

Mate Hollosvolgyi
Szombathely National Prison, Hungary
probation officer
hollosvolgyi.mate@bv.gov.hu
Orcid/ResarchedID: 0000-0003-1074-847X

Possible Causes of Violent Crime According to the Experience of a Probation Officer

Možné příčiny násilných trestných činů na základě zkušeností probačního úředníka

Abstract

The number of violent crimes shows a downward tendency in a domestic context, which, according to the police, is attributed to the technical improvements in crime technology and more efficient forensic investigation. Low education and social status, as well as inadequate parental care and upbringing, are among the main determinants of deviance and violent crime, from which all acts that do not comply with social norms can be inferred and deduced. In my study, I explore the causes of violent crime by a review of the literature and available statistical data, as well as through the analysis of the educational background of prisoners under probation supervision.

Keywords: Probation, violent crime, level of education, deviance.

Abstrakt

Počet násilných trestných činů vykazuje v domácím kontextu klesající tendenci, což je podle policie přisuzováno odbornému zdokonalení kriminalistické techniky a efektivnějšímu forenznímu vyšetřování. Nízké vzdělání a sociální postavení, jakož i nedostatečná rodičovská péče a výchova patří mezi hlavní determinanty deviance a násilné trestné činnosti, z nichž lze vyvozovat a odvozovat veškeré činy, které nejsou v souladu se sociálními normami. Ve své studii zkoumám příčiny násilných trestných činů na základě přehledu literatury a dostupných statistických údajů, jakož i prostřednictvím analýzy vzdělávacího zázemí vězňů pod probačním dohledem.

Klíčová slova: Probace, násilná trestná činnost, úroveň vzdělání, deviance.

Under the current Penal Code, homicide is the most severe form of violent crime. Even the Bible mentions it among the Ten Commandments: "Thou shalt not kill." According to the literature, murderers can also be considered victims, since most homicides are committed when the murderer and the victim lay hands on each other out of mutual hatred or because of a seriously damaged relationship. Interestingly, the murderer and the victim usually know each other and alcohol is often a contributory factor. The number of homicides in our country is decreasing, which is explained by Máté Sivadó: *"Those that have been critical of the increasingly improving homicide*

figures in Hungary have also suggested in professional forums that the authorities prefer to classify unsolved homicides as fatal assault or death-causing negligent endangerment in the course of employment to improve homicide statistics.”¹

The main characteristics of violent crime:

- *“- Violent crimes involve direct contact between two parties. The violence and aggression are explicitly manifested towards the other party, to an extent that certain approaches perceive aggression and violence as a special form of relationship between persons in a unique mutual position.*
- *Acts of violence are the most aggressive means of resolving external or internal conflicts, where physical or psychological harm is intentionally inflicted on a person through violence.*
- *It acts against the most fundamental human values, such as life, physical integrity, freedom of sexual self-determination, and choice. It is a major threat to society.*
- *The possibility of objective prevention is low, given the fact that it is mainly an emotionally motivated manifestation.*
- *Subcultural norms prevailing in segregated areas hinder the detection of violence in society.*
- *Violent crime is closely linked to drug and alcohol abuse. In fact, alcohol abuse is also a characteristic symptom of the victims.”²*

¹ SIVADO, M. 2021. *Radical Decrease in the Number of Homicides in Hungary*, p. 229.

² ROSTA, A. 2007. *Sociology of deviant behaviour*, p. 264.

Table 1 - Causes of violent crime

Causal groups	Causes
Macro-social factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poverty - Social inequality - Urbanization - Commuting - Industrialization - Anomie - Deterioration of public goods - Exacerbation of cultural goods - Regulation of weapons licence - Media coverage of violence
Micro-environmental harms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family dysfunctions - Social disadvantages - Subcultural small community relations - Adverse custom and tradition system - Relationship of participants (problematic quality of human relations)
Biological and psychological factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Divergent views on the underlying causes: - Aggression instinct is a normal innate trait of humans - Temperament - Mental disorders - Brain damage - Genetic deficiency - Frustration - Learning process based on social patterns
Situational factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Influence of alcohol, drugs, medication - Communicative relationship between participants (e.g. misunderstanding each other) - Behavioural interference (carelessness, irresponsibility, provocation)

Source: ROSTA, A. 2007. *Sociology of deviant behaviour*. p. 265.

Statistical data on criminal offences

For years, the number of known criminal offences has been stagnating between 200 and 300 thousand. The number of known offenders has decreased from 100,933 in 2016 to 92,896 in 2017, but the number of under-aged offenders who cannot be prosecuted is increasing and has been steadily rising since 2015.

