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# **Criminological Research and Education in Albania**

The First Balkan Criminology Conference  
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**BALKAN  
CRIMINOLOGY**

# History and Development of Criminology in Albania

The first tracks of criminological thought in Albania date back to the XIXth century.

One of the founders of the scientific discipline of criminology in Albania, Prof. Dr. *Ismet Elezi*, in his works presents some facts on the existence of the Albanian criminological thought in the writings of the Albanian writers of the renaissance period (*Elezi 1994, 26–32*).

They used to discuss crime matters along with other problems that faced the Albanian society of that time such as poverty, low cultural and educational levels and the burden of occupation from the Ottoman Empire.



### **The Criminological Thought from 1912–1944**

After the creation of the Albanian independent state in 1912, the juridical penal thought of Albanian scholars started to be evident. Among the ideas expressed in different papers of that time, the causes of crime were sometimes related to biological factors, or to the disrespectful and evil nature of the people and their desire to show off. (Some discussions on Lombroso's theory were also present) (*Hysi 2005, 100*).

### **The Criminological Thought during the Dictatorial Regime (1944–1990)**

For a long time criminology was not studied as an independent discipline in the University (*Hysi 2005, 103*).

The only source for conducting criminological research was the official statistics, but the possibility of using them was very low since they were classified as a state secret.

- The analysis of the causes of criminality was politicized.
- The criminological thought concerning matters of prevention of criminality was more advanced. Special attention was paid to the role of the family, education of the society, the popularization of law et cetera (*Hysi 2005, 104*).

### **Albanian Criminological Research after the 1990s**

- great and various possibilities to freely conduct criminological research, and openness with the outside world;
- criminologists themselves are free to express their ideas and standings on the causes of criminality, preventive measures and their efficiency;
- The official statistics on criminality are public and freely accessible;
- The criminological thought was focused on analyzing special crime tendencies such as organized crime, trafficking in persons and trafficking in narcotics, juvenile crime, specific forms of property offences et cetera.

# Criminological Education in Albania

In Albania there is no doctoral research school related solely to criminological studies. A student who wants to conduct doctoral research in the field of criminology has to be enrolled in the general program of the Doctoral School "On Criminal Sciences".

The major institutions providing criminological education in Albania are **the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Social Sciences** of the University of Tirana (UT).

- ❑ The Law Faculty of UT- criminological education is provided to Bachelor students .... a specific one-semester course named "Criminology and Penology".
- ❑ Special and more advanced knowledge on *European Criminal Policy and Restorative Justice* is provided in a special course in the Master's Program "On Criminal Sciences".
- ❑ In the curricula of the Faculty of Social Sciences there are various courses related to criminological matters going on under an Interdisciplinary Master's Program named "*The Administration of Social Institutions in the Justice System*". This Master 's Programme runs as a joint program of the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Law Faculty. The main objective is to contribute to capacity building in the field of the penitentiary system.



## **Criminological Research in Albania**

The major sources of data about crime are the official statistics prepared by state institutions: Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior Affairs, the General Prosecutor's Office and the General Directorate of Prisons.

**Methodological approach** – Prevalence of the quantitative method. Most of the criminological studies held in the country are essentially about collecting numerical data to explain a particular phenomenon. In this regard, researchers base their work on three main stages: 1) collecting the data; 2) modelling and analysing the data; 3) evaluating the results. So, measurable data are used to formulate facts and explain trends and patterns.

### **Problems with official statistics:**

- They provide information only for that part of crime that has been regularly reported and addressed. (eg. The number of unreported domestic violence cases and sexual crimes might be relatively high).
- delays in publishing the Statistical Yearbook of the MJ.

# **Criminological Research and the Government**

-There is no consolidated practice of cooperation in this regard.

Sometimes, the results obtained by different criminological researches present interest to governmental agencies and they do start several actions or reforms on specific matters by considering such indicators.

On the other hand, when it comes to discussions about the possible solutions or steps to be taken when facing a particular criminal policy matter, the inclusion of specialists of the field is considerably low, or completely lacking.

