

# Youth Delinquency in Slovenia in International Comparison

*Bojan Dekleva*

## ***Abstract***

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*The article analyzes the official statistics of youth delinquency in Slovenia over the last 30 years. It presents an overview of Slovenian studies of youth delinquency using the self-report surveying method, and describes the International Self-Reported Delinquency Study II, which Slovenia was also took part in. And finally, it analyzes the information, on the basis of which it is possible to formulate conclusions on the extent of youth delinquency in Slovenia compared to selected Eastern and Western European countries. The Slovenian data concerns five cities, particularly highlighting Ljubljana and Celje.*

***Key words:*** youth delinquency, minors, Slovenia, the self-report method, Ljubljana, Celje.

## Introduction

The term delinquency is commonly used to denote all offences and misdeeds committed by young people. Delinquent behaviour (in the wider sense) signifies 'delinquencies', that is, offences or violations of behavioural rules. In the narrow sense, within the context of criminal law and criminal prosecution, this term refers solely to acts that are defined by criminal law as criminal offences. Delinquent behaviour in the wider sense could also be termed deviance, and in the narrow sense, criminality. The age limits are similarly context-specific. In the context of criminal law, the term juvenile delinquency is used, otherwise often replaced by youth delinquency. The latter refers to minors as a legal category, encompassing (according to Slovenian criminal law) young people between the ages of 14 and 17 (i.e. a period of four years), while the former is much more loosely defined and can also encompass the legal category of 'children' (up to 14 years of age) and a section of the adult population (from 18 years of age, perhaps up to 19, 20, 21... years of age).

In regard to its content, youth delinquency is very heterogeneous. It includes everything that a society at a certain time and place deems to be impermissible or unacceptable (for young people), or what is defined by criminal law as a criminal offence. Beside the standard or conventional prohibited acts (criminal offences or acts that violate moral rules) such as theft, physical and sexual violence, it also includes behaviour that represents the rapidly changing set of lifestyle characteristics. This includes many types of behaviour connected to drug use, sexuality, even clothing and popular music. Some of these deviant or criminal types of behaviour are part of so-called status offences, in other words, offences linked with the age of the perpetrator. These are types of behaviour that are criminal offences or punishable only if they are committed by people that are (too) young, i.e. minors and children, but not if they are committed by adults.

Due to the above-described heterogeneity of juvenile/youth delinquency, as well as due to the relatively rapid changeability of what is deemed as prohibited for minors, the goal to consider all of these types of behaviour together is often too ambitious and theoretically not necessarily sound. But perhaps it is sensible to consider juvenile delinquency as a whole when it comes to the

degree and extent of social repression or the response of the criminal justice system in relation to young people.

## **Youth delinquency in Slovenia**

In Slovenia, there exists a specific category and a special set of stipulations for minors in criminal law and specific departments for them within the police and court systems. Their level of criminal responsibility is different and they are subject to different forms of sanctions or educational measures. The most standard statistical indicators of juvenile delinquency are the number of charges for criminal offences and the number of minors that have been sentenced in the form of criminal sanctions or educational measures. The first indicator shows – besides the extent of delinquency – above all the extent of police activities, while the second indicator is influenced by the characteristics of the whole system of prosecution, i.e. the work of the police, the public prosecutor's office and the courts.

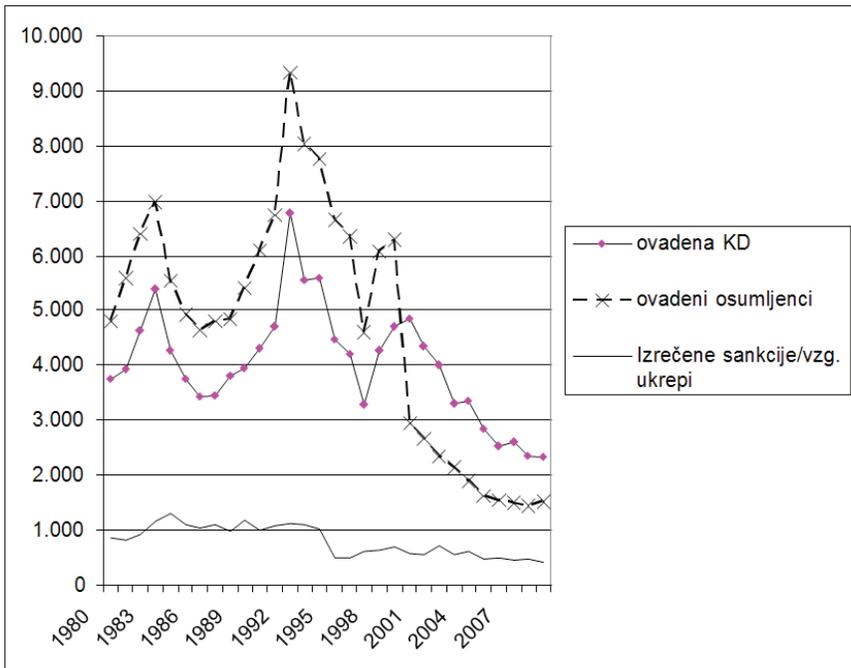
Table 1 presents four of the principle indicators of youth delinquency in Slovenia over a period of almost three decades, from 1980 to 2009. The first three indicators, the annual number of criminal offence charges of minors, the annual number of charged juvenile suspects and the percentage of juvenile suspects among all the suspects of criminal offences, have been acquired from the statistical reports of the police. The indicator that is in police statistics termed “charged juvenile suspects”, it has to be pointed out, does not refer to the number of different underage people that have been charged in a certain year, but is the product of the number of those charged with criminal offences and the number of suspects in those offences. For example, if someone was a suspect in five criminal offences (and also charged with them), then the number would be five. If three people were suspected of committing the same act, the number would be three. The problem with this indicator is that it does not actually show the number of offences, or the number of minors, but in a way, both pieces of information are still expressed by the number. The indicator of the number of imposed criminal sanctions or educational measures is taken from criminal justice statistics or information from Slovenian courts. The last column in Table 1 shows the ratio between the two key indicators of the police and the courts. Chart 1 shows three of the indicators found in Table 1.

