Czech Republic and Slovakia: Criminal statistics during the coronavirus situation

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Abstract: The purpose of the paper is to identify and describe the influences and impacts that the coronavirus situation and subsequent measures (lockdowns, other forms of quarantine measures, declaration of crisis situations) have affected the development of registered crime in two European countries (Czech Republic, Slovakia). The study is based on the most recent official crime statistics and other statistical outputs of the mentioned countries, as well as other open sources. It also uses some relevant secondary studies, published only recently. The mentioned issue is also related to the approach to the publication of police statistics in both countries, including its “user friendliness” with regard to the public. Based on the findings so far, an attempt will be made to estimate further expected development in the monitored area, including the changes, related to the further police work priorities.

Subjects: Criminology - Law; Health & Safety Law; Policing & Police Law

Keywords: Coronavirus; policing; quarantine measures; comparisons

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to identify and describe the influences that the coronavirus situation and subsequent measures (lockdowns, other forms of quarantine measures, crisis situation declarations) have affected the development of registered crime in two European countries (Czech Republic, Slovakia). The primary question is, how sensitively did these trends (restrictions on social interaction and registered crime) correlate? Which groups of crimes were “more sensitive” to the quarantine measures—and which were not? Are there groups of crimes that have adapted to the situation—and are now more common than in the past? Another question is, if, and how, this complicated situation correlated with other socio-economic phenomena.

The study is primarily based on official crime statistics and other statistical outputs of both countries, as well as other open sources. It also uses some relevant secondary studies published only recently. The mentioned issue is also related to the approach to the publication of police statistics in both countries, including its “user friendliness” with regard to the public. Based on the

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The author’s collective can be seen as a group of “veterans” of the security-police community in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland. In their outputs, they address both general current trends in the field of local public order affairs and the issue of crime statistics, including its latency. Other security challenges and topics also belong to the spectrum of their attention.

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

Description of the paper: The impact of the coronavirus situation on internal security and crime is a very acute, lively topic – and for this reason, there is a lot of confusion and speculation about it. The authors decided – on the example of development in the Czech Republic and Slovakia – to map this development, with use of the most up-to-date official statistics (overall development, impacts on specific groups of crimes).
findings so far, an attempt will be made to estimate further expected development in the monitored area, including the changes related to the further police work priorities.

The reason for creating the study was, on the one hand, a national need within both countries. The authors of the study are directly involved in developing police analytics in the monitored countries, and the published text is both the essence and at the same time a superstructure of their findings, which are directly used by the police units of the Czech Republic and Slovakia. This two-way feedback, connecting theory with practice, is perceived by the authors as a specific added value of the entire study.

A similarly strong motivation was the absence of an academic treatise on this acute topic, which is directly related to the existence of robust and publicly accessible up-to-date statistics of registered crime. In this case, the two monitored countries are a suitable springboard that can be further expanded (to cover developments over time and with regard to other European countries).

The submitted text will be structured as follows:

First, basic data related to the monitored countries (area, number of inhabitants) will be mentioned. With regard to the topic, detailed attention is paid to quarantine and other distance measures in the years 2020 to 2022 in these countries. In the rest of the text, the measures and their distribution over time are correlated with the development of registered crime.

The text includes general statistics of the registered crime between 2018 and 2022. A more detailed view, including tables and graphs, then refers to violent crime, with special emphasis on the aspect known as “domestic violence”. There is also an overview regarding the development of murders in the observed period. Further specific attention is paid to the development of property crime, “drug” crime and “cybercrime” or “cyber-related” crime.

In an attempt to put the situation into a broader framework, socio-economic aspects in both monitored countries are mentioned, including the impact of the coronavirus situation and the respective measures on extremism and politically motivated tensions.

2. Methods and findings

Regarding the methodology, the study is based on the most recent official registered crime statistics and other statistical outputs from both countries. These are statistics in which the authors are directly involved in summarizing, interpreting and formulating recommendations for police work in the monitored countries. At the same time, it is clear that registered crime represents only a part of the total crime. Some groups of crimes are characterized by a high degree of latency, for example, cybercrime. Even so, the detected fluctuations and correlation of statistics with the development of quarantine and other coronavirus-related measures are still perceived as significant. Related data was collected using standard policing channels (standardized reporting of registered crime that takes place on a monthly basis). Moreover, these data are accessible to the public and can be verified by any other researchers. The police forces of both countries are the main sources of information in this area, these processes have been in place for decades. Data on socio-economic aspects of development are then presented by the statistical offices, usually at annual intervals.

To put it simply, the related findings can be perceived as that the decline in registered crime in both countries correlates to some extent with the most fundamental restrictions on social interaction, but over time, the effect of these restrictions began to be reduced. The first quarter of 2022 in many respects represents similar level of registered crime as before the coronavirus situation, while it has also partially transformed. It is not a simple return to the previous situation. Different groups of registered crime reacted differently to the related measures and restrictions.
The presented study is completely original, based on the current outputs of the author’s team.

The limitations regarding the results of the study were not serious (again, taking into consideration the latency of certain crimes). Both monitored countries have very open and up-to-date statistical outputs, which, however, do not always operate with overlaps into the social and economic sphere. The related findings will be used in practice by the police forces of both countries involved in their conceptual and terrain activities. The study also operates with the relevant social or socio-economic aspects of the topic (correlation of unemployment and registered crime, etc.). A certain bias or lack of clarity may relate primarily to the forecasting of future developments. Opinions can stand side by side, ranging from those claiming that the coronavirus situation and possible restrictions on the movement of the public would no longer be possible, to the ones that think that these measures can be re-introduced very soon. The social, political and security reaction to the developments of the last months (high inflation, hundreds of thousands of newcomers from Ukraine, concerns about the energy sustainability of future periods, or the general increase in tension in the community) are, however, difficult to assess. The authors try to avoid these aspects, and prefer to focus on objectively existing data, for example, regarding unemployment, which remains relatively unchanged in both countries.

2.1. Basic data related to the monitored countries

Czech Republic: Territory: 78,870 km². Population (2021): 10,701,777. Administrative division: 14 regions (higher territorial self-governing units), 77 districts (including the capital city of Prague), 205 administrative districts of municipalities with extended powers (microregion) and 6,253 municipalities (Český statistický úřad).

Slovakia: Territory: 49,036 km². Population (2021): 5,449,270. Administrative division: 8 regions, 79 districts and 2,890 municipalities (Štatistický úrad Slovenskej republiky).

Note: After a long tradition of a common state, it is possible to say, with considerable simplification, that the population of Slovakia is roughly half that of the Czech Republic. For the purposes of this study, the 2:1 ratio can serve as an indicative measure of the presence of certain observed phenomena.

