

FACTORS RELATED TO CRIME RECORDING BY THE POLICE: CONDITIONS AND CHALLENGES IN MACEDONIA

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Abstract: Whether and how much crime data can be trusted and how much those data are objective, confidential and accurate, are frequently asked questions among criminologists and among those researchers who investigate crime numbers. Part of such research should focus on the factors that influence police officers in recording reported crime because they have a strategic role in the creation of police statistics. We divided them into three groups: related to the legal framework, related to the organizational structure and capacity of the police, and related to the discretionary decision-making of police officers. In that sense, by the Faculty of security – Skopje was carried out the study “The process of recording and statistical presentation of conventional crimes by the police” (Stefanovska, Gogov, Peovska, 2019). Certain findings and conclusions are presented in this article.

Key words: reported crime, crime recording, police, crime rate, police statistics.

INTRODUCTION

Police crime statistics are a starting point for understanding crime rate and scope in every county. They are important not only for the public in order to improve their trust and perception in the police regarding crime control and prevention, but also much more in relation to the police so as to improve their performance, efficiency and crime detection. Therefore, the process of police crime recording is research issue in many studies within the expert and scientific community. And because the police crime statistics are a product of police practices to record crime, the question to measure, count and record all reported crimes in objective and accurate manner get serious challenges and weaknesses. Actually, whether and how much crime data can be trusted and how much those data are objective, confidential and accurate, are frequently asked questions among criminologists and among those researchers who investigate crime numbers. The basis is that, like many other phenomena, crime is also a product of social processes, and the criminal justice system plays a significant role in its social construction.

In this respect, any data collected by the police should be treated as a subjective measure of a social process. Consequently, one of the ways in which crime is constructed by the police is through official statistics. On the other hand, the crime numbers are produced to meet certain organizational goals which mean that the statistics do not reflect the real picture of crime, do not describe them, nor tell about the phenomena that they refer to (Patric, 2014, Jupp, 1989). In fact, the main problem in interpreting official crime statistics recorded by the police is that they are incomplete and with prejudices.

CERTAIN RESEARCH RESULTS

The manner and process of police crime recording are the subject of many researches within academic community around the world. In this respect, given that police crime statistics are a product of police practices for crime recording, today more and more scholars think that it is not possible to set up an objective and accurate picture of the current state of crime in a society. In doing so, it is concluded that several factors of different nature influence decision making process. For example, Coleman & Moynihan (2002) talk about several factors related to the social and political context, to the organizational and situational context. Social and political context refer to whether the crime rate is a political issue and subject to political pressure. For example, some studies suggest that drug-related offences, prostitution and gambling criminal activities are highly sensitive to police action or that police officers feel certain pressures to “censor” the numbers of offenders to meet someone’s political interests or to show a good picture of police effectiveness. Under the organizational context, researchers imply factors related to the organization and capacity of the police, such as working practices and personnel, the degree of professionalization of the police department etc. Situational context means certain characteristics of reported crimes, their severity, characteristics of both, the victims and offenders, the situation circumstances of the crime place (Eterno, Verna & Silverman, 2014).

Taking into account the influence of certain factors, scientific and expert community is aware of possible misconceptions, manipulations and errors of police statistics and crime reports. Sulejmanov writes about unintentional and intentional mistakes in his *Criminology* (2003). Unintentional errors are divided into: (a) errors in police responses (for example, one event will be recorded as a crime, but later will be clarified that the reported event does not fit the legal definition of certain crime (no recognizable crime) and (b) errors in the collection and data processing. Intentional mistakes are made due to daily political reasons to hide the increase in certain types of crimes, to calm the public or to reduce the fear among potential tourists (Sulejmanov, 2003: 74). In addition, certain data show that the number of reported offenses is proportional to the number of police officers in one sector (or at one police station). If there are more police officers, the number of reported and recorded crime is greater and vice versa (Marvell &

Moody, 1996). Another example is that increased juvenile crime may not have a significant link with the increased number of criminal activities of young people. They can be an expression of changes in the juvenile justice law or might be result of increased police attention towards certain groups. Such focused police detection might be a result of increased public pressure or of particular media or political campaign (Carrabine at all, 2009). Or, in relation to some situational characteristics of the place where crime occurs, the data indicate that reported events to the police are less likely to be recorded as crimes in poor and disorganized neighbourhoods (Varano, Schafer, Cancino & Swatt, 2009). On the other hand, certain stolen items can be recorded as lost property, serious crimes as less serious (for example, robbery as theft), crimes as minor offences etc. Based on that, the main conclusions from most researches related to police recording practices are that the process to decide whether to record an event as a crime is complex. There are a number of external factors that may affect the likelihood of an event being recorded as a crime, and some of them serve the purpose of obtaining better crime detection and clearing up rates by the police (Walklate, 2005).