*Table 1: Principle statistical indicators of youth delinquency from 1980 to 2009.*

<b>Year:</b>	<b>Number of CO charges of minors (A)</b>	<b>Number of charged juvenile suspects</b>	<b>Percentage of juvenile suspects</b>	<b>Imposed criminal sanctions or educational measures (B)</b>	<b>Ratio between columns A/B</b>
1980	3.739	4.806	15,3	856	4,4
1981	3.937	5.591	18,0	825	4,8
1982	4.636	6.385	18,1	924	5,0
1983	5.381	6.966	15,7	1164	4,6
1984	4.262	5.552	16,4	1297	3,3
1985	3.751	4.935	15,7	1098	3,4
1986	3.422	4.643	15,4	1043	3,3
1987	3.453	4.806	16,2	1104	3,1
1988	3.802	4.855	16,7	972	3,9
1989	3.938	5.413	17,7	1183	3,3
1990	4.302	6.097	19,3	997	4,3
1991	4.709	6.737	18,9	1076	4,4
1992	6.770	9.333	22,6	1115	6,1
1993	5.554	8.029	21,8	1093	5,1
1994	5.599	7.759	22,3	1027	5,5
1995	4.475	6.657	19,4	499	9,0
1996	4.207	6.347	17,6	500	8,4
1997	3.281	4.616	13,7	617	5,3
1998	4.264	6.070	14,5	636	6,7
1999	4.709	6.291	16,9	705	6,7
2000	4.847	2.937	16,6	590	8,2
2001	4.344	2.671	14,0	571	7,6
2002	4.007	2.337	12,0	728	5,5
2003	3.308	2.147	11,4	568	5,8
2004	3.349	1.912	10,3	612	5,5
2005	2.847	1.631	9,3	479	5,9
2006	2.527	1.550	8,7	511	4,9
2007	2.596	1.508	8,6	459	5,7
2008	2.352	1.439	8,4	489	4,8
2009	2.316	1.525	8,0	418	5,5

Table 1 and Chart 1 show the long-term decrease in processed juvenile delinquency in the period of nearly three decades. In the police information (charged criminal offences) we find two distinct peaks around the years 1983 and 1992; after this year, an unusually sharp and persistent decrease is noticeable all the way to 2009. On the other hand, in the information of the courts we find in the first 15 years (1980-1994) a fairly level continuity on the average level of about 1,050 imposed sanctions/measures a year, and in the following 15 years (1995-2009) a fairly level continuity of around 560 imposed sanctions/measures a year, nearly half of the previous period's. A specific aspect of the workings of the criminal justice system as a whole can be noted in the ratio between charged criminal offences and sanctioned minors (the last column of Table 1). The average ratio is 5.3, with the value ranging between 3.1 and 9.0 in individual years. To put it simply – in one year (1995), it was three times more likely than in another (1987) that a criminal offence charge would lead to an imposed sanction or educational measure in the criminal justice system.

Chart 1: Principle statistical indicators of juvenile delinquency in 1980-2009.



