# Juvenile Delinquency Prevention: Social Intervention Reducing the Problem of Youth Crime in Central and Eastern Europe?

Comparative study of the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Poland.

#### Introduction

Criminality as well as juvenile delinquency has always been an important legal and social issue especially in the period of transitions from one system to an other. Moreover, many statistical and scientific analyses support the hypothesis that juvenile delinquency as a part of the whole criminality, increases during the time of sweeping changes and social crises. This fact became well known to many Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, as one of the negative outcomes of transition from the totalitarism to democracy. For example, since 1990 to 1994 juvenile delinquency in Lithuania and Poland has almost doubled and in the Czech Republic increased more then two and a half times. 

I Juvenile delinquents here are considered children, teenagers and youths up to 18 years of age whose behavior does not comply with the legal norms of society and is considered to be a punishable activity or crime. (See also Appendix, Table Nr.1 and Graph Nr. 1)

The causes of such rapid growth could be analyzed referring to three main spheres: legal, social and economic. First, legislation gaps such as the absence of juvenile courts in Central and Eastern Europe have resulted in inadequate penalties for young offenders. Moreover, for instance, in Lithuania there was only one juvenile detention institution, and some of the sentenced young criminals were serving their penalties in adult prisons. In addition, criminal justice institutions in transforming societies sustained the former tyrannical and authoritarian attitude to young offenders. The methods introduced by such institutions based on penalization and deteriorating approach to juvenile delinquents violated children's rights and disregarded the possibility of rehabilitation of young individuals. Despite of the fact, that every third child sentenced to imprisonment commits the crime again, there was still a strong believe among officials as well general public, that punishment was the way to "correct" the behavior of delinquent children.

Former mechanisms of social control executed in the totalitarian regime collapsed together with the brake down of the communist block. During the transition period, the ability of family and school to provide social control has decreased. Moreover, transforming societies faced the change of social values and norms brought about by market and political liberalization. The last but not the least important factor, is the overall economic decline and the lack of funding for the institutions and programs directed to improve the situation of delinquent youth.

Democratization of the post-Soviet and post socialist societies brought about changes in the legislation system as well as crime control politics very slowly. In 1994 alternative preventive policies were introduced in the Czech Republic, based on experience from the West, where methods of crime prevention by social intervention have proved to be effective when reducing crime rates and controlling delinquent behavior of children.

Juvenile delinquency prevention (JDP) is a complex concept and should be analyzed in terms of psychological, social and economic factors provoking deviant behaviors. The crime prevention policy should be first of all directed to the causes of crime and the elimination of factors, which increase the possibility of law offenses. Preventive work directed to the youngest group of population is also a progressive control over the overall criminal situation in the region,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For the comparison, juvenile crime in the USA during the same period increased by 32%. Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Department of Justice.

since juvenile delinquents constitute the potential for the future adult criminality. Furthermore, the JDP strategies vary according to social, political and economic situation over country and over time, since both of these determinants introduce new and different causes of criminal behavior. Therefore, designers of prevention programs have focused on newly emerging forms of delinquency, as well methods of treatment of young delinquents, which would be in harmony with their values, social and personal background.

Nevertheless, three examined countries have substantially different crime control policy. For example, prevention system as a working concept introduced in the public policy exists only in the Czech Republic. In Lithuania such a system is just being created and in Poland such a perspective of social prevention system is not defined. However, this does not mean, that there is no preventive work executed or that there are no institutions, dealing with problematic juveniles. The absence of such a national prevention system for juvenile delinquents in Poland could help when evaluating the effectiveness of centralization and coordination of preventive work in other countries.

The idea to make comparative study on crime prevention politics was generated when studying various literature on prevention systems and programs in Western countries. Furthermore, no such a study has yet been made comparing the juvenile crime prevention in CEE countries. Although, each country might have individual methods when solving the problem of crime, there are also many common aspects of preventive work, which could be successfully applied in other countries. The comparative research could yield important information on how to create the system of social prevention, which would be a better way to plan and implement preventive activities, and what kind of preventive interventions could operate.

The first part of the study is dedicated to the theoretical premises for preventive policies implemented in the Czech Republic and Lithuania elucidating social dimensions for intervention, describing the policy mechanisms and drawbacks of policy implementation. Following presentation of selected figures will demonstrate change in youth crime statistics before and after the implementation of the national prevention projects.

#### The Main Dimensions of Social Intervention

The discussion of crime requires the consideration of the setting in which it occurs, the commodities that affect its rate and the private efforts required for its reduction.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the analysis of juvenile delinquency involves the unstable economic situation as well as social problems of family, changes in educational system and overall social changes, creating vacuum of values in society. These are called risk factors- conditions, attitudes and behaviors that increasse likelehood, that a child will develop delinquent behaviors in adolescents leading to crime and arrest. The preventive interventions should be directed to the elimination of these causal factors, which exist at multiple levels including families, schools, community, peer group and within the individual.<sup>3</sup>

Schools and school day centers are important institutions and serve their purpose when solving the problem of children's unemployment thereby organizing their free time and helping them to avoid the street life. <sup>4</sup> Moreover, they have a reasonable input in children's school

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> James Q. Wilson, Crime and Public Policy, London: JCS Press, 1983, p.282.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> 1999 Report to Congress, Title V Incentive Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Programs, OOJDP Report, US Department of Justice, July, 2000, p.5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The correlation between youth unemployment and crime has been elucidated by Jackson Toby, *Crime in the Schools* in James Q. Wilson., <u>Crime and Public Policy</u>, London: JCS Press, 1983, pp.69-89.

attendance. The relationship between the dropouts from school and the increase of juvenile delinquency has been examined by many sociologists. For instance, Jasine Junger-Tas introduced a Dutch experiment in three vocational schools distinguishing positive correlation between teenager's school problems, school dropouts and delinquency.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, criminal statistics in Lithuania also prove this link. During the period from 1993 to 1995 number of children who stopped attending school fluctuated between three to four thousand at the same time till 1997 almost half (50%) of children, delivered to the police institutions consisted of those who do not study and do not work. However, this pattern was radically changing and already in 1999 the majority (72%) of children registered in police were pupils of comprehensive or other types of schools.<sup>6</sup>

The link between school dropouts and juvenile delinquency may be explained employing the criminological theory of social control. After children stop attending school, the social control over them lessens. This is especially important for children from poor parenting families. In this case, together with the dropout from school such youngsters loose their social bond with society represented in the name of school and, therefore, become excluded from the socialization process. In addition to this, the dropout from school has the direct connection to child's employment and free time, which is spend most often on the street together with youngsters of the same fate. Therefore, the risk increases to form or join the groups of street children and be involved into delinquent acts.