In this regard, the question that often arises is whether the increase or reduction of official crime statistics really results from the increased crime or is a consequence of specific police activity? The question arises due to the fact that those statistics largely depend on the quality, rationality and objectivity of statistical records conducted in the analytical services within police organisational structure. The main consideration is that the accuracy, objectivity and the confidentiality of crime statistics should be subject to more extensive scientific research. A part of such research should focus on the factors that influence police officers in recording reported crime because they have a strategic role in the creation of police statistics.

Actually, the crime event in order to become part of the official police records should pass two obstacles. First, it has to come to the focus of the police. Then, the police must record it as a crime. Hence, there are many reasons, both legitimate and illegitimate, that prevent reported events from becoming official police records (Lomell, 2010: 124). For example, one research done by Sparks, Genn and Dodd (1997) shows that only 1/3 of the reported crimes end up as a statistical number (state in Jupp, 1989: 95). Therefore, statistics could not be used, for example, to make crime prognosis or to assess the effectiveness of the criminal justice system. But they should not be ignored either. Their value lies, not in the figures themselves, but in the questions posed by different theoretical perspectives. Hence, Maguire in his work *Data and Statistics on Crime* (2002) states two major recommendations: (1) crime statistics are not simple reflections on "facts", but one of many possible tools for gaining a greater understanding of complex and rapidly changing forms of behaviour that can be described as a crime and (2) crime statistics are not immune to political and social changes and to the manner in which crime data are collected, analyzed and presented (Maguire, 2002: 294-295).

In that sense, we have carried out study “The process of recording and statistical presentation of reported crime by the police” (Stefanovska, Gogov, Peovska, 2019). One issue that was investigated and analysed were the factors that are related to the objectivity of the recorded crimes. We divided them into three groups related to the (1) legal framework, (b) organizational structure and capacity of the police, and (c) discretionary decision-making powers of police officers. Moreover, in trying to find a certain connection with the possible “distortions” of the objective picture of crime, the first question that arises is whether we can speak about objective statistics on crime? In the answer to this question, two aspects are significant. Firstly, the objective picture of statistical data can be monitored and analyzed only through official, publicly available and disseminated statistical data on criminal offenses. Citizens, including the academic community, can rely exclusively on those figures that build trust in the police and affect the safety of citizens and their sense of security. Secondly, although the police run and use internal police statistics, they are confidential, secret, not published, and are therefore not considered as official. Such internal data are not commented and analyzed by the public and the academic community and, so far, are not subject to scientific research and public debates.

Therefore, under *objective official statistical data on reported and recorded crime* we understand the reported events by both, the citizens or the police, that are found to fulfil the elements of crimes and which are: (1) recorded in the official police records, (2) properly qualified as certain crimes and (3) entered into the official police statistics. Such crimes receive a statistical figure and become part of the official rates for the reported crime in one country.

Because, in order to obtain an objective picture of the reported crimes, certain decision-making processes need to pass, any misclassification, qualification or non-recording of the reported crimes violates that image. And these decision-making processes are influenced by different organisational, social and situational factors. In particular, the police officer is a person influenced by certain factors related to the organization, goals, values and priorities of the environment where he/she operates. Also, in performing his/her tasks, he/she is guided by specific rules, legal norms and practice. Thirdly, discretionary decision-making is conditioned by the way the police officer perceives the reported event, by his/her individual value judgments, as well as by his/her knowledge and professionalism to assess whether and what crime has occurred. Bearing in mind that, most frequently question is whether the data show true or false picture of crime. The answer depends on many issues: adoption of police recording standards to harmonize different police practices and to establish legal rules and guiding principles, determination of organizational goals and priorities within certain period, establishment of police performance indicators, cognitive and other capabilities of police officers etc. Those issues are very important in order to perceive the accuracy, reliability and objectivity of crime statistics.

METHODS

The issue related to possible factors that influence police crime recording practices was considered within the project “The process of recording and statistical presentation of conventional crimes by the police” (Stefanovska, Gogov, Peovska, 2019) undertaken by the Faculty of security – Skopje (February 2018 – May 2019). The main goal of the research study was to identify strengths and weaknesses in the process of police production of official crime statistics. In that sense, the study was aimed to investigate possible factors that impact crime recording practices, competencies and challenges that police officers encounter. In doing so, we have set up several research questions: Are there standards for recording the reported crimes that provide an objective picture of their scope and prevalence? What factors influence the discretionary decision of the police officers? Whether and which organizational goals, priorities and capacities of the police service are related to the design and construction of crime statistics? Does the personnel potential of the police services provide an objective presentation of crime?