Both countries monitored, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, are quite progressive and open in terms of the presentation and reporting of registered crime, even with regard to “user-friendliness” in relation to the public. (Krulik & Bohman, 2012) The Czech Republic and Slovakia represent the pinnacle of openness and user-friendliness in European comparison. Indeed, the structure of criminal acts and their naming is quite similar, although differences can also be found. At the same time, it should be emphasized that crime statistics, especially the outputs generated by the Police of the Czech Republic, are generally very up-to-date, even in an international comparison. Until November 2020, the Crime Map functionality dominated, with the ability to search and compare by many indicators [20]. After this time, it is the Crime Portal, see Figure 1 (Mapy kriminality).

In the Czech Republic, the basic responsibility for keeping statistics on registered crime lies with the Police of the Czech Republic. Registered crime statistics since 2008 are presented quite openly, with a delay not exceeding 14 days each month. The individual crimes and individual regions are presented. Until November 2020, it was possible to monitor statistics in the above-standard internet application also in relation to individual service areas into which police work is structured. This model has been replaced by a less precise approach (use of map data), which is still considerably above standard in European comparison (Kriminalita). In addition, there are interactive statistics on traffic accidents (Dopravní nehody v České republice) or the location of detected clandestine drug labs (Varny a pěstíny). Secondary, not always fully compatible data on crime, predominantly in the light of justice, are generated by courts and prosecutors’ offices (Ministerstvo spravedlnosti …).
In Slovakia, the basic responsibility for keeping statistics on registered crime belongs to the Police Force of the Slovak Republic. Registered crime statistics, from 1997 to the present, are presented openly, with a delay of no more than 14 days each month. The individual crimes and individual regions are presented (Štatistika kriminality ...). Traffic accidents are listed separately (Ministerstvo vnútra ...). The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic also offers a number of statistical outputs for the area of crime (Štatistický úrad Slovenskej republiky 2022). The third source is the General Prosecutor’s Office of the Slovak Republic, providing data since 1999 (Generálna prokuratúra ...). In this case, any map materials or visualizations are created on an ad hoc basis, for example, in the framework of certain follow-up research projects.
2.2. Quarantine and other distance measures in the years 2020 to 2022

In this passage, attention is paid to whether a state of emergency or lockdown was declared in the monitored countries in the selected years (due to the coronavirus situation).

The first case of coronavirus was in the Czech Republic clearly identified on 1 March 2020. A State of Emergency in this regard was declared on 12 March 2020. The first lockdown (restriction of movement of persons, restriction of air traffic, significant restriction of movement of persons at state borders; this was usually a curfew, with the exception of travel to work, to test and provide for essential needs or to stay in the countryside in the district of residence) took place in the Czech Republic from 16 March to 24 April 2020, including the closure of “dispensable” shops and services by 11 May 2020. The second lockdown (restrictions on trade and services) was launched on 22 October 2020, with some easing between 14 and 27 December 2020. From 1 March 2021 to 12 April 2021, the lockdown was amplified by substantially reducing “unjustified” crossings between districts, see Figure 2 and Table 1. In parallel with this process, a night curfew or...
Figure 6. Registered crime in the Czech Republic, quarters of 2020 and 2021 and 1st and 2nd quarter of 2022 (Kriminalita).

Figure 7. Registered crime in Slovakia, quarters of 2020 and 2021 and 1st and 2nd quarter of 2022 (Štatistika kriminality ...).

Figure 8. Violent crime in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, quarters of 2020 and 2021 and 1st and 2nd quarter of 2022 (Štatistika kriminality ...; Kriminalita).

measures were applied in relation to specific districts or otherwise defined microregions. On 12 April 2021, the hitherto repeatedly extended State of Emergency and a curfew ended. On 10 May 2021, the vast majority of retail establishments and services opened, see Figure 2 and Table 1. Restrictions at different times, in different environments and in different intensities...
Figure 9. Abuse of a person cohabiting in a common household or abuse of a close and entrusted person—Czech Republic and Slovakia, quarters of 2020 and 2021 and 1st and 2nd quarter of 2022 (Statistika kriminality ...; Kriminalita).

Figure 10. Murder, comparison of quarters of 2020 and 2021 and the 1st and 2nd quarter of 2022, Czech Republic and Slovakia (Statistika kriminality ...; Kriminalita).

Figure 11. The most common sections related to the “drug crime” in the Czech Republic, years 2018 to 2022; in years 2020–2022 additionally structured into quarters (Kriminalita).

concerned mass events or crowded places in general (from March 2020 to early 2022), as well as international transport (Vyhlášené křizové stavy; Ministerstvo zdravotnictví České republiky).

The first case of coronavirus was clearly identified in Slovakia on 6 March 2020. A State of Emergency was declared on 15 March 2020. The State of Emergency ended on 13 June 2020 and was re-declared on 1 October 2020, with a gradually extended validity until 14 May 2021 (i.e., a total of 226 days). Between 24 October and 12 November 2020, and again from 19 December 2020 to 7 February 2021, it was a lockdown of varying intensity. The State of Emergency was re-declared on 25 November 2021, with a gradually extended validity until
Figure 12. The most common sections of the “drug crime” in Slovakia, years 2018 to 2022; in years 2020–2022 additionally structured into quarters (Štatistika kriminality ...)

Figure 13. “Cybercrime” in the Czech Republic, years 2020 to 2022; structured into quarters (Kriminalita)

Figure 14. Development of unemployment from 1999 to 2021 (%) and development of registered crime from 1999 to 2021 (thousands of cases).

Figure 15. Development of unemployment from 1999 to 2021 (%) and development of registered crime from 1999 to 2021 (thousands of cases).
Table 1. Time periods of the relevant quarters of 2020 to 2022, when a State of Emergency and lockdowns related to the coronavirus situation were declared in the Czech Republic. (own elaboration, on the basis of: Vyhlášené krizové stavy; Ministerstvo zdravotnictví České republiky)

| Quarter | Beginning of the State of Emergency | End of the State of Emergency | Number of days | Days in quarter | Percentage of days per quarter (rounded) | Note |
|---------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------------------------------|------|
| 1Q 2020 | 12 March 2020                      | 31 March 2020                 | 20            | 91             | 22                                     |      |
|         |                                    |                               |               |                | has a so-called hard lockdown (16 days, 18 %) |
| 2Q 2020 | 1 April 2020                       | 17 May 2020                   | 47            | 91             | 52 (23 days, 25 %)                      |      |
| 3Q 2020 |                                    |                               | 0             | 92             |                                        |      |
| 4Q 2020 | 5 October 2020                     | 31 December 2020              | 88            | 92             | 96 (58 days, 63 %)                      |      |
| 1Q 2021 | 1 January 2021                     | 31 March 2021                 | 90            | 90             | 100 (90 days, 100 %)                    |      |