School achievements are also related to juvenile delinquency. For example, according to Lithuanian research, 2.7% of children who stopped attending school as the cause of it indicated their bad achievements in learning process. Furthermore, psychologists relate bad achievements at school to the increase of aggressiveness in child's behavior. The aggression within the school may be also explained by the relationships between teachers and pupils. Mandatory school attendance planned and unified teaching system during the soviet time, formed the gap between teacher and children. Moreover, according to the labeling theory of deviance, those children who fail at school are labeled as bad and excluded from the group of normal children by various kinds of punishments, such as special classes and denigrating treatment. This stigmatization and classification only widens the gap between teacher and pupils. School then becomes the official institution, which rather suppresses than supports those who need to find their place in social grouping. Therefore, excluded children form groups, which are often called deviant subcultures and characterized as the most vulnerable for the criminal behavior.

Many attempts have been made to examine the causes of children's dropouts from school. One of the recent studies has been taken in Lithuania and yielded very interesting results, according to which school dropouts appear to be a complex problem, which could be solved by the cooperation between family and academic staff. Moreover, it is a problem of the whole society and its changing values in social and economic transitions. Therefore, the strategy of prevention represented as an alternative school provides the possibility to reduce this problem

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Josine Junger-Tas, *School Drop-Out and Delinquency* in Gunter Albrecht, Hans-Uwe Otto (eds.), <u>Social Prevention and the Social Sciences</u>, Berlin.: Walter de Gruyter, 1991,pp.551.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Criminality and the Law Enforcement, Department of Statistics, Vilnius, 2000.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Refer to Jackson Toby and Maria Toby (1961) and Jackson Toby, (1974).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Referring to results of the recent research, 41.8% of children who stopped attending school did not want to study, 14.8% were prevented from school by their parents, 10,8% did not study because of material difficulties faced by their families, 5.7% of school drop-outs live in anti-social families, and 21% of them are street children. Source: R. Motuzas. *Privalomo mokymo igyvendinimo ir paauliu nusikalstamumo prevencijos problemos* in Z. Bajoriunas, G. Kvieskiene, and V. Slapkauskas, Mokykla ir Nusikalstamumo Prevencija, Vilnius.: Leidybos Centras, 1996, pp.6.

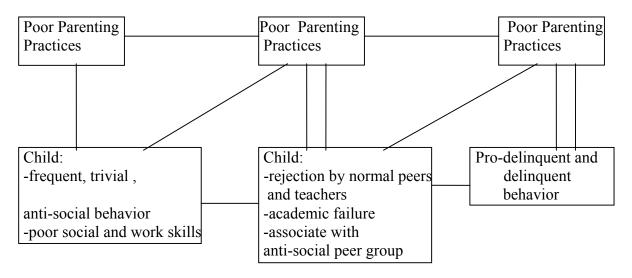
by nontraditional ways of teaching and building up new relationships between teachers and pupils.

In addition, during the Soviet times single parent families would be addressed as the most problematic ones looking for the traditional explanation of deviant behaviors. However, the information collected about families of juveniles registered in police yielded the opposite picture: 60 to 70% of youth delivered to police institutions during the last five years had both parents. In addition only 1 to 2 % of these children had no parents. Therefore, family as a social dimension of intervention should have been reconsidered.

Family rehabilitation institution is expected to acquire much broader field for the social intervention. First of all, it involves younger children than those at day centers and these children may stay longer at the home program spending day and night in the safe environment. Therefore, the change of environment here is much more radical and stable. Second, family treatment institution has a variety of programs for parents of both real and foster family. Therefore, the individual problem of parent or child is solved through the involvement of both individual and family therapy.<sup>9</sup>

The efforts of this institutional form of prevention could be also supported by the theoretical assumptions revealing the relationship between poor parenting and the increase of child's vulnerability for crime, which is presented by the causal scheme of the developing delinquent behavior.

### Family contributions to delinquent behavior: a proposed development sequence 10



Poor parenting here addressed in terms of discipline, monitoring, conflict solving, sociodemographic characteristics constitute a complex causal variable of juvenile delinquency. Furthermore, T. Hirshi, directing criminological agenda to families' studies, pointed out the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> This method have been confirmed by the works of psychotherapy, such as the study of "Family Therapy" by H.E. Richter (1967).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Source: James Snyder and Gerald Patterson, *Family Interaction and Delinquent Behavior* in Irving B. Weiner (ed.), <u>Wiley Series On Personality Processes</u>, New York: John Wiley &Sons, 1987, p. 216.

supreme importance of the family. <sup>11</sup>Therefore, it is one of the most important dimensions in the social prevention of youth crime. However, this type of preventive strategy introduces the issue of ethics in practice, when applying limitations for the community intrusion into family affairs.