Those questions are analyzed through a qualitative analysis of the content of both, the attitudes of the interviewees and certain strategic documents, reports and laws.¹ The sample (respondents) consisted of 56 respondents and they were selected in two ways: the first group (42 respondents) police officers (uniformed and un-uniformed) were selected from the local police stations and from Crime Investigation Police Departments at Skopje City level. The second category of respondents was employers in the police statistical departments at local and national level (14 respondents) (Department for statistical research and documentation). For the purposes of data collection, semi-structured protocols for interview were developed. All respondents interviewed gave their written consent that their participation in the research study is voluntary. With regard to audio recording, each respondent was requested prior consent before recording. The collected data were categorized into three basic categories (thematic areas) and several subcategories: a) Legal framework for recording, i.e. not recording of crime: legal basis, rules for crime counting, rules for re-qualification of the crime, b) Police discretionary practices in classifying, qualifying and not registering crime and c) Organizational structure and capacities of the police.

¹ Ministry of interior of the Republic of North Macedonia, Police Development Strategy 2016 – 2020; Ministry of interior of the Republic of North Macedonia, OSCE Spillover Mission in Skopje, Reform of the police within Criminal Justice system reform, 2013; Law on police, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 114/2006; Rulebook for the manner of conducting police powers, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 149/2007, 117/2014; Rulebook for the content and the manner of conducting police records and the form and content of the police evidence pattern, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 160 /2013.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Legal framework for crime recording

The first area to be considered when analysing the objectivity of crime data is the legal framework, that is, the rules and standards that should be observed when counting and measuring crime. The stipulated rules and other written methodology do not mean that they ensure objective counting and recording of crime. If we agree with the thesis that both the rules, i.e. the laws are written and serve to achieve certain organizational goals, either of the police or of the governing structure, then the question is: whether the legal framework provides an objective data? The answer is: not completely. In fact, the analysis of the legal framework shows certain legal gaps or unwritten rules that “distort” the reality of the reported crime.

Legal basis

Based on the analysis of the legal framework related to the recording of the reported crime, as well as on the basis of the respondents’ views, the following findings were obtained:

The crimes of private lawsuit are not part of the official statistical records. Criminal offenses prosecuted on a private charge, even though they are recorded in certain police records and documents are not included in official statistical reviews and reports. To the question: why the crimes that are prosecuted under a private lawsuit are not part of the official statistics?, the frequent answers are: “these crimes have never been commented”, or “it is inherited (police) practice”. Some of the respondents just “shrug their shoulders” to show that they don’t know the answer.

When there is no official victims (damaged person by the crime), there is no official offense. For a criminal offense to be recorded in the official records, the damaged party should report the crime that has to be recorded in certain reporting document in the police. When there is a need to inspect the crime scene, then, depending on the offense, the consent of the injured party is required. Hence, as long as the injured party does not sign the reported crime in official police record or does not agree to process further the reported event, that event is not officially recorded as a criminal offense and cannot be counted in the statistical evidence of crime. To illustrate such claims we refer to the following statements from the interviewed persons:

(1) If he does not want to report, we cannot force him to report it. (2) If there is no report, there is no crime. (3) They (crimes) do not exist, they are invisible to us. (4) If there is no damage, there is no crime, (5) It’s (the crime) invisible and you cannot count it. (6) If you do not have a damaged (person), you do not have a crime... officially. (7) It’s not an official offense... we may have it, but how we will prove the

crime, the public prosecutor wants from us to have a record (Statements by interviewed persons).

In this regard, the police statistical records do not count the reported crimes when: (1) the victim reports the crime, but gave up from further prosecution, (2) a third person reports the crime, but the victim refuses to make an official statement to the police, (3) the victim reports the crime, but he/she is unavailable to the police to make an official statement. So the objective crime is based on reported, recorded and prosecuted crimes. Based on that, we can conclude that written and signed records (for receiving an application for a criminal act) constitute the basis for further processing and further, the basis for obtaining a statistical crime number. Those statistics do not reflect the real crimes reported to the police, but rather they are reflection of the police work to record and process them.

Counting Rules for Crimes and Perpetrators

The counting rules for crimes and offenders are necessary for the unification of police practice in crime recording, particularly in more complex criminal cases. For example, when several crimes are committed simultaneously (multiply offences) or in a certain time interval or when there are more perpetrators or victims. In this part, police have no clear rules and written standards and therefore there are different police practices in counting and crime recording. For examples, when one offender commits several crimes within one event, each crime is recorded and counted in the databases. But, when we have multiple offences, it is better to adopt a hierarchical rule or a *rule of main crime* that will be counted in crime statistics.