(Continued)
Table 1. (Continued)

| Quarter       | Beginning of the State of Emergency | End of the State of Emergency | Number of days | Days in quarter | Percentage of days per quarter (rounded) | Note                                                                 |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2Q 2021       | 1 April 2021                         | 11 April 2021                  | 91             | 10/91           | 12%                                      | throughout the situation was perceived as a lockdown (11 days, 12%), including restrictions on unjustified crossings between districts |
| 3Q 2021       | 0                                    | 92                              | 0              | 0               | 0                                        | a State of Emergency is declared in connection with the migration wave from Ukraine, but without measures of a curfew |
| 4Q 2021       | 26 November 2021                     | 25 December 2021               | 92             | 92              | 0                                        |                                                                       |
| 1Q 2022       | 2022                                 | 90                              | 0              | 0               | 0                                        |                                                                       |
Table 2. Time periods of the relevant quarters of 2020 to 2022, when a State of Emergency and lockdowns related to the coronavirus situation was declared in Slovakia (Ministerstvo investícií…)

| Quarter | Beginning of the State of Emergency | End of the State of Emergency | Number of days | Days in quarter | Percentage of days per quarter (rounded) | Note |
|---------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------|------|
| 1Q 2020 | 15 March 2020                       | 31 March 2021                 | 16             | 91             | 18                                      |      |
| 2Q 2020 | 1 April 2021                        | 13 June 2020                  | 74             | 91             | 81                                      |      |
| 3Q 2020 | 1 October 2020                      | 31 December 2020              | 92             | 92             | 100                                     |      |
| 4Q 2020 | 1 January 2021                      | 31 March 2021                 | 90             | 90             | 100                                     |      |
| 1Q 2021 | 1 January 2021                      | 31 March 2021                 | 90             | 90             | 100                                     |      |
| 2Q 2021 | 1 April 2021                        | 14 May 2021                   | 44             | 91             | 48                                      |      |
| 3Q 2021 | 1 April 2021                        | 14 May 2021                   | 0              | 92             | 0                                       |      |

(Continued)
| Quarter | Beginning of the State of Emergency | End of the State of Emergency | Number of days | Days in quarter | Percentage of days per quarter (rounded) | Note |
|---------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------------------|------|
| 4Q 2021 | 25 November 2021                   | 31 December 2021              | 37             | 92             | 40                                     |      |
|         |                                    |                               |                |                |                                        |      |
| 1Q 2022 | 1 January 2022                     | 22 February 2022              | 53             | 90             | 59                                     |      |

Note: between 25 November and 9 December, it was a so-called lockdown (national quarantine, 15 days, 16%); from 10 December to the end of the year, (and further) there was a night curfew until 9 January 2022, there was a night curfew.
## Table 3. Registered crime in the Czech Republic, comparison of 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 (Kriminalita)

| Czech Republic | 2018   | 2019   | 2020   | 2021   |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| total crime    | 192 405| 199 221| 165 525| 153 233|
| general crime  | 141 581| 145 829| 121 981| 117 349|
| of which violent crime | 13 553 | 13 606 | 12 247 | 11 958 |
| of which murder | 116    | 143    | 130    | 105    |
| of which vice crime | 2 655  | 2 733  | 2 605  | 3 049  |
| of which property crime total | 98 670 | 102 136| 82 116 | 77 562 |
| of which theft by burglary | 21 151 | 22 161 | 20 661 | 30 748 |
| of which simple theft | 59 438 | 59 850 | 45 638 | 26 589 |
| of which other property crime | 18 081 | 20 125 | 15 817 | 20 225 |
| of which other crime | 26 703 | 27 354 | 25 013 | 24 780 |
| remaining criminal activity | 25 974 | 28 682 | 24 946 | 23 312 |
| economic crime | 24 837 | 24 589 | 18 528 | 12 510 |
| military and unconstitutional crime | 13    | 48    | 19    | 10    |

## Table 4. Registered crime in Slovakia, comparison of 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 (Štatistika kriminality ...)

| Slovakia | 2018   | 2019   | 2020   | 2021   |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| total crime | 61 392 | 58 829 | 54 244 | 50 915 |
| general crime together | 35 789 | 33 513 | 31 366 | 28 205 |
| of which violent crime | 5 781  | 5 540  | 5 280  | 4 575  |
| of which murder | 67     | 76     | 63     | 55     |
| of which moral (vice) crime | 1 122  | 1 097  | 1 112  | 970    |
| of which property crime | 21 787 | 19 583 | 18 715 | 16 535 |
| of which burglary | 4 529  | 3 695  | 3 725  | 3 247  |
| of which other thefts | 13 549 | 12 120 | 11 442 | 9 799  |
| of which other property crime | 3 709  | 3 768  | 3 548  | 3 489  |
| other crime | 7 099  | 7 293  | 6 259  | 6 125  |
| remaining crime | 12 088 | 11 981 | 11 659 | 10 823 |
| economic crime | 13 515 | 13 326 | 11 212 | 11 844 |
| military crimes and crimes against the republic | 11    | 9     | 7     | 43     |
| Czech Republic | 2019 | 1Q 2020 | 2Q 2020 | 3Q 2020 | 4Q 2020 | 2020 | 1Q 2021 | 2Q 2021 | 3Q 2021 | 4Q 2021 | 2021 | 1Q 2022 | 2Q 2022 |
|----------------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------|---------|---------|
| total crime    | 199 221 | 49 921 | 39 993 | 44 791 | 31 420 | 165 525 | 35 690 | 38 281 | 42 009 | 37 253 | 153 233 | 46 940 | 46 713 |
| general crime  | 145 829 | 35 854 | 29 792 | 33 641 | 22 694 | 121 981 | 25 815 | 28 681 | 33 365 | 29 488 | 117 349 | 35 715 | 34 784 |
| of which violent crime | 13 606 | 3 528 | 2 922 | 3 352 | 2 445 | 12 247 | 3 136 | 3 081 | 3 211 | 2 530 | 11 958 | 3 568 | 3 378 |
| of which murder | 143 | 41 | 26 | 36 | 27 | 130 | 27 | 31 | 27 | 20 | 105 | 35 | 43 |
| of which vice crime | 2 733 | 745 | 694 | 655 | 511 | 2 605 | 888 | 811 | 738 | 612 | 3 049 | 1 027 | 921 |
| of which property crime total | 102 136 | 24 351 | 20 089 | 23 278 | 14 398 | 82 116 | 15 582 | 18 201 | 23 049 | 20 730 | 77 562 | 23 172 | 25 102 |
| of which theft by burglary | 22 161 | 5 924 | 4 975 | 5 089 | 4 673 | 20 661 | 6 817 | 7 429 | 8 568 | 7 934 | 30 748 | 8 063 | 8 343 |
| of which simple theft | 59 850 | 13 464 | 10 800 | 13 887 | 7 487 | 45 638 | 4 555 | 6 020 | 8 857 | 7 157 | 26 589 | 7 865 | 8 596 |
| of which other property crime | 20 125 | 4 963 | 4 314 | 4 302 | 2 238 | 15 817 | 4 210 | 4 752 | 5 624 | 5 639 | 20 225 | 7 244 | 8 163 |
| of which other crime | 27 354 | 7 230 | 6 087 | 6 356 | 5 340 | 25 013 | 6 209 | 6 588 | 6 367 | 5 616 | 24 780 | 7 948 | 7 383 |
| remaining criminal activity | 28 682 | 7 259 | 5 944 | 6 830 | 4 913 | 24 946 | 6 338 | 6 450 | 5 890 | 4 625 | 23 312 | 6 918 | 6 256 |
| economic crime | 24 589 | 6 157 | 4 257 | 4 309 | 3 805 | 18 528 | 3 501 | 3 421 | 2 735 | 2 833 | 12 510 | 4 261 | 3 655 |
| military and unconstitutional crime | 48 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 19 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 9 | 0 |
22 February 2022. In addition, between 25 November and 9 December 2021, it was a lockdown of varying intensity, see Figure 3 and Table 2. Other restrictions must be added to this (night curfew or restrictions on movement among districts with a very unfavorable epidemiological situation) (own elaboration, on the basis of: Gáliková, 2022 and Ministerstvo investicí ….).

