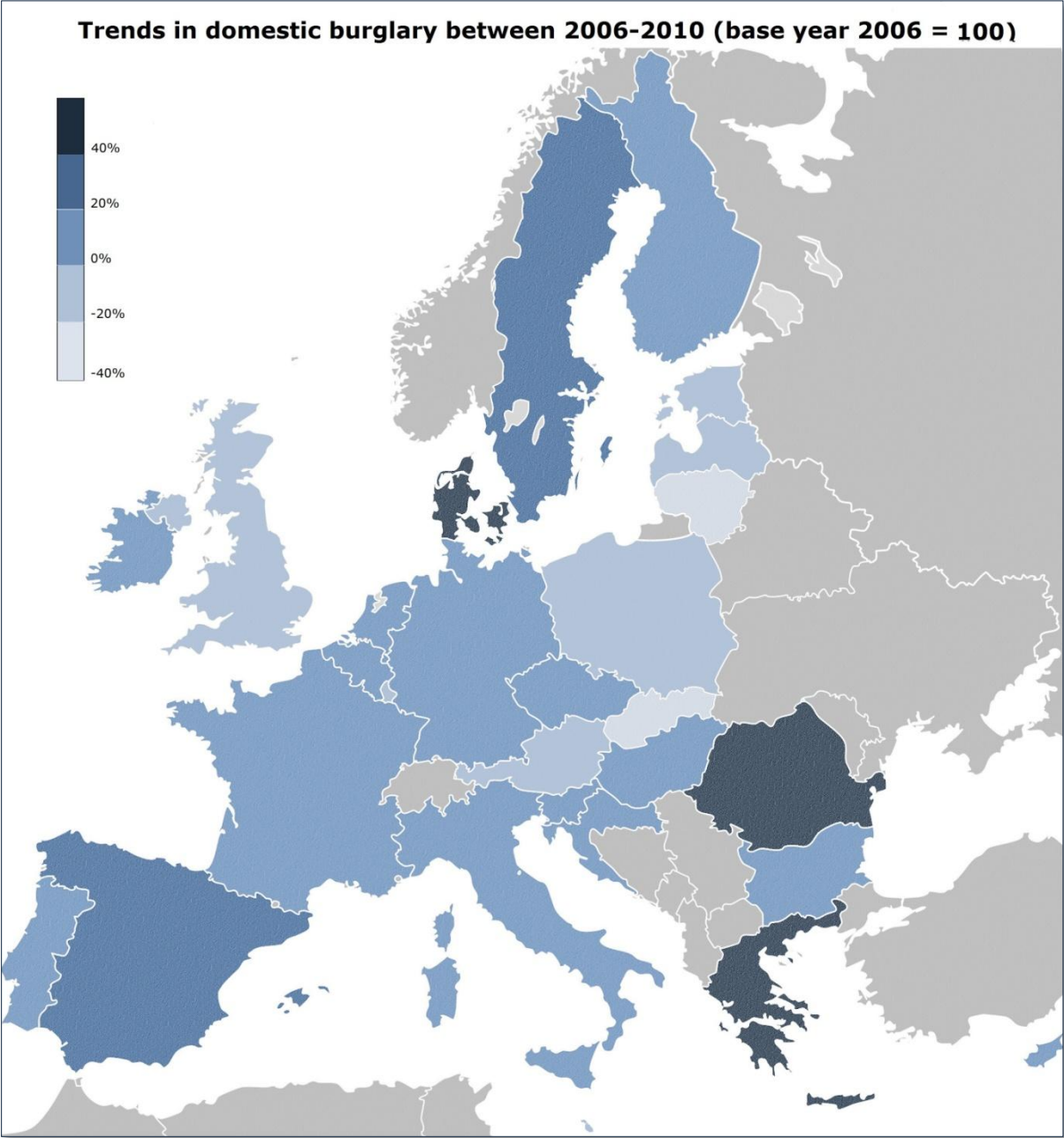


Figure 2: Trends in domestic burglary between 2006-2010 (base year 2006 = 100)
Source: Statistics in focus 2013, Eurostat – own calculations

Eurostat defines domestic burglary as gaining access to a dwelling by force in order to steal goods. According to the police records of the Member States, domestic burglary rose on average by about 7% in the EU in the period 2006 to 2010. Figure 2 shows the trends in domestic burglary between 2006 and 2010 in the EU Member States. In the majority of the EU Member States, there were rises of between 5% and 10%, with sharper rises (over 30%) in Sweden, Spain, Denmark and Romania. The highest rise was recorded in Greece with over 90%. On the other hand, a decline of more than 15% was recorded in Austria, Malta, Estonia, Luxembourg, Poland and Lithuania, and even a 28% decline was recorded in Slovakia.

Denmark and Romania, two of the Member States that recorded the highest rises in burglary between 2006-2010, identified burglary as one of their top three prominent crime problem. Despite the strong decrease recorded for Luxembourg between 2006-2010, they mentioned a strong increase (+48%) between 2010 and 2011. Partly because of an important series of burglaries at the end of 2011, partly because of a spectacular rise of burglaries in private housing. In the previous monitor report Cyprus, Denmark and Ireland also mentioned an increase in the number of burglaries and property-related crimes. Suggestions have been made that this upward trend could partly be linked to the current broader economic situation and the financial crises (EUCPN, 2012b).

- **Theft**

The ICVS 2005 makes a distinction between car theft and theft out of a car (including vans and trucks). Prevalence and incidence victimisation percentages of thefts out of a car are much higher than those of car thefts in all the EU Member States. Usually, Member States that encounter high/low numbers of thefts out of a car also experience high/low numbers of car thefts. Nevertheless, the data show that there are some exceptions, like Estonia or Germany. Estonia, for example, has the highest percentage of all for prevalence of thefts out of a car, but 'scores' relatively low for car thefts. In the ICVS 2010, on the other hand, Germany has the lowest percentages for car thefts, but high prevalence for thefts out of a car (while they have amongst the lowest percentages for car thefts in the ICVS 2005).

In the ICVS 2005, one-year prevalence of victimisation of car thefts varies in the EU Member States between 0,1 and 1,8% (to up to 7,2% for five-year prevalence). The highest prevalence and incidence victimisation rates were recorded in the United Kingdom and Portugal while the lowest were found in Germany, Hungary and Austria. One-year prevalence of theft out of a car varies across the EU Member States between 1,8 and 6% (up to 18,9% for 5 year prevalence). For thefts out of a car, the United Kingdom and Estonia recorded the highest, while Austria, Italy, Finland, Hungary and Germany scored low. Greece has the lowest one-year prevalence and incidence victimisation rates, but scores higher than the average for five-year prevalence. The ICVS 2010 shows similar results.

Another category of theft is theft of personal property, which also includes pickpocketing (when carrying what was stolen) but excludes theft out of a car, car theft, motorcycle and bicycle theft. Examples of this type of crime are thefts of a purse, wallet, clothing, sports or work equipment. Approximately one out of three cases of personal property constitutes pickpocketing. One-year prevalence victimisation rates of theft of personal property varies between 1,6 and 7,2% (and up to 18,2% for five year prevalence rates). High one-year victimisation rates and incidence rates were recorded in Ireland, United Kingdom, Estonia and Greece. High five-year prevalence rates on the other hand were recorded in Estonia, Luxembourg and Greece. Low overall prevalence rates were recorded in Portugal, Finland, Italy, Sweden and Spain.