Table 2 - Registered offenders and offences between 2015 and 2021

Description	Offenders 2017	Offenders 2018, 1 st half	Offences 2018, 2 nd half	Offences 2019	Offences 2020	Offences 2021
Child offenders (under the age of 14)	1,409	873	300	1,826	1,734	1,763
Juvenile offenders (between 14–17 years)	6,492	3,405	3,697	7,863	8,064	7,666
Young adult offenders (between 18–24 years)	17,815	10,426	10,612	24,497	23,989	26,078
Adult offenders (25 years or older)	67,143	38,731	43,520	102,475	105,151	111,168
Total	92,896	53,460	58,130	136,669	138,950	146,688
Of which: criminal offenders	90,369	51,896				
Offenders/offences per a hundred thousand inhabitants at the age of 14 or above	1,081			1,618	1,648	1,747
Criminal offenders per a hundred thousand inhabitants at the age of 14 or above	1,068					
No criminal record	70,377	40,979	43,114	99,644	98,708	105,599
Non-recidivist	16,553	9,111	10,765	25,702	28,108	28,420
Recidivist	1,878	1,089	1,354	3,486	2,946	3,235
Special recidivist	1,817	1,026	1,531	3,770	3,952	4,381
Multiple recidivists	2,225	1,223	1,323	4,000	5,111	4,895
Multiple violent recidivist	46	32	43	67	125	158
Under alcohol influence	25,200	13,181	11,825	24,276	24,563	22,132
Under substance influence	5,723	4,429	3,510	7,125	7,830	8,599
Under alcohol and substance influence	122	63	92	196	234	277
Murder	189	115	53	143	239	176
Physical assault	4,527	2,524	2,957	6,826	7,570	7,441
Drunken/intoxicated driving	15,627	8,466	7,896	14,561	14,564	12,464
Vandalism	11,911	6,364	4,617	10,412	10,964	10,880
Theft	16,897	9,144	9,682	24,032	24,604	23,996
Fraud	3,056	2,027	7,831	17,086	13,377	14,964

Source: ksh.hu

The criminal statistics in the above table show that both the number of juvenile offenders and the number of child offenders have been stagnating since 2017. A child offender cannot be prosecuted for an offence committed as a child unless he or she

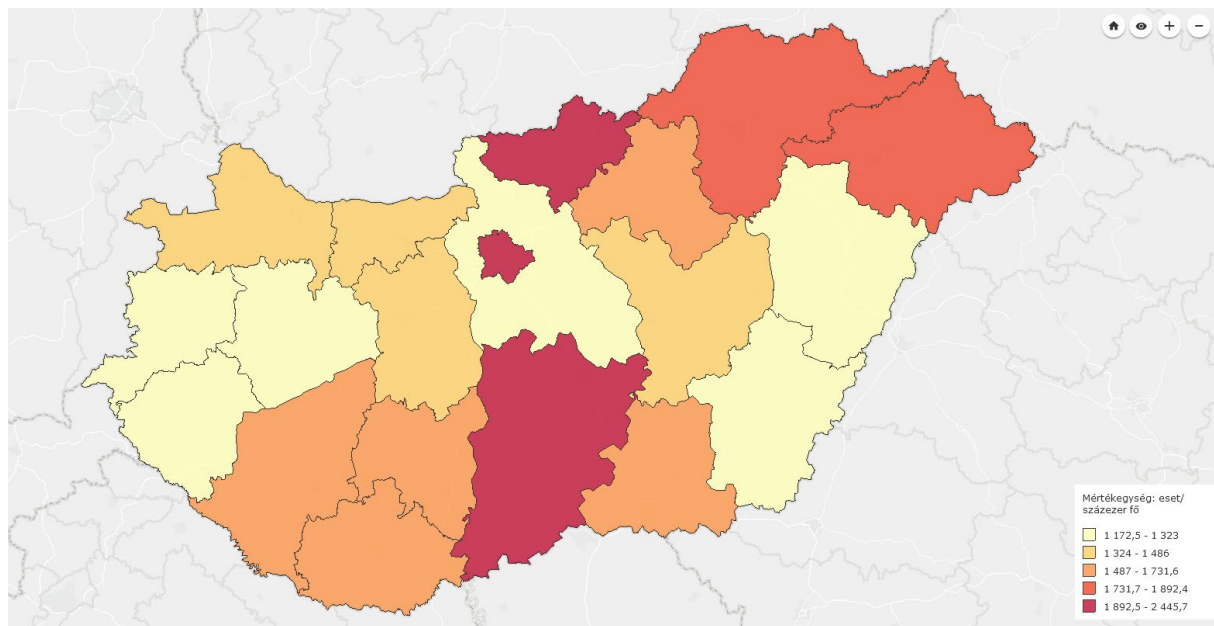
commits robbery, manslaughter or pillage. No criminal prosecution can be brought against a child for any other offence, and a juvenile cannot be held liable, although in many cases this would be necessary, as there are cases where the start of a criminal career can be traced back to childhood. Let me illustrate this with a specific example from a case at the CPS: a 13-year-old boy raped a 6-year-old girl, but no criminal proceedings could be brought against him, since under the existing Criminal Code this offence cannot be prosecuted under the age of 14, and in this case, only a procedure for child protection and preventive probation was initiated in the framework of a guardianship procedure, even if the child offender had committed a violent crime. In the case of an offender under the age of 18, the Child Protection Service will initiate ex officio proceedings for the protection and preventive probation of the child, in which case the probation officers of the Probation Service will carry out an environmental analysis to assess the risk associated with the young person from the crime prevention point of view. It is important to mention here a relatively new legal institution, preventive probation, which has been operating in Hungary for 8 years:

“Preventive probation has been in force since 1 January 2015 and is a new legal institution in Hungarian legal life, rooted in criminal law, which was integrated into the child protection system based on the mandate of Government Decision 1430/2011 (13.12.2011), despite the fact that its main reason for being introduced was to reduce child and juvenile delinquency and to effectively reintegrate offenders. The public administrative procedure is carried out with the involvement of the Child Protection Signalling System. The guardianship authority shall contact the probation service following its report on the commission of a criminal offence or an offence punishable by detention, either in the course of an initiated protection procedure or in an already existing protection procedure, to obtain an environmental assessment and a risk assessment of the child’s vulnerability from a crime prevention perspective.”³