2.3. Registered crime statistics
The registered crime statistics in both countries are based on a common basis before the dissolution of the Czechoslovak federation in 1993. The structure of registered crime is similar in both countries, with a significant dominance of property crime. There is a comparison with the context of whole years (2018 to 2021 inclusive, see Figure 4 and Table 3), as well as individual quarters.

**Note:** Statistical records are a dynamic variable. Basic period, in which the data are recorded, is one year. Although the update takes place every month, with regard to the development of individual cases and their ongoing re-qualification or expansion of legal qualifications, it is not possible to consider the centrally presented data for individual month or quarter as final.

With considerable simplification, it can be stated that in the Czech Republic, the year-on-year comparison of 2019 and 2020 shows a clear decline in virtually all groups of crime. When comparing the situation within individual quarters, this is a fluctuating trend that sensitively responds to periods of specific, more drastic quarantine measures (lockdowns). Registered crime was the least burdened in the 4th quarter of 2020. The beginning of 2022 is then marked by the return of the situation to more or less the original state, see Figure 5 and Table 4. It is also necessary to mention the change in the limit between the minor offense and the criminal offense as regards the amount of damage caused (from 1 October 2020, this limit moved from CZK 5,000 to CZK 10,000; cca EUR 185 to EUR 370). Related qualified estimates on the subject suggest that this step alone may represent a reduction in the number of crimes by 3,000 to 5,000 cases per year (i.e. 750 to 1,250 cases per quarter; Moravčík, 2020).

The situation in Slovakia can be characterized, with the exception of the economic crime, as a complex decrease in all groups of registered crime, stretching for all four monitored years. Although the 4th quarter of 2020 was also the least burdened by registered crime, with regard to lockdowns, that continued during 2021. There were also relatively satisfactory results in the 4th quarter of 2021. Early in 2022, although we see an increase in registered crime, the result lags far behind the pre-coronavirus situation, see Figures 5 and 7, and Tables 4 and 6.

In the context of statistics, it cannot be overlooked that the activities of the police force in both countries were to some extent limited during the emergency situation, including search activities, and were focused on the necessary actions and activities related to the enforcement of quarantine measures. (Policie České Republiky, 2021)

2.4. Violent crime, with special emphasis on the aspect known as “domestic violence”
Violent crime in the period under review fluctuated in both countries, which was the highest in both countries in the 4th quarter of 2022. Concerns about domestic violence (among family and household members) were one of the major media topic in this regard. In addition, a number of social services were out of order during an emergency. At the same time, non-profit organizations, concerning to the help victims of domestic violence have experienced a shortage of state funding (Bartůněk, 2020; Hroch, 2020; Siripala, 2020). Some NGOs reported hundreds of percent more calls on their hotlines in response to growing domestic violence (Townsend, 2020). However, the registered crime in this area did not resonate with these concerns (ČTK, 2021). Without confirming this aspect, at least for the time being, there are concerns that the number of cases of domestic violence has not decreased, but these incidents have not been reported (out of fear that victims would still have to stay with the violent person in the same household due to quarantine measures). The equalization of the situation in both countries is worth mentioning, as Slovakia has registered about the same volume of cases of “domestic violence” as the Czech Republic.
| Slovakia | 2019 | 1Q 2020 | 2Q 2020 | 3Q 2020 | 4Q 2020 | 2020  | 1Q 2021 | 2Q 2021 | 3Q 2021 | 4Q 2021 | 2021  | 1Q 2022 | 2Q 2022 |
|----------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|---------|---------|
| total crime | 58 829 | 15 819 | 13 641 | 13 358 | 11 426 | 54 244 | 12 725 | 13 094 | 12 945 | 12 151 | 50 915 | 13 926 | 14 134 |
| general crime | 33 513 | 9 266 | 7 983 | 7 819 | 6 298 | 31 366 | 7 124 | 7 172 | 7 359 | 6 550 | 28 205 | 7 860 | 7 737 |
| of which violent crime | 5 540 | 1 582 | 1 389 | 1 311 | 998 | 5 280 | 1 203 | 1 242 | 1 168 | 962 | 4 575 | 1 252 | 1 074 |
| of which murder | 76 | 10 | 22 | 17 | 14 | 63 | 11 | 17 | 12 | 13 | 55 | 11 | 11 |
| of which moral (vice) crime | 1 097 | 313 | 268 | 271 | 260 | 1 112 | 255 | 315 | 227 | 173 | 970 | 325 | 387 |
| of which property crime | 19 583 | 5 373 | 4 747 | 4 697 | 3 898 | 18 715 | 4 031 | 4 006 | 4 422 | 4 076 | 16 535 | 4 592 | 4 542 |
| of which burglary | 3 695 | 1 072 | 1 017 | 836 | 800 | 3 725 | 713 | 809 | 865 | 860 | 3 247 | 941 | 888 |
| of which other thefts | 12 120 | 3 381 | 2 829 | 2 949 | 2 283 | 11 442 | 2 539 | 2 354 | 2 591 | 2 315 | 9 799 | 2 770 | 2 691 |
| of which other property crime | 3 768 | 920 | 901 | 912 | 815 | 3 548 | 779 | 843 | 966 | 901 | 3 489 | 881 | 961 |