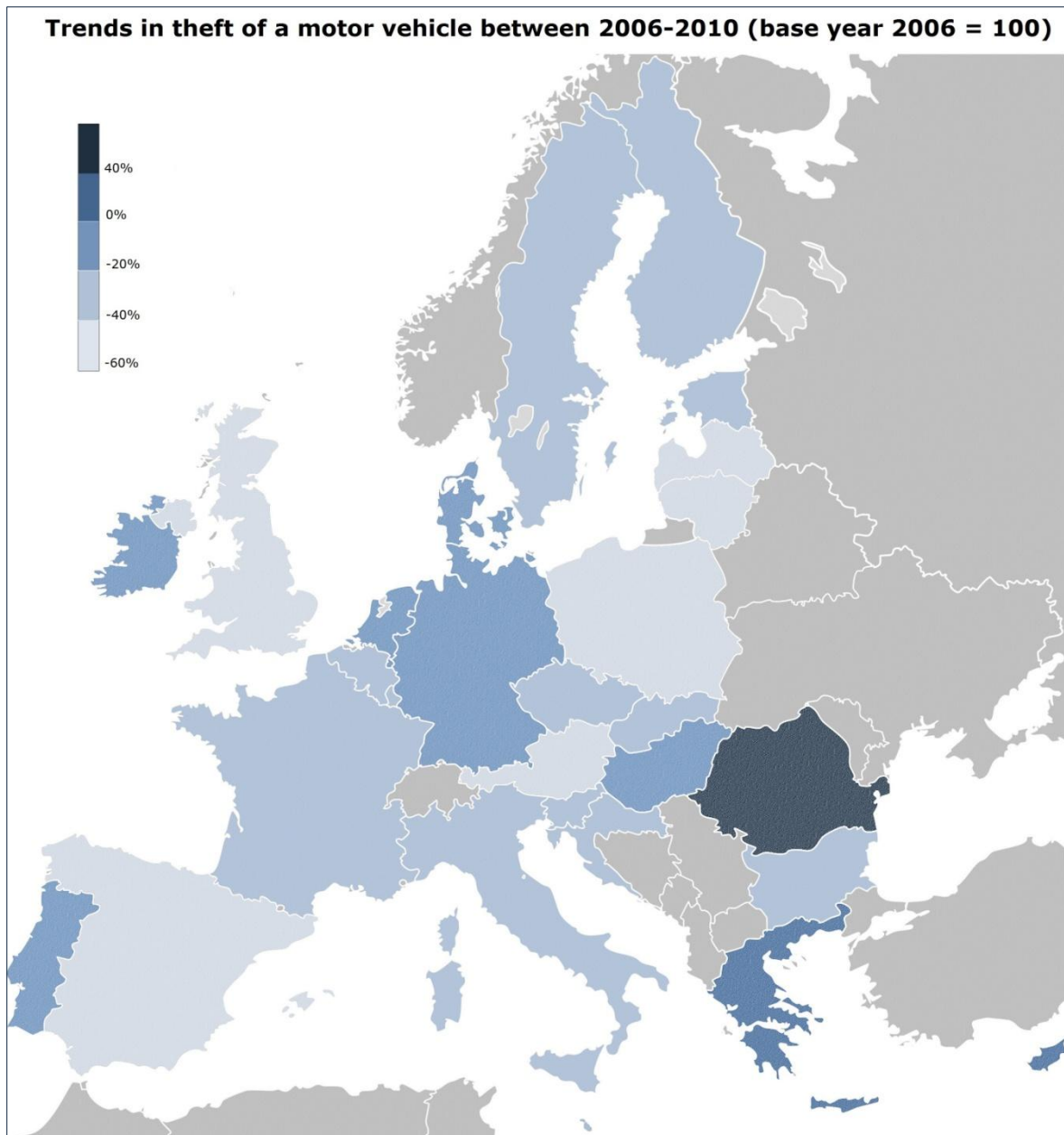


Figure 3: Trends in theft of a motor vehicle between 2006-2010 (base year 2006 = 100)
 Source Statistics in focus 2013, Eurostat – own calculations

The definition of theft of a motor vehicle of Eurostat covers thefts of cars, motorcycles, buses, lorries, construction and agricultural vehicles. The number of thefts of a motor vehicle has declined steadily in recent years. Clarke (2013) indicates that perhaps this could be partly the result of technical improvements in automobile security systems. Vehicle theft decreased by about 21% on average in the EU in the period 2006 to 2010. In figure 3, it can be observed that the largest decreases were recorded in Latvia, Austria, Spain, United Kingdom (England & Wales) and Poland. Whereas some Member States reported substantial increases, the largest was found in Greece and Cyprus (over 35%) and in Romania (with fewer cars per head than any other EU Member State but with doubled theft figures since 2006).

3.2. Crimes against the person and violent crime

The second crime prevention policy priority identified in the previous monitor report (EUCPN, 2012b) was crime against the person. More than one third of the Member States that identified their main crime problems and priorities in crime prevention considered crimes against the person as one of their three most prominent crime problems. It concerns Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Poland (domestic violence) and the United Kingdom. Not one of those countries, however, indicated this as their number one prominent crime problem. Crimes against the person are also considered by one third of the EU Member States as one of their three priorities in crime prevention policy. It concerns Belgium (domestic violence), Spain, Ireland (their listed priorities did not accorded any relative priority), Luxembourg and Poland (domestic violence).

Crimes against the person and violent crimes are often interrelated. For example, the definition of violent crime Eurostat is using, includes violence against the person (such as physical assault), but also robbery (stealing by force or threat of force) and sexual offences (including rape and sexual assault). Violent crime was indicated as a priority by Belgium, Finland, Lithuania and the Netherlands (armed robbery) and as a prominent crime problem in Romania (robbery).

Detailed analysis of this type of crime is more difficult because not all Member States use the same standard definition. However, the general trends show a decline in the EU of about 3% for the period 2006-2010 in the number of these violent offences reported to the police. At country level, the picture is mixed, with a significant increase (between 20-40%) in Ireland, Hungary, Denmark and Luxembourg and most notable declines in Lithuania and Latvia (33% and 49% respectively).

- **Homicide**

Homicide is defined by Eurostat as the intentional killing of a person, including murder, manslaughter, euthanasia and infanticide. It excludes death by dangerous driving, abortion and help with suicide. Unlike other crime types, homicide is fairly consistently reported and definitions vary less between the different Member States. In some countries however, the police register any death that cannot immediately be attributed to other causes, as homicide (Clarke, 2013). Therefore, homicide can be overrepresented in the statistics.

Figure 4 below shows that in the EU Member States homicide rates vary between less than one to almost eight victims per 100 000 inhabitants per year for the period 2008-2010. The highest rates were recorded in Lithuania (7,70 victims/100 000) and Estonia (5,57 victims/100 000), although in both countries the homicide rates have been strongly decreasing for years now. The lowest numbers were recorded in Austria (0,58 victims/100 000) and Slovenia (0,56 victims/100 000).

With the exceptions of Denmark, Greece and Malta, who recorded an increase, all Member States recorded a decrease in their homicide rates. In the Netherlands, the situation remained the same compared to the period 2005-2007.

