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Designing the Level of Security in Poland in the Context of Typology and a Spatial Structure of Crime

Abstract: The Department of Internal Affairs and Administration is responsible for the state of maintenance of public order and safety in Poland. On the basis of the data collected mainly from the police, it analyses crime threats in Poland. The threat assessment outcomes are used for effective prevention and control of crime. In this regard, preventive measures have been taken including the development of relevant programmes and strategies as well as tasks assigned to services subordinated to, and supervised by, the minister competent for internal affairs. Due to the analysis of statistical data summaries one has knowledge of expected trends in police activities and expectations of the general public. The analysis of crime statistics and the sense of security among Poles is, on the one hand, one of the methods for assessing the functioning of the Polish police and on the other hand, a search for new solutions to prevent and control crime. The presented analyses, together with the data interpretation, aims at bringing closer the phenomenon of crime in Poland, showing changes which have occurred within many years in the area of public order and safety and presenting the public view of the police. The article is divided into three parts including a definitional and practical approach to statistics in crime studies. It also presents (in the form of graphs) statistics collected by the police. The sense of security among Poles is assessed, and a unique (on the national level; in quantitative terms) initiative for public opinion polling in the form of the Polish Crime Survey is characterized. The article is addressed to experts dealing with broadly understood internal security, in particular those conducting research into trends in, and determinants of, criminal behaviour. It can also of practical use within the process of higher education, especially in the following fields of study: criminology, forensic science and security systems, internal security, administration and law.

Keywords: crime, statistics, detection, sense of security, social survey, police, public order and safety

Introduction

A statistical data summary of crime in Poland¹ is annually prepared by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration in its reports on the state of security in Poland. The reports present the state of security in Poland in a given year compared to previous years, in the form adapted to different methods for collecting data by relevant authorities and institutions. The statistics include the most important issues related to security, including the results of social surveys on the sense of security among Poles and other data concerning, among others, criminal offences, drug-related crimes, corruption, terrorist threats, issues related to common security, road traffic safety, security at major events and financial aspects of crimes and frauds committed to the detriment of the European Union, as well as data on issuing fixed penalty notices.²

Collected for reporting purposes, statistics about crime in Poland are classified into, among others, initiated investigations, confirmed crimes and detected crimes. The notion of ‘initiated investigations’ has to be understood as preparatory proceedings initiated by a police organisational unit in relation to an incident suspected of being a criminal offence or instituted by a prosecutor’s office and referred to the police for further investigation. This category also includes the investigations which have been initiated and then terminated on the basis of the

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¹ Order No. 5 of the National Police Chief of 31 January 2013 abolished order No. 350 of the National Police Chief of 1 July 2003 on collecting, gathering, processing and analysing statistical data about crime, suicide attacks and drowning incidents (OJ, National Police Headquarters of 2003, No. 14, item 74 as amended). Due to the abolition of this order and, at the same time, its exclusion from the Police Crime Statistics System TEMIDA, since 2013 all relevant tasks have been carried out with the use of the Analytic System based on information processed in the National Police Information System (KSIP).

² Report on crime in Poland in 2016, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016, p. 5.

decision on discontinuation of the investigation and which have been included in the register of criminal offences. The category does not include proceedings which have been excluded with regard to a criminal act or an accomplice. Moreover, this category does not include any information about proceedings instituted by a prosecutor and taken up by themselves or referred to non-police services for further investigation. Statistics collected by the police refer to units authorised to conduct preparatory proceedings, i.e. police organisational units. Another category is a 'confirmed crime', i.e. a crime which has been subject to investigation which confirmed that a given prohibited act did occur. Such offences comprise indictable felonies and misdemeanours, including tax offences. A 'detected crime' is the last of the mentioned categories. It includes confirmed crimes where at least one suspect was identified as a result of the investigation. At this point it should be noted that the basic construction of police statistics reflects in a way the criminological doctrine to be found in the relevant Polish literature, according to which crimes are divided into four categories: real, discovered and confirmed crimes and those whose perpetrators have been convicted.³

One of the determinants of the effectiveness of the police in combating crime is the detection rate, expressed as a percentage, i.e. the quotient of the number of crimes detected by the total number of committed offences, plus the number of offences detected after taking away the proceedings which were dismissed a year before or in previous years.

The study of statistical data on crime and the sense of security of Polish people is on the one hand a method of assessing the performance of the Polish police, but on the other hand, it is a way of seeking solutions for preventing and combating crime. The presented analyses, along with the interpretation of data, aim to provide a better insight into the phenomenon of crime in Poland, showing the changes that have taken place over the years in the area of public safety and order.

The text of the study has been divided into three parts. They include a definitional and pragmatic approach to statistical data in research into crime, as well as the statistics (in a graphical form) collected by the Police. In addition, the study presents the estimated sense of safety of Polish citizens and characterises a public-opinion-survey initiative – unique from the national point of view (in the quantitative dimension) – in the form of the Polish Crime Survey.

The article is first of all addressed to specialists dealing with the issues of broadly understood internal security, with special emphasis on researchers studying developmental trends and determinants which condition the occurrence of criminal behaviour. Moreover, the text can be useful in the process of higher education, especially in the following fields: criminology, forensic science and security systems, internal security, administration and law.