On the basis of long-term monitoring of statistical data from various parts of the system, it is possible (at least hypothetically) to explain what has been happening in the system and also elucidate the changes in the pattern of the observed phenomenon – juvenile delinquency. Of course other findings and information about the structural changes in the criminal justice system and outside of it have to be taken into account. Based on all of the above, we can formulate the following (hypothetical) conclusions:

- The sudden decrease in the number of imposed sanctions/educational measures to minors in 1995, which means that after 1994 nearly half the number was sanctioned than up to 1994, does not have any connection with the changes in the pattern of juvenile delinquency, but is the consequence of changes in criminal legislation that came into effect in 1995 and introduced stronger procedural guarantees, a higher level of protection for the defendants and an increased complexity in penal/judicial proceedings. With this, the capacity (in the sense of successfully processing the charges to the point where a sanction/educational measure is imposed) of the judicial system was decreased, and with the same amount of charges in the system, only approximately half were sanctioned per year.
- It is – taking into account the theoretical (Durkheim!) and empirical findings on the functioning of social systems – essentially impossible for the scope of a social phenomenon like delinquency to have doubled or halved in the period of a few years (the number of charged criminal offences by minors in 1992 was almost double the number from 1987, while in 1997, it more than halved in comparison with 1992). Because of this, in spite of the wild fluctuations in police data, we cannot imagine a substantial change in the occurrence of juvenile delinquency, but rather an altered extent of discovering, recording and prosecuting, in other words, a change in the amount of attention devoted to the phenomenon. Both of the peaks in police data, presented in Table 1 in the periods of 1982-1984 and 1992-1994, coincide with two waves of moral panic (Cohen, 2002), that is, increased amounts of attention to this issue in the media and emanating from expert and political bodies. The first wave in 1982-1984 was connected to punk and the public alarm about a new youth style, which was distinctly and expressly oppositional and to which the police initially responded with increased attempts at repression. Later,

punk became normalized and even capitalized upon in the social movements that helped to establish the social circumstances in which Slovenia became independent. The second wave in 1992-1994 is connected to the public alarm over the violent 'street' activities of the young (extortion, threats, robberies) and the discovery of violence and torment among peers. The increase in violence was significantly (although not exclusively) seen to be linked with the early transition phase, as the response of the young to the general 'brutalization' of life as part and parcel of the introduction of capitalism. It is not very likely that the extent of violence increased so swiftly, all within a period of a few years, but then decreased equally fast. This leads to the interpretation of the police data from 1992-1994 first and foremost in connection with the moral panic of the time, and the period of almost twenty years of decreasing in police data as a period of normalization.

- The persistent decreases in police data over a period of 18 years after 1992 can to a large extent (hypothetically) be related to two causes. The first was that on the whole juvenile (and youth) delinquency in this period ceased to be an important social topic, in much the same way that the youth became pacified, depoliticized, lost their revolutionary potential, i.e. because other topics became more socially relevant. Parallel to this, the society's interest in education was dropping, and education as a social topic was no longer a priority. The second (supposed) occurrence was that the police force was adjusting to the altered conditions – the decreased capacities of the courts after 1995. A relatively high number of criminal offence charges contrasted with the relatively low number of imposed sanctions or educational measures could no longer be seen as rational and sensible from the police perspective, which is why the police force also introduced some changes (probably not in a formal sense, but changes affecting the actual exercise of discretion), which led to a decrease in the number of criminal offence charges.
- Over a period of almost twenty years, the number of criminal offence charges was dropping, which still begs the question of the actual changes in the extent of youth delinquency. Information from several countries shows that the scope of youth delinquency, after a few decades of growth became stabilized, or even began to decrease in some areas. This is

hypothetically connected with the virtualization of life (young people spend more and more time in front of the computer) and with significantly improved surveillance technology, which greatly decreases the chances of certain typical juvenile criminal offences (e.g. shoplifting in a supermarket). I am of the opinion that in order to answer this 'substantial' question, analyzing official data from criminal justice institutions is not a suitable approach; in other words, it is impossible to answer this question simply on the basis of police and court data.

## **Research interest in youth delinquency in Slovenia**

It is possible to study juvenile delinquency from various points of view. We can devote special attention to its occurrence (its forms and types, the methods in which it is committed, the time and place, etc.), its causes (the conceivably causally relevant characteristics of personality, family and other institutions of socialization, social context, etc.) or its treatment, the social response. The latter can deal with various ways (methods, approaches, systems, regimes, premises, theories, etc.) of working with the delinquents, including the aspects of discovery, criminal proceedings, education and socialization, support, counselling, assistance, etc. Both quantitative (based on statistics and larger patterns) and qualitative (based on more in-depth treatment of a smaller number of units) approaches are possible; other specific types of research include action research, which with the intervention or involvement of the researchers in the reality itself develops new approaches; evaluation research, which evaluates the existing methods; systemic research, which is interested in the interaction between individual parts of the system; and others. These various types of research have also been conducted in Slovenia.

However, it seems that in the past few decades, juvenile delinquency as the central topic of research is becoming less popular and less frequent. An overview of the titles of research studies conducted by the Institute of Criminology, in the last century in essence the only institution conducting quality research in this field, shows that only two such studies were conducted in

the decade 1954-1963, ten in the decade 1964-73, seven in 1974-1983, six in 1984-1993, and only three in the last included decade between 1994-2003. It is true that in this time, the Department of Social Pedagogy was developed, and most of its research activity is connected with youth deviance. COBISS (the Slovenian Co-operative Online Bibliographic System and Services) yields similar results, including only a small number of articles or books on the topic of juvenile delinquency, with only nine units (not counting graduate and master's theses) in the decade between 2001-2010 (less than one a year) compared to 27, or nearly three times as many units in the previous decade 1991-2000. The three most common authors on COBISS on the topic of youth delinquency and related issues are Alenka Šelih, Vinko Skalar and Bojan Dekleva.