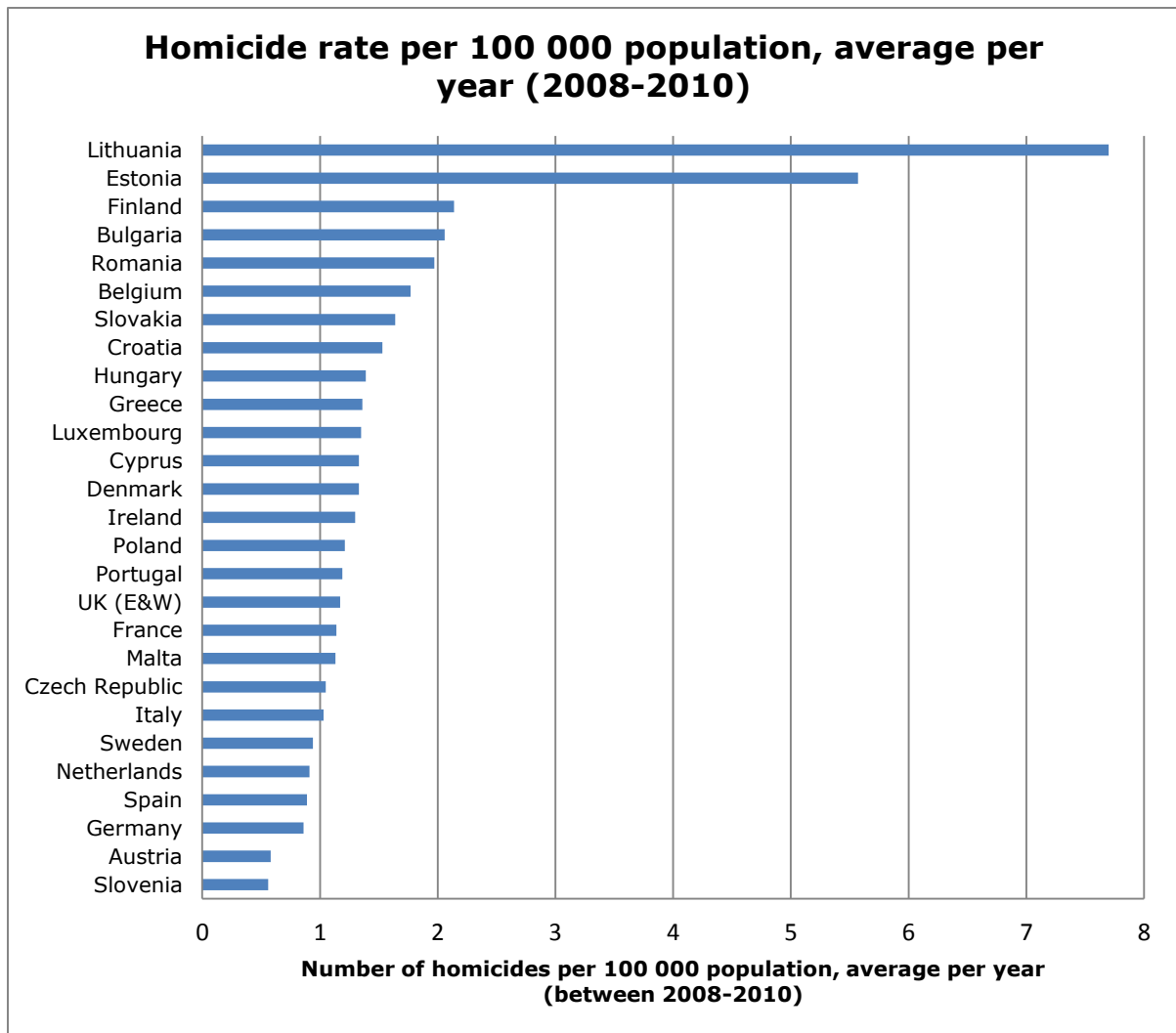


Figure 4: Homicide rate per 100 000 population, average per year (2008-2010)
 Statistics in focus 2013, Eurostat

○ **Robbery**

ICVS 2005 defines robbery as (trying to) steal something from someone using force or threatening to use force. According to Van Dijk, Van Kesteren and Smith (2007), robbery is a typical manifestation of urban crime that is therefore much more prevalent in larger cities than in rural areas. Robbery rates in the capital cities are significantly higher than in the Member State as a whole, with the exceptions of Athens, Dublin & Stockholm. The one-year prevalence victimisation rate varies from 0,3% to 2,2% (up to 7,5% for five year prevalence rates) in the EU Member States, and between 0,7% and 3,3% in the capital cities.

The lowest prevalence and incidence victimisation rates in the Member States were recorded in Austria, Germany, Finland and Italy, while the lowest prevalence victimisation rates for capital cities were recorded in Athens, Stockholm and Rome. The highest one-year prevalence rate was recorded in Ireland, whereas the highest five-year prevalence rate was recorded in Estonia. The highest one-year prevalence rates for the capital cities were recorded in Warsaw (Poland) and Tallinn (Estonia).

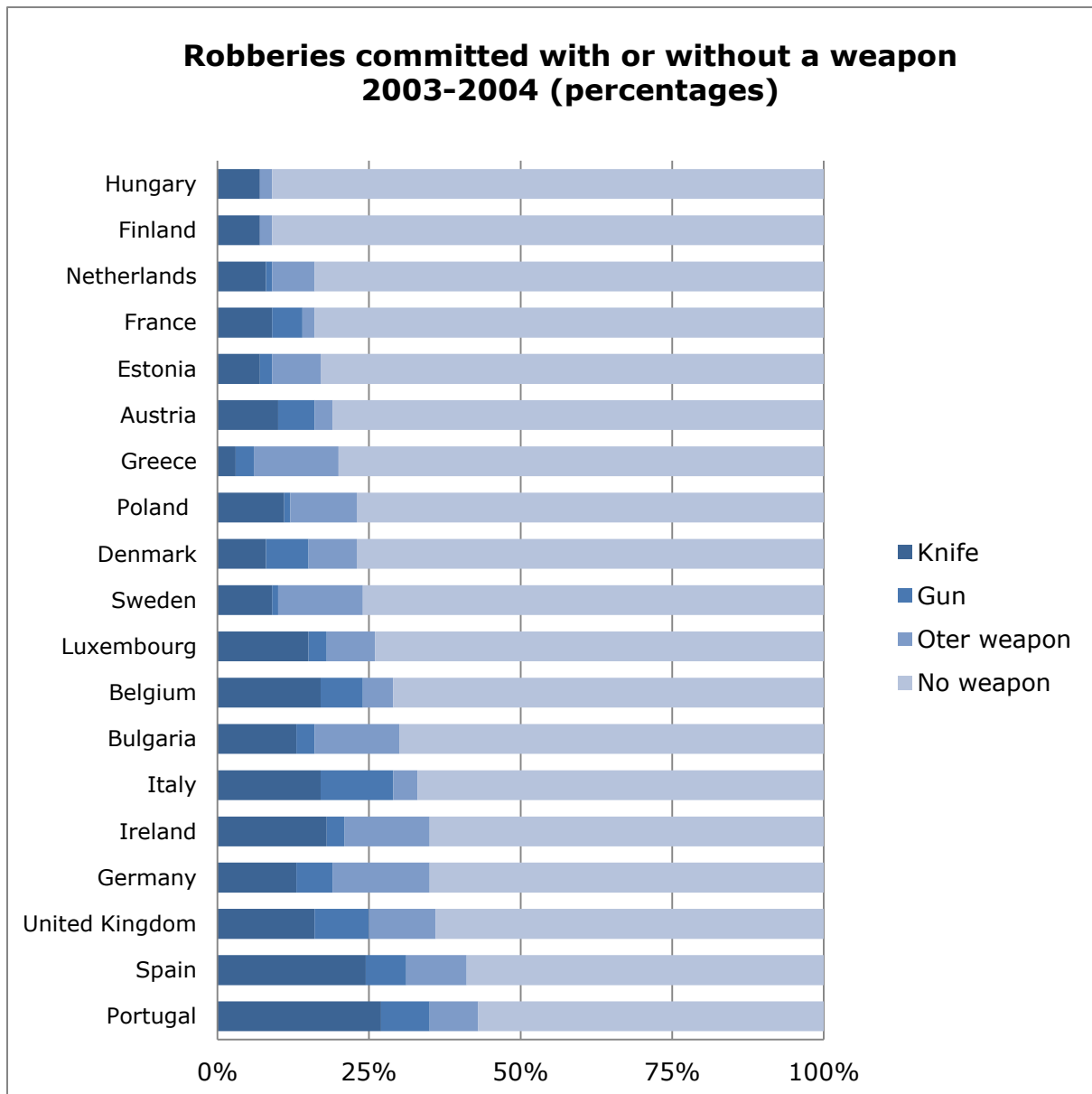


Figure 5: Robberies committed with or without a weapon 2003-2004 (percentages)
Source: International Crime Victimization Survey 2005 – own calculations