The closed institution may represent the third dimension of social intervention on the institutional level. Prison may reduce the tendency of offender to commit further crimes through either rehabilitation or what is called social deterrence. However, it is also possible, that criminal propensities of some offenders will be intensified by prison experiences, either, being labeled as criminal, youngsters may behave adequately or the long period of incarceration may prevent an inmate from learning to function in an open society.<sup>12</sup>

The state institutionalization of young offenders by sentence and the deprivation of liberty was favored by the Soviet courts. Approximately 60-70 % of adjudicated juveniles in the former Soviet State were sentenced to terms in juvenile labor colonies ("standard" or "intensified" regime). 13

The Youth Prison (YP) helps to isolate the youngest part of population, which introduce the thread to the society or are ascribed to be dangerous to the community. In the transformation from the totalitarism to democracy this institution has not been reformed, directing it to the enlargement of space and the selective incarceration as a potentially effective way of crime reduction. Therefore, it is expected to have little to do with the rehabilitation of young offenders. The social control here have not been replaced by the social support. The reform of this institution should include also the reform of the justice system introducing youth court and rational sentencing system. Moreover, counseling and rehabilitation should be the prior methods of work with young prisoners. The social supports of the prior methods of work with young prisoners.

In addition, transitional economic difficulties brought about new factors causing family disorders and violence (parent's unemployment, increasing differences between wealthy and poor families), school dropouts (for instance, there are case, when children are forced to work or steal in order to provide for living for their parents instead of going to school and parents encourage these behaviors), deviant peers (joining violent movements such as skinheads). The social and economic changes also provoked new forms of youth crime, such as violence against parents, cruelty and severe behaviors, pester, crime committed in-group with adults, and robberies to provide for living for parents. Consequently, crime prevention policies should have been modified adjusting to these current developments.

#### **Crime Control Politics**

The change in juvenile criminality during 1990-1994 evoked the reaction of the policy specialists. The government of the Czech Republic in 1994 initiated the official crime prevention policy as a working concept. Before the new concept of crime prevention politics (CPP) was

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Refer to T. Hirshi, *Crime and the Family*, in James Q. Wilson (ed.), <u>Crime and Public Policy</u>, London: JCS Press, 1983, pp.69-89.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Peter W. Greenwood, *Controlling the Crime Rate through Imprisonment*, in James Q. Wilson (ed.), <u>Crime and Public Policy</u>, London: JCS Press, 1983,p.253.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Maria Los, <u>Communist Ideology</u>, <u>Law ad Crime: Comparative View of the USSR and Poland</u>, London: The Macmillan Press LTD, 1988,p.275.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Relationship between these two factors and crime rates was describe by A. Blumstein (1983) and P. Greenwood with Alan Abrahamse (1982).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Refer to studies by D. Glaser (1979).

introduced, crime prevention in the Czech Republic was not directed to support the effective implementation of the concrete preventive programs. One of the main preventive activities or proposed measures of prevention was realized either isolated in narrow framework of particular ministry, or executed accidentally by non-institutional organizations such as church or movements with the diverse professional quality. In addition to this, preventive activities were often directed to the secondary causes of crime revealed after the crime was already committed. The aim of prevention was unclearly formulated and the criteria of evaluation were missing. It had a negative influence on the effectiveness of the planned preventive activities. In such a situation, projecting new, separate and unrelated to each other preventive programs, the work of which is limited to the single entity, was ineffective and not useful.

Therefore, the systemic solution of crime prevention required the structural and organizational changes, which would provide complex solution of the problem, stating the priority spheres of work according to the current developments of crime and coordinating separate subjects of prevention. This approach to crime prevention could result in the creation of functional and sophisticated preventive projects and programs, respecting not only specificity of every locality and region, but also the basic methodological principals originating from the main theoretical guidelines of sciences orientated to the personality of individual in the interaction with social environment.

The aim of the new prevention system was to develop the basic conditions for the creation and effective use of prevention mechanisms directed to the elimination of the complex causes of crime and work out the favorable conditions supporting non criminal behavior in the democratization of society and humanization of interpersonal relationships. The basic categories of crime prevention politics were defined in three main areas: *Primary prevention*, directed to the whole society, addressing its institutions and individuals; *Secondary prevention*, which addresses individuals and societal groups in criminal risk; and *Tertiary prevention* directed to the elimination or reduction of recidivistic crime, the social environment of recidivism, causes and conditions of it's occurrence.

Since, the defined object of prevention is focused on individual's interaction with certain social environment, as well as on the decision individual takes when solving problem of a certain life situation, three basic categories were indicated such as *Individual prevention* concentrating on individual and the modes of his/her behavior when interacting with social environment. *Social prevention*, the task of which is to create the positive social environment, and *Situational prevention* - the target of which is to eliminate the situation supporting the possibility of crime. In addition, the structural division of preventive activities was mainly defined by three interrelated and interconnected levels: **state, regional and local.** (Appendix, Table Nr.2) The main actor responsible for the implementation of this crime prevention policy in the Czech Republic was the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The CCP was financed distributing money through various ministries, which were responsible for different prevention programs. (Appendix, Schemes Nr. 1 and Nr.2)

Two years later in 1996, the comprehensive reform was also undertaken in Lithuania with the creation of the National Prevention Program for Juvenile Delinquents (NPPJD) being the product of it.

The new approach of the Lithuanian government to the reduction of juvenile delinquency was represented by the NPPJD. The objective of this reform was to move beyond punishment to the effective prevention and protection of children's rights and interests according to the Law adopted on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 1996. This law incorporates the requirements of both The

International Convention of Child's Rights (1989) and the Declaration of the Child Rights (1959) introduced by the United Nations. The directions of preventive work with juvenile delinquents in Lithuania are based on five main elements. <sup>16</sup> (Appendix, Table Nr. 3)

The NPPJD had various directions of preventive work. The main attention was driven to the changing values of society and their impact on juvenile's behavior addressing the influencing actors such as social services, specialized legal institutions, facilities for juvenile delinquents and legislative reforms. These concerns constituted the sphere through which the reform could be executed, integrating social (family and school environment) and individual (personality) variables. The preventive policy was also distributed on three levels: national, regional and institutional. The NPPJD is funded distributing money from the state's budget to the municipalities, which are responsible for preventive projects on the local level. (Appendix, Table Nr.4. and Scheme Nr.3)