The essence of statistical studies and their pragmatics in crime research

The objective scope of the study is related to the concept of statistics. The term 'statistics' comes from the Latin word 'status', i.e. the state of affairs. This term was introduced into science in the eighteenth century by German scholar Gottfried Achenwall to

³ Real crime comprises criminal acts committed in a given period of time in a given area. Both the volume and the structure of the crimes are unknown. Attempts to estimate the incidence of real crime are presented in the criminological literature within the framework of the so-called dark figure. Discovered crime refers to acts the information of which has been obtained by law enforcement authorities and which is the basis for initiating preparatory proceedings. This crime is sometimes called apparent crime because not all of the acts which were classified as crimes when the proceedings were initiated do have characteristics of a criminal offence. Confirmed crime is the total of acts whose character as a criminal offence has been confirmed as a result of preparatory proceedings. The category of crimes whose perpetrators have been convicted includes acts which have been identified as criminal offences as a result of court proceedings. Source: B. Holyst, *Kryminologia*, Warsaw 2000, p. 52.

determine a wide collection of information about the state. Below are the different meanings of the word ‘statistics’:

- the science of the state, i.e. a branch of knowledge presenting basic information necessary for those who lead the state (description of the state on the basis of numerical data, censuses, lists of royal, ecclesiastical and monastic goods) – which has a historical, ancient and medieval significance,
- any numerical comparisons, a set of numerical information (tables, charts) concerning a selected group or category of phenomena, as well as drawing conclusions on the basis of numerical values,
- activities consisting in collecting and describing numerical data (e.g. statistics of road accidents),
- a field of science concerned with methods of numerical description and drawing conclusions about regularities occurring in mass processes,
- specification of any measurement settings (e.g. the mean value) describing the result of a test.⁴

Descriptive statistics refers to the methods of statistical description of (alternatively called as analysis) research findings which are based on a full and comprehensive observation. Such a perspective is referred to as deterministic. Descriptive statistics is divided into the analysis of the structure of phenomena, the analysis of the dynamics (changes in time) of phenomena and the analysis of the interdependence of phenomena.

In general, statistics is a branch of quantitative sciences dealing with both numerical description methods (deterministic approach) and methods of numerical reasoning in conditions of uncertainty (scholastic approach). The indicated methods are treated in an integral way. Therefore, the purpose of statistical methods is not only to open the possibility of reliable and comprehensive diagnoses – ‘how is it and why is it so?’ – but also to the possibility of highly probable statistical prediction – ‘how to recreate the unknown reality on a random basis?’. The statistical analysis is therefore both a diagnosis and a prediction. Statistics have extensive practical applications wherever mass phenomena and processes occur. They occur in all areas of human knowledge and activity, including economic and social sciences⁵.

Police statistics in the context of crime in Poland

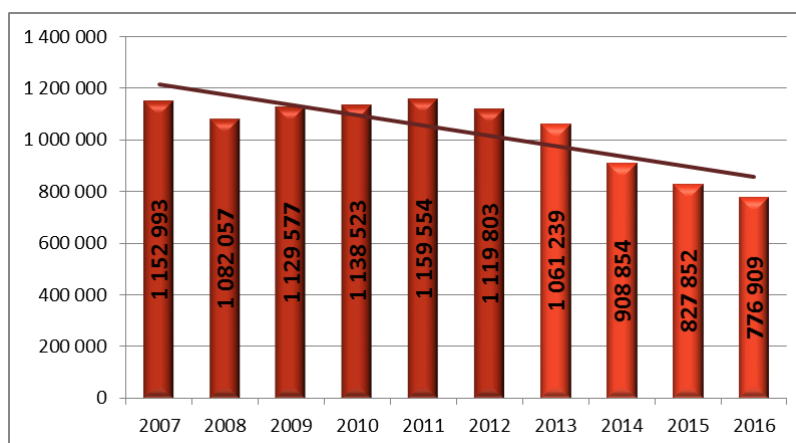
In 2016, the Police launched 717,141 preparatory proceedings in crime cases, i.e. 70,827 fewer than in 2015 (which means a 9% decrease in their number). In recent years, the number of offenses confirmed by the Police has had a downward trend, which is clearly visible in Poland. In 2016, the police confirmed a total number of 776,909 crimes, which is the lowest number so far. This means that the number of crimes committed in total decreased by 6.2% compared to 2015. In the years 2001-2005, the number of crimes confirmed by the Police remained at the level of around 1.4 million a year. By 2013, there were more than one million of them, while since 2014 their number has fallen to less than a million. It should be noted that this situation was influenced by several factors among which the most important seem to be changes introduced by amendments to the Penal Code, significant improvement of

⁴ M. Borowska, Statystyka materiały pomocnicze dla studentów do nauki statystyki, Stalowa Wola 2016, p. 10.

⁵ For more information see: <https://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/haslo/statystyka;3979300.html> (accessed on 04/02/2017); M. Fisz, Rachunek prawdopodobieństwa i statystyka matematyczna, Warsaw 1969; G. Kendall, W.R. Buckland, Słownik terminów statystycznych, Warsaw 1986; C.R. Rao, Statystyka i prawda, Warsaw 1994; J. Józwiak, J. Podgórski, Statystyka od podstaw, Warsaw 2000; C. Domański, K. Pruska Nieklasyczne metody statystyczne, Warsaw 2000; A. Zeliaś, Metody statystyczne, Warsaw 2000.

the police activity and the activity of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration in the field of crime prevention⁶ and the community becoming more vigilant against culturally unaccepted behaviour. The number of crimes confirmed in 2016 was 32.6% lower than that recorded in 2007 (when more than 1.15 million offenses were identified)⁷.

Graph No. 1. The total number of crimes committed in the years 2007-2016



Source: *Report on the crime level in Poland in 2016*, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016

