

## 6.2 STRUCTURE OF CRIME IN PRAGUE

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Research on various types of crime or selected criminal offences at larger territorial unit level was conducted by European cartographic school of criminology as early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Research at city level consisted mainly of ethnographic studies, e.g. Mayhew (1861 [2009]) studied London underworld, Thrasher (1927 [2013]) analysed youth gangs. More extensive analyses of patterns and distribution of various criminal offences are associated with the Chicago School. However, major development took place only later, in the context of social problems associated with an increase in crime in the 60s. Phillips (1972, cit. in Smith 1986, p. 6) on the example of US cities pointed to the declining incidence of certain criminal offences towards the outskirts (car theft, robbery, burglary) and to the existence of specific territorial clusters of e.g. rape, property crime or pickpocketing. Smith (1986) followed up on his work and identified a higher concentration of thefts, burglaries, robberies and sexual harassment in the inner city. Environmental criminology research highlighted the search for links and causes of the spatial distribution of crime, the importance of social and physical environment, social ties and the specifics of city development.

Research on the spatial distribution of crime within Prague has not been given much attention. A study on robbery in Prague was published only in the 90s (Osmančík 1992). The number of publications has since increased with the majority of them being overview studies on the structure of crime (e.g. Marešová and Scheinost 2001), studies focused on a selected criminal offence (e.g. robbery in Prague, Rozum et al. 2005) or on crime victims (Martinková 2002). Although these studies provide a wealth of valuable information, most of them lack spatial aspect with the exception of studies by Čermák (2008), Karban (2009) or Temelová et al. (2012). At the same time, there is new research into crime in various residential areas of Prague, e.g. in the centre and inner city (Jíchová and Temelová 2012a, b).

The aim of the map sheet is to assess spatial differentiation and changes in recorded crime structure in Prague in 1995–2013. The classification of crime is taken from the tactical and statistical classification used by the police with an emphasis on general crime<sup>1</sup> consisting of violent and property crime and their detailed structure. The maps use classic crime indices (number of recorded criminal offences per number of inhabitants), detection (share of criminal offences in which the identity of the perpetrator is known) and typologies based on the indices from the 90s to the present time. The assessment covers differences between local police departments (hereinafter LPD) and city zones defined on the basis of residential buildings in accordance with the typology of Ouředníček et al. (2012) (see map sheet section B 9.2 Typology of residential areas).

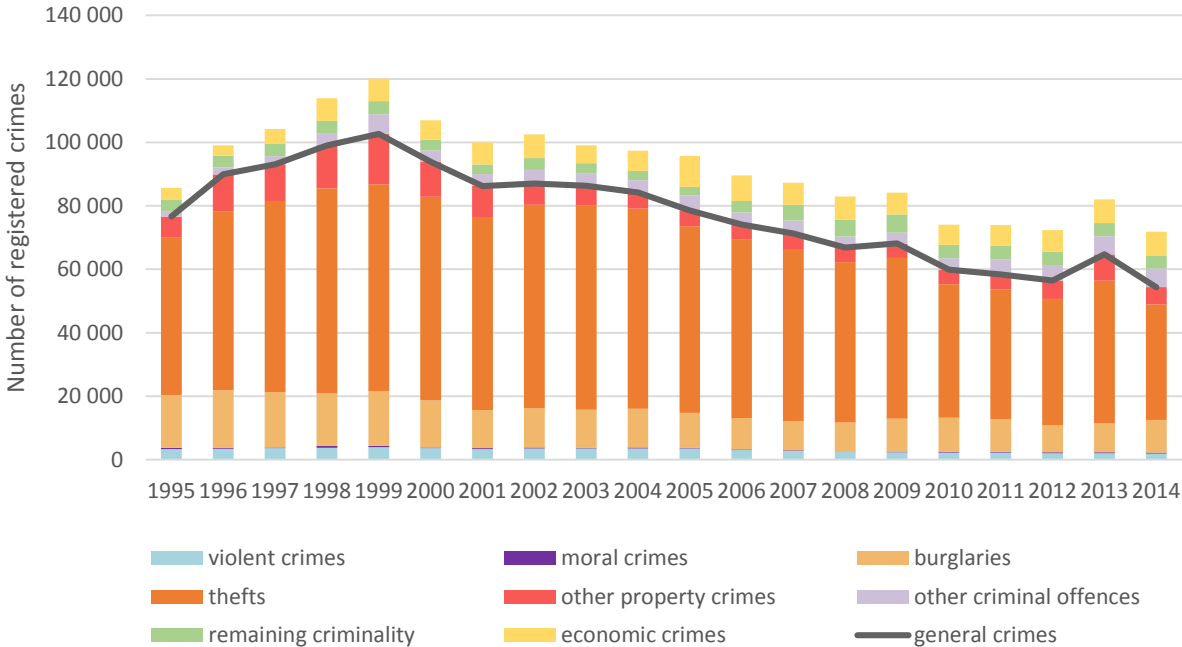
The data is primarily acquired from the Czech Police Presidium statistics (Statistical Recording System of Crime) covering the period from 1995 to the present time. The statistics include only recorded crime which may differ substantially from the real