Figure 5 shows that in all of the EU countries included in the survey, robberies committed in 2003-2004 generally did not involve a weapon. On average, only in one fourth of the robbery cases a weapon was used, generally a knife. In almost half of the cases of armed robbery a knife was the most common weapon. Nevertheless, in Germany, Bulgaria, Sweden, Greece and Estonia other weapons besides a knife or a gun were the most common weapon of choice.

Obviously, these figures are a decade old and the situation on the use of weapons might be different today. For example, The Netherlands indicated in the previous monitor report (EUCPN, 2012b) that the prevention of armed robberies is their number one policy priority.

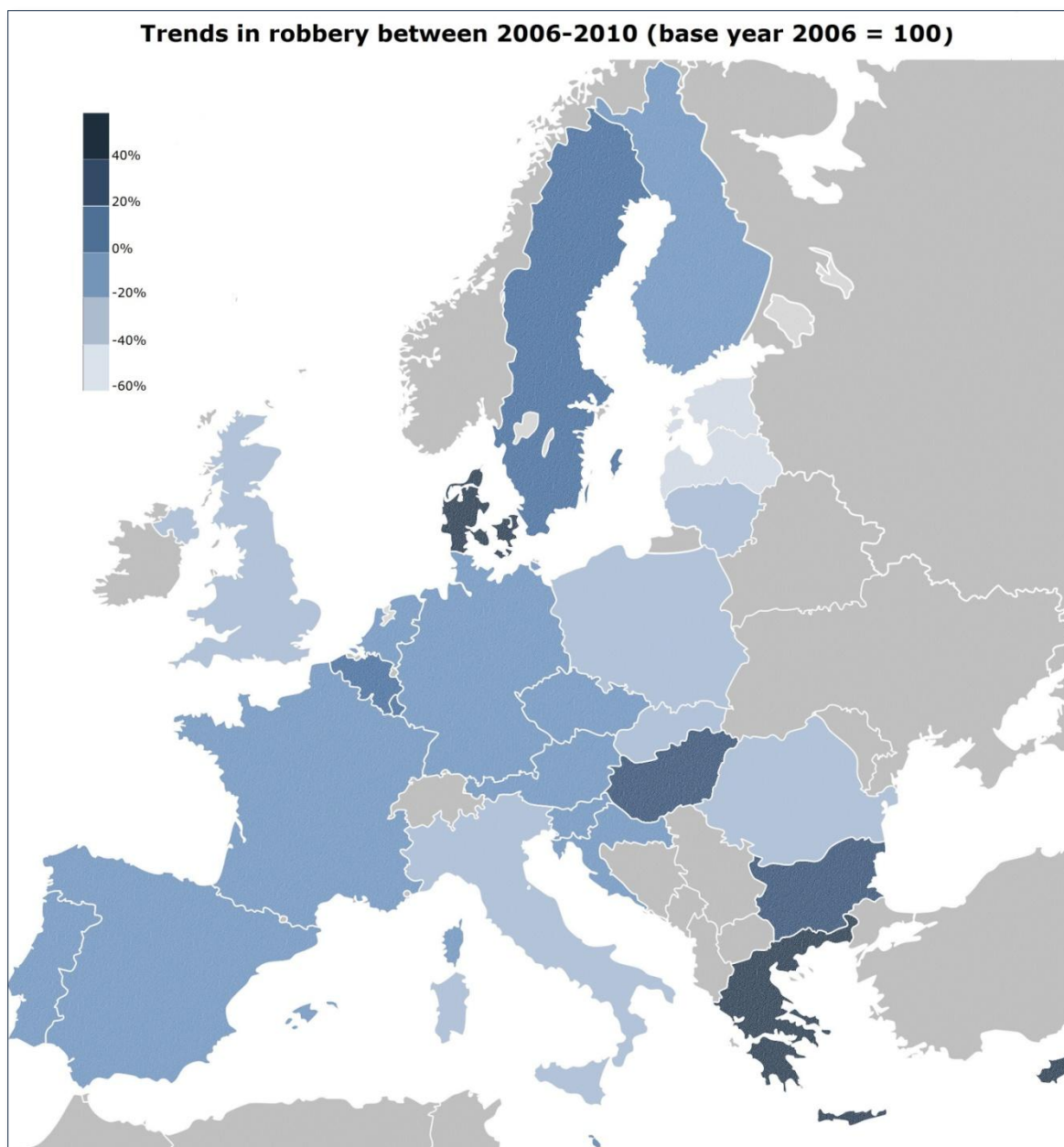


Figure 6: Trends in robbery between 2006-2010 (base year 2006 = 100)
 Source: Statistics in focus 2013, Eurostat – own calculations

Eurostat uses a similar definition for robbery but also includes muggings (bagsnatching) and theft with violence. Pickpocketing, extortion and blackmailing are generally excluded. Unfortunately, no distinction is made between armed and non-armed robbery.

Looking at the EU as a whole, police recorded robbery offences have dropped by about 11% since 2006. Nevertheless, as can be observed in figure 6, significant rises were reported in some Member States, particularly in Cyprus, Greece and Denmark (where the figures more than doubled). In contrast, there were sharp drops in Italy, Poland, Lithuania, Romania, Estonia and Latvia (decrease of more than 30%). Despite this large drop in the period 2006-2010, Romania was one of the Member States, together with the Netherlands, that identified robbery as their second most prominent crime problem in the previous monitor report (EUCPN, 2012b).

- **Sexual crimes**

The ICVS 2005 defines sexual crimes as grabbing, touching or assaulting others for sexual reasons in a really offensive way and makes the distinction between sexual crimes against men and women. Compared to other crime types, it is even more difficult to measure sexual crime because the rates of victimisation of sexual offences are less stable over time and the perception of unacceptable sexual behaviour varies widely across the Member States (Van Dijk, Van Kesteren & Smith, 2007). Van Dijk, Van Kesteren and Smith (2007) suggest that a possible explanation of the observed link between gender equality and victimisation of sexual offences in some Member States, for example in Sweden, may be that women in those countries perhaps have the tendency to report sexual offences more easily, especially when it concerns minor sexual incidents.