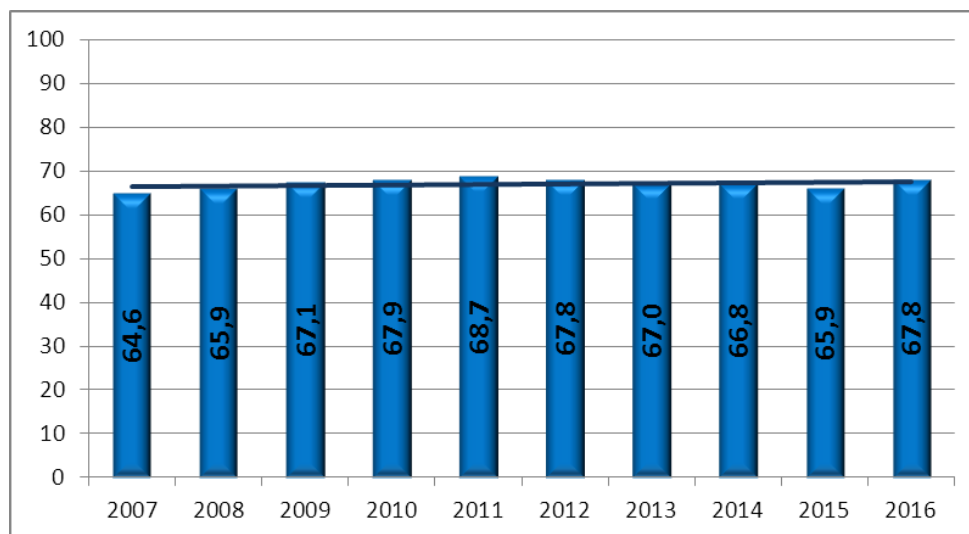
In 2016, the overall detection rate of crimes amounted to 67.8% and was 1.9% higher than that achieved in 2015 (65.9%). The general detection rate of crimes in 2016 was 3.2% higher than in 2007. The police activity in the area of raising the level of detecting activities in the last two years has been one of the basic determinants of detection. Among the solutions implemented into the current doctrine of the police force activities, we should include establishing specialized task groups aimed at combating crime in cyberspace as well as “declaring war” on road pirates, who are combatted by the officers fighting with aggression on the road⁸.

⁶ In 2016, one of such initiatives involved the launch of the National Map of Hotspots. The national map of security threats in Poland is a platform for the exchange of information between the Police and the public. It is an IT tool allowing the Police to clearly present to local communities the scale and type of identified threats (statistical map) as well as enabling residents to signal places at risk (interactive map) subject to police checks.

⁷ Statistical data for the years 2013–2016 used in the Crime Report in Poland in 2016, regarding launched proceedings and confirmed offenses, come from the police information system KSIP (National Police Information System).

⁸ In the organizational structure of each regional police headquarters in Poland, special teams for combating aggression on the road have been created. The teams include policemen from Road Traffic Divisions and the Criminal Division. Newly established teams operate not only on roads but also on the Internet. Officers collect information about illegal races and participants of these events. They observe the way drivers behave on the road and analyse the most common offenses. In the fight against aggression on the road, police officers are also assisted by press releases, the Internet and the analysis of CCTV footage.

Graph No. 2. General detection of crimes in 2007-2016



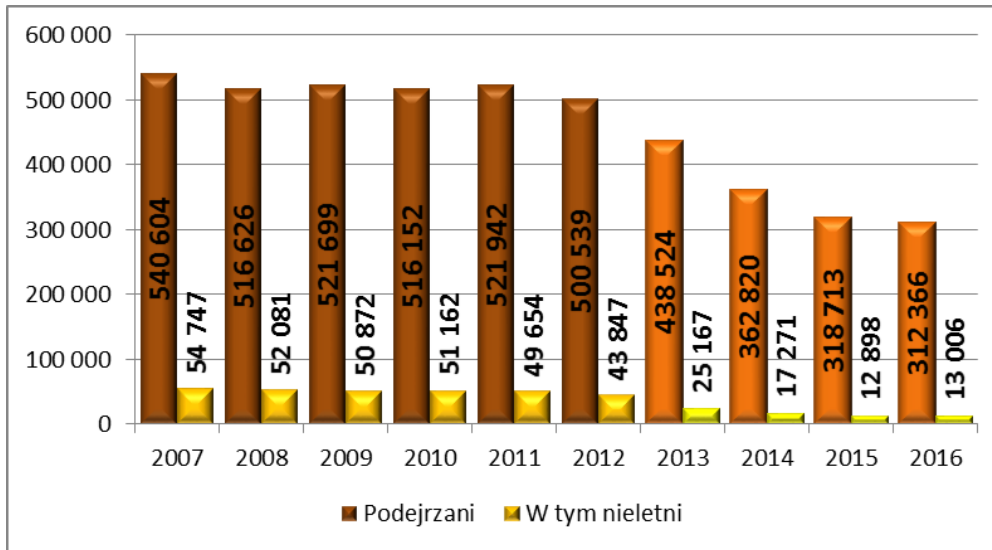
Source: Report on the crime level in Poland in 2016, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016

In 2016, the Police established a total number of 312,366 suspects in crimes. This means a 2% decrease in the number of suspects when compared to 2015 (318,713). A significant support in establishing the whereabouts of suspects outside the Republic of Poland is provided by international cooperation. It is coordinated centrally by the National Police Headquarters and located in its organizational structure – the International Police Cooperation Bureau. In Poland, police officers are very active internationally, cooperate with Interpol, Europol or other agencies dealing with internal security in the European Union. Police cooperation under Joint Investigation Teams (JITs) is becoming a significant support during investigations carried out by Polish law enforcers, especially in the context of international organized crime. Members of Joint Investigation Teams are entitled to participate in actions conducted on the territory of a partner country, and the collected materials are considered evidence in the countries represented by Joint Investigation Teams members.

In 2016, among all criminal offenders identified by the police, there were 13,006 minors (just a few more than in the previous year when there were 12,898 of them). Minors constituted 4.2% of all suspects identified by the police (in 2015, the percentage value was 4%).⁹ We should mention also police activities among a wide range of initiatives undertaken by the state and the administration of local governments and by social organisations to make Polish juveniles more active and thus less susceptible of breaking the law. They are mostly focused on preventive actions (teams for crime prevention), environmental prevention (community police officers), as well as educational initiatives (e.g. contests in the area of security or creating course books for police students in secondary schools by the Police Academy in Szczytno).