To the present day, there is no national prevention policy in Poland. The prevention activities are frequently based on the individual initiative and organized by the people of "good will", who make contacts with various specialists. The lack of sufficient financing is seen as the biggest obstacle in development of such initiatives. In addition, there are also various agencies, which undertake the prevention of child and youth delinquency. For instance, the State Agency for Solving Alcohol Problems introduced the programs in schools teaching children to refuse offered alcohol and to put down arguments against drinking. There are also institutions dealing with children from problematic families executing long term (one year) educational, protective and therapeutic functions. (Preventive and Therapeutic clinic "Opta"). Educational, advising and vocational counseling centers are spread all over the country. <sup>17</sup>

The majority of juveniles cases are being solved in family courts applying educational and social rehabilitation elements, and respecting children's rights. The most often used educational measures consist of: reprimand, supervision of parents and foster families, the supervision of probation officer, placement in an educational institution. However, the severe measures may be imposed on juvenile 13-17 years of age placing them in a house of correction for juveniles. In other cases the educational measure could be assigned not specifying the period of stay.

### Crime Prevention Policies in the Czech Republic and Lithuania: Compared

The concept of prevention (CCP)as the method of fighting the crime increase in the Czech Republic was introduced in November, 1993. The National Prevention Program for Juvenile Delinquents (NPPJD) in Lithuania was presented in March, 1996. The system of prevention already functioning in the Czech Republic is just at the initial stage of creation in Lithuania. Therefore, when making comparative study, it should be taken into consideration that these two policies are at the different stage of development. This fact makes a clear distinction between two policies when evaluating the methodology and strategies of prevention, as well as preventive planning.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup>Antanas Dapsys, Children and Youth in Conflict with the Law: Problems and Ways to its Solution in Lithuania, Institute of Law, forward.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> <u>Crime Control in Poland</u>, Jerzy Lasincky and Andrzej Siemaszko (eds.), Polish Ministry of Justice & Institute of Justice, Warsaw.: Oficyna Naukowa, 1995, p74-75.

The project of prevention in Lithuania concentrates on social environment, humanization of the punishments for children and children rights protection. The implementation of this policy is based on the methods and strategies represented by social sciences addressing social institutions as the main actors of prevention. The main task of the crime control politics (CPP) in the Czech Republic is to ensure the security of citizens. The implementation of such policy is executed by improving the structure and character of police institutions. Therefore, the strategies of preventive work in two countries represent different approaches. Thus, Lithuanian policy is more concentrated on the elimination of the social causes of crime, whereas in the Czech Republic it is directed to the reduction of law offences and crime control directly through the police. Consequently the crime prevention politics in Lithuania could be described as the politics of social support and in the Czech Republic as the politics of crime control.

In addition, the defined strategies of policy implementation differ, since the Czech CPP represents the long-term implementation project and Lithuanian NPPJD demonstrates a general prevention scheme. Further, the prevention in Lithuania is not defined in three important categories: individual, situational and social. The absence of such a system is considered as an obstacle of policy implementation, which results in inadequacies and inefficiency of the whole prevention policy.

A considerable disadvantage of the Lithuanian prevention policy in comparison to the Czech CPP is the fact, that the role of ministries as the actors of preventive work is not clearly defined. The coordination among ministries is represented in the Czech CPP through the Republic Committee, which is the major actor in the distribution of funding. Moreover, every ministry here plays an important role when creating, executing and financing prevention programs on the local level. This mechanism increases the control over the implementation of the planned preventive activities and the correctness of money distribution. Furthermore, the Lithuanian prevention policy does not possess a clear and well-organized funding mechanism, including the requirements and criteria of funding, and regulations of program implementation. In Lithuanian the Ministry of Education plays the major role by creating and selecting the prevention programs as well as distributing the governmental funds. The lack of participation of other ministries and specialists with the necessary level of expertise in separate fields hampers implementation of preventive activities.

The other drawback of Lithuanian policy is the absence of coordinating mechanism, which would control the preventive work and record children's migration from one program to the other. The reluctance to understand the need for a voluntary cooperation between adults and children and among children themselves constitutes the main problem of the NPPJD. Partly, the role of coordinators is played by the local police departments, since they register children and gather the primary information on their personal and social background. However, there is no communication among other actors on the institutional level of prevention.

When making this comparative study, the different situation of each country should be considered. For example, social services for youth have longer traditions in the Czech republic, since there were lots of various activities and organizations dealing with free time of the youngest group of population such as "Sokol" and others. Moreover, many of these institutions survived the transformation period and lots of them are still functioning. The sustained traditions of active free time management constituted the successful creation of prevention system in the Czech Republic. Opposite to this, in Lithuania most of the services such as summer camps disappeared with the collapse of the communist system. Therefore, the reestablishment of such social services required lots of time, effort and economic resources.

This part of the investigation may be considered as an initial stage of the research, which will be carried out through the years of the implementation of the CPP and the NPPJD. The comparative study of the subsequent preventive programs executed on institutional level of both countries would yield a useful information on the needs of juvenile delinquency prevention and the reduction of the youth criminality. As was indicated in the governmental documents on the NPPJD implementation, this program is one of the first strategic steps of Lithuanian government in the work of practical children rights protection and the reduction of the youth criminality in Lithuania. It involves both governmental and public organizations ensuring the social intervention and mobilization of societal efforts creating the system of juvenile delinquency prevention. The preventive services for children and their families are cheaper than the costs of maintenance of young prisoners or the support for the foster families. Consequently, implementing the preventive system for young delinquents serves the long-term economic, social and political purposes.