Preventive probation as a child protection measure is still in its infancy, as the probation itself is carried out by professional probation officers, however since the guiding principles for its implementation are still the provisions of Act XXXI of 1997 on the Protection of Children and Guardianship Administration, the probation officers are in fact completely powerless, as there is no serious system of sanctions for the implementation of the probation, since according to the relevant passages of the GYVTV, the right to be brought up in the family is the priority, so in the case of a problematic young person, the removal of a young person from the family is only the last resort of the child protection professionals and the probation officers.

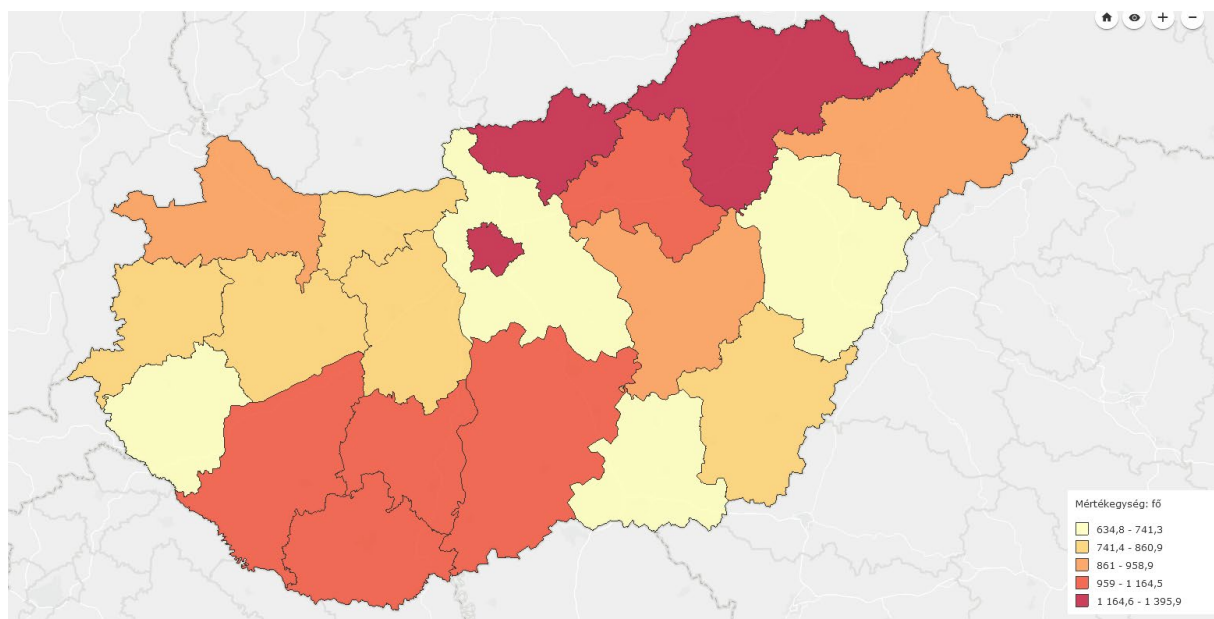
³ HERKE-FÁBOS, B. K. 2018. *The Role of preventive detention in the prevention of crime.* p. 1.

Figure 1. Number of registered criminal offences per 100,000 inhabitants in 2020⁴



(Source: www.ksh.hu)

Figure 2. Number of registered victims per 100,000 inhabitants in 2020



(Source: www.ksh.hu)

The first thing to notice in the two graphs is the inversion: while the number of registered crimes per 100,000 inhabitants is the highest in Northern Hungary, the number of registered crimes and the number of victims is much lower in Western Hungary. This inversion can be explained by the fact that the impoverished region of Northern Hungary has the highest number of offenders, while in Western Hungary the standard of living is higher, which means that there are not as many offences as in the North-Eastern region. I would also like to share my own experience: between August