(Continued)
Table 6. (Continued)

| Slovakia          | 2019 | 1Q 2020 | 2Q 2020 | 3Q 2020 | 4Q 2020 | 2020  | 1Q 2021 | 2Q 2021 | 3Q 2021 | 4Q 2021 | 2021  | 1Q 2022 | 2Q 2022 |
|-------------------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|---------|---------|
| other crime       | 7 293| 1 998   | 1 579   | 1 540   | 1 142   | 6 259 | 1 635   | 1 609   | 1 542   | 1 339   | 6 125 | 1 691   | 1 736   |
| remaining crime   | 11 981| 3 130   | 2 953   | 3 095   | 2 481   | 11 659| 2 685   | 2 916   | 2 778   | 2 444   | 10 823| 2 942   | 3 019   |
| economic crime    | 13 326| 3 420   | 2 706   | 2 446   | 2 640   | 11 212| 2 912   | 3 010   | 2 808   | 3 114   | 11 844| 3 116   | 6 491   |
| military crimes and crimes against the republic | 9    | 2       | -       | 1       | 4       | 7     | 4       | 6       | 12      | 21      | 43    | 8       | 3       |
(taking into consideration the significant latency of this phenomenon and Slovakia's population being half the size of the population of the Czech Republic, see Table 7 and Figures 8 and 9.)

2.4.1. Violent crime: Murder
In both countries monitored, the number of registered murders is very limited and fluctuations with regard to their number take place at the level of single cases. Between 2018 and 2021/2022, this aspect culminated in 2019, also in view of the economic situation—and the quarantine measures of 2020 and 2021 played a dampening factor here (concerns about the number of homicides caused by “submarine sickness” in households were not confirmed). However, an abysmal difference can be seen in the first quarters of 2022 between the two countries monitored—in Slovakia, the downward trend continues, while in the Czech Republic we are nearly approaching the pre-coronavirus figures for this serious form of crime, see Figure 10 and Table 8.

2.4.2. Property Crime
Property crime represents a decisive share of registered crime in both countries. Specifically, the 3rd quarter (characterized by the holiday loosening of measures) in both years was also a time of increase in this group of crimes. A further increase is also evident at the beginning of 2022, see Table 9. To some extent, in the near future this may be a similar development as in the case of economic downturn after 2009, when a number of people got into difficulties in repaying mortgages or leases, or for other reasons, found itself in secondary insolvency. From the affected persons, accustomed to a certain lifestyle, the first-time perpetrators of property or violent crime were recruited (Kovářík, 2015).

The situation presented a unique opportunity for fraudsters seeking to benefit from the uncertainty, constraints and growing demand for certain products. In particular, these were frauds related with non-delivery of prepaid goods, including protective equipment and other medical supplies. During the coronavirus situation, some offenders modified “traditional” schemes to lure money fraudulently (from the elderly) by pretending to be sick relatives who needed money. Some fraudsters also pretended to be medics or police officers to gain access to the residence of the victim.

In relation to distance measures, we can talk about a certain form of situational prevention: Shoplifting decreased because the shops were closed (or, the perpetrators moved to shops that remained opened, but it was still a decrease in absolute numbers). The number of incidents in restaurants dropped for the same reason. Burglary was less common due to the fact that many people stayed at home. Pickpocketing, taking advantage of crowded places, has fallen by more than 60 % as high concentration of people has become undesirable in itself (and trying not to keep the distance is suspicious in itself; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2020).

2.4.3. „Drug“ Crime
In the Czech Republic, the most prevalent forms of crime in this area include “illicit manufacture and other handling of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and poisons for others“ and “possession of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and poisons for own purposes“. Other crimes are less significant, and relate to individual cases or dozens of cases per year. Registered crime in this area has decreased in recent years. The first year of the coronavirus situation (2020, and especially its second quarter) intensified this trend. „According to the … National Drug Headquarters, epidemic-related measures have contributed to this development. Apparently, for example, the number of discovered distributors operating in the dance scene and night entertainment has decreased. However, this segment is in decline due to coronavirus.“ (Novinky.cz 2020)

The second year of the coronavirus situation, when the impact of the coronavirus measures was no longer so significant, the above-mentioned trend actually stopped. Despite initial and local disruptions to drug supply and distribution during the first lockdowns, the drug trade gradually began to continue without major fluctuations, (see Table 10 and Figure 11). After a relatively short phase of price and drug supply fluctuations on the European market in the early phase of the coronavirus
|                  | 1Q 2020 | 2Q 2020 | 3Q 2020 | 4Q 2020 | 1Q 2021 | 2Q 2021 | 3Q 2021 | 4Q 2021 | 1Q 2022 | 2Q 2022 |
|------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| **Czech Republic:** |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
| Violent crime,    | 3,528   | 2,922   | 2,758   | 3,039   | 3,136   | 3,081   | 3,211   | 2,530   | 3,568   | 3,378   |
| total             |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
|                   | 142     | 107     | 102     | 77      | 140     | 111     | 55      | 97      | 155     | 106     |
| which abuse of    |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
| a person          |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
| cohabiting in a   |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
| common household  |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
| (Section 199)     |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
| **Slovakia:**     |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
| Violent crime,    | 1,582   | 1,389   | 1,311   | 998     | 1,203   | 1,242   | 1,168   | 962     | 1,252   | 1,074   |
| total             |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
|                   | 167     | 128     | 91      | 92      | 132     | 109     | 109     | 82      | 123     | no data |
| which abuse of    |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
| a close and       |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
| entrusted person  |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
| (Section 208)     |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
Table 8. Murder, comparison of quarters of 2020 and 2021 and the 1st and 2nd quarter of 2022, Czech Republic and Slovakia (Štatistika kriminality...; Kriminalita).