These numbers do not only indicate falling interest in juvenile delinquency in Slovenia, but certainly also show the way that the material encompassed by this concept differentiated itself in Slovenian research and writing, namely in two ways. First, new topics arose, which would earlier perhaps have been considered as part of juvenile delinquency, e.g. drug use or teen violence among peers, but now acquired the status of independent topics, themes that are no longer covered by the concept of delinquency very well. Similarly, other topics arose that were partially connected with the same material, but were conceptually grabbing the attention of researchers. One such theme is for example, children's (psychological) rights and child abuse. On the other hand, research interests changed in accordance with new concepts, which focused on areas that were also relevant to the field of juvenile delinquency, but did not deal with it predominantly or exclusively. These include, for example, hermeneutical sociopedagogical diagnostics, social exclusion, (youth) unemployment, etc. It appears that juvenile delinquency as the central concept is simply not productive or characteristic enough to describe the contemporary approach to the themes that are linked to delinquency and deviance.

In my analysis of the conducted research of youth deviance in the period of 1954-1985 (Dekleva, 1985) I found that it can be divided into three phases. The first phase (1960-1964) was to tackle the question Who is a juvenile delinquent and what is he like?, the second (1964-1977) How are delinquents best dealt with and what institutional system should be established for the purpose?, and

the third (1977–1985) greatly expanded (or diversified) research interests, posing the following questions: What are the internal discrepancies of our understanding and treatment of delinquency?, How is juvenile delinquency linked with many other areas of life, including everyday life, and the informal spheres of life? My thesis is that this phase continued and developed in the same direction and led to a number of different research fields and focuses, where juvenile delinquency is no longer a very useful, or indeed, central issue of research.

In the last three decades, however, a new form of empirical research has been developing, which in my opinion is more suitable (compared to the analysis of official statistical data) to answer the question of what youth delinquency is really like and what its scope is. This research is based on the survey technique for measuring victimisation or the survey method of self-reporting deviant/delinquent behaviour. These two methods provide data that is virtually independent from official institutions and the occasional moral panic that so determinately focuses the attentions of the public, and consequently affects the way official institutions work and the data they produce.

The self-report survey method was first used for measuring delinquent behaviour in Slovenia in 1978 (Dekleva, 1978). Among other things, the research compared the self-report data with the police data to confirm the validity of the method. The victimisation survey method was first used in Slovenia in the early eighties (Pečar, 1981). After these beginnings, more studies were conducted in Slovenia using the self-report method, but only a few (or none) could be said to deal explicitly and specifically with the entire field of delinquency, to encompass the entire Slovenian territory, and could at the same time be representative. In the last 15 years, many studies were conducted that dealt, in particular, with drug use or various health aspects, for example:

- A number of studies included in the research programme ESPAD by Stergar and associates focused on drug use on the entire Slovenian territory, and used representative sampling (e.g. Stergar, 1995; Stergar 2005).
- The study *Droge med srednješolsko mladino v Ljubljani* (Dekleva, 1998) focused on drug use among high school

- students in Ljubljana, and used representative sampling.
- The study *Na spidu* (Sande, 2002), *On speed*, focused on drug use and certain forms of hazardous behaviour among people attending dance events in Slovenia, but used unrepresentative sampling.
  - The study *Tri leta kasneje: uporaba drog med dijaki ob koncu srednje šole* (Dekleva & Sande, 2003), *Three years later: the use of drugs among students at the end of high school*, focused on drug use among older high school students in Ljubljana, and used representative sampling.
  - The study *Z zdravjem povezano vedenje v šolskem obdobju* (Jeriček et al., 2007), *focused on health-related behaviour in the schooling period, in particular on health-related risks (and partially on deviant behaviour), and on mental health*. In this it is similar to an older study on the risk factors of Slovenian high school students, *Dejavniki tveganja pri slovenskih srednješolcih* (Tomori et al., 1998).

Only one study was conducted in this period that systematically and comprehensively focused on delinquent behaviour using the self-report survey method as well as representative sampling. This was the study *Odklonskost, nasilje in kriminaliteta – problematika mladine neslovenske narodnosti oz. priseljencev druge generacije* (Deviance, violence and criminality – the issue of young people of non-Slovene nationality, or second generation immigrants), the results of which were published in *Čefurji so bili rojeni tu: življenje mladih priseljencev druge generacije v Ljubljani* (Dekleva & Razpotnik, 2002) (*‘Čefurji’ were born here: the life of young second generation immigrants in Ljubljana*). Its one drawback is that the research was only conducted in Ljubljana.