Graph No. 3. The number of suspects established by the police in the years 2007–2016

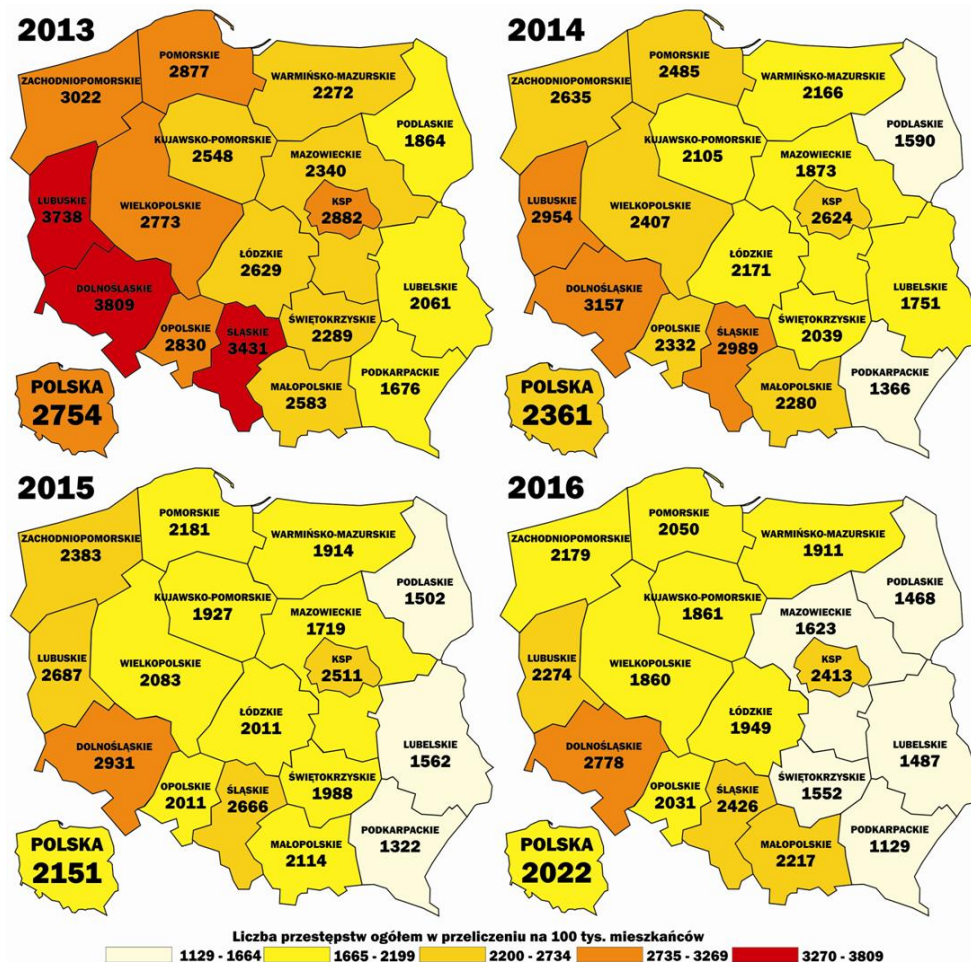
⁹ For more information see: the Report of the Ministry of Interior and Administration on the crime level in Poland in the years 2014–2016



Source: Report on the crime level in Poland in 2016, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016

The level of crime threat (in total in Poland and in each administrative region) per 100,000 inhabitants is shown in chart 4.

Graph No. 4. Crime threat in total per 100,000 inhabitants



Source: Report on the crime level in Poland in 2016, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016

The average crime threat level in Poland per 100,000 inhabitants in 2016 was 2,022*, the lowest in the last few years. It was gradually lower together with the number of crimes detected in Poland in total (in 2013 it was 2,754, in 2014: 2,361, in 2015: 2,151). Basically, in 2016 the crime threat level per 100,000 inhabitants was the lowest in the eastern and the central part of Poland.

The highest levels of crime threat in total per 100,000 inhabitants are stated in the western region of the country and in the Metropolitan Police Headquarters' area of activity. In 2016 the crime threat level above 2,000 crimes per 100,000 inhabitants was noted in the following regions: Lower Silesian, Silesian, Lesser Poland, Lubusz, West Pomeranian, Pomeranian and Opole, as well as on the territory controlled by the Metropolitan Police Headquarters. In 2016, in comparison with 2015, the crime threat level per 100,000 inhabitants was lower in all regions. It is undoubtedly correlated with the population density – the bigger the number of inhabitants, the higher the level of crime threat. There are more potential victims of crime whose property is located in a smaller area and offenders hope for bigger anonymity. The next factor influencing the crime threat level is the living standard of citizens. It is getting higher and higher, a proof of which is the rise of the standard of living and the lowest unemployment rate. This may, at the same time, be a determinant for initiating illegal behaviour (e.g. establishing quasi-banks offering usury loans or mechanism in the form of financial pyramids). The growing old community is another factor generating criminal acts. Elderly people are more often victims of extortion, robberies or thefts (especially pickpocketing). As is seen in the above charts, the crime threat level in Poland is becoming lower, which results from the policy of balanced development, whose regular component is e.g. the multiplatform activity of the sector of internal affairs aimed at improving the security of all citizens.

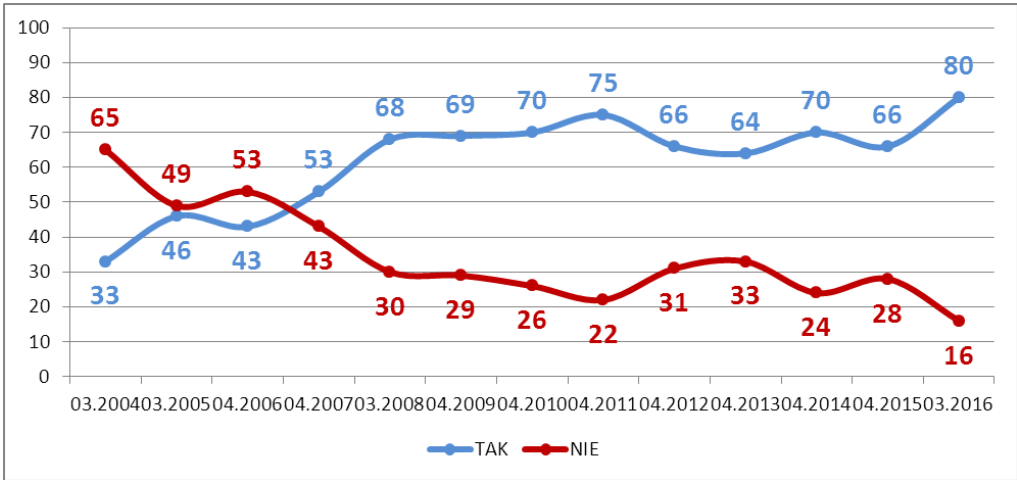
Public opinion on the level of internal security in Poland