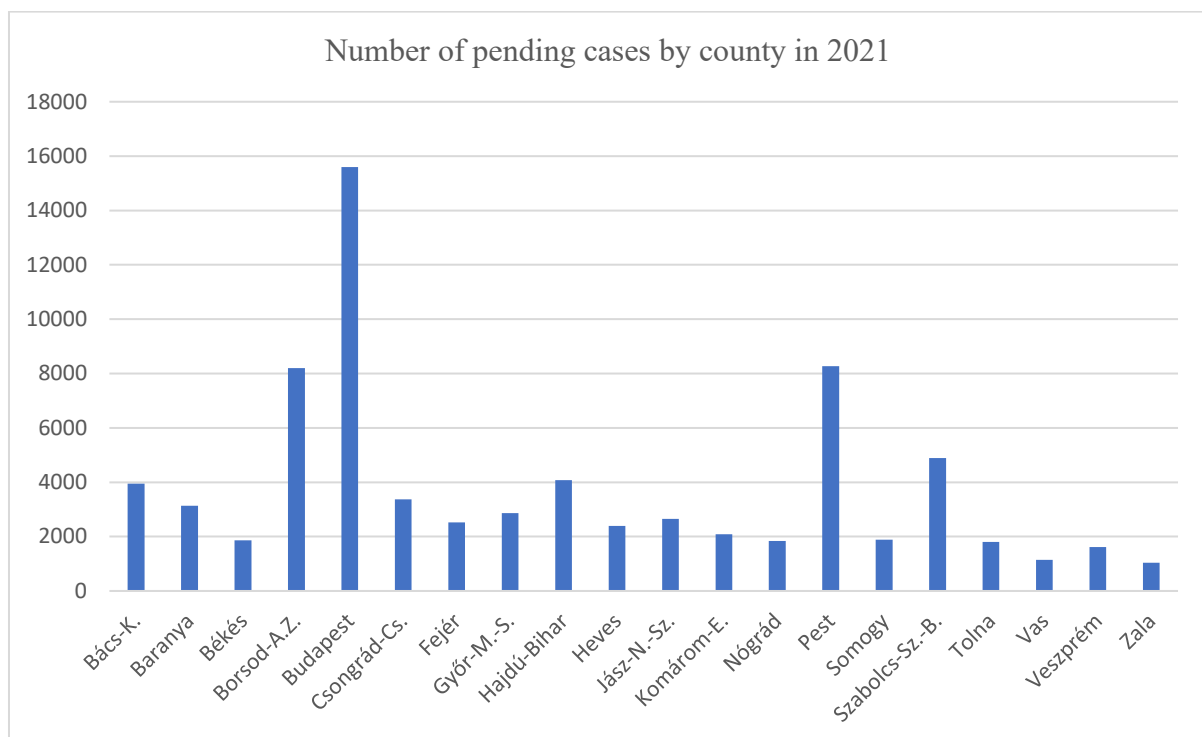
⁴ Such a comparative figure is only available for 2020 among the interactive maps on ksh.hu - there are no updates concerning later periods.

2017 and March 2022, I worked as a probation officer in the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county.

The criminal offences committed here were mostly property offences (typically theft) and offences disturbing public order (disorderly conduct, armed disorderly conduct), both for juvenile and adult offenders.

Since April 2022, I have been serving as a probation officer in the Vas county, where the number of offences committed is visibly lower (see Figure 3). Juvenile offences against property and misdemeanours are not common in the Vas county, nor are public order offences in the region. For juvenile offenders, drug-related offences are more significant than in the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county, while for adult offenders, relational violence and offences against physical integrity are more prevalent in the Vas county.

Figure 3 Number of pending cases by county in 2021



Source: Ministry of Justice report on the activities of the judicial probation service in 2021

The figure above illustrates the number of pending cases in each county, highlighting the capital and the four counties with the highest number of cases, namely Pest, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county, and Hajdú-Bihar county. It can be seen that the West Transdanubian region (Vas, Zala and Veszprém counties) has the lowest number of pending criminal cases. The figures from the Central Statistical Office (see Figures 1-2) are also confirmed by the number of cases at the Probation Service.

Table 3 Number of registered criminal offences

Type of criminal offence	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
homicide	101	92	84	60	81
robbery	1141	853	710	637	616
known criminal offences in total	290,779	226,452	199,830	165,648	162,741

(Source: ugyeszseg.hu)

The table shows a downward trend in registered and violent criminal offences, which is explained by the National Police Headquarters in the following press release:

“The technical improvements in crime technology in recent years, for example, more efficient forensic investigation and recording, have increased the number of detections. In fact, an increasing number of old cold files are being closed successfully, as, due to the technical progress, the previously recorded traces and material remains can lead to the perpetrator even after a longer period of time. The number of police officers has also increased significantly, with four times as many than in 2013 - almost 3,000 uniformed officers were appointed last year - and the number of patrolling vigilantes has also increased. In the ongoing 300×100 Safety programme, 100 vigilantes in 300 municipalities reinforce public safety and the population’s sense of security. According to ORFK data, in 90 percent of the municipalities participating in the programme, the number of recorded crimes has significantly decreased and the subjective sense of security of the residents has increased. The “We go to your door!” property protection programme was launched more than two years ago, in which the staff of the regional services gave prevention advice to more than 70,000 people nationwide. School safety programmes have also been set up in the spirit of prevention: DADA helps primary schools to develop good self-esteem and teaches young children to recognise dangerous situations in good time. The ELLEN-SZER (Anti-Substance) and School Crime Prevention Counsellors (IBT) programmes provide secondary school students with answers to questions that concern their age group. These interactive sessions reach over 100,000 underage children every year, where they discuss the issues raised by young people and show them how to avoid both victimisation and a life of crime.”⁵

Correlation between alcohol and criminal activities

The correlation between alcohol consumption and crime has long been a major concern for researchers. The main research hypotheses concern whether there is a link between alcohol consumption and crime. According to a US study, where alcohol is readily available, homicide rates are higher, while in neighbourhoods where access to alcohol is more difficult, homicide rates are much lower. *“The typical setting for alcohol-induced violent behaviour is the urban environment. Shepherd and Brickley’s research on urban violence focuses not only on the extent to which alcohol consumption influences violent behaviour, but also on the fact that excessive alcohol consumption significantly increases the risk of injury.*

The study focuses on violence in city centres, which are usually well-defined areas of a few streets with a large number of licensed premises where alcohol can be

⁵ magyaridok.hu

consumed. Most of the violence occurs near nightclubs, pubs, and liquor stores with the longest opening hours, usually between men of similar age, and most of the violence occurs in the hours before closing time. Since in most cases, both the perpetrators and the victims were intoxicated, alcohol and urban violence are certainly causally linked."⁶

Research has also found that the degree of drunkenness is related to the degree of crime, so the drunker a person is, the more violent the acts.