|        | 1Q 2020 | 2Q 2020 | 3Q 2020 | 4Q 2020 | 1Q 2021 | 2Q 2021 | 3Q 2021 | 4Q 2021 | 1Q 2022 | 2Q 2022 |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Czech Republic | 41 | 26 | 36 | 27 | 27 | 31 | 27 | 20 | 35 | 43 |
| Slovakia | 10 | 22 | 17 | 14 | 11 | 17 | 12 | 13 | 11 | 11 |
|                  | 2019 | 1Q 2020 | 2Q 2020 | 3Q 2020 | 4Q 2020 | 2020 | 1Q 2021 | 2Q 2021 | 3Q 2021 | 4Q 2021 | 2021 | 1Q 2022 | 2Q 2022 |
|------------------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------|---------|---------|
| **Czech Republic:**<br>property crime total | 102 136 | 24 351 | 20 089 | 23 278 | 14 398 | 82 116 | 15 582 | 18 201 | 23 049 | 20 730 | 77 562 | 23 172 | 25 102 |
| **Czech Republic:**theft by burglary | 22 161 | 5 924 | 4 975 | 5 089 | 4 673 | 20 661 | 6 817 | 7 429 | 8 568 | 7 934 | 30 748 | 8 063 | 8 343 |
| **Czech Republic:**simple theft | 59 850 | 13 464 | 10 800 | 13 887 | 7 487 | 45 638 | 4 555 | 6 020 | 8 857 | 7 157 | 26 589 | 7 865 | 8 596 |
| **Czech Republic:**other property crime | 20 125 | 4 963 | 4 314 | 4 302 | 2 238 | 15 817 | 4 210 | 4 752 | 5 624 | 5 639 | 20 225 | 7 244 | 8 163 |
| **Slovakia:**property crime total | 19 583 | 5 373 | 4 747 | 4 697 | 3 898 | 18 715 | 4 031 | 4 006 | 4 422 | 4 076 | 16 535 | 4 592 | 4 542 |
| **Slovakia:**burglary | 3 695 | 1 072 | 1 017 | 836 | 800 | 3 725 | 713 | 809 | 865 | 860 | 3 247 | 941 | 888 |
| **Slovakia:**other thefts | 12 120 | 3 381 | 2 829 | 2 949 | 2 283 | 11 442 | 2 539 | 2 354 | 2 591 | 2 315 | 9 799 | 2 770 | 2 691 |
| **Slovakia:**other property crime | 3 768 | 920 | 901 | 912 | 815 | 3 548 | 779 | 843 | 966 | 901 | 3 489 | 881 | 961 |
situation, the situation returned to the level of 2019. In addition, the number of detected acts under the influence of alcohol (compared to 2019 and 2020) decreased by almost 9% (10,405 for 2020; 11,429 for 2019). However, this is difficult to interpret clearly.

In Slovakia, the key Criminal Code sections are referred to as “illicit drug production and possession” and “drugs for personal use”. Other sections are less significant and relate to just few cases or few dozens of cases per year. Drug crime increased slightly during the period under review, with the only exception being 2020, the period of the most rigid quarantine measures. At the quarter level, the largest decline is in fourth quarter of 2020. At the beginning of 2022, however, the situation returns to its “original level”, see Table 11 and Figure 12.

The relevant forms of crime in both countries are similar in the observed area and relate to the production (respectively distribution) of narcotic and psychotropic substances and the possession of narcotic and psychotropic substances for own use. The largest decline in registered drug crime in the Czech Republic was related to the most intensive anti-coronavirus measures—in the Czech Republic it was the 2nd quarter of 2020, in Slovakia the 4th quarter of 2020.

The withdrawal of most Western forces from Afghanistan could have brought about some changes in development (September 2021). In this context, it is possible, for example, to expect a reduction in the price of methamphetamine in Europe (at least since 2019, ephedrine production has been on the rise in Afghanistan, with the wild ephedra herb playing a key role). Drug production in other destabilized countries, such as Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, may also pose a challenge (Krulík & Bohman, 2022; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2021).

2.4.4. „Cybercrime“ and „cyber-related“ crime
The term “cybercrime” (computer crime, cybercrime, etc.) in the environment of the Czech Republic is not always perceived in a completely homogeneous way.

For the purposes of this study, it is possible to first refer to the criminal offenses regulated by Act No. 40/2009 Coll., Criminal Code, as amended, committed in relation to data (stored information): Unauthorized access to a computer system and information carrier (Section 230); Measures and storing the access device and password to the computer system and other such data (Section 231); Damage to the record in the computer system and on the information carrier and interference with the computer equipment due to negligence (Section 232).

Secondly, there are criminal offenses regulated by Act No. 40/2009 Coll., the Criminal Code, as amended, committed in relation to data (stored information), in which the computer is a means of committing them: Pornography dissemination (Section 191); Production and other handling of child pornography (Section 192); Establishing illicit contacts with a child (Section 193b); Infringement of copyright, rights related to copyright and rights to the database (Section 270); Defamation of a nation, race, ethnic or other group of persons (Section 355); Incitement to hatred against a group of persons or restriction of their rights and freedoms (Section 356); Dissemination of an alarm message (Section 357); Defamation (Section 184); Blackmail (Section 175), and many more.

This is a type of crime that has risen despite the coronavirus situation, see Table 12 and Figure 13. At the same time, it is a type of crime with a considerable latency, where the police probably obtain information only about a small number of the total volume of committed acts. The current phenomenon at the time of coronavirus was the penetration of teleconferencing applications (Teams, Zoom and others) to obtain internal information (to a lesser extent, this also applied to efforts to obtain pornographic material; Europol, 2021b). Cyber extortion attacks on medical facilities and other organizations were also recorded (usually in the form of a ransom for
Table 10. “Drug crime” in the Czech Republic, years 2018 to 2022; in years 2020–2022 additionally structured into quarters (Kriminalita)

| Section of Criminal Code | 2018  | 2019  | 1Q 2020 | 2Q 2020 | 3Q 2020 | 4Q 2020 | 2020  | 1Q 2021 | 2Q 2021 | 3Q 2021 | 4Q 2021 | 2021  | 1Q 2022 | 2Q 2022 |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------|----------|----------|
| 283: illicit manufacture and other handling of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and poisons for others | 4396  | 3559  | 914      | 668      | 737      | 693      | 3012  | 703      | 797      | 714      | 693      | 2907  | 800      | 804      |
| 284: possession of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and poisons for own purposes | 792   | 954   | 292      | 189      | 221      | 250      | 952   | 313      | 269      | 229      | 225      | 1036  | 297      | 246      |
| 285: illicit growing of plants containing a narcotic or psychotropic substance* | 129   | 148   | 16       | 14       | 79*      | ...      | 135   | 24       | 25       | 100*     | ...      | 144   | 15       | 8        |
| 286: production and possession of an object for the illicit production of narcotic and psychotropic substances and poisons | 127   | 141   | 38       | 15       | 9        | 20       | 82    | 24       | 34       | 26       | 13       | 97    | 29       | 25       |
| 287: drug dealing ** | 21    | 17    | 7**      | 2**      | 3**      | ...      | 10    | 3        | 5        | 1        | 3        | 12    | 4        | 5        |

* Dozens of cases have been retroactively classified as offenses, not crimes.

** Several cases were retroactively classified as offenses, not crimes.
unblocking in an attack of encrypted data, databases—an example could be the blackmail of the Olomouc municipality in May 2021, an attempt to raise USD 100,000 (iHned.cz 2021; Český rozhlas, 2021).