### Juvenile Criminality in the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Poland

As it was mentioned before, during the period since 1990 to 1994 juvenile delinquency in the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Poland had been rapidly growing and youth arrest statistics was increasing even faster then the adult criminality. For example, juvenile criminality in the Czech Republic in 1990-1994 rose approximately 2,67 times and adult criminality increased by 0.7 times during the same period. <sup>19</sup> Crimes committed by youngsters constituted 6 to 8% of the whole criminal offences and males (95%) commit the majority of crimes in all three countries. The most frequent crime committed by youngest group of population in three countries was robberies and thefts (80%). (Appendix, Graph Nr.1)

The implementation of preventive programs had positive results on the qualitative and quantitative indicators of children's criminality in the Czech Republic and Lithuania. For example, in Lithuania one after the introduction of the NPPJD there were fewer criminals younger than fourteen years old (1089 cases in 1997 compared to 1213 in 1996). Moreover, there were fewer children less than ten years of age in comparison to 1996 statistical data. This reflects the right direction of work in prevention programs when reducing the possibility for criminal behavior in early childhood. There were 51.9% fewer children who were committing crimes persistently and played truant and 23% fewer street and homeless children registered in police departments. However, during 1996-1997, the tendency of children dropout from schools and their criminal risk in Lithuania has not changed (39.1% of young criminals have never attended school and worked). Moreover, alcohol and drug addiction among children was increasing. This number increased by 16%. A slight majority of these children used alcohol together with adults (50-59%). This situation poses a new task for preventive institutions to create programs including the treatment for young alcohol addicts. In addition, juvenile arrests decreased for almost every category of juvenile crime including murder, bodily injury, theft,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> The costs of maintenance of one child in the prison in 1997 reached 17257Lt(\$4050) and in the confessional day center in Palemonas 3108Lt(\$772). Sources: The project of confessional day center and A. Pranevicius, *Nepilnameciu Resocializacija*, in Z. Bajoriunas (ed.), Mokykla ir Nusikalstamumo Prevencija, Vilnius.: Leidybos Centras, 1996, p. 117.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> For comparison, while the youth crime in the USA during 1990-1994 grew by 31%, the adult criminality increased by 10%. Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Department of Justice.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> A Rutkauskas, <u>Report on the Situation of Children's Criminality in Lithuania</u>, Municipal Police Department near the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 1998.

burglary, vehicle theft, and disorderly conduct. However, the number of robberies was steadily increasing and the drug related crimes tripled.<sup>21</sup>

The gradual youth crime decrease could be observed in the Czech Republic a year after the CPP implementation. During 1995-1996 the juvenile crime was growing almost 2% slower then the previous year. In 1997 the youth crime numbers dropped down by 10% and in 1998 acquired a stable negative growth. Since 1993 to 1997 juvenile crime decreased by 9.2% and in such categories as robberies (16.9%), murders (42.8%) and economic crimes (42%). The share of juvenile crime in the whole criminality was slightly decreasing in comparison to the previous years. In 1994 the juvenile criminals constituted 11.6% of the total law offences and in 1997-10.7%. However, children criminality during 1990-1997 in the Czech Republic increased by 46% with the biggest growth in property crimes (28.4%) and violent crimes (140.4%). This could signal a lack or inefficiency of preventive work directed to the group of children under fifteen years old.<sup>22</sup>

In 1995 Poland experienced the highest level of the youth crime for the last ten years. Although in 1996 the juvenile criminality dropped by 15%, it grew again by 4.2% during 1997. According to Polish crime statistics, during the period from 1995-1997 there was a considerable decrease in juvenile crime categories such as murder (50%), rape and robbery.

Juvenile arrest statistics in three countries were also down compared to the adult crime. Lithuania could be a good example: juvenile crime in this country in 1997 was down by 1.3% compared to the previous year, when adult crime grew by 11%. The categories where juvenile arrests declined in the period from 1995 to 1999, adult crime was still gradually growing, except of murders (30% decrease). In the Czech Republic the youth crime during 1996-1997 decreased by 10%, while adult crime was increasing by 2.4%. Then during subsequent years, both juvenile crime and adult criminality were decreasing. The significant difference between adult criminality and youth crime could be noticed in Poland in year 1999 when youth crime reduced by 10% and adult criminality grew by 4.5%. However, in year 2000 both juvenile and adult crime acquired similar growth by 9% and 13 % respectively. (Appendix, Graph Nr.2 and Nr.3)

During the last three years the substantial differences could be noticed comparing juvenile criminality in three analyzed countries. Juvenile arrests had negative growth in the Czech Republic during 1998-1999, reaching the highest level of decline during the year 2000, when the criminality of youth 11-15 years old last year decreased by 18%. After the biggest decrease in 1998 in Lithuania, the youth crime again acquired a positive growth and was slightly increasing during the year 2000. Poland was experiencing the most unexpected juvenile crime fluctuations decreasing by 10% in 1999 and increasing by almost 9% during the year 2000. (Appendix, Graph Nr.4)

Considerable changes could be also noticed in prison statistics. The secondary data for the Czech Republic indicates, that 1900 to 2000 children and juveniles are appointed by the court decision to the closed institutions every year. In addition, there were 537 juveniles sentenced to imprisonment in 1996, which made 1.44% of all imprisoned criminals. This number decreased by 34 % in 1997. In year 2000 the number of sentenced juveniles reduced by 70% when

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Sources: Lithuanian Department of Statistics; Polish Police General register, and Czech Minister of Internal Affairs.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Children under fifteen years of age . Source: Ministry of Interiors: www.mvcr.cz

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Tesařová, J.: Rozhodování o ústavní a ochranné výchově mladistvých. Diplomová práce, katedra sociální práce FF UK Praha.

compared to 1996 and made up for 0.7% of all sentenced to imprisonment.<sup>24</sup> Similar trend could also be noticed in juvenile sentence statistics in Lithuania, where the number of imprisoned juveniles in 2000 decreased by 41% when compared to 1998.<sup>25</sup> The decreasing number of imprisoned youth could be a result of preventive activities directed to rather support and rehabilitate young offenders then punish and suppress.