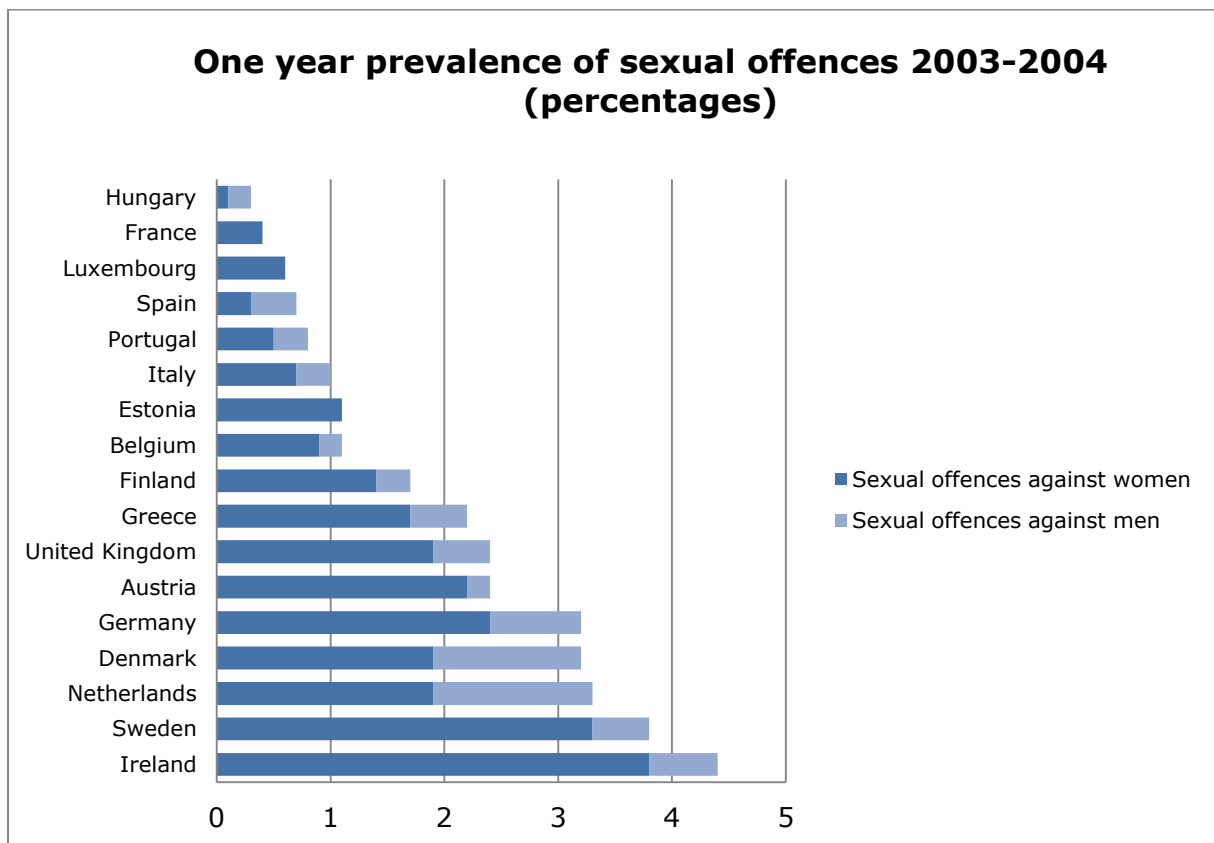


Figure 7: One year prevalence of sexual offences 2003-2004 (percentages)
 Source: International Crime Victimization Survey 2005 – own calculations

First of all, victimisation of sexual offences tends to be low in Europe. The proportion of people indicating that they have been a victim of sexual offences in 2003-2004 is less than 5% in all European Member States.

As would be expected, sexual offences against men were less reported than sexual offences against women. They range between 0% and 1,4% (up to 5,3% for five-year prevalence victimisation rates), while sexual offences against women range between 0,1% and 3,8% (up to 7,5% for five-year prevalence victimisation rates). The highest prevalence and incidence victimisation rates for sexual offences against men were recorded in the Netherlands and Denmark. Greece scored the highest for five-year prevalence victimisation rates while they only score average for one-year prevalence and incidence victimisation rates. No cases of sexual offences against men (one-year

prevalence rates) were recorded in Estonia, France and Luxembourg. France also scores the lowest for five-year prevalence victimisation while Luxembourg scores above average for this. Beside the fact that sexual offences against men are probably less common, men might encounter more barriers to actually report them, possibly leading to an underestimation of these figures.

In the ICVS 2005, sexual crimes were also further divided into sexual assaults (i.e. incidents described as rape, attempted rape and indecent assaults) and incidents of a less serious nature (i.e. just offensive). The first were less commonly recorded than the latter. In general, one-year prevalence victimisation rates for sexual assaults against women ranged between 0% and 1,3% across the EU, while the number of other sexual incidents of less serious nature ranged between 0,1% and 3%.

- **Assaults and threats**

In the ICVS 2005, assaults and threats measure whether respondents were personally attacked or threatened by someone in a way that really frightened them, at home or elsewhere. These figures do not include the sexual assaults.

One-year prevalence victimisation rates vary between 0,8% and 5,4% (and up to 14% for five-year prevalence victimisation rates). High scores were found in the United Kingdom, Ireland and the Netherlands, while low scores were found in Italy, Portugal, Hungary and Bulgaria. The ICVS 2010 shows similar results.

In general, there are not as many assaults and threats with a weapon involved (on average almost 14% in the whole of the EU) compared to robbery (where the average was around 25%, as shown in figure 5 above). On the other hand, a weapon is more often used for this type of assault than for sexual offences against women (on average less than 3%).

3.3. Drugs

Drug use is also highly listed as a priority in crime prevention policy. One out of five participating Member States considered this as one of their three most prominent crime problems or policy priorities. Cyprus and Luxembourg identified drug use as one of their three most prominent crime problems and considered it as one of their prevention policy priorities as well. Finland acknowledged it as a prominent crime problem, although it was not mentioned as a priority in their policy making, while Austria indicated addiction as an important priority in policy (EUCPN, 2012b).

3.3.1. Use of illegal drugs

- **Cannabis**

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) asked respondents to indicate whether or not they used cannabis during their life, in the past 12 months and/or in the last 30 days. For cannabis use, it is important to note that the measures adopted by the EU Member States to control the use of cannabis at national level vary considerably. For example in the Netherlands, the investigation and prosecution of possession of cannabis for personal use (up to 5g) have the lowest judicial

priority, whereas Sweden has a zero-tolerance approach to cannabis use and users are usually fined.⁹

The lifetime prevalence cannabis use in the Member States of the EU in the age group of 15-64 year olds (adults) varies a lot, from less than 2% in Romania to almost one third of the population in Denmark. The last month prevalence of cannabis use, on the other hand, varies from 0,1% in Romania to 7% in Spain. The Member States with the highest/lowest numbers of lifetime prevalence cannabis user adults usually also score relatively high/low for last 12 months and last 30 days prevalence of cannabis use.

Member States with high percentages of cannabis users (lifetime, last year and last month) are France, Spain, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Member States with low percentages of cannabis users are Greece, Malta and Romania. The figures are slightly different for Denmark: while they have the highest percentage of lifetime prevalence cannabis use in comparison to other Member States, the last year and last month prevalence is low. In other words, in Denmark there are more people who indicated that they have used cannabis at some point in the past but not in the past 12 months. Denmark shows, what is called, *low continuation rates*. Poland on the other hand, has an average lifetime of cannabis use, while they have among the highest percentages of last year prevalence and last month prevalence of cannabis use. Poland has *high continuation rates*. The continuation rate provides information on the proportion of people that has used cannabis in the past and *continued* to use it in the last 12 months. The continuation rate of last month prevalence of cannabis use ranges within the Member States from 6,3% to almost 31%, which rises to almost 55% for last year continuation rate. Member States with high last month continuation rates are Cyprus, Belgium, Spain and Poland and Member States with low last month continuation rates are Denmark, Italy, Romania and Sweden.