The research on public opinion on the level of safety of the Polish people concerns mostly the evaluation of police officers' work and the police effectiveness when fighting crime, as well as the fear of crime. The results of the survey carried out in 2016 and in previous years show that the Polish people feel safe in their country. The indicators of the social evaluation of police work are also high. It concerns police officers who perform tasks related to providing safety in the state. Information on the current level of safety awareness, expressed fears and expectations of Polish citizens in the area of security come from the survey on public opinion carried out by specialist research centres (e.g. the Public Opinion Research Centre) independently, ordered by the National Police Headquarters (the Polish Research on Crime). The Public Opinion Research Centre has been conducting cyclical research on the sense of security of people living in Poland since the end of the 1980's. The research performed in mid-March 2016 showed that the Polish people declared their high sense of security. The research conducted in March 2016 involved a group of 1,007 Poles (N=1,007).

Over the past several years, opinions of the Polish people on security in Poland have changed significantly. Since 2007, we have been able to clearly see the dominance of persons claiming that life in Poland is safe over the respondents who claim the opposite. In March 2016, four fifths of adult Poles (80%) considered their country safe. A similarly high indicator was observed in April 2001 when 81% of respondents considered Poland a safe country. In comparison with the research conducted in 2015, the number of positive answers increased by about 14%. In the research performed in March 2016, 16% of the respondents answered that Poland was not a country where one could live safely. When compared with the previous

research, the percentage of respondents who considered Poland a safe country to live in had decreased by about 12%. It was the lowest result of all recorded in this research.

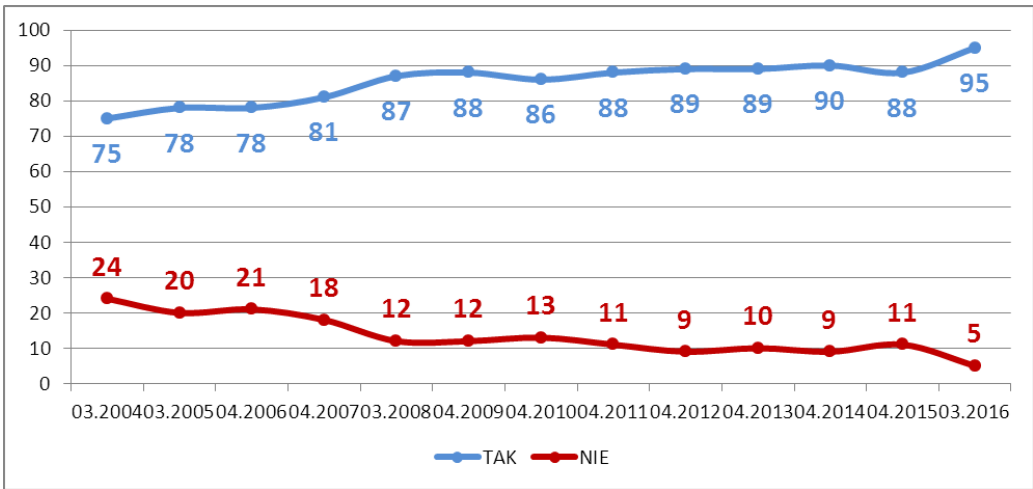
Graph No. 5. Is Poland a country where one can live safely? (in %), N=1,007



Source: Report on the crime level in Poland in 2016, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016

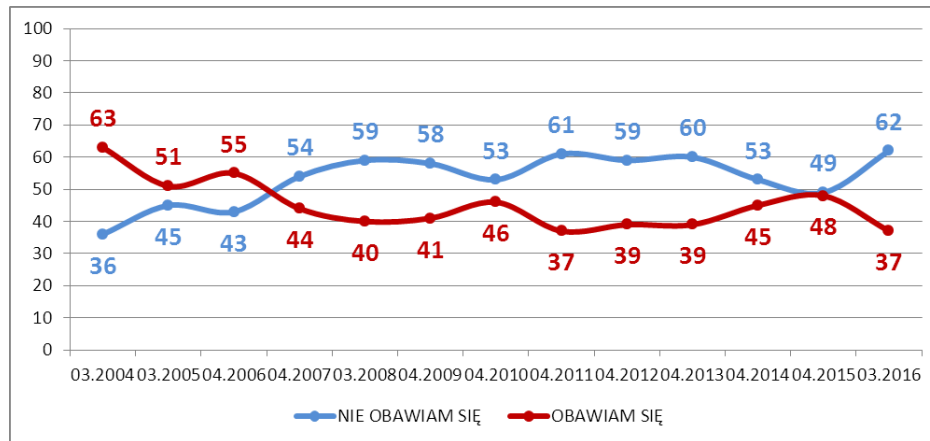
In the research conducted by the Public Opinion Research Centre in March 2016, when answering a cyclic question regarding the sense of safety in their neighbourhood (a district, an estate, a village, etc.), 95% of adult Poles claimed that the area where they lived could be considered safe and calm. It is the highest result in the history of this research. Since April 2015, the percentage of such indications had increased by about 7 points. Simultaneously, 5% of respondents (the lowest percentage so far) expressed the opposite opinion then.

Graph No. 6. Can the area you live in be called safe and calm? (in %), N=1,007



Source: Report on the crime level in Poland in 2016, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016

According to the research carried out by the Public Opinion Research Centre in March 2016, 62% of adult Poles were not afraid they could become a victim of a crime. When compared with the previous edition of the research (April 2015), the percentage of Poles surveyed who were not afraid they could become a victim of a crime increased by 13 points (the highest result in this research so far). Simultaneously, 37% of respondents expressed their concern about becoming a crime victim, whereby only 3% of respondents declared a strong sense of threat ('I am really afraid of that').