The academic contributions are commonly substituted by the opinions held by members of the parliamentary commissions covering a special matter or by the viewpoints of persons holding leading positions within the framework of central institutions.

In 2012 and 2013 significant quantitative and qualitative changes were made to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania and the initiative was not preceded by any special consulting campaign with legal scholars and university professors.




# Criminological Studies

Currently, Albania is participating in the following analytic sources:

- The European Sourcebook of crime and criminal justice statistics;
- The European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the United Nations (HEUNI);

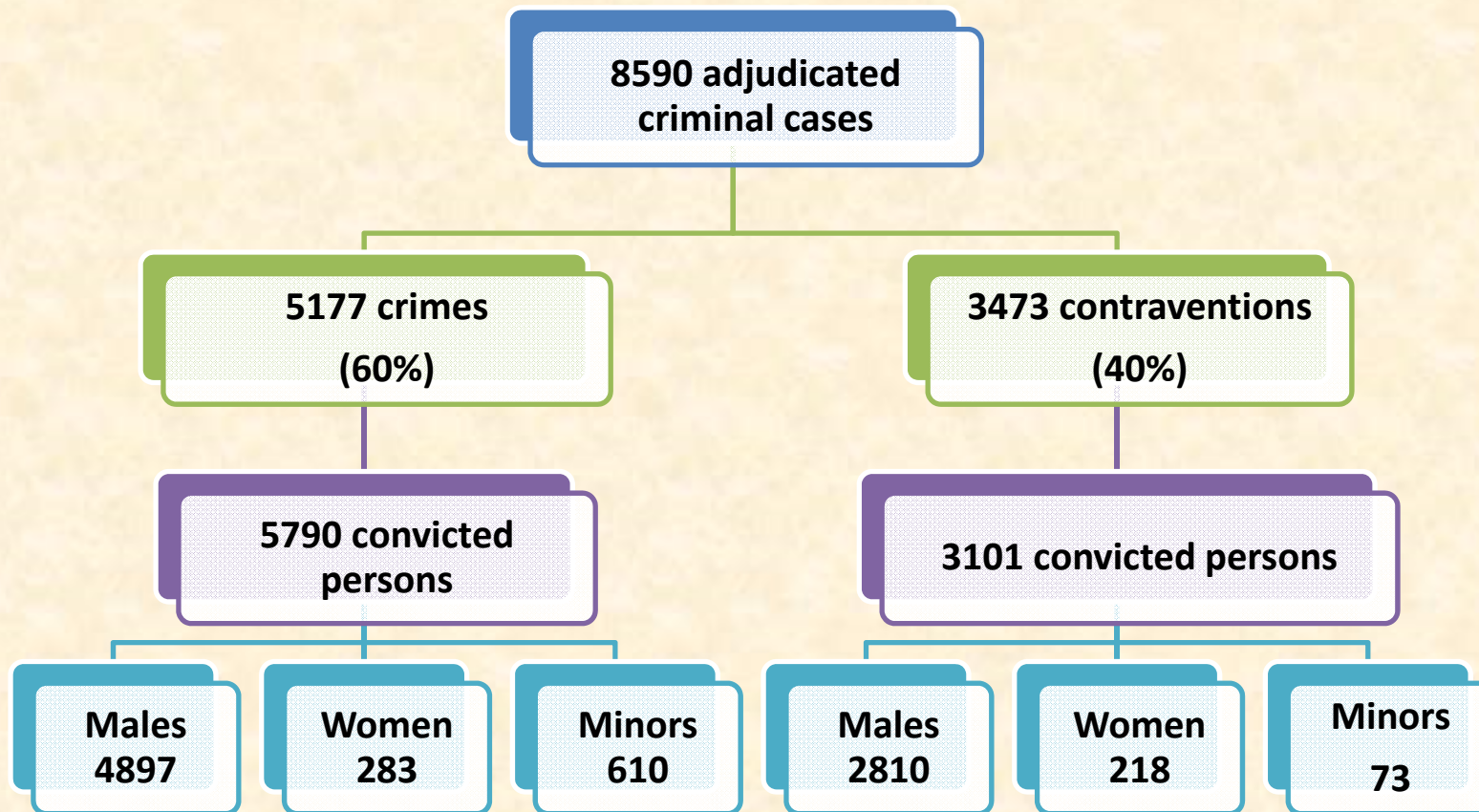
There are no criminological journals publishing especially criminology related articles. Authors of criminological articles thus publish their works in journals that cover issues of legal theory and practice in general.