The data of the EMCDDA indicate that in the age category '15-64 years old', especially the youngest adults used cannabis the last 12 months and the last 30 days before the survey. Figure 8 below shows the lifetime prevalence of cannabis use among students across the EU.

⁹ For more information on the legal status of cannabis when used or cultivated/possessed for personal use in the different countries, see <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/legal-topic-overviews/cannabis-possession-for-personal-use>.

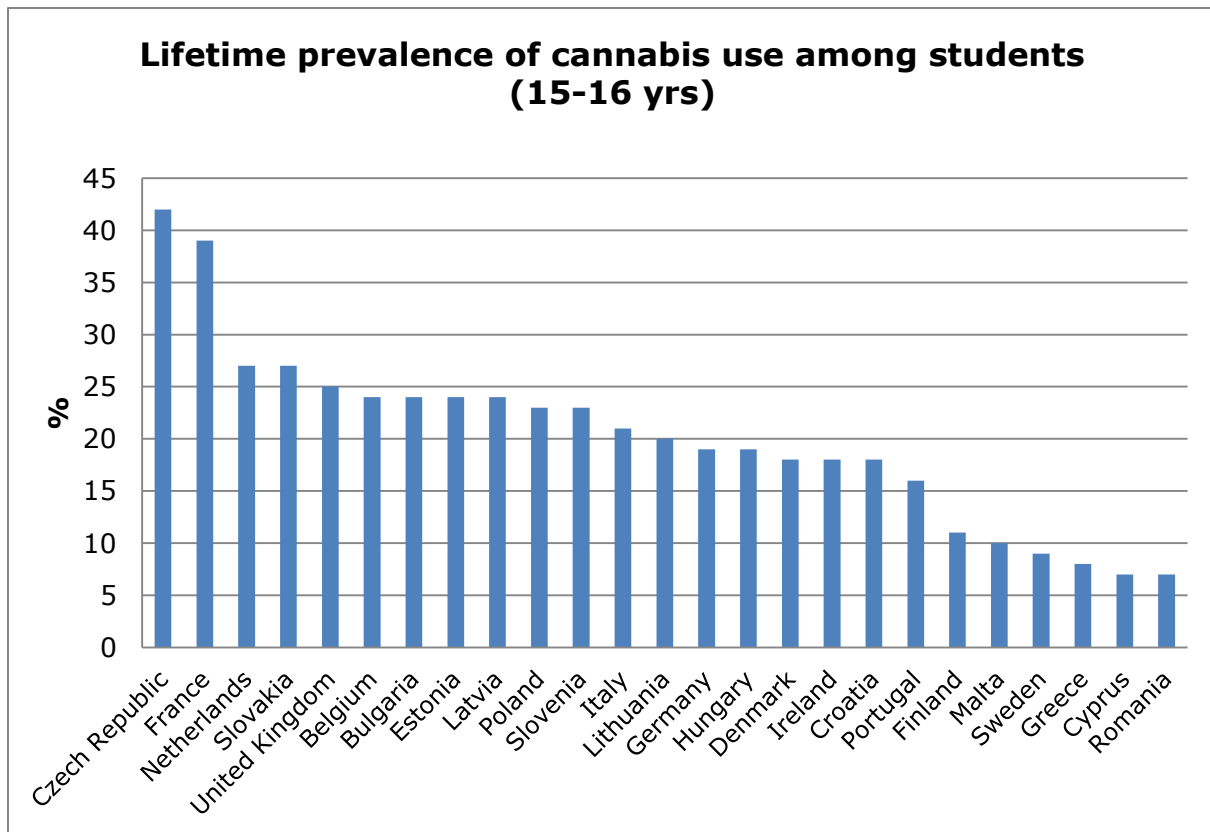


Figure 8: Lifetime prevalence of cannabis use among students (15-16 yrs)
Source: Statistical bulletin 2013, EMCDDA – own calculations

In the ESPAD report of 2011, a lifetime prevalence rate of cannabis use for 15-16 year olds was found which ranged from 7% up to 42%, while the last month prevalence ranged from 2% to 24% of the people in the same age group. The highest prevalence rates of cannabis use were recorded in Czech Republic and France, while the lowest rates were found in Finland, Malta, Sweden, Greece, Cyprus and Romania.

The Czech Republic and France, together with the United Kingdom, also had the highest number of respondents that had used cannabis for the first time at the age of 13 or before, and the highest number of respondents that used cannabis more than 40 times during their lifetime (together with the Netherlands). The lowest number of respondents that used this drug for the first time at the age of 13 was found in Greece, Romania, Finland and Sweden (1%). The proportion of respondents who used cannabis more than 40 times during their lifetime varies across the Member States between 0% and 8%, the lowest being in Romania (0%).

Easy access to drugs is perceived the highest in the Czech Republic, where almost 60% of the 15-16 year old respondents indicated it was very or fairly easy for them to get cannabis. These figures are followed by those in the Netherlands and Slovenia, where 45% of the youngsters say it is (very or fairly) easy to obtain cannabis. In comparison, in Romania, where the lowest percentages of (lifetime) cannabis use were recorded, only 13% of the respondents believed that it was very or fairly easy to get cannabis. In Cyprus and Finland, who also have low percentages of cannabis use, almost one fifth of the respondents believed they could get the drug easily, while this is the case for one fourth of the respondents in Sweden and Greece.

- **Other illegal drugs**

Figure 9 below shows the lifetime prevalence of drug use among all adults (15-64 years) across the EU.

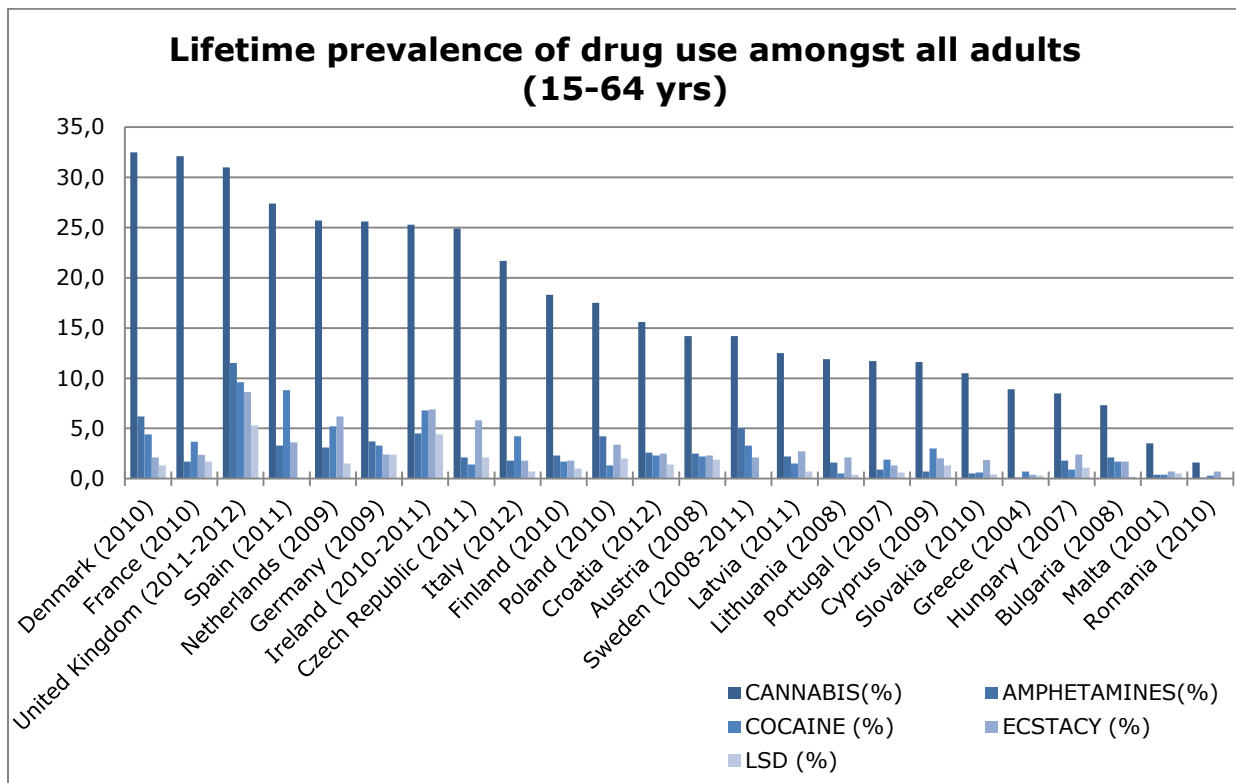


Figure 9: Lifetime prevalence of drug use amongst all adults (15-64 yrs)
 Source: Statistical bulletin 2013, EMCDDA – own calculations