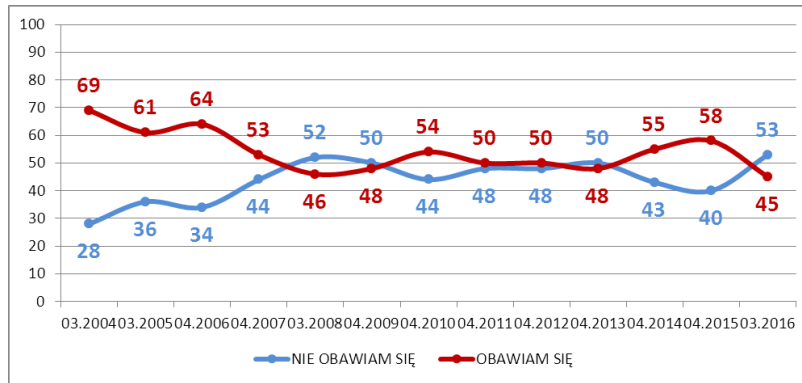


Graph No. 7. Are you afraid of becoming a victim of a crime? (in %), N=1,007

Source: Report on the crime level in Poland in 2016, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016

In March 2016, 53% of adult Poles were not afraid that a close family member could become a victim of a crime. When compared with the April 2015 research, the percentage of respondents who were not afraid that a close family member could become a victim of a crime increased by 13 points. The highest result in the history of this research was achieved then. In the same research, 45% of respondents expressed their concern about the fact that their close family could become victims of a crime, whereby 6% declared a strong sense of threat in this regard ('I am really afraid of that'), constituting the lowest result in the history of this research.

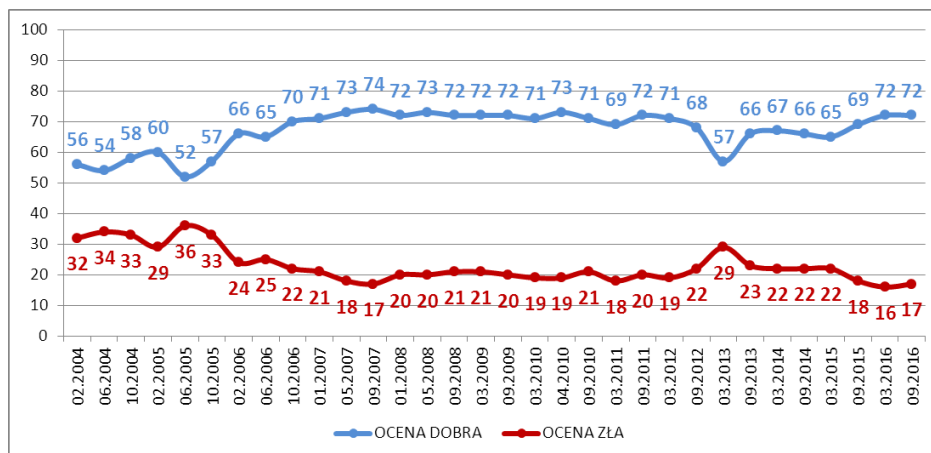
Graph No. 8. Are you afraid that a close member of your family can become a victim of a crime? (in %), N=1,007.



Source: Report on the crime level in Poland in 2016, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016

A cyclic study of the assessment of public institutions conducted by the Public Opinion Research Centre indicates that the rating of the police, when compared with other institutions, is very high. According to the research undertaken in 2006*, the percentage of Poles positively perceiving the police had increased in comparison with the previous editions of the research and amounted to 72%. In September 2016, 17 % of respondents expressed the opposite opinion.

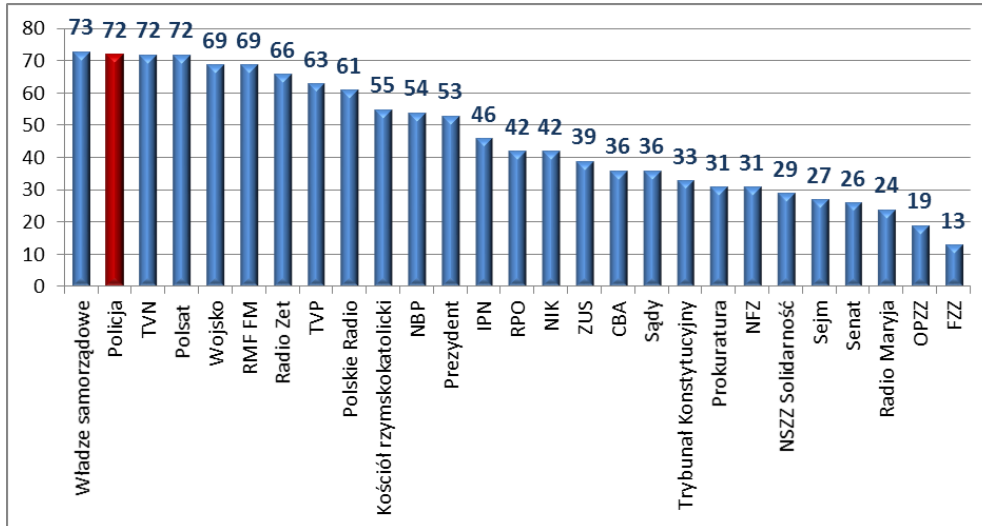
Graph No. 9. How would you describe the activities of the police? (in %, N=981)



Source: Report on crime level in Poland in 2016, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016.

In the research carried out by the Public Opinion Research Centre in September 2016, among institutions which were the subject of the social assessment, there were only self-government authorities evaluated more positively than the police, the army and two TV stations (TVN and Polsat), all of them occupying the second position with 72% of positive answers.

Graph No. 10. How would you assess the activities of...? (in %, N=981).