When talking about dimensions of social interventions addressed by the policy specialist working on prevention, it would be interesting to analyze the data from the police register in Lithuania. For example, it could be noticed that in 2000 only 30% out of all 14-17 years old children included into the police preventive register were unemployed and not attending schools. At the same time, the number of delinquent pupils attending schools had grown by 25% compared to 1997. In addition, pupils committed 2761 criminal offences in 1999, which makes 35.7 crimes for 10 000 pupils in Lithuania. 57% of children included in the register had both parents and 41.6% were from the single parent families and these numbers were slightly growing since 1997. Surprising is the fact, that according to the register the number of children who had no parents decreased by 64% in 2000 when compared to the previous year. These numbers could signal the wrong direction of social interventions. Traditionally, the dropouts and children from the single parent family are considered to be jeopardized and in risk to become delinquent. However, as one can see from the data presented above, school attendance and two-parent family not necessarily ensure the positive and secure environment for children preventing them from delinquent behaviors.<sup>26</sup>

Referring to the official crime records described before, it should be stressed, that there are discrepancies in the legislation of each country. For example, there is a difference of age of criminal responsibility in three CEE countries: in Poland and Lithuania it is 14 years, in the Czech Republic-15. Therefore, combining the official arrest data could be misleading, since the Polish and Lithuanian police register includes juveniles 14-17 years of age whereas Czech register is more accurate including children (till 15 years old) and youth (15-18 years). Further, the official statistics could not be the only source of data, because of the latent or unreported crime. This difference could also explain the higher crime rates in the latter country. The other factor could also be the efficiency of police work. The fact, that the highest number of crime for 10 000 inhabitants could be observed in the Czech Republic, could once more prove the statement, that Czech Police is more effective when registering crimes or there is less latent crimes. However, the share of cleared up crimes is more or less the same in all three countries of the region (40-45%).<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Vězenská slutba CR, www.vezenskasluzba.cz.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> However, when talking in absolute numbers, there were 185 juveniles imprisoned in Lithuania and 167 in the Czech Republic. Referring to the number of prisoners for 10 000 inhabitants, the highest number (209) could be observed in the Czech republic, at the same time in Poland this number is 30% smaller. Source: *Vězenská slutba CR*, www.vezenskasluzba.cz.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Criminality and Law Enforcement activity, Department of Statistics, Vilnius 2000.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> In 1996 there were 382 crime committed per 10 000 inhabitants in the Czech Republic, 183 in Lithuania and 229 in Poland. During the last five years this number was slightly growing in Lithuania and Poland, and in 2000 constituted 223 and 327 crimes respectively. At the same time in the Czech R decreased from 413 in 1998 to 380 in 2000. See also Appendix, Graph Nr.5.

#### **Instead of Conclusions**

There are two main approaches to social prevention: social support and social control. Preventive policy oriented to social control is deeply concerned with the work of police. Social support approach is represented by programs directed to the improvement of social environment, which could increase the possibility of crime. Programs of social support, such as all educational programs, constitute an effort to improve the situation and reduce the chance of law offense. The policy analysis at the moment allows me to note, that social control is the main approach of the national politics of crime control in the Czech Republic and Poland. The social support approach dominates Lithuanian crime prevention system.

The effective system of social prevention is based on the strategies of social politics and sufficient implementation of social policy reforms. In addition, the strength of social prevention depends on the success of preventive planning, thereby distinguishing goals of programs, selecting subjects of prevention, designing methods of preventive work, ensuring cooperation and communication among participants, stable funding and the adequate implementation of intended preventive activities. These should be the criteria for comparative study.

However, the implementation of new prevention policies has deemed to be more demanding then the creation of strategies on paper. Furthermore, no evaluations have been made on how these prevention projects work in practice. For example, since the introduction of prevention programs in Lithuania in 1996, no report has been prepared about the impact of prevention methods on the behavior of delinquent children involved in programs. Consequently, although, according to official statistics, crime rate fluctuations in the Czech republic and Lithuania have been more stable over the past five years and crime growth has been slightly decreasing, it is difficult to prove, that crime prevention programs as alternative crime control methods have caused this improvement.

There are many contradictions such as indifferent teachers leading prevention projects, poor program facilities, lack of financial resources and inadequate funding in all three countries. During interviews with the policy specialists working in the field it became clear, that some of them misunderstand or misinterpret the concept of prevention itself. The latter seems to be the biggest obstacle for the successful implementation of crime prevention policies in post-communist countries. Understanding the importance of social rehabilitation and supportive environment for delinquent juveniles is the most important factor when solving the problem of youth crime. Such an understanding could only be achieved together with the growing tolerance and responsibility, search for conflict solution and compromise, which should dominate the societal life in advanced democracies.

To evaluate the effectiveness of prevention for one country is very difficult, because the decrease or slower increase in crime rates might be conditioned by many other factors including improved economic situation of the country or changes in legislation system. Therefore, relating crime rate fluctuations to the efficacy of crime prevention projects implemented in the Czech republic and Lithuania is hypothetical. In addition, it is difficult to evaluate the success of preventive interventions using the available quantitative data on juvenile delinquents, since the results of preventive work could only be recognized combining both quantitative and qualitative analysis into longitudinal study. The most accurate criteria here would be the data on the recidivism of juveniles who participated in preventive programs. However, it is very difficult to obtain such information, because of the short time of the policy existence.

Nevertheless, significant differences of registered youth crime in the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Poland should be considered. The first two countries having introduced the national prevention projects managed to stabilize juvenile crime fluctuations and reduce youth arrest statistics. At the same time juvenile criminality in Poland over the past five years was rapidly changing and acquired the highest growth of 8.2% in the year 2000. Based on this it can be estimated, that without such preventive policies the growth of the juvenile crime as well as the whole criminality would be faster.

## Appendix

Table Nr.1 Youth Crime Growth <sup>28</sup>

Youth Crime Growth in %

	1990-1994	1994-1995	1995-1996	1996-1997
Czech Republic	264	8	6.4	-10
Lithuania	71.5	2,7	17,5	-1,3
Poland	62,8	8.7	-15	2,6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Computation based on the official data posted by Lithuanian Department of Statistics; Polish Police General register, and Czech Minister of Internal Affairs.