Areas lacking attention:  
Domestic violence, juvenile  
crime and brutal crimes.

# Crime Trends

## Statistics of the Ministry of Justice of 2011





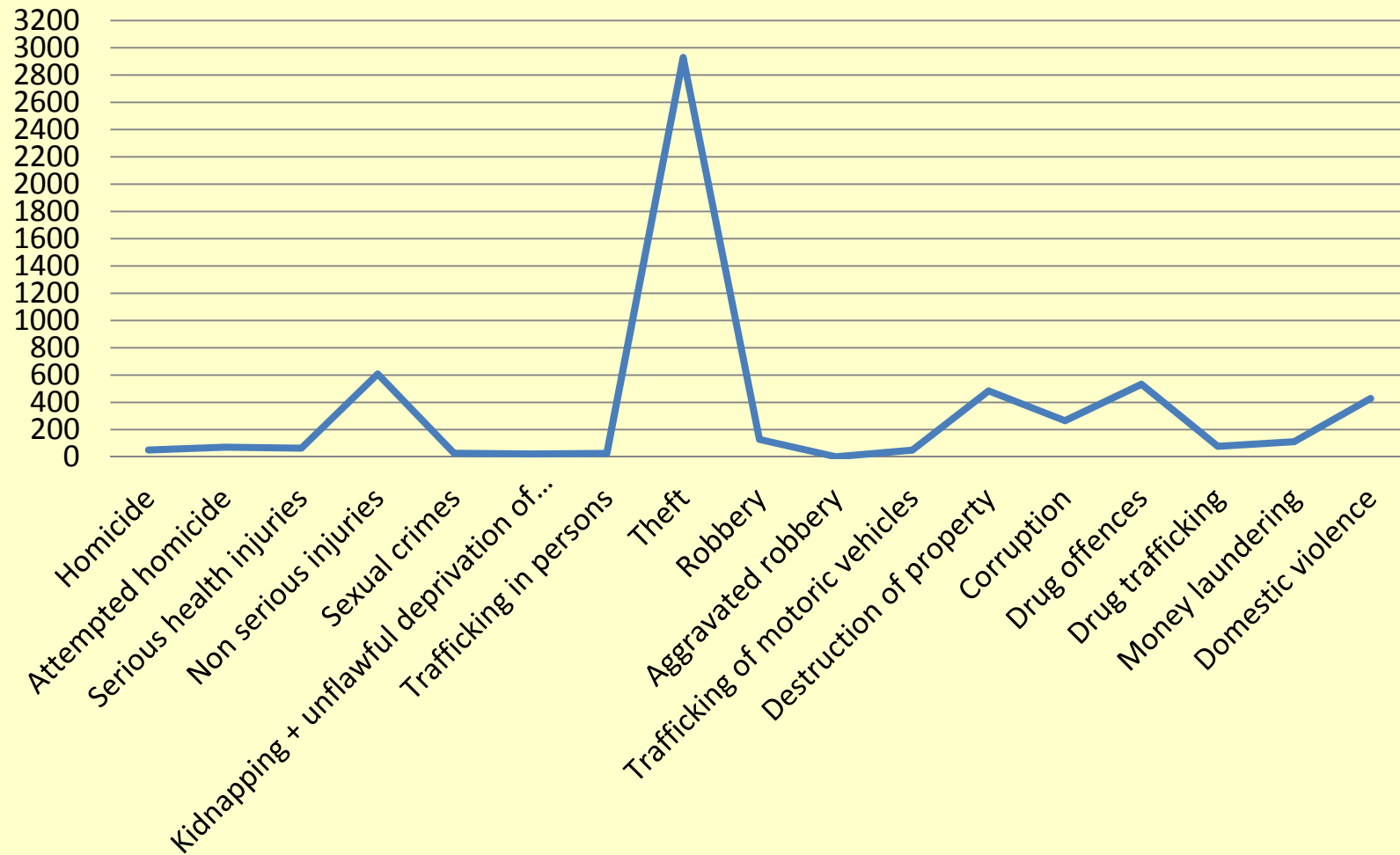
### Judged Criminal Cases from the First Instance Courts per 100 000 population