Source: Report on the crime level in Poland in 2016, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016

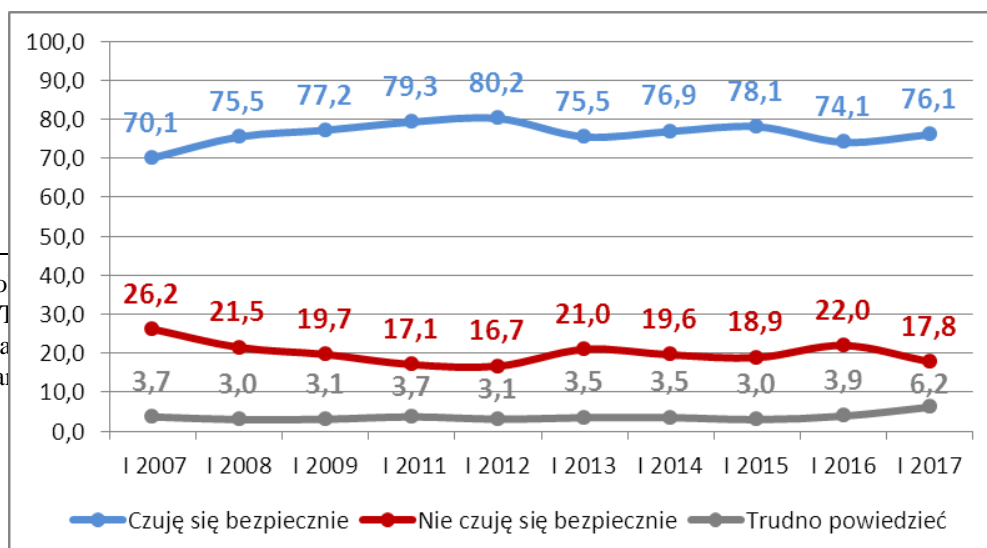
Polish Crime Survey

The Polish Crime Survey (Polskie Badanie Przeszeczności – PBP)¹⁰ is a public opinion survey which has been conducted in 10 editions (between 2007 and 2017). The survey concerns, above all, the assessment of police officers' work, their effectiveness in fighting crime and the fear of crime among Poles. It involves a survey group of 17,000 Poles who are over 15 years old, i.e. 1,000 respondents (representative sample) from the area of each regional Police Headquarters plus the Metropolitan Police Headquarters (N=17,000). In order to use the results, the Polish Crime Survey is always conducted in January and summarizes the previous year. The National Police Headquarters entrusts an independent research agency with tasks of selecting the sample, conducting the research and analysing statistical data.

Adult Poles were asked whether they feel safe when walking in their neighbourhood after nightfall. More than three quarters of them (76.1%) pledged the feeling of security when walking around after nightfall. 17.8% claimed lack of security, whereas 6.2% of respondents could not answer this question.

In comparison to the results of the research performed in the previous year (January 2016), the number of people who declared the feeling of safety after nightfall had increased by 2 percentage points. At the same time, the percentage of people who did not feel safe had decreased by 4.2 percentage points.

Graph No. 11. Do you feel safe when walking in your neighbourhood after nightfall? (in %), N=17,000.



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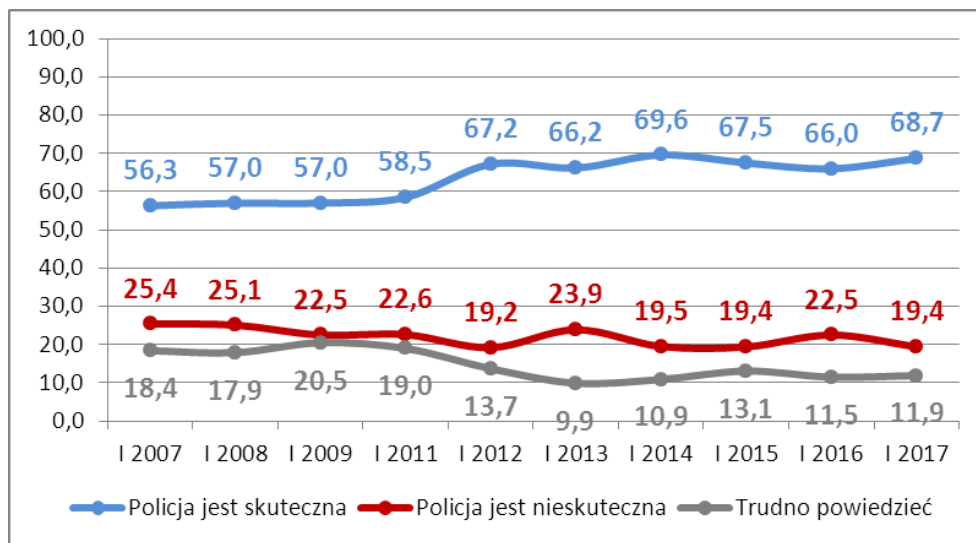
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Blue – I feel safe, Red – I do not feel safe, Grey – It is hard to say

Source: Report on the crime level in Poland in 2016, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016

The Poles were asked how they assess the effectiveness of the police in their war against crime. Most respondents (68.7%) thought the police were effective. The opposite was claimed by just under a quarter of respondents (23.9%). Every tenth person (11.9%) could not answer this question. In comparison to the previous year, the assessment had improved. The ‘effective’ answers had increased by 2.7% and the ‘ineffective’ answers had decreased by 3.1%.

Graph No. 12. Are police effective in their war against crime in your neighbourhood? (in %), N=17,000.



Blue – Police are effective, Red – Police are ineffective, Grey – It is hard to say

Source: Report on the crime level in Poland in 2016, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016

Participants in the research were also asked to evaluate the work of police officers serving in their neighbourhood. Most Poles (69.2%) responded positively. 16.7% of respondents evaluated it negatively, whereas 14.1% did not hold any opinion. In comparison to the previous year, there had been a small increase in positive opinions (by 1.8%) parallel to a decrease in negative opinions (by 2.4%).

From the most recent edition of the Polish Crime Survey, it appears that more than three quarters of Polish citizens (76.1%) feel safe when walking after nightfall in their neighbourhood. The lack of feeling of safety is experienced by 17.8% of respondents. In comparison to the previous edition of the research, there had been an increase in the feeling of safety (there was a higher percentage of people who claimed they felt safe – a 2% increase – parallel to a smaller percentage of people claiming the opposite – a 4.2% decrease).