"There are several theories as to why the tendency to aggression increases as a consequence of alcohol consumption.

Relevant explanations for aggression among men include:

- a) As a cognitive effect of alcohol, the alcohol consumer tends to overestimate his own strength and power and is less able to find non-aggressive solutions to deal with provocation.*
- b) As a consequence of the effects of alcohol consumption on mindfulness, the alcohol consumer tends to focus exclusively on the present.*
- c) Some men, as a consequence of alcohol consumption, attribute excessive importance to their own personal power. Other triggers of pub aggression may include provocation, third-party behaviour, crowds, unpleasant, irritating, smoky surroundings, and a permissive social context. Moreover, situations in which large groups of people are intoxicated significantly increase the risk of violent behaviour. The cultural values and expectations of the young men of whom pub audiences are composed reveal an important link between aggression and the social process of pub drinking.*"⁷

While in Hungary, drunkenness is not a mitigating circumstance for criminal liability, in 10 US states it is perfectly acceptable to plead drunkenness as it is actually accepted by the courts as a mitigating circumstance.

Poverty and crime

Experts on poverty agree that poverty has always existed, but its level, extent, and social perception have been constantly changing.

Sociology and criminology also investigate the impact of economic trends on crime. These two disciplines have been working for decades to explore the correlations between economic factors and crime. Katalin Gönczöl's 1989 study confirms that there is a causal link between the economy and crime. *"Crime, which has increased under conditions of economic hardship and crisis, is already causing serious social tensions and is likely to do so even more in the future. Scarce financial resources and a narrow perspective on the economy make it difficult (if not impossible) for governments to approach crime as a social problem whose prevention requires the institutionalisation of social, family-related, educational, and cultural solutions. In the absence of such solutions, the classical criminal policy responses, sanctions based on proportional responsibility, are almost exclusive means, which, as crime continues to increase, may impose increasingly harsh and severe punishments.*"⁸

⁶ LÉVAY B. 2006. *Alcohol and Crime*, p. 19-20.

⁷ LÉVAY B. 2006. *Alcohol and Crime. Psychiatria Hungarica*, p. 21.

⁸ GÖNCZÖL, K. 1989. *Economy - Crime, Criminal Policy Methodological Booklets*, p. 46.

Durkheim, in contrast to previous researchers, believed that the relation between poverty, unemployment, hopelessness, and crime cannot be explained simply by economic processes. According to Durkheim, the increase in poverty is not the sole cause of the increase in deviance and crime on a societal scale. *“Poverty is in itself a barrier. Whatever one desires to do, to a certain extent he must reckon with the means at his disposal: what he actually possesses is at least a partial reference point for what he wants.”*⁹

The majority of criminal offenders commit crimes against property (according to the data provided by the Central Statistical Office). The term “subsistence criminality” - introduced by Gábor Kuncze (then Minister of the Interior) back in 2006 - is unique to our country. According to the interpretation of that time, theft under HUF 20,000 was not considered a police case. *“Yet according to various research findings, the most important aspect of the concept of subsistence criminality is that it was exclusively used for people of Roma descent following its introduction, as a way of exonerating the perpetrators of petty thefts. Today, however, such a limited category cannot be applied, as the whole of society is involved (Budapest Analyses). In other words, a kind of deviance, a deviant behaviour, can be observed concerning society as a whole. In addition to a large number of deviant conducts, it is important to highlight the fact that the increase in the threshold amount, as well as the Criminal Code, make it more difficult to define the category of subsistence offences.”*¹⁰ According to the current Criminal Code, criminal offences can be divided into two parts, namely misdemeanour and felonious forms. The financial threshold for misdemeanour is HUF 50,000, whereas the criminal threshold is above HUF 50,000 (Act C of 2012). In light of this, it is more difficult to delimit the scope of subsistence criminality, but according to the facts reported in actual police enquiries, the phenomenon is still alive and well in society.

The relationship between the level of education and criminality

*“Upon reflecting on crime and its causes, we must not forget the significance of school. Schooling and educational attainment have an impact on the prevalence of crime. In the life of an individual, the experiences acquired at school are very important, as subsequently, these will greatly determine the motivation to learn and the attitudes toward society. The close correlation between the level of education and delinquency is a worldwide phenomenon. We can talk about white-collar crime, which is associated with high educational attainment and is typical of this social group, however, criminality is much higher among the under-educated. In my study, I consider those who have not completed primary education or have no vocational education as undereducated.”*¹¹

In the following table, I present the level of education of the convicted and registered defendants between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2018 in the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county:

⁹ SZABÓ, A. 2013. *Subsistence Crimes - the Relationship between Poverty and Crime.* pp. 101-112.

¹⁰ SZABÓ, A. 2013. *Subsistence Crimes - the Relationship between Poverty and Crime.* pp. 101-112. p. 109.

¹¹ HOLLÓSVÖLGYI, M. 2020. *Socialisation and Deviance: the school trajectory of violent offenders in a rural prison and jail.* pp. 136-137.