In comparison with cannabis use, the data of EMCDDA indicate that the prevalence rates for other drugs (cocaine, amphetamines, ecstasy and LSD) are much lower. The lifetime prevalence rate of these other drug types for the age group 15-64 year ranges between less than 1% and never exceeds 12%. The highest lifetime prevalence rates that could be detected in the Member States for these drugs range between 5,3% for LSD and 11,5% for amphetamines (both recorded in the United Kingdom). The highest one-month prevalence rate never exceeds 1,1% (last month prevalence of cocaine use in Spain).

Some countries reported high/low lifetime prevalence use for multiple drug types. Member States that score above average for all other illegal drug types are the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Netherlands and Spain. Romania, Malta and Greece on the other hand always reported very low numbers. High continuation rates can be found in Poland, Bulgaria and Cyprus and low continuation rates are recorded, for example, in Greece. Some Member States have very high continuation rates for one type of drug and very low continuation rates for the others, e.g., Malta has a last 12 month continuation rate of 75% for cocaine use, but lower continuation rates for the other drug types.

Differences between the different age groups are also less evident than for cannabis use. According to the ESPAD report 2011, lifetime prevalence percentages for the age group of 15-16 year range between 1% and 7% (up to 28% for inhalants/volatile substances) in the different EU Member States. This is in contrast to cannabis use in this age group, which varied between 7% and 42% (cfr. supra).

Also according to the ESPAD report of 2011, lifetime prevalence drug use of students aged 15-16 is the highest for cannabis, followed by inhalants/volatile substances. Exceptions here were recorded in Cyprus, Croatia, Greece, Malta and Sweden, where more use of inhalants/ volatile substances were recorded. The use of amphetamines, ecstasy, cocaine, LSD and other hallucinogens follow. Heroin is used the least.¹⁰

The prevalence of problematic drug use is defined by the EMCDDA as injecting drug use or long duration/regular use of opioids, cocaine and/or amphetamines. This definition does not include rare or irregular use nor the use of other drugs, such as ecstasy or cannabis. When measuring problematic drug use, there are several comparability issues due to e.g., different methods that are used in the Member States to produce prevalence estimations. Prevalence estimates of overall problem drug use vary between two and around ten cases per 1000 population aged 15-64 in the last available studies (2006-2011). More specifically for problem opioid use, the estimates vary between less than one and around eight cases per 1 000 population and the estimates of the prevalence of injecting drug use range between one and around five cases per 1000 population.

3.3.2. Drug law offences

Drug law offences have increased by approximately 18% in the EU between 2006 and 2010.

As shown in figure 10 below, especially drug law offences related to amphetamine have increased (+43%), but also offences related to cocaine (+21%) and cannabis (+24%). For other drug types, like ecstasy and heroin, the number of law offences has generally decreased in this period in the EU (-64% and -5% respectively). The drug type that is most recorded in drug law offences in EU Member States in 2010/2011 is cannabis (77%), followed by cocaine (10%), amphetamine and heroin (6%) and ecstasy (1%). Between 25% (Latvia) and 88% (France) of the drug law offences in the Member States were related to cannabis. Only in Latvia and Czech Republic more drug law offences were linked more to methamphetamines than to cannabis, and in Malta more drug law offences were linked to cocaine than to cannabis. LSD and crack were least connected to drug law offences.

In most EU Member States, drug law offences are primarily linked to use-related offences (with an average of 2/3 of the offences). Romania has the lowest percentage of use-related offences (6,9%), and Spain the highest percentage (94,3%). In the Czech Republic, Italy and Romania there are more supply-related than use-related offences. Percentages of supply-related offences range between 5,1% (Finland) and 65,2% (Czech Republic). Both use-related offences as supply-related offences have increased between 2006-2010 in the EU (use-related offences with 15% and supply-related offences with 26%).

¹⁰ For more information on youths at risks for legal highs, i.e. new psychoactive substances used as alternatives to illicit drugs, see the Eurobarometer 2011 on youth attitudes on drugs: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_330_en.pdf.

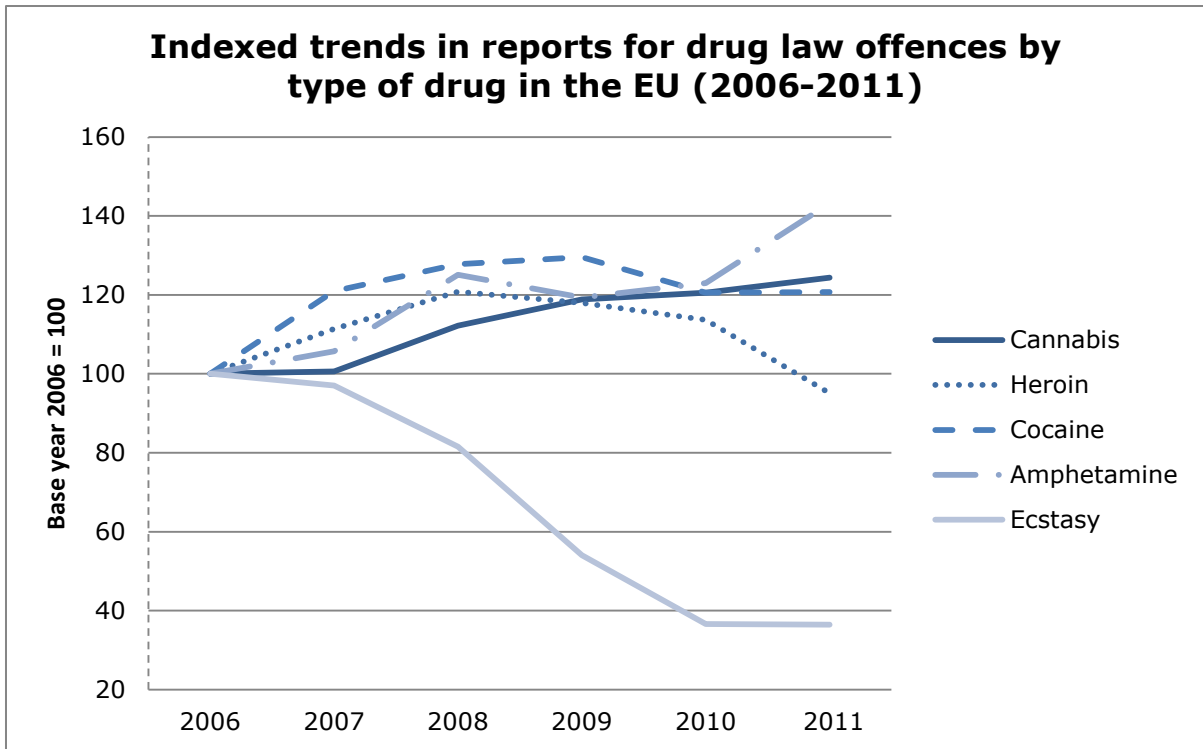


Figure 10: Indexed trends in reports for drug law offences by type of drug in the EU (2006-2011)
 Source: Statistical bulletin 2013, EMCDDA

4. Conclusion

This monitor report focused on some of the crime types which are currently prioritised by the Member States and which were identified in the previous Monitor (EUCPN, 2012b), including crimes against the property, crimes against the person and violent crime and drug use. In order to do so, this monitor report summarized some of the findings of the International Crime Victimization Survey (ICVS), Eurostat, the Statistical Bulletin 2013 from the European Monitoring Centre for Drug and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) and the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD).