	Year 2008	Year 2009	Year 2010	Year 2011
<b>Intentional homicide</b>	7.8	7.5	5.7	6.3
<b>Serious intentional injuries</b>	2.2	1.8	2.6	3.2
<b>Sexual intercourse with minors</b>	0.75	0.6	0.5	0.3
<b>Rape of adult persons</b>	0.4	0.13	0.2	0.1
<b>Kidnapping + unlawful deprivation of freedom</b>	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.3
<b>Exploitation of Prostitution</b>	1.5	1.3	0.6	0.9
<b>Trafficking of women</b>	0.4	0.2	0.13	0.3
<b>Trafficking of minors</b>	0.13	0.03	0.03	0.1
<b>Theft</b>	42.5	36.4	43.4	48.6
<b>Robbery</b>	2.65	66	2.3	2.8
<b>Aggravated robbery</b>	-	-	-	0.2
<b>Trafficking of motoric vehicles</b>	0.8	0.8	0.5	0.4
<b>Fraud</b>	6.7	9	8.8	12.4
<b>Destruction of property</b>	3.7	4.2	2.7	3.5
<b>Corruption</b>	0.72	0.75	0.8	0.65
<b>Smuggling</b>	2.52	2	1.6	1.9
<b>Abuse of office</b>	3.3	3.6	1.2	1.9
<b>Drug offences</b>	8.2	10.2	8.5	12.2
<b>Drug trafficking</b>	1	1.2	0.9	1.34
<b>Money laundering</b>	0.07	0.3	0.2	0.13



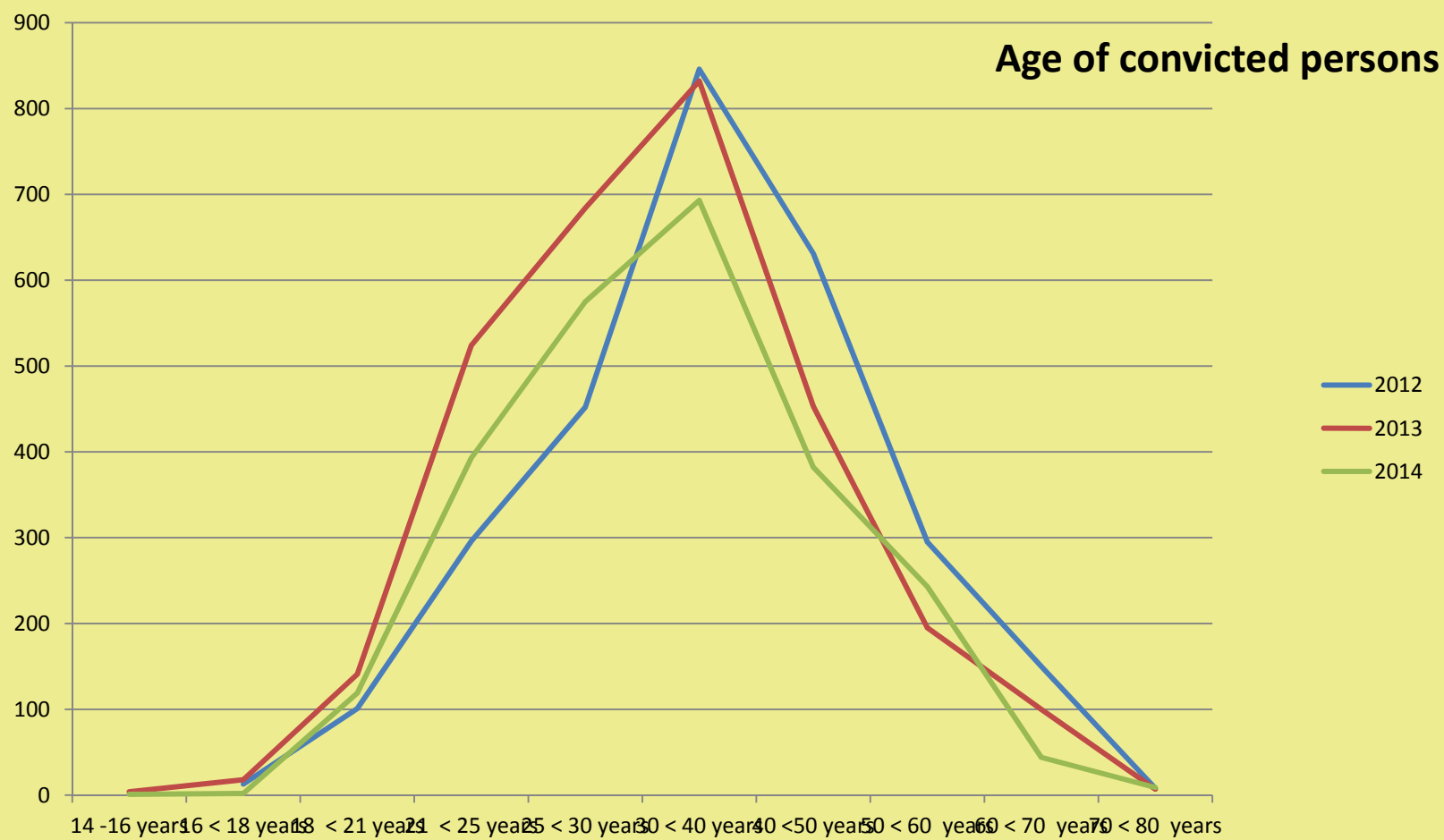
The most recent data are the monthly statistics compiled by the Ministry of Interior.