Table 4 - Education level of defendants in 2018 in the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county¹²

DESCRIPTION	Nr. of People	%
Illiterate	11	1,58
Less than 8 grades of primary school	193	27,77
8 grades of primary school	268	38,57
10 grades	16	2,3
Matriculation	31	4,47
Vocational school degree	144	20,71
Technical school	4	0,57
University or high school	2	0,28
Unknown	26	3,75
TOTAL	695	100,00

Source: Parole Inspection System - OSAP statistics of the Parole Inspection Department of the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County Government Office in 2018

In the table, I highlighted in orange those with a low level of education, totalling 461 out of a sample of 695 persons. The question may arise: Is a low level of education a cause of offending, or is offending the reason why individuals remain poorly educated?

“A longitudinal study in the Netherlands revealed some interesting correlations (cited by Weerman -Bijleveled, 2014): at the beginning of the study, 19,391 people from 400 schools were surveyed up to 2010/11. A unique code was assigned to each research participant, which was used to track their school trajectory (e.g. whether they repeated a grade, dropped out of school, etc.). This database was linked to the crime statistics database between 1996 and 2010 and the conclusion was that the rate of criminal offences committed by school dropouts and those with school failure was higher than that of those with a traditional school 'trajectory'. According to this research, 56% of property offenders, 32% of assault offenders, and 11% of substance abusers were early school dropouts. This indicates that there is a high correlation between levels of education and delinquency, with strong interactions between the following factors: low educational attainment - early school dropout - criminalisation.”¹³

In the following table, I present the highest level of education of the probationers in my former working area (Sátorajújhely, Cigánd, and Gönc districts). The analysed period is the number of persons in custody based on legal judgments registered between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2018.

¹² At the Probation Services, the Specialised System which required the provision of some demographic data on probationers, including education, was discontinued after 2018, so more up-to-date data is not available in this subject area. The study covered the county of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén because at the time I was acting as a probation officer there.

¹³ BODONYI E. dr. habil et.al. 2015. *Early school leaving - criminality - possible solutions from the perspective of education*, p. 24.

Table 5 Highest level of education of probationers in the Sátoraljaújhely, Cigánd, and Gönc Districts¹⁴

DESCRIPTION	Nr. of People	%
Illiterate	1	1,35
Less than 8 grades of primary school	13	17,56
8 grades of primary school	28	37,83
10 grades	6	8,10
Matriculation	4	5,40
Vocational school degree	11	14,86
Technical school	3	4,05
University or High School	3	4,05
Unknown	5	6,75
TOTAL	74	100

Source: Parole Inspection System - OSAP statistics of the Parole Inspection Department of the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County Government Office

The data in the table (Sátoraljaújhely, Cigánd, and Gönc Districts) also confirm that in 2018, 41 out of 74 probationers had low education levels. It can be said that there is a high percentage of people with low education among probationers.

Upon talking about early school leaving and drop-out, it is very important to underline the role of the family in this process. A young person will find his/her interest in learning based on the parent's feedback and guidance. It is important, how much the young person can reconcile the values received at school with the standards experienced within the family. If there is a big gap between the two, it can easily lead to truancy. Education inevitably reinforces social inequalities. The criminalisation of young people is exacerbated by a reduction in equality of opportunity between students and by the fact that, to date, no strategy has been developed in public education to effectively reduce disadvantage.

International outlook

The data on violent crime include crimes against a person (assault), robbery (theft by force or threat), and sexual offences (forcible intercourse and sexual assault). The analysis of this type of offence is difficult because not all EU Member States use the same definitions. In addition, as the data on violent crimes recorded in France in 2012 do not include cases recorded by the gendarmerie (i.e. the series is broken), a comparison with the aggregated data on violent crimes for the reference year 2011 can be misleading. However, the overall trend observed in the EU-28 shows that between 2007 and 2012 the number of violent crimes recorded decreased by around 10 %. This overall decline is largely influenced by the figures for England and Wales, where 166,000 fewer violent crimes were reported in 2012 than in 2007 (Table 2). The picture is not uniform across the other EU Member States: between 2007 and 2012, large increases were recorded in Luxembourg (38 %), Hungary (26 %),

¹⁴ At the Probation Services, the Specialised System which required the provision of some demographic data on probationers, including education, was discontinued after 2018, so more up-to-date data is not available in this subject area.

and Denmark (23 %), but significant decreases were recorded in Lithuania (-42 %), Croatia (-33 %), Scotland (-32 %), Latvia (-30 %), Slovakia (-30 %), and Malta (-27 %).

Homicide

Homicide is defined in the analysis as the intentional taking of human life and includes premeditated homicide, assault causing death, euthanasia, and infanticide, but excludes road endangerment causing death, abortion, and assisted suicide. The recording of homicide is relatively consistent and its definition varies less between countries than other categories of crime. The results presented here reflect actual homicides, except for Latvia, where the data include attempted homicide. In some countries, the police record all deaths as homicides that are not immediately attributable to some other cause, so the data for this category may be overstated. The number of homicides recorded in each country is shown in Table 5. Compared to the average figures for the period 2007-2009 and 2010-2012, the number of homicides per 100,000 inhabitants shows a downward trend, with all countries except Greece, Malta, and Austria showing a decrease. Although the number of homicides decreased in the three Baltic Member States, these countries still have a higher homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants than all other Member States.