Respondents were presented with the list of potential threats and asked to point to a maximum of three which they fear most in their neighbourhood. Following their answers, the most frightening are: reckless driving (29.5%) and break-ins into, for instance, houses, basements or cars (28.7%). More than a fifth of respondents are afraid of mugging (21.1%), vandalism (20.3%) and assault by a drunken person or a drug addict (20.2%). The rest of threats were indicated by less than a fifth of respondents. In comparison to the previous year

results, respondents more rarely indicated break-ins (a decrease of 5.8%), fights and batteries (of 3.7%), thefts, for instance, pickpocketing (of 3.3%) and mugging (of 2.6%). However, they pointed more to vandalism (an increase of 4.1%).

Table 1. What in general and what threats are you most afraid of in your neighbourhood? (in %), N=17,000

Threats	2007	2008	2009	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Reckless driving	34.9	38.5	35.9	31.0	26.9	27.9	29.7	30.3	29.0	29.5
Break-ins	22.1	20.7	19.3	30.1	32.2	35.5	33.2	29.0	34.5	28.7
Mugging	23.4	19.6	19.6	21.6	26.3	24.9	20.5	21.0	23.7	21.1
Vandalism	21.0	21.8	21.0	17.8	18.7	19.7	19.0	17.1	16.2	20.3
Assault by a drunken person or a drug addict	20.2	19.3	20.0	14.5	18.3	19.3	20.4	14.4	18.8	20.2
Fights	19.9	17.8	17.6	14.9	18.0	23.2	21.1	14.0	21.7	18.0
Intimidation by youths	23.1	21.0	19.1	15.8	18.3	17.8	16.0	12.8	15.4	17.5
Thefts (e.g. pickpocketing)	14.4	11.9	12.2	16.2	22.1	22.5	22.8	16.4	18.8	15.5
None. I am afraid of nothing in my neighbourhood	13.7	15.6	17.6	19.5	15.0	13.1	14.1	22.2	14.7	14.8
Extortion, ransom	4.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	6.3	10.3	8.8	4.3	8.3	9.4
Drug dealing	6.0	6.3	5.7	4.2	5.4	9.1	8.3	5.0	8.4	9.1
Rowdy neighbours	5.7	5.8	6.4	4.6	6.7	6.5	5.9	4.9	5.0	8.4

Source: Report on the crime level in Poland in 2016, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, Warsaw 2016

Respondents were also asked which aspects of police work were most important for them. The results suggest that what is mostly required from police officers is to respond quickly to an incident (44.5%). For more than a third of Poles, the effectiveness of police is significant (35.3%) and for about one fourth, it is the police presence in their neighbourhood (25.5%), easiness in getting through to emergency services (24.0%) and police officers' honesty and incorruptibility (23.1%). Every fifth respondent expects an effective and quick investigative process without unnecessary formalities (20.6%). In comparison to the previous edition of the research, there had been a smaller percentage of easiness in reaching emergency services (a decrease of 8.9%), quick police response (of 6.4%) and police effectiveness (of 3.3%). Respondents more often point to police professionalism and competence (an increase of 4.5%).

Summary

In 2016, police dealt with 776,909 crimes in total. It means that a number of crimes had decreased by 6.2% in comparison with the year 2015. From 2009 to 2011, the number of crimes recorded by police slightly increased after a noticeable decrease in 2004–2008. Another decline was recorded after the year 2011. The number of crimes in 2016 was 32.6% lower than the number recorded in 2007 (when there were more than 1.15 million crimes). In 2016, the crime detection rate came to 67.8% and increased by 1.9% (to 65.9%) when compared to that attained in 2015. Along with the decrease in the number of reported crimes, the number of suspects decreased as well – in 2016, police found in total 312,366 perpetrators

suspected of committing crimes. It demonstrates the decrease of 2% in comparison to 2015 (when there were 318,713 of them).

The results of the independent social research conducted in 2016 and at the beginning of 2017 show that Polish residents feel safe. The indicators of the social assessment of police work, which comprises the service responsible for performing a large number of tasks related to ensuring security in the country, still remain high. The results of the March 2016 research indicate that Polish residents have a very high sense of safety. Most Polish people (80%) found their country safe (16% of respondents were of different opinion). The same research included a question about their sense of security in their close neighbourhoods (a district, an estate, a village). It is even higher than that declared countrywide. The vast majority of respondents (95%) considered their neighbourhood a safe and quiet place (5% of respondents were of different opinion).

Polish people were asked about their sense of security while walking around their neighbourhood after dark. In January 2017, the vast majority of Polish people (76.1%) said that they felt safe in that situation (17.8% respondents expressed an opposite view). Assessing the effectiveness of police in the fight against crime in the respondents' place of residence, in January 2017, 68.7% of respondents claimed that police were effective. 19.4% of the people surveyed expressed a different opinion. In the PBP survey, Polish people were also positive about the engagement of police officers working near the place of their residence. In 2017, the adult Polish were asked how often they noticed walking or motorized patrols in their neighbourhood. The largest number of respondents (58%) said that they saw police patrols at least once a week. 16.2% of adult respondents declared they observed police patrols in their neighbourhood at least once a month. 11.3% of respondents saw police patrols less than once a month and 7.8% declared they did not see any patrol at all (5.8%).

The present multidimensionality of existing or potential dangers obligates the state to facilitate a continuous improvement in the form of their detention, recognition and prevention. This situation is the main catalyst of the occurrence of a kind of bodies' specialization in performing tasks in broadly defined national security. However, it is police that make an unquestioned, significant contribution to the ensuring of internal security in Poland. It should be stated that an extremely important element contributing to crime reduction and an increase in the sense of security of Polish people is necessity of common actions of citizens and national authorities in the form of, inter alia, actions, campaigns and other preventive security actions. Another important element of operations run to guarantee internal security of our country is a constant cooperation between particular operational groups organized at the government level or by local authorities to perform tasks of improving security of Polish people. Only such holistic actions will result in positive, synergistic effects on common, native grounds in the field of security operations.

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