**Graph Nr. 1 Youth Criminality Growth** 

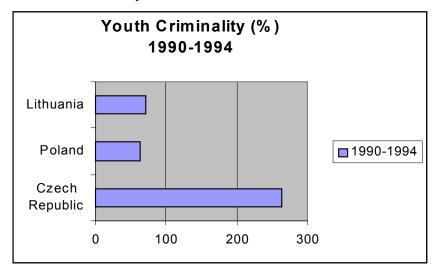


Table Nr.2 The strategy of implementation of crime prevention politics in the Czech Republic

терионе		
Level	Description	
1. The state or the national level	The organization of crime prevention on the state level is dedicated to the creation of legal framework according to which, the planned preventive activities are implemented on the local level. The possibility to introduce and to realize the projected crime prevention programs depends on the decision made on the state's level. The Republic Committee of prevention	
	is responsible for the preventive work on the state's level. The Republic Committee is based in the ministry of Interiors. However, it includes representatives of different ministries being the central coordinator of the whole preventive work.	
2. The regional	Ministries as participants in the state's prevention politics conceptualize	

level.	the programs reflecting the character of their work and persuading the main aim of crime prevention and prevention of other social pathologies. There is no subordination between central and local institutions working on prevention. Ministries supply local institutions with methodological data, economic resources and examine the use of financial resources provided to the municipality. The local level of crime prevention is responsible for the creation, implementation including funding, and coordination of the preventive programs introduced in the concrete locality.
3.The institutional	,
level	In general all prevention projects on the local level are directed to the main social institutions such as family, school and society. For example, family support programs are directed to both parents and children, school programs focus on teachers and pupils as well as drug problems, programs of the individual and social support for the juveniles delinquents are focused on the improvement of their environment and etc. As it can be implied, the majority of programs are directed to the preventive work with juveniles and children. The municipal authorities are responsible for preventive activities implemented on the local level.

Table Nr. 3. The main Elements of the NPPJD

Nr.	Main Elements
1.	Changing values of society in the transformation from totalitarism to democracy.
2.	The need for new social services for juveniles after the destruction of those which
	existed during the Soviet period.
3.	The demand for specialized legal institutions, the work of which would be specifically
	devoted to the cases of young criminals.
4.	The restructuring of facilities for juvenile delinquents, including the fundamental reforms humanizing and democratizing the detention facilities and changing the
	attitude to punishment and sentencing of young offenders relying on the international regulations presented by the United Nations.
5.	Legal reform related to age limits, the duration of punishment for young offenders,
	the family, adoption and security of children according to the Constitution of
	Lithuania and the requirements of the United Nations

Table Nr.4 The practical means of the NPPJD in Lithuania

Level	Description	
1. The state or the national level	Complying the governmental authorities and ministries, which coordinate the program and organize the competition of preventive programs for governmental funding. This level is not connected to the practicalities of preventive work with juvenile offenders. However, the decisions made at the state level determine the implementation of concrete programs and, therefore, the whole NPPJD depends on the decision of these authorities. The main actor responsible for the implementation and funding of the NPPJD in Lithuania is the Ministry of Education.	
2. The regional level.	The Ministry of Education made the decision in 1997, that the funding of regional programs would become the prerogative of the municipal or regional authorities. Therefore, this level has acquired the role of coordinating and assessing authority. However, the analysis made at this level is very formal and the report of it rather reflects the financial part of the program's implementation than the results of the preventive strategies and instruments adopted in programs. <sup>29</sup>	
3.The institutional level	Includes the educational, social guardianship, public and private, no governmental organizations and institutions, which create prevention programs for juvenile delinquents and execute them.	

Scheme Nr.1. Cooperation of the National Committee for Crime Prevention and Commission for Crime Prevention in the Czech Republic.<sup>30</sup>

STATE

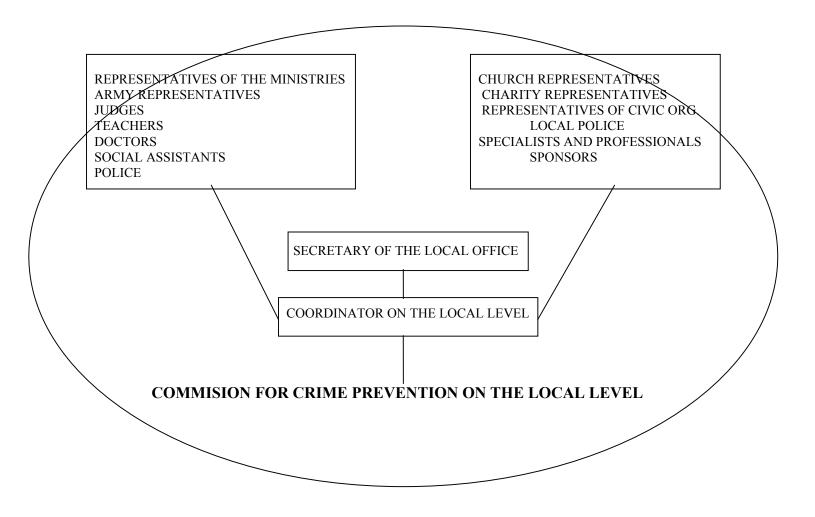
### MINISTER OF INTERIOR-HEAD OF THE REPUBLIC COMMITTEE FOR CRIME PREVENTION (RCPP) DEPUTY OF THE NCPP

REPRESENTATIVES APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL BY THE MINISTRIES **ORGANIZATIONS** MINISTRIES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC CHURCH **CHARITIES** CIVIC UNIONS

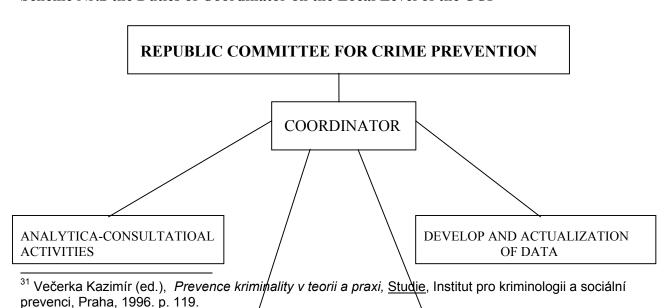
<sup>29</sup> Vaiku ir Paaugliu Nusikalstamumo Preventcijos Nacionalines Programos Vykdymas, Dokumentu Rinkinys, Lietuvos respublikos Svietimo ir Mokslo Ministerija, Vilnius,1998.