Robbery

Robbery is a type of violent crime: it is defined as theft by force or threat of force. It includes both street robbery (for example, snatching a passer-by's purse) and theft by force. As the data on robberies registered in France in 2012 do not include cases recorded by the gendarmerie (i.e. the series is broken), a comparison with the aggregated robbery data for the reference year 2011 may be misleading. The number of robberies in the EU as a whole has remained relatively stable, falling by only 4 % between 2007 and 2012. While the number of reported robberies decreased significantly in the Baltic Member States and Scotland (by an average of 46 % and 40 %, respectively, between 2007 and 2012), some countries have seen a very large increase. In Cyprus, Denmark, and Greece, the number of robberies almost doubled between 2007 and 2012.

The gradual abolition of border controls within the European Union has greatly facilitated the free movement of European citizens, but it has also made life easier for criminals, especially as law enforcement agencies and criminal justice systems usually have no jurisdiction across national borders. Since the adoption of the Amsterdam Treaty, the European Union has set itself the objective of ensuring a common area of freedom, security, and justice. This objective was further developed in 2004 by the Hague Programme, which identified the following ten priority areas: strengthening fundamental rights and EU citizenship; counter-terrorism measures; developing a balanced approach to migration; developing integrated management of the EU's external borders; developing a common asylum procedure; maximising the positive impact of immigration; striking the right balance between data protection and security in the exchange of information; developing a strategic concept for the fight against organised crime; ensuring a truly European area of justice; and sharing responsibility and solidarity. Judicial cooperation in criminal matters will be based on the mutual recognition of judgments handed down by national judges, and a number of instruments have been developed to facilitate practical cooperation between Member States. In the context of work to harmonise and improve crime and criminal justice

statistics, EU Member States have agreed to approximate the definitions of offences and the level of penalties for each type of crime.¹⁵

Table 5 - Violent crimes recorded by the police, 2002-12

	Number (1 000)											Index (2007 = 100)				
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Belgium	108.0	108.6	109.2	111.5	114.0	115.6	119.7	122.2	123.1	128.1	120.4	104	106	106	111	104
Bulgaria	12.2	12.8	11.3	10.6	8.8	8.7	8.5	9.2	9.1	7.4	7.3	98	106	104	85	84
Czech Republic	24.0	22.8	24.0	22.1	19.5	20.0	18.2	17.4	18.7	20.1	19.0	91	87	93	101	95
Denmark	18.8	19.2	19.4	19.1	19.6	20.6	24.9	26.2	26.4	26.4	25.3	121	127	128	128	123
Germany	197.5	204.1	211.2	212.8	215.5	217.9	210.9	208.4	201.2	197.0	195.1	97	96	92	90	90
Estonia ⁽¹⁾	:	2.4	3.3	4.8	5.2	5.8	9.1	7.4	5.3	6.1	6.7	156	127	92	104	115
Ireland ⁽²⁾	12.0	10.0	9.6	9.4	9.9	10.2	10.8	10.8	12.1	11.1	10.3	106	106	119	109	101
Greece	7.5	10.1	10.1	10.3	10.4	10.9	11.2	12.2	12.3	9.8	8.7	103	113	113	90	80
Spain ⁽³⁾	120.6	109.8	108.8	112.4	114.2	113.5	116.3	113.1	106.5	109.4	116.9	103	100	94	96	103
France ⁽⁴⁾	288.9	292.7	292.1	307.5	326.1	324.8	331.8	341.9	351.1	353.1	277.5	102	105	108	109	85
Croatia	8.8	10.0	11.3	12.4	13.2	13.0	13.0	12.2	11.0	10.2	8.6	100	94	85	79	67
Italy ⁽⁵⁾	106.6	111.2	131.8	136.3	145.2	154.0	146.6	131.6	127.7	141.5	147.4	95	85	83	92	96
Cyprus	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.4	:	:	106	150	145	:	:
Latvia ⁽⁶⁾	3.4	3.2	3.4	2.9	2.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.4	1.4	1.4	100	98	74	73	70
Lithuania ⁽⁷⁾	5.5	6.0	6.6	6.6	5.5	4.8	4.4	4.2	3.7	3.4	2.8	92	88	78	72	58
Luxembourg	2.1	2.1	2.4	2.4	2.5	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.8	4.5	99	101	103	118	138
Hungary	31.2	31.5	33.4	32.8	29.7	29.6	33.0	32.0	38.4	37.2	37.4	111	108	130	125	126
Malta	:	:	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	91	89	88	72	73
Netherlands ⁽⁸⁾	104.3	106.4	109.9	138.9	138.2	138.9	133.5	136.6	129.5	127.4	123.4	96	98	93	92	89
Austria	37.0	40.0	41.0	42.9	43.3	46.2	47.0	47.6	44.6	46.7	47.6	102	103	97	101	103
Poland	74.9	77.2	74.6	68.1	61.4	54.6	52.1	51.1	49.2	48.4	45.6	95	94	90	89	83
Portugal	22.9	23.4	24.3	23.2	24.2	21.7	24.5	24.4	24.3	24.0	22.0	113	112	112	111	101
Romania	7.1	6.3	6.4	6.5	7.2	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.0	6.2	98	99	98	90	110
Slovenia	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.1	3.1	2.6	2.8	2.8	2.5	2.5	85	91	90	80	82
Slovakia ⁽⁹⁾	15.0	13.7	13.8	13.6	11.6	10.3	9.7	9.0	8.1	7.8	7.2	94	87	79	76	71
Finland ⁽¹⁰⁾	34.2	35.3	36.5	37.1	38.0	41.7	42.2	39.6	39.6	47.8	46.0	101	95	95	115	110
Sweden	79.5	83.8	86.1	94.2	98.2	104.6	108.4	111.7	113.3	116.5	113.2	104	107	108	111	108
United Kingdom:																
England and Wales	875.7	963.4	997.6	997.2	972.3	885.7	839.3	827.1	795.6	754.2	719.8	95	93	90	85	81
Scotland ⁽¹¹⁾	28.2	27.4	27.4	26.6	27.6	25.2	24.8	21.7	21.5	20.1	17.2	98	86	85	80	68
Northern Ireland	32.4	32.7	32.4	34.3	35.1	32.4	32.5	32.8	32.6	33.5	33.3	100	101	101	103	103
Liechtenstein	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	108	110	100	100	98
Norway ⁽¹²⁾	20.4	20.0	21.4	21.4	22.6	23.2	23.8	24.3	24.2	25.0	25.4	103	105	104	108	110
Switzerland ⁽¹³⁾	9.3	10.2	11.9	11.5	12.8	13.5	12.6	15.4	14.1	14.0	14.4	93	113	104	104	106
Montenegro ⁽¹⁴⁾	4.2	3.9	4.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	111	134	130	113	125
FYR of Macedonia	0.7	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.1	0.9	0.8	87	101	102	91	81
Serbia	31.4	25.5	28.0	29.1	28.9	29.3	29.6	32.1	32.2	34.2	33.7	101	109	110	117	115
Turkey ⁽¹⁵⁾	94.9	96.2	108.4	125.5	165.1	138.6	167.1	206.7	234.7	229.1	248.0	121	149	169	165	179
Albania	:	:	:	:	:	:	0.2	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Bosnia and Herzegovina	:	:	:	:	:	:	1.5	1.8	:	1.9	1.9	:	:	:	:	:
Kosovo	:	:	:	:	:	:	17.2	16.2	18.2	22.8	23.1	:	:	:	:	:

(1) 2006, 2008 and 2009: break in series.
 (2) 2007: break in series.
 (3) 2005 and 2008: break in series.
 (4) 2012: break in series. Data from the gendarmerie excluded.
 (5) 2004: break in series.
 (6) 2004, 2005 and 2006: break in series.
 (7) 2005: break in series.
 (8) 2009: break in series.
 (9) 2006: break in series.
 (10) 2005 and 2006: break in series.

Source: Crime statistics from 2002 to 2012 in the European Union Member States¹⁶

¹⁵ <https://ec.europa.eu>
¹⁶ <https://ec.europa.eu>

Conclusion

In my work, I have discussed the possible causes of criminality and violent crime and analysed crime locations based on crime statistics. In Hungary, a spatial inversion can be observed, which is best typified by the stark contrast between Eastern and Western Hungary, which can be explained by the difference in living standards. The number of violent crimes shows a decreasing trend, which can be attributed to the technical improvements in the field of crime in recent years and to the more efficient forensic investigation. I believe that one of the main roots of deviance and violent crime, from which all acts that do not conform to social standards can be deduced and derived, is poor education and low social status, as well as inadequate parental care and upbringing. Things that an educated person with common sense would refuse to do are often being done by undereducated people who have grown up in a poor social stratum, as the conversations with the protégés during the interviews have revealed that these people never consider the consequences of their actions. The problem-solving ability of people with low education is much less developed than that of a person with higher education. Individuals with low social status do not consider the pain they might cause to another person by committing a violent crime. One of my protégés, who was later sentenced to imprisonment for a violent crime, only contemplated the pain he had caused the victim during his years in prison - in his words, "being reasonable is easier in hindsight..." An important milestone in terms of individual socialisation among my protégés was their micro-environment. Most of the probationers have a family and friends with a criminal record. As socialisation spans over a lifetime, they may unconsciously adopt criminal behaviour as they live/grow up in it and judge it to be right. The micro-environment has a profound impact on individual value judgements. Among the probationers, it can also be observed that a large number of convicted individuals grew up in families where the number of children was well above the Hungarian average. This is important because income is spread over multiple areas, and the mother also has to share her care, thus there may be times when the child needs the parents' care the most, yet there is no time for him/her, which can lead to mistrust and, according to Erik Ericson, can even lead to mental illness and frustration, which can later be typified in the commission of crimes. As a practitioner, a suggested solution is to impose more specific rules of conduct for violent offenders in court sentences, implemented by specially trained probation officers or by specially trained probation officers in prisons. The specific behavioural rules provided may include aggression management training or specific training to develop social skills. Prisons could provide specialised training for those convicted of violent offences, with the involvement of mental health professionals, to improve their reintegration into society after their release.

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I work as a reintegration officer at the Szombathely prison in Hungary. I am a third-year PhD student at the National University of Public Service. My research interests are preventive probation and juvenile delinquency. I have published several publications and presented papers at several national conferences. I am a member of the Hungarian Society of Criminology and the National Association of Doctoral Students.