The first part of the report focused on property related crimes, i.e. theft and burglaries. While most of the crime types described by Eurostat decreased on the EU level between 2006-2010, an increase was recorded for domestic burglary, with the highest rise in Greece (+92%). Even Member States, such as Luxemburg, that had a significant decrease between 2006-2010, indicated in the previous monitor a reversed trend (2010-2011). Suggestions have been made that this upward trend may be linked to the current economic situation and the financial crises. The ICVS 2005 identified that almost two thirds of the Member States recorded more succeeded burglaries than attempts. Recorded theft of motor vehicles, on the other hand, has steadily fallen since 2006. Clarke (2013) partly explains this as a result of technical improvements in vehicle theft deterrents.

The second part of the monitor focused on crimes against the person and violent crimes, and provided information on homicide, robbery, sexual crimes and assaults and threats. In most of the Member States, a decrease in homicide rates was recorded between 2006 and 2010. Despite a strong decrease for years now, the rates recorded for Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia are still two to four times higher than other Member States. Also for robbery, a drop of about 11% was recorded between 2006 and 2010. Nevertheless, some Member States reported significant rises, sometimes even a doubling of the number of robberies. The ICVS 2005 indicated that only in one fourth of the robbery cases a weapon was used. In almost half of these armed robbery cases the weapon of choice was a knife.

In general, there are not as many assaults and threats with a weapon involved (on average 14% in the whole of the EU) compared to robbery (where the average was around 25%). On the other hand, a weapon is more often used for this type of assault than for sexual offences against women (on average less than 3%).

Sexual crimes can be divided into sexual assaults (i.e. incidents described as rape, attempted rape and indecent assaults) and incidents of a less serious nature (i.e. just offensive). Sexual assaults were less frequently reported than the incidents of a less serious nature. Also, as would be expected, more sexual crimes against women were reported compared to sexual crimes against men.

The last part of the monitor focused on drugs and was divided in a part on illegal drug use and a part on drug law offences. For cannabis use (aged 15-64), especially young adults (15-34 year olds) used cannabis, with the highest last year and last month prevalence rate for 15-24 year olds. Compared to cannabis use, prevalence rates for other drugs (cocaine, amphetamines, ecstasy and LSD) are much lower. After cannabis, amphetamine use was the highest, while LSD was least used. Overall in the EU, between two and around 10 cases per 1000 population aged 15-64 were considered problem drug

users. Drug law offences have increased by approximately almost one fifth in the EU between 2006 – 2010 and especially those related to amphetamines, cannabis and cocaine. Most of the offences were connected to use-related offences (compared to supply-related offences).

Data from Eurostat are available until 2010. These data are based on national police recorded crimes which suffer several limitations, (e.g., being more a sign of the policing efforts and priorities at a given time than the actual crime rate), making them therefore less reliable in cross-country comparisons. Nevertheless, they can give a good idea of the recorded crime trends in the EU Member States and they are a good measure for very serious crimes.

With the exception of the more severe crime types, victimisation surveys are often considered to be more reliable at assessing the level of stereotypic volume crimes, e.g., burglaries and petty theft. The ICVS shows that large-scale comparison is possible through standardised instruments and the use of common definitions. The funding on a global scale, however, remains a problem and that is why the most recent data of the ICVS for 19 EU Member States dates back to 2003/2004 (or 2010 for only five Member States). Therefore, unfortunately, new evolutions in crime trends, for example due to the economic situation and the financial crisis as sometimes suggested with the increase of the crime rates related to burglary, are not yet taken into account. Eurostat did some preparatory work on a future standardised European Safety Survey (SASU), but until now no support has been given to collect valuable and comparable cross-national victimisation data at the European level.

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Annex: Summary characteristics of the data used

	EMCDDA – Statistical Bulletin 2013	ESPAD Report 2011	Eurostat – Statistics in focus 2013	ICVS 2005 and 2010
Institution conducting the study	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)	Researchers	Eurostat	Researchers
Funding organisation	European Commission	The Swedish Ministry of Health and Social affairs, the EMCDDA and the Pompidou Group at the Council of Europe	European Commission	European Commission
Main focus	Self-reported data and police records on drug use in the EU	Self-reported data on substance use among 15-16 year old students	Police records	Victim data
Methodology	Quantitative	Quantitative	Quantitative	Quantitative
Delinquency measured	Prevalence and population estimates, infectious diseases and deaths, treatment demand and health and social responses and crime, seizures and market data	The survey covers the fields of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug use	Total crime, homicide, violent crime, robbery, domestic burglary, theft of a motor vehicle and drug trafficking	Car theft, theft from a car, theft of motorcycles, bicycle theft, burglary, attempted burglary, robbery, theft of personal property, sexual incidents and assaults and threats
Measurements	Self-reported surveys, police records,...	Self-reported surveys	Recorded crime, police officers and prison population	Victimisation data, fear of crime, crime prevention measures
Geographical coverage	30 countries, including the 28 Member States	In 2011, in total 39 countries collected data, whereof 25 were Member States of the EU	Data collection covers the current 27 EU Member States; candidate and potential candidate countries: Albania, Croatia, Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey; European Free Trade	2000 persons had been interviewed in most countries and 800 in main cities (over the years 140 surveys have been conducted with more than 320,000 citizens in 78 different countries)

			Association/European Economic Area (EFTA/EEA) countries: Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Liechtenstein; Russian Federation; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries: Canada, Japan, New Zealand, USA, South Africa	
Sample	Differs in every country	Differs in every country		1989, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004/2005 and 2010 pilot
Frequency	Annual	Every four years	Annual	
Key publication		HIBELL, B., GUTTORMSSON, U., AHLSTRÖM, S., BALAKIREVA, O., THORODDUR, B., KOKKEVI, A. & KRAUS, L. (2012). <i>The 2011 ESPAD Report: substance use among students in 36 European Countries</i> . Sweden: The Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAN). http://www.espad.org/Uploads/ESPAD_reports/2011/The_2011_ESPAD_Report_FULL_2012_10_29.pdf , 390p.	CLARKE, S. (2013). <i>Crime and criminal justice. Statistics in focus, 18/2013</i> . European Union. http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-13-018/EN/KS-SF-13-018-EN.PDF	VAN DIJK, J., VAN KESTEREN, J. & SMIT, P. (2007). <i>Criminal victimisation in international perspective, key findings from the 2004-2005 ICVS and EU ICS</i> . Den Hague: Boom Juridische Uitgevers. http://www.crimevictimsurvey.eu/Products/Archive/ICVS_5_2004_5
Website	http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/stats12	http://www.espad.org/	http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database	http://www.crimevictimsurvey.eu/