This period (1991–1992) also saw the first international comparative research of youth delinquency conducted in Europe. This was the International self-reported delinquency study (ISRD; Junger-Tass, Haen Marshall, Ribeaud, 2003), which included 11 European countries, the USA (Nebraska) and New Zealand, but not Slovenia. In 2006–2008, this research was conducted for the second time (ISRD-II), and included 31 countries. 15 were Western European, 12 members of the EU and 3 others; 10 were Eastern or Central European, out of which 6 were new members of the EU; and six other countries, including Canada and (four federal states of) the USA. The total number of

surveyed young people was 71,400 (Junger-Tass et al., 2009). The collection and processing of the data in the six new EU members (Slovenia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Cyprus and Poland) was part of a special research assignment entitled Juvenile delinquency in six new EU member states (Stekatee Moll & Kapardis, 2008). The results of this research will be presented in the rest of the article.

## **The purpose of the study**

The main purposes of the ISRD-II study were:

- to ascertain the prevalence and incidence of delinquency and victimisation among 12-15-year-olds in the countries included;
- to determine the order of individual types of delinquent behaviour according to frequency of occurrence;
- to ascertain which factors delinquency is connected with and to find out international similarities or differences in the patterns of these connections;
- to determine possible connections between delinquency and social control, self-control, social disorganization and lifestyles;
- to research the importance of the family, the school and the neighbourhood for the delinquency of this age group;
- to contribute to the development of an internationally comparable instrument for measuring delinquency and the continuation of such studies in future.

The two goals of the research focused on in this article are:

- to formulate an assessment of the extent of delinquency in Slovenia (and Ljubljana), compared to five other new members of the EU and some established members of the EU;
- to formulate a comparable assessment of the extent of delinquency in Slovenian cities of different sizes.

## **The research process**

Survey was conducted using a unified questionnaire. It consisted of 24 pages of 67 questions and supplementary questions. The questions

covered the topics of demography, family control, victimisation, free time, peer groups, self-control, school and neighbourhood characteristics, and predominantly concerned with deviant behaviour and delinquent activity (of the interviewee and of peers). Table 2 shows the 15 key questions/areas, encompassed in the survey. Each of the questions included supplementary questions, referring to whether the interviewee had already performed/done the particular activity, how many times in the last month, on his own or with someone else, if he had been discovered (and who discovered him) and punished.

Table 2: Key questions of the self-report survey in the ISRD-II study.

Question used in the survey:	Abbreviation:
Have you ever taken part in a group fight on the school playground, football stadium, street or another public location?	Group fighting
Do you ever carry a weapon, e.g. a cane, a knife (not just a penknife) or a chain?	Weapon-carrying
Have you ever intentionally beaten or injured anyone with a cane or a knife so that they required medical attention?	Assault
Have you ever snatched a purse, bag or another object from someone in order to steal it?	Robbery
Have you ever threatened anyone with a weapon or with physical harm in order to extort money or another object from them?	Extortion
Have you ever intentionally damaged or broken something, for example a bus stop bench, a phone booth, a window, a bus, train or car seat?	Vandalism
Have you ever stolen anything from a shop or department store?	Shoplifting
Have you ever stolen a bicycle, scooter or moped?	Bicycle or moped theft
Have you ever stolen anything from or on a car?	Car burglary
Have you ever broken into a house for the purpose of stealing something?	House burglary
Have you ever stolen a motorcycle or car?	Motorcycle or car theft
Have you ever used your computer for hacking?	Computer hacking
Have you ever sold anyone any form of (hard or soft) drugs or helped someone buy them?	Drug trafficking
Have you ever used drugs like ecstasy and speed?	Ecstasy or amphetamine use
Have you ever used drugs like LSD, heroin and cocaine?	LSD/heroin/cocaine use

The research used city-based sampling. The research team of the international study agreed to include in the sample the country's biggest city, one medium-sized city and three smaller cities, based on population. The limit for a small city was at least 20,000 inhabitants. An additional condition was to select cities from different regions of the country. In view of the small size of Slovenia, we necessarily had to select cities that differ significantly less in the number of inhabitants than cities selected in any of the bigger countries where the biggest cities have millions of inhabitants. Thus we chose Ljubljana as the biggest city, Celje as a medium-sized city, and Jesenice, Piran and Kočevje as three smaller cities. This encompassed the following regions: the Ljubljana region, Lower Styria, Upper Carniola, Lower Carniola and the Slovenian Littoral. Of course this does not include all the regions, but it does ensure for a relatively large geographical dispersion of the selected cities. In terms of population, the cities rank as first (Ljubljana) and fourth (Celje), while the other three cities rank much lower on the scale.

One of the agreed upon guidelines was that each of the three types of cities included at least 700 students in seventh and ninth grade, half each. Sampling the students was random, meaning that each student in principle had the same chance of being part of the sample. As each type of city had at least 700 students and because we estimated an average of 22 students per class, we randomly selected enough classes among the seventh and ninth grades from the list of all regular elementary schools in the selected cities to include slightly more than 700 students.