Within Slovakia, the monitored crime group is structured into four specific areas (Ministerstvo vnitra ... 2022):

1) Sexual abuse of children online: production of child pornography according to Section 368 of the Criminal Code; dissemination of child pornography pursuant to Section 369 of the Criminal Code; possession of child pornography and participation in child pornography performances pursuant to Section 370 of the Criminal Code; sexual abuse under Section 201a of the Criminal Code (so-called grooming).

2) Attacks on information systems: unauthorized access to a computer system pursuant to Section 247 of the Criminal Code; unauthorized interference with the computer system pursuant to Section 247a of the Criminal Code; unauthorized interference with computer data pursuant to Section 247b of the Criminal Code; unauthorized interception of computer data pursuant to Section 247c of the Criminal Code; production and possession of an access device, password to a computer system or other data pursuant to Section 247d of the Criminal Code.

3) Fraud with non-cash means of payment: unauthorized production and use of an electronic means of payment or another payment card pursuant to Section 219 of the Criminal Code.

4) Copyright infringement under Section 283 of the Criminal Code.

However, statistical reporting of this issue (regarding individual Sections) is not available in open sources (altogether, however, there is a maximum of dozens of registered cases per year). Therefore, a comparison between the two respective countries is not available in this chapter of the study.

2.5. Socio-economic aspects of the situation

Unemployment in the Czech Republic is still one of the lowest in Europe, see Table 13 and Figure 14. In some regions, unemployment even fell sharply during the quarantine measures (Hradec Králové Region, Pardubice Region, Vysočina Region). In May 2021, for example, male unemployment was stable with a relatively small year-on-year increase (from 1.8 % to 2.7 %), while female unemployment has increased relatively sharply (from 2.2 % to 4.4 %), as women had to stay at home with their children during the school closures. However, the unemployment rate may gradually increase in the near future as a result of the economic downturn, causing a number of another problems, including an increase in crime (Weiss 2021; Kurzy.cz; Český statistický úřad, 2021).

Unemployment in Slovakia, on the other hand, has traditionally been higher, attacking even the 20% level of economically productive population in the past, while it has only been falling to more satisfactory level since 2012, see Table 14 and Figure 15. It was 2020 that saw a sharp rise in unemployment, up to 15 %. Registered crime, however, has been steadily declining since 2004 (Ondicová, 2011; Rybáček, 2018; Český statistický úřad, 2014; Surveillgence, 2020; Ministerstvo vnútra ... 2020; Business Info; Kurzy-online.sk; Ústredie práce ...; Macrotrends).

The long-term consequences of the coronavirus situation and possible future development can currently be estimated in such a way that some economic sectors, such as aviation, hospitality industry, culture and leisure, will feel the impact of the crisis in full force. The current situation has slowed economic activity, including consumer spending, retail sales and employment (Council of the European Union, 2021; Europol, 2021a). Even if the crisis comes to an end in 2022, its repercussions will be visible on macroeconomic indicators by the year 2023 (according to the
Table 11. “Drug crime” in Slovakia, years 2018 to 2022; in years 2020–2022 additionally structured into quarters (Štatistika kriminality …)

| Section of Criminal Code | 2018 | 2019 | 1Q 2020 | 2Q 2020 | 3Q 2020 | 4Q 2020 | 2020 | 1Q 2021 | 2Q 2021 | 3Q 2021 | 4Q 2021 | 2021 | 1Q 2022 | 2Q 2022 |
|--------------------------|------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------|---------|---------|
| 171: drugs for personal use | 896  | 919  | 261     | 181     | 188     | 134     | 764  | 312     | 266     | 182     | 194     | 954  | 288     | no data |
| 172: support of the production of drugs and dangerous substances | 7    | 3    | 1       | 2       | 1       | 1       | 5    | 1       | 3       | 0       | 2       | 6    | 0       | no data |
| 173: illicit drug production and possession | 629  | 757  | 144     | 195     | 231     | 154     | 724  | 205     | 221     | 168     | 224     | 818  | 155     | 180     |
| 174: drug dealing | 41   | 44   | 7       | 6       | 5       | 2       | 20   | 13      | 2       | 8       | 5       | 28   | 9       | 6       |
| Quarter   | 1Q 2020 | 2Q 2020 | 3Q 2020 | 4Q 2020 | 1Q 2021 | 2Q 2021 | 3Q 2021 | 4Q 2021 | 1Q 2022 | 2Q 2022 |
|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| **2020**  | 2 107   | 2 061   | 1 850   | 1 830   | 2 197   | 2 163   | 2 197   | 2 163   | 2 197   | 2 163   |
| **2021**  | 2 197   | 2 243   | 2 058   | 2 197   | 2 738   | 2 738   | 2 738   | 2 738   | 2 738   | 2 738   |
| **2022**  | 2 243   | 2 738   | 2 738   | 2 738   | 2 738   | 2 738   | 2 738   | 2 738   | 2 738   | 2 738   |

**Table 12.** "Cybercrime" in the Czech Republic, years 2020 to 2022; structured into quarters (Kriminalita)
most optimistic estimates), or by the year 2026 (according to more conservative forecasts, not to mention other stressful effects that arose after April 2022 in connection with the war in Ukraine).

Another significant factor will be the expected subsequent economic crisis, which will manifest itself in inflation, volatile public finances, unemployment and the closure of small and medium-sized enterprises (after the end of state subsidies when the pandemic is over). Retail sales have fallen by tens of percent since March 2020. On the contrary, the yields of open supermarkets and e-shops, especially those aimed at delivering daily necessities, have increased (ČTK, 2020).

2.6. Extremism and politically motivated violence

Extremist and populist platforms have sought to make full use of public fatigue in relation to quarantine measures and to provoke manifestations of “civil disobedience.” A relatively new model of protest social movement based on online associations (discussion forums) was recorded, followed by a wide range of protests, from numerous rallies to threats of intimidation. There were, however, almost no manifestations of “traditional” extremist movements. In other words, the right-wing extremist, left-extremist, anarchist and radical-environmental movements did not manifest themselves significantly. The only exception was the constantly evolving spectrum of opponents of anti-coronavirus measures, which to a certain extent represented a personal inter-connection of the above-mentioned streams. During the period of the validity of the quarantine measures, the police were forced to check the participant’s compliance with the rules during the convened demonstrations (maximum 100 participants, time from 5.00 to 21.00). Police officers focused mainly on whether the number of protesters did not exceed the number allowed and whether they use the prescribed respiratory protection. The events could only take place in the open air, the participants had to keep distance of at least two meters. In the Czech Republic, these incidents culminated in the period January-May 2021, in Slovakia in the period October-November 2021 (Policie České republiky, 2021).