30 Večerka Kazimír (ed.), *Prevence kriminality v teorii a praxi*, <u>Studie</u>, Institut pro kriminologii a sociální

prevenci, Praha, 1996. p. 115.



Scheme Nr.2 the Duties of Coordinator on the Local Level of the CCP<sup>31</sup>



-PERIODICAL ANALYSIS
OF THE SITUATION IN LOCALITY
-COMMUNICATIO WITH THE LOCAL
MUNICIPALITY AND ELECTED ORGANS
-STUDY METHODS AND TECHNICS
OF PREVENTIVE WORK

ESTABLISHMENT AND HELP IN SUPERVISION AND COORDINATION OF COMMISSION FOR CRIME PREVENTION CONSISSTING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF

- -STATE AND LOCAL INSTITUTIONS
- -NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
- SPECIALISTS
- SPONSORS

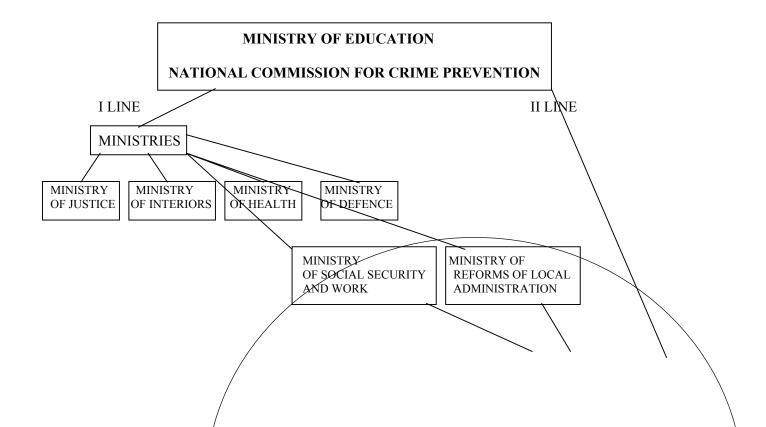
- -GEOPARDISED INDIVIDUALS
- -GEOPARDISED LOCALITIES
- SUBJECTS USED FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PREVENTIVE ACTIVITIES

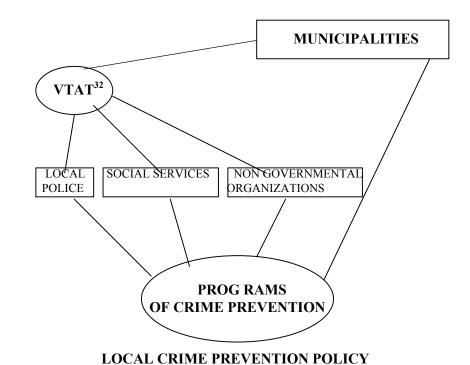
POPULARISATION AND EDUCATIONALACTIVITIES

-CREATING A CLIMATE FAVOURING PREVENTION

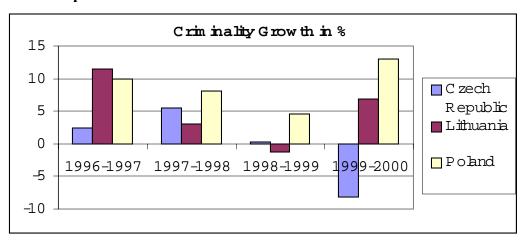
- MEDIATING UNDERSTANDING BETWEE THE CONFLICT GROUPS

Scheme Nr. 3 The institutional infrastructure of the NPPJD in Lithuania



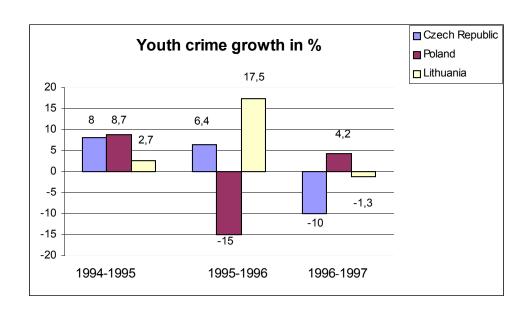


Graph Nr. 2

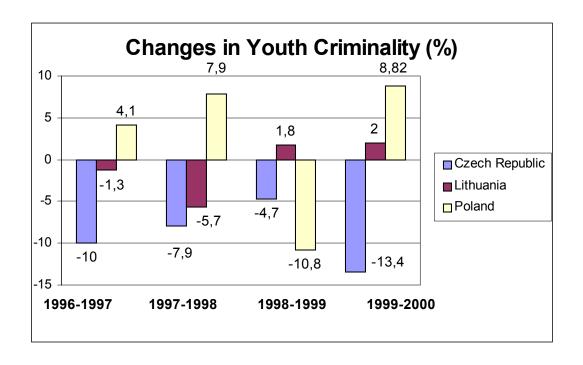


# Graph Nr. 3

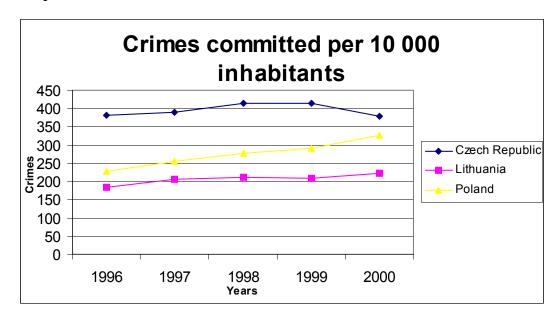
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# **Graph Nr.4**



Graph Nr. 5



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