In Ljubljana, we conducted the survey in 23 out of the 46 elementary schools, surveying 38 classes; in Jesenice, we conducted the survey at all three elementary schools, surveying 14 classes; in Kočevje we also surveyed all three elementary schools, surveying 15 classes. In Piran, we only conducted the survey in 2 of the 4 elementary schools, because we left out the Italian school due to an extremely small number of students, while one school declined to take part. Consequently, a smaller number of students was surveyed in Piran, which meant that in the stratum encompassing Jesenice, Kočevje and Piran, an insufficient number of students would have been surveyed. Because of this, we included an elementary school in Izola, the nearest city, so that we conducted the survey in 11 classes

on the coast. In Celje,<sup>1</sup> we conducted the survey at all 9 regular elementary schools, surveying 39 classes, and encompassing the entire population of students in the seventh and ninth grade.

Table 3: Schools, classes and students in the five cities.

City:	Number of elementary schools	Number of surveyed schools	Number of classes	Number of enrolled students
Celje	9	9	39	838
Ljubljana	46	23	38	853
Jesenice	3	3	14	309
Piran	4	3	11	220
Kočevje	3	3	15	312
Total	65	41	117	2,532

After conducting the survey, we evaluated the level of responses (i.e. how many of the targeted students in the sample did not fill in the survey because they were absent or because they chose not to fill it in) and how many of the questionnaires had to be excluded because they were not filled out properly. In the end, 84.4 percent of the questionnaires from all five cities were returned and fit for analysis.

Table 4 shows the structure of the surveyed students by grade and average age in the five cities. Given the information in the last column, we could infer that the average age is 13.44 years, but it is more probable that it is closer to 14 years of age. The question on the basis of which these numbers were calculated, called for the students to select one of the given numbers to mark their age (e.g. 13 or 14). Because it is a reasonable assumption that, for example, 14 was selected both by students that had just turned 14 as well as those that were nearly 15, we must take the answer 14 to mean 14.5. Therefore it makes sense to add 0.5 to the result of 13.44, and establish the average age as 14.96 years.

<sup>1</sup> The data from this research has been separately processed for the Ljubljana area (Dekleva & Grobelšek, 2006b) and for the Celje area (Dekleva & Grobelšek, 2006a). At individual stages, Mija Marija Klemenčič Rozman and Špela Razpotnik assisted with the research, while Andreja Grobelšek played a key part in the execution of the survey in Celje and in writing the final report on Celje.

Table 4: The structure of the surveyed students by grade and average age in the five cities.

City:	Grade				f total:	Average student age:
	7. grade		9. grade			
	f	%	f	%		
Ljubljana	403	53.9	344	46.1	747	13.32
Celje	368	49.9	369	50.1	737	13.50
Jesenice	147	54.0	125	46.0	272	13.48
Piran	109	55.3	88	44.7	197	13.43
Kočevje	142	49.7	144	50.3	286	13.60
Total	1,169	52.2	1.070	47.8	2,239	13.44

For the purposes of this article we will only present those results that apply to the questions set above. The results for 15 key delinquent types of behaviour are presented as follows: first, in comparison with the results from the other countries, second, in comparison with the capital cities of the other countries, and third, in comparison between the three strata of Slovenian cities (according to size). All of the results present the % of interviewees that have already performed the particular actions.

## The results

### *A. Comparison between the capital cities of six new members of the EU*

Table 5 shows the lifelong prevalence of the selected delinquent behaviours among (mainly) 14-15 year old adolescents in the capital cities of six new EU members. The table also shows that the structure of delinquent actions in all six capitals is surprisingly similar. This means that on the whole, those acts that are the most common in one country, are among the most common in other countries as well. The most common actions among those included are group fighting, shoplifting and weapon carrying, while vehicle theft, robbery and assault are among the rarest. This is also generally true in Slovenia (that is, Ljubljana). The last column in Table 5 shows that the percentage of the prevalence of these behaviours among Ljubljana's youth most often ranks somewhere in the middle, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> (among the six capital cities). However, the ranking of

Ljubljana in 9 out of 15 types of behaviour is 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup>, meaning that most of these behaviours do not occur as often with adolescents in Ljubljana as they do with adolescents in the other five capitals. In comparison, the rarest actions for Ljubljana's youths are group fighting and particularly robbery. Two actions that are committed more often in Ljubljana are vandalism (damaging property) and particularly bicycle or motorcycle theft.

Table 5: The percentage of young people from six capital cities that have ever in their life committed any of the 15 delinquent acts. The two areas in which Ljubljana deviates the most from the average of the other cities have been marked with grey.