### Registered criminal cases from the police (january-may 2014)

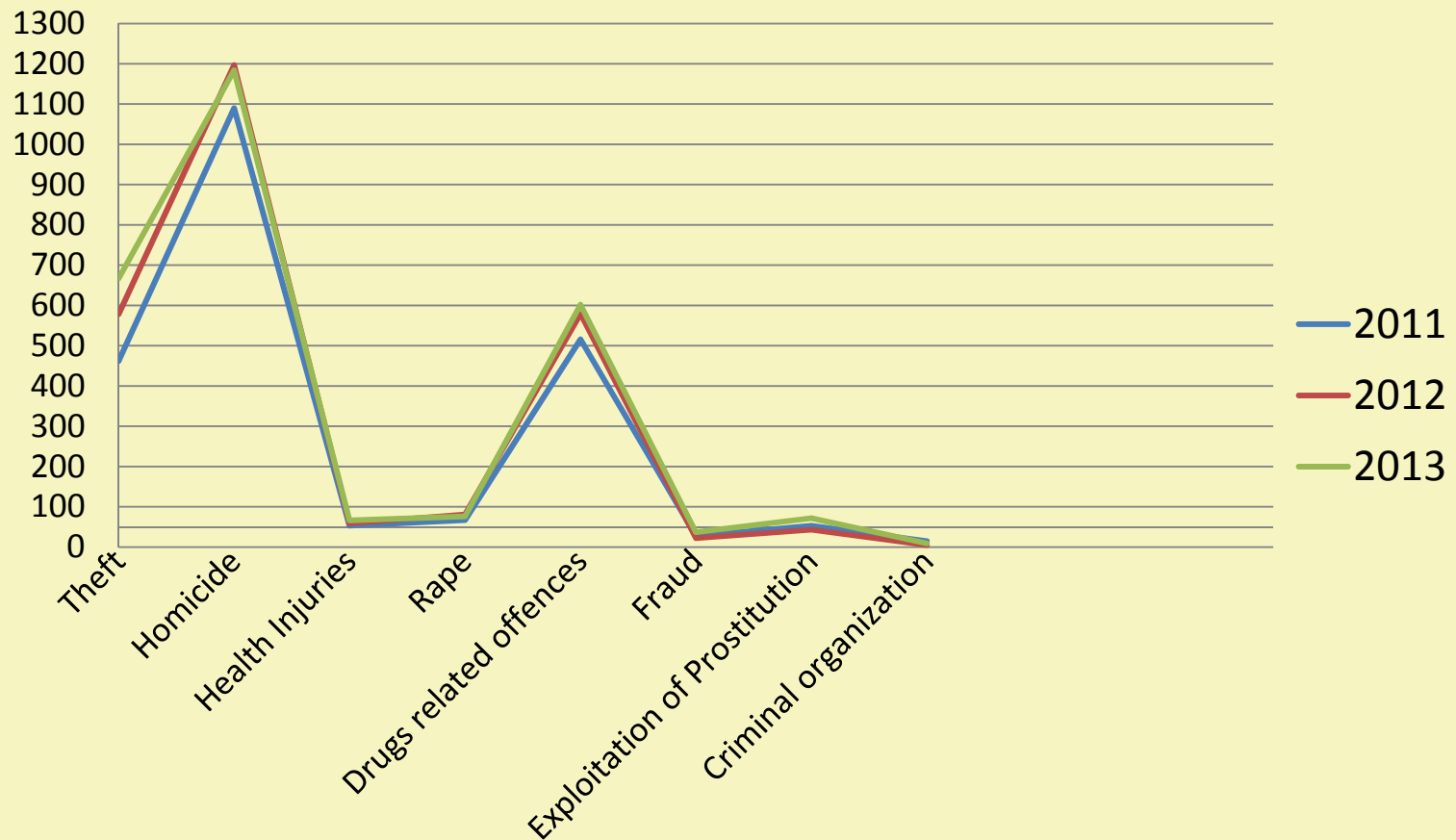




# Statistical data of convicted persons

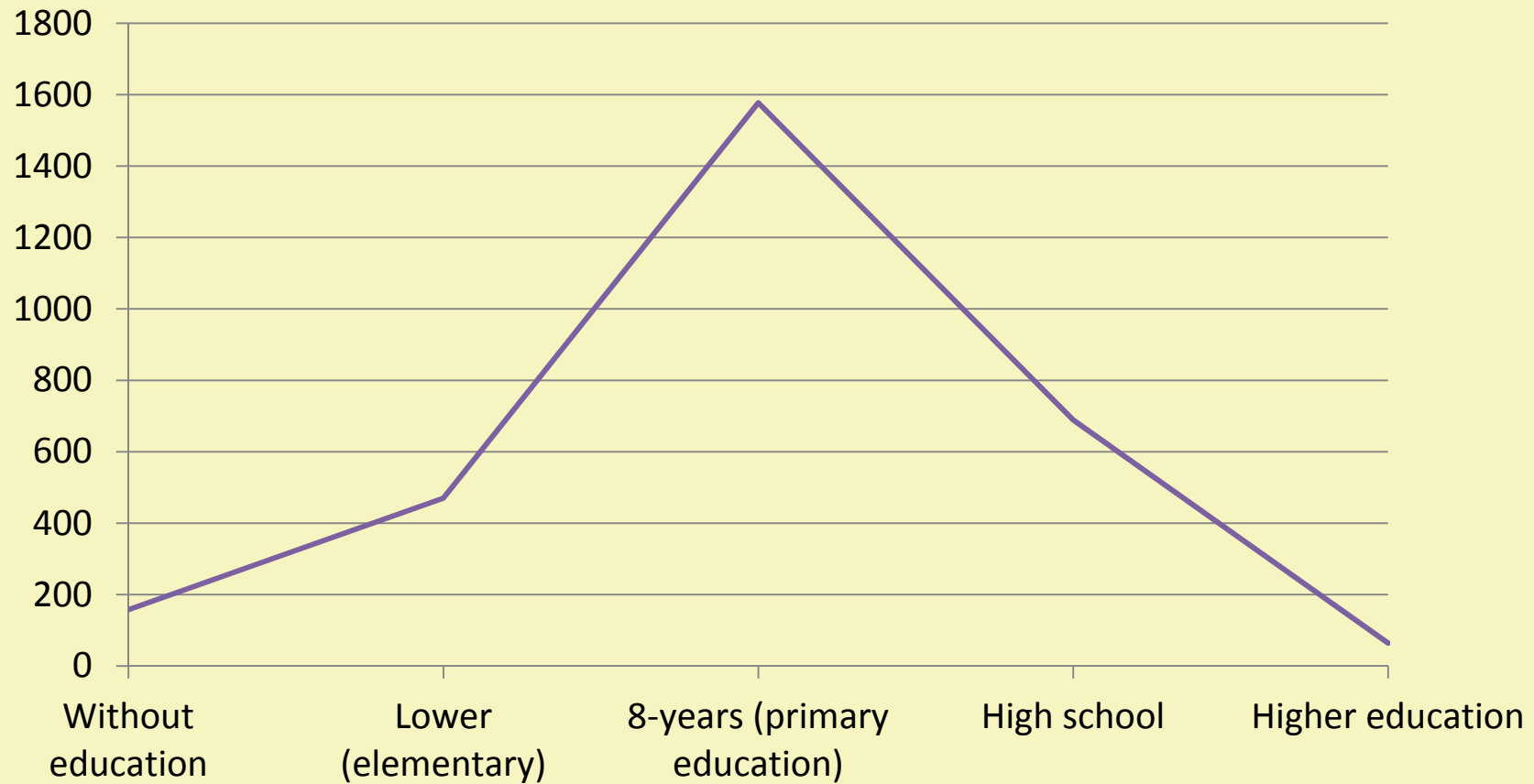


## Types of offences committed by convicted persons

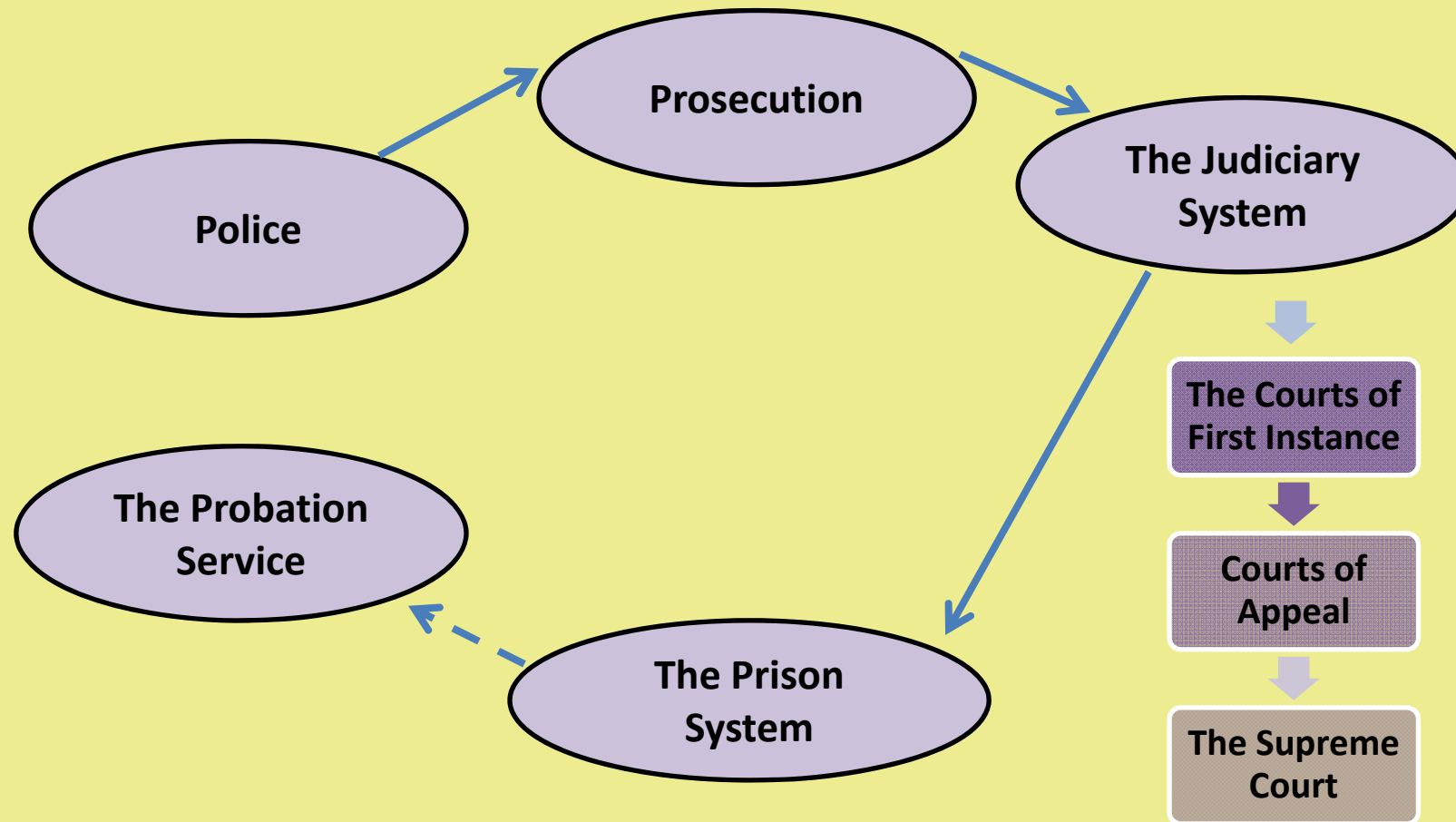




**Education of Inmates (2013)**



# The Albanian Criminal Justice System



# Major Problems of the Albanian Criminal Justice System

*1. Corruption and lack of transparency in the judiciary system and prosecutions service* seems to be the major problems of the criminal justice system.

Corruption still remains an endemic problem for Albania despite the fact that many legislative efforts have been made to fight against it.

- ➡ Network society: Friendship relations, kinship relations
- ➡ illegal practices perceived by the official himself as perks of the occupation