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<sup>1</sup> General crime includes violent and property crimes and crime against morality.

situation. In the case of certain criminal offences, the undetected (latent) crime may constitute up to 70% (see also Marešová and Scheinost 2001). High latency is mainly associated with theft since it represents a significant part of overall crime rate and thus has a considerable influence on it (see also Marešová 2006). Crime statistics are also influenced by other circumstances such as statistical data processing and the way police record criminal offences. For example, a series of car thefts is sometimes recorded as one, sometimes as more criminal offences (Marešová 2006). Another differentiating factor are legislative changes, e.g. in 2002 the threshold for property crimes increased from 2500 CZK to 5000 CZK, in 2006 driving without a licence became a criminal offence (see also Marešová 2006). Furthermore, there is a lack of continuous data regarding the population present in the city, which accounts for a significant part of the crime rate. Therefore, areas with a low number of residents, but a high number of people present are disadvantaged (e.g. city centre). A more detailed description of other problematic areas related to criminal data processing may be found in map list section B 6.1 Crime in Prague.

The evolution of the structure of crime is associated with society-wide changes after 1989. The structure of crime in Prague has changed considerably since 1995, as "new" types of criminal offences were gradually incorporated into legislation (computer crime, credit card fraud etc.). Thus, the number and share of other, remaining and economic criminal offences has risen since the 90s (see also Figure 6.2.1). On the other hand, there is a decrease in general crime index. Only several LPDs in the city centre and inner city (Libeň, Nusle, Pankrác or Smíchov) with a high share of property crime still have high values.



**Figure 6.2.1:** The evolution of crime structure in Prague

Source: Policejní prezidium, 1994–2014

Note: Other criminal offences includes criminal offences 901-903 in accordance with the tactical and statistical classification (military crime, war crime, crime against peace).

Since the 90s, violent and property crime index has been declining in Prague, which is particularly evident today. Both indices have highest values in the city centre and decrease towards the outskirts (see also Table 6.2.1). The concentration of crime in the city centre is mainly associated with close links between certain criminal offences and the presence of potentially suitable victims/targets, e.g. pickpocketing, robberies, car thefts or thefts from cars. The detection for violent and property crimes varies considerably. Despite a gradual decline, the average detection for violent crime is over 50% in every period, whereas for property crime it is less than 20%. The character of the crime plays an important role here, as violent crime is linked to personal contact with the perpetrator, whereas in property crime the contact is less common.

Zones of Prague	Violent crime index				Property crime index			
	1995–1998	2000–2003	2005–2008	2010–2013	1995–1998	2000–2003	2005–2008	2010–2013
City centre	11.7	12.2	10.0	5.7	307.3	306.0	248.0	187.2
Inner city	3.4	3.7	3.1	2.4	81.3	89.7	71.0	63.5
Outer city	2.8	2.5	2.1	1.4	65.3	57.0	48.6	34.4
Urban periphery	2.5	2.1	2.0	0.7	55.9	46.7	52.2	17.6
<b>Prague</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>86.7</b>	<b>83.6</b>	<b>69.0</b>	<b>49.8</b>