Activity:\nCity:	Nicosia,\nCyprus	Prague,\nCzech Republic	Tallinn,\nEstonia	Vilnius,\nLithuania	Warsaw,\nPoland	Ljubljana,\nSlovenia	Total	Ranking\nLjubljana
Group fighting	18,7	18,2	15,7	16,8	13,3	<b>9,9</b>	15,4	6.
Weapon-carrying	4,8	13,0	18,0	14,0	12,0	<b>7,6</b>	11,6	5.
Assault	3,3	1,8	3,9	2,3	2,1	<b>2,1</b>	2,6	4.-5.
Robbery	1,5	2,5	1,6	1,5	1,2	<b>0,1</b>	1,4	6.
Extortion	1,3	1,8	0,9	1,1	2,9	<b>1,5</b>	1,6	3.
Vandalism	7,7	9,6	10,7	5,9	10,0	<b>11,4</b>	9,2	1.
Shoplifting	5,7	25,9	12,7	8,3	14,4	<b>16,3</b>	13,9	2.
Bicycle or\nmoped theft	2,2	0,1	0,3	0,4	1,1	<b>1,9</b>	1,0	2.
Car burglary	1,9	2,4	2,0	3,5	1,8	<b>2,7</b>	2,4	2.
House burglary	1,9	1,4	0,9	0,7	1,7	<b>1,2</b>	1,3	4.
Motorcycle or\ncar theft	1,3	0,3	0,8	0,5	0,9	<b>0,7</b>	0,8	4.
Computer\nhacking	4,8	8,4	11,1	7,7	9,2	<b>8,7</b>	8,3	3.
Drug trafficking	1,5	3,4	3,9	1,4	2,6	<b>2,1</b>	2,5	4.
Ecstasy or\namphetamine use	2,2	1,0	3,7	0,8	2,6	<b>1,1</b>	1,9	4.
LSD/heroin/\ncocaine use	1,4	1,1	2,8	0,4	2,3	<b>0,7</b>	1,5	5.

### *B. Comparison between the selected countries*

Table 6 shows the comparison of the behaviour of the Slovenian sample and the samples from five Eastern and Central European countries. These samples partially match the pattern of the capital cities from Table 5, except that they include Hungary instead of Cyprus.

*Table 6: The percentages of young people from six Eastern and Central European countries that have ever in their life committed any of the 15 delinquent acts.*

<b>Country:</b> <b>Activity:</b>	<b>Hungary</b>	<b>Czech Republic</b>	<b>Estonia</b>	<b>Lithuania</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>Slovenia</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Ranking SLO</b>
Group fighting:	17,5	19,8	15,1	15,4	13,1	12,4	13,5	6.
Weapon-carrying	10,4	10,3	15,8	13,1	9,9	6,9	9,9	6.
Assault	2,3	1,3	3,8	2,4	1,9	2,3	2,0	3.-4.
Robbery	3,1	2,3	0,8	1,3	1,1	0,5	1,4	6.
Extortion	0,7	1,4	0,8	1,2	2,6	1,4	1,1	2.-3.
Vandalism	14,4	11,5	11,9	7,7	8,3	11,5	9,0	3.-4.
Shoplifting	11,6	22,5	11,4	9,3	12,0	13,2	11,1	2.
Bicycle or moped theft	0,9	1,3	0,4	0,5	0,8	1,7	0,7	1.
Car burglary	1,3	1,9	2,0	0,8	1,5	1,7	1,3	3.
House burglary	1,1	1,1	1,5	0,7	2,2	0,8	1,1	5.
Motorcycle or car theft	0,8	0,8	1,3	0,6	0,9	0,5	0,7	6.
Computer hacking	50,9	7,1	10,4	6,7	8,9	10,6	14,0	2.
Drug trafficking	2,1	3,8	2,7	1,6	3,1	2,3	2,2	4.
Ecstasy or amphetamine use	2,9	1,2	3,1	1,2	3,2	1,4	1,9	4.
LSD/heroin/cocaine use	1,3	0,6	1,5	0,9	1,7	0,8	1,0	5.

Table 6, similarly to Table 5, shows that the prevalence of delinquent behaviour in Slovenia compared to the five other countries is relatively small, particularly in group fighting, weapon carrying and robbery. Again, bicycle and motorcycle theft, as well as shoplifting, are more prevalent in Slovenia as a whole (including medium-sized and small cities).

To extend the research further than the comparison between Slovenia and the other five Eastern and Central European recent EU members, Table 7 compares the Slovenian data with data from

five Western European countries. These were selected based on intuitive possibilities of comparison. Italy and Austria are Slovenia's neighbours, Italy and Spain are Mediterranean countries, among which Slovenia is often included. Germany and Belgium, two continental countries that are among those which somehow define the concept of Europe and the European. In comparison with these five countries Slovenia fares even better. In as many as 13 out of 15 activities it ranks 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup>, in one case 4-5<sup>th</sup>, but it also places 2<sup>nd</sup> in one instance – surprisingly, in hacking. On the other hand, Slovenia has the lowest prevalence of robbery (i.e. pick pocketing).

Table 7: The percentages of young people from Slovenia and five Western European countries that have ever committed any of the 15 delinquent acts.