- ➡ The current system of appointment of Supreme Court judges and the General Prosecutor poses a serious risk of improper political influence.

*2. Overburdened court dockets* are still a worrisome problem concerning the Albanian Judiciary System. The Albanian Helsinki Committee has noticed practices of case dragging-on in a number of civil and criminal processes.

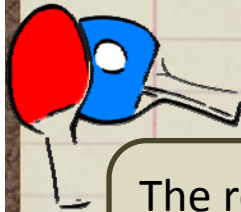
*3. Lack of special institutions for people under court-ordered mental health treatment.*



# Political and Media Engagement with Crime

## The politics

Representatives of the political force in power tend to address some of the main criminal problems with the failures and wrong policies of the previous government



The representatives of the opposition parties criticize or put in question the actual government's actions towards crime.

### --- The role of media

- ☐ investigative media plays an indispensable role in manifesting corruption practices and other serious illegal activities.
- ☐ on the other hand it has negatively influenced criminal conduct: material aspects of criminal events, presented separately from their surrounding circumstances; the ethical rules are frequently disregarded.

## The Impact of the European Union on the Albanian Criminal Justice System

❑ The Albanian authorities have further strengthened the legal and institutional anti-corruption framework:

-National Coordinator for Anti-corruption (NCAC);

-A network of *anti-corruption focal points in all line ministries and independent Institutions*.

❑ Through amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code (March 2014), competences for corruption offences by state officials have been transferred to the Serious Crimes Court (SCC). Other legal measures for applying restrictive financial measures on officials suspected of being involved in corruptive practices.

❑ As regards *economic crime*, a major police operation took place between October and December 2013, targeting illegal gambling establishments and leading to the investigation of 720 criminal offences and the seizure of important quantities of games of chance equipment of a total value of EUR 8.5 million;

❑ As regards *the fight against drugs*, the *National Plan against Drug Cultivation* is being implemented. Public destruction of seized drugs took place in the period March -June 2014. In June one of the largest police operations took place in Lazarat (the biggest drug producing village) where huge quantities of drug plantations and several tons of narcotic substances were destroyed.





*Thank You!*