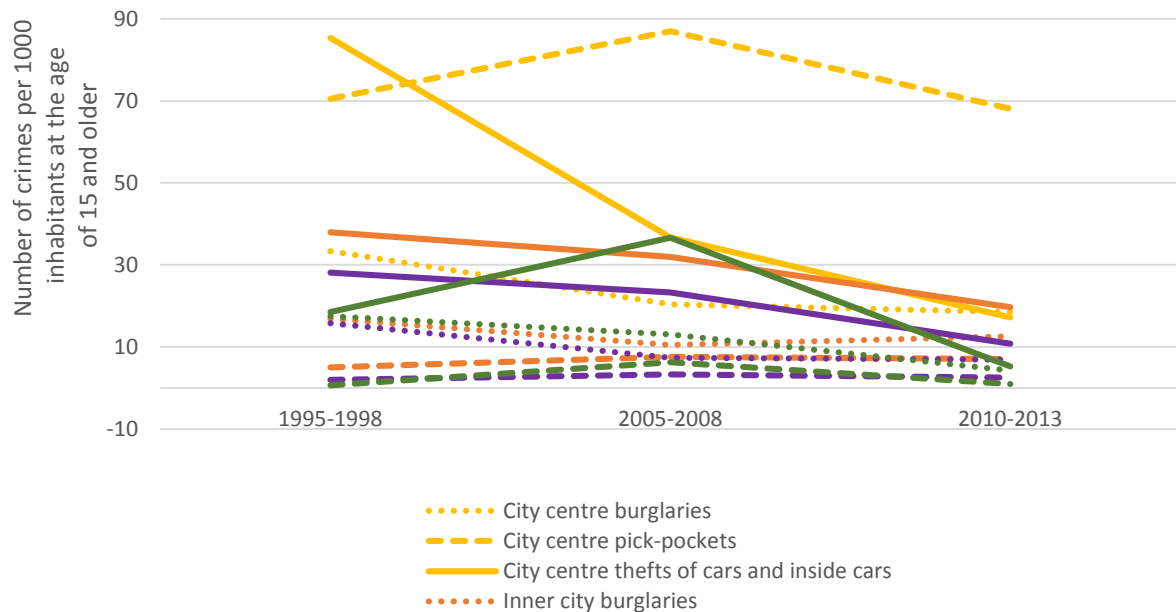
**Table 6.2.1:** *The evolution of violent and property crime index by city zones*

**Zdroj:** *Policejní prezidium, 1994–2014; ČSÚ, 1991, 2001, 2011*

*Note: The typology of city zones is adapted according to Ouředníček et al. (2012).*

Despite the generally declining rates, violent crime index undergoes a different evolution in each neighbourhood. While in the outer city and urban periphery LPDs a gradual decline may be observed throughout the whole period, in the centre and inner city (e.g. LPD Strašnice, Vysočany, Břevnov) the index increased at first. The index rate also reflects the change in the violent crime structure. A negative trend is evident in the increasing share of robberies in the inner and outer city when comparing 1995–8 to 2005–8 (LPD Libeň, Karlín, Kyje). In the current period, the numbers and shares have decreased, but the share of bodily harm with intent has increased. The increase in the share of dangerous threats and stalking may be related to the new categorization of stalking as a criminal offence. However, this will manifest itself to a greater extent in the coming years.

The evolution of property crime and its structure varies between the city zones with a major difference being between the inner city and urban periphery (see Table 6.2.1, Figure 6.2.2). Although burglaries have long been affecting the city centre, differences between the zones are gradually diminishing. A similar trend may be observed in car thefts and thefts from cars. While in the 90s there were huge differences between the city centre and other zones, the following period saw levelling of differences and currently the most affected area is the inner city (LPD Vršovice, Strašnice, Pankrác). In general, pickpocketing occurs primarily in areas with a higher concentration on people, i.e. in the city centre or LPDs with large shopping centres (e.g. LPD Letňany, Zličín).



**Figure 6.2.2:** The evolution of property crime in Prague's city zones

**Source:** Policejní prezidium, 1994–2014; ČSÚ, 1991, 2001, 2011

*Note:* The typology of city zones is adapted according to Ouředníček et al. (2012).

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