Activity:	Country:						
	Italy	Spain	Austria	Germany	Belgium	Slovenia	Ranking SLO
Group fighting	27,3	22,1	20,9	12,1	21,6	12,4	5.
Weapon-carrying	10,0	9,3	10,2	10,0	15,0	6,9	6.
Assault	3,1	1,5	4,4	4,7	3,5	2,3	5.
Robbery	3,6	1,1	4,8	2,9	2,4	0,5	6.
Extortion	2,7	1,6	1,8	2,2	2,4	1,4	6.
Vandalism	15,7	13,0	16,9	13,4	10,7	11,5	5.
Shoplifting	18,9	20,9	18,2	7,9	20,1	13,2	5.
Bicycle or moped theft	4,6	3,7	3,3	2,1	5,1	1,7	5.
Car burglary	4,5	3,6	2,3	1,2	1,7	1,7	4.-5.
House burglary	3,6	2,8	1,5	0,9	2,0	0,8	6.
Motorcycle or car theft	1,1	1,6	0,7	0,5	1,2	0,5	5.-6.
Computer hacking	10,4	31,6	6,7	5,8	6,8	10,6	2.
Drug trafficking	3,7	6,1	3,3	3,3	4,3	2,3	6.
Ecstasy or amphetamine use	1,6	3,8	1,8	1,2	2,3	1,4	5.
LSD/heroin/cocaine use	1,8	4,4	1,6	0,9	1,4	0,8	6.

### C. Comparison between Slovenian cities of different sizes

The differences and similarities between Tables 5 and Table 6 pose the question to what extent combining the data from the capital city with the data from middle-sized and smaller Slovenian cities will affect the results, particularly Slovenia's rankings.

Because the comparison between Tables 5 and 6 only shows small differences, we can conclude that we will not find significant differences between the three different types of cities. Table 8 does in fact show that the differences in the prevalence of individual types of behaviour between the three types are relatively small. It even seems somewhat surprising that in Ljubljana the prevalence of most of the activities (8 out of 15) is lower than the average. The only statistically significant difference, reaching the risk level of 0.05, concerns only one type of behaviour, namely shoplifting, which is more frequent in Ljubljana than it is elsewhere. However, despite its statistic significance, this difference in percentages is relatively small.

*Table 8: The percentages of young people from five Slovenian cities that have ever in their life committed any of the 15 delinquent acts.*

Activity:	City:	Ljubljana	Celje	Piran, Jesenice, Kočevje	All cities
Group fighting		9,9	13,2	14,2	12,4
Weapon-carrying		7,6	6,4	6,7	6,9
Assault		2,1	1,8	3,0	2,3
Robbery		0,1	0,8	0,5	0,5
Extortion		1,5	1,2	1,6	1,4
Vandalism		11,4	10,0	13,2	11,5
Shoplifting		16,3	10,4	13,0	13,2
Bicycle or moped theft		1,9	1,2	1,9	1,7
Car burglary		2,7	0,6	1,8	1,7
House burglary		1,2	0,1	1,2	0,8
Motorcycle or car theft		0,7	0,4	0,4	0,5
Computer hacking		8,7	10,1	13,0	10,6
Drug trafficking		2,1	2,5	2,2	2,3
Ecstasy or amphetamine use		1,1	1,8	1,2	1,4
LSD/heroin/cocaine use		0,7	0,4	1,3	0,8

## Discussion

In a general sense, the ISRD-II study has illustrated the possibilities of internationally comparable research of youth

delinquency using the self-report method. In a more specific sense, the results of the study show that the structure of delinquent behaviour in various countries is surprisingly similar and that identical or similar factors (of social control) are statistically linked with the occurrence of delinquency in various countries (although this has not been examined in detail in this article). The two research questions set in the article can be answered as follows:

- The prevalence of delinquent behaviour in Slovenia is relatively small compared to other countries. This holds true both in the comparison between the six new members of the EU, five of which are among those Eastern European countries that approximately two decades ago underwent a transformation of their social system, and even more true in the comparison with the selected Western European countries, two of which are Slovenia's neighbours.
- There is virtually no difference in the prevalence of the 15 selected types of delinquent behaviour among the three smaller towns, medium sized cities, and the capital city. This supports the view of Slovenia as a relatively unified area, where deviance characteristics (e.g. drug use or criminality) do not vary much according to region or type of environment.

An empirical study of youth delinquency at first glance does not present anything other than dry numbers. Their meaning and applicability depend on who and how they are put to use. If the thesis that there is a decline in the interest in youth delinquency is true, than perhaps these numbers will not be of interest to many. The main idea of the research presented here is, first, to provide internationally comparable information, and second, continually conducting the research using the same methodology through time. Both of these aspects are concerned with the standardization of knowledge or data, likely to serve as the basis for more rational decision-making. The ISRD study was conducted for the first time in Slovenia between 2005 and 2007. The third international research project is now starting, and it will be Slovenia's second. We expect that it will be conducted by the Institute of Criminology.

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