With the length of ongoing anti-epidemic measures and restrictions, dissatisfaction grew among a large part of the public, especially those affected by these measures economically, socially, mentally and otherwise (for example, postponing the return of children to school). There were interventions by police officers against persons who did not want to comply with the measures even after repeated calls. Procedures of this type have usually been widely publicized. The vast majority of documented interventions were assessed by the control authorities as adequate and justified. At the same time, the efforts of variously profiled political currents (including populist ones) can be observed to parasitize on these demonstrations and make themselves visible. The effort to achieve electoral support cannot be overlooked either. The situation was misused (and partly initiated) by the so-called alternative media, disinformation websites and related persons, usually oriented towards the Russian Federation (Policie České republiky, 2021).
3. Conclusion—impacts of the situation on policing

The coronavirus situation was (or will continue to be) a stressful situation of an unprecedented nature. Its wider consequences affect all aspects of society, including crime. In addition to the consequences caused by the disease itself, it has caused spontaneous fears of citizens and a change in their behavior. In particular, these are the effects of national regulatory measures. The whole population was “derailed”, the perception of day and night, the perception of days in a week, the difference between weekday and weekend is changing. And criminals also need a routine to predict the behaviour of their victims. This was (temporarily) gone. Society, as well as criminals, need some time to adapt to change. Different people, different professions, were regulated differently and with different intensity, which further complicates criminals’ adaptation to a changed situation (Stickle and Felson 2020).

The Czech Republic and Slovakia, two medium-sized Central European countries, were no exception in this regard. At the time of the strictest restrictive measures in connection with the declaration of a state of emergency, an overall decrease in registered crime was recorded (especially as regards restrictions on the free movement of persons, which also significantly restricted police activities). This was especially true for crimes that require some physical (direct interpersonal) interaction. This can be illustrated by the outputs of registered crime statistics, which in the case of both countries are published continuously, openly and in relative completeness.

Specifically, in the Czech Republic, restrictions on the movement of the public in connection with the coronavirus situation were concentrated in the period from March 2020 to April 2021, including variously strict national or local lockdowns. During the warmer months of the year, but also in the period before Christmas 2020, the measures were considerably withdrawn. In Slovakia, the measures lasted from March 2020 until February 2022 and were accompanied by both national lockdowns and, in the Czech Republic, unused restrictive measures at the regional and local level. At least the year 2020 was parallel to this marked by a sharp decline in registered crime in both countries. In both countries, the largest decline in this phenomenon was obvious in the 4th quarter of 2020, but in Slovakia, almost the same decline also occurred in the 4th quarter of 2021.

In relation to the Czech Republic, it is possible to claim that the role of lockdowns or attempts at other models of social distancing has become somewhat exhausted over time (not only in terms of the impact on the registered crime).

Registered crime in the Czech Republic was in June 2022, more or less on pre-coronavirus level, while the data for Slovakia showed a rate of about 15% lower in this comparison. The largest share of these trends relates to “traditional” property crime, which is the dominant type of registered crime in both countries. The increase in the damage limit between a misdemeanor and a criminal offense that occurred in the Czech Republic (October 2020) had little effect on this development.
Following the withdrawal of respective measures, including a return to a more normal situation with regard to cross-border interaction, there has been a gradual return to the “usual ways of committing crime”. At the same time, a month-on-month increase in crime in the order of percentage units can be witnessed. However, this is not a simple return, but a crime that is transformed (shift to cyberspace, modified modus operandi). The criminal sector is resourceful in finding new opportunities in a changed environment.

Specific groups of crimes then offer even more different findings. For example, violent crime in Slovakia copied the quarantine measures (the lowest data—number of cases for the 4th Quarter of 2020 and 2021—and remains at a low level). In the Czech Republic, after a record drop at the end of 2021, there is a sharp increase to pre-coronavirus numbers. Fears about the number of cases of domestic violence, caused by “submarine sickness” in closed households, were not confirmed in official statistics, as the non-governmental sector does not see the situation so clearly. Even greater differences concern the situation surrounding murders: In Slovakia, the incidence of this serious crime has been steadily decreasing since April 2020, but in the Czech Republic, since October 2021, it is possible to witness the development in the number of cases to a higher than pre-coronavirus level.

“Drug crime” and even more so “cybercrime” (crime in cyberspace, crime using computer technology) are in both countries burdened with a high level of latency. In connection with drugs, however, the biggest drop regarding recorded cases was in the 2nd quarter of 2020, after which the situation on the drug market in both countries apparently stabilized and adapted to the new situation. Cybercrime of all kinds (at least as far as the available data for the Czech Republic is concerned) is significantly on the rise. In June 2022 registered cases in the Czech Republic climbed to roughly double the numbers from the beginning of the coronavirus situation.

Police forces in both states have declared a **far greater emphasis on fighting crime in cyberspace**. Within the framework of the Czech Republic, the creation of a new police unit with nationwide competence in this area is therefore being directly prepared from January 2023.

As far as estimates of further developments are concerned, prediction is extremely difficult. The introduction of certain quarantine measures at the end of 2022 cannot be ruled out, which could rather reduce crime. On the other hand, one cannot help but see the significant fluctuation of public finances and the socio-economic uncertainty that affects a large part of the population of both countries. A large part of the population has been and is exposed to the economic consequences of restrictive measures, which is a robust criminogenic factor. Similarly, as in the case of the mortgage crisis in 2009 and the following years, the situation will be related to the economic condition of both countries. By far the most important indicator will be the unemployment rate, followed by rising consumer prices and inflation). At the same time, compared to the Czech Republic, Slovakia is confronted with a higher, and currently rather increasing, rate of unemployment.

It cannot be ruled out that even after the coronavirus situation has subsided, a protracted economic recession will occur, even in the context of other influences. This will be a breeding ground for serious crime. Previous experience with times of severe economic crisis, including the turn of the 1920s and 1930s, makes it possible to predict how such a crisis may translate into the expansion of serious and organized crime.

Fears about the negative criminogenic effects of the wave of migration from Ukraine have not yet been practically realized in both countries (at the end of June 2022, there is about 260,000 and 130,000 refugees respectively, in the Czech Republic and Slovakia—it means, about more than 2.5% increase of population to be integrated just in the period of several months), but even that may be irrelevant in the context of other pressures. At the same time, uncertainty is a breeding ground for various forms of extremism, which is often directly linked
to protests that were focused against anti-coronavirus measures. Specific activities of extremist groups with different ideological backgrounds were registered in both countries. Thus, the coronavirus situation was certainly a catalyst for radicalization and self-radicalization in both countries.

Law enforcement authorities rather only react to the outlined development, they cannot deal with it independently, in isolation. These are complex political, social and economic challenges where the cooperation of society as a whole is needed. The issue is the overall setting of public budgets (investment in the military forces, efforts to address energy challenges, the potential for climate or food crises, social programs), and the related resources for police forces (personnel challenges, pressures to perform a wider range of tasks with a similar budget).

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