Prequalified and dismissed criminal offenses by the public prosecutor are not corrected in monthly police statistics.

Monthly statistical reviews prepared by the police statistical department are not corrected when the public prosecutor re-classifies the crime or dismisses the criminal charge as unfounded in the further criminal procedure. For example, data show that the number of dismissed criminal charges by the public prosecutor has increased over the years, so in 2014 that percentage is 22% (Trajkov, 2016: 95). The rejected crimes remain to be part of the police official statistics.

Year	Submitted criminal charges to the public prosecutor office	Dismissed criminal charges by the public prosecutor
2010	11.823 100%	1.277 11%
2011	11.519 100%	1.403 13%
2012	10.806 100%	1.625 15%
2013	11.444 100%	1.637 16%
2014	11.268 100%	2.451 22%

Police discretionary practices in classifying² and qualifying³ reported events

Based on the research findings, several factors can be identified that influence the decision making process of the police officers for classifying the reported event. They are:

a) *The manner of presenting the reported event to those who decide about classification and qualification of crime event.* The manner how the event is presented to the police inspectors and the public prosecutor's office is of great importance in the process of classification because through that representation and description they receive a picture of whether the reported crime has occurred. In certain cases, one detail or element related to the circumstances under which the event occurred may exert key influence in decision whether the reported event is crime. In doing so, the intent of the perpetrator are of primary importance, and in some cases, when is not clear what the perpetrator wanted to do, is difficult to determine the crime motivation, having in mind that the largest percentage (can reach up to 99%) of the reported events (mainly property offences) are with an unknown (NN) perpetrator. Therefore, many of the respondents agree that the way of how the information related to the crime is transmitted to senior police officers is of great importance so as to properly classify the reported events. The omission to report or the silence of certain details related to the event by field police officers may also occur due to incompetence or desire to display the event in one way or another. For confirmation we quote the following statement:

The prosecutor sits in the office. He will make a decision depending on how I will present him (the crime event) from the field ... if I want to get something in some direction, I will present him so... He will say ok ... He gets a picture, depending how you will transfer it (the elements of crime).

Taking into account possible mistakes and abuses, whenever possible, the factual situation of the reported event should be determined by the police inspectors from the departments of property or violent crimes.

b) *Personal capacities, knowledge and expertise of police officers.* In fact, the actual situation of reported events is result of the perception and cognitive abilities of the police officer. In addition, the police officer is required to possess knowledge, professionalism and expertise to identify the legal elements, traces and circumstances associated with the committed crime. Therefore, the classification and qualification of the reported event under a particular article of the Criminal Code should not be left to a free assessment of the police officers who do not have special knowledge and skills in that field. Dilemmas in determining the elements of crime must not be detrimental to both, the injured party and the public confidence in the police. Therefore the experience, knowledge and commitment of po-

² Classifying in this sense means to classify the reported event as crime, misdemeanour or just complaint according to police classification scheme.

³ Qualifying in this sense means to qualify the crime under certain article of Macedonian Criminal code or to give it legal qualification.

lice officers have a significant role in classifying and qualifying the reported event. But, according to the statements of the respondents, the police are facing certain problems due to incompetence and disinterest, especially among the young police officers. In that sense, the respondents had divided opinions about the quality and expertise of the police officers. According to them, a part of young police officers (usually, those with less than five years work experience) are motivated, but the other part is disinterested, unmotivated and not enough qualified. These findings are supported by the following statements:

Field officers are very uneducated... I'm not satisfied, 50-50%.

Weak, very weak, as they come, (the new police officers) they are weaker.

I am satisfied with the "new children."

The majority are good, others are not active, they are not interested, they do not ask.

There are many good children... There are solid ones.

Usually inexperienced colleagues know to make mistakes.

(Statements by interviewed persons)

Therefore, police can face more challenges in the long run if the basic criteria for recruiting police officers are not met by the police human resources policy.

c) *Circumstances related to certain elements of crime.* Certain elements related to both, the offender and the victim can exert certain influence on decision-making process whether to report the crime. For example, the police officer may decide to classify the crime as misdemeanour if the victim does not want to file criminal charges against the perpetrator. Or, if the victim does not submit medical documentation for heavier bodily injuries, the reported event might be recorded as minor offence, such a "physical attack" against the public order, which is prosecuted under the Law on misdemeanours.

Organizational structure and capacities of the police

As part of the organizational structure and capacities of the police service, based on the statements of the respondents, we list the following factors that are related to the recording of reported crime: workload, insufficient number of police officers, motivation and pro-activity of police officers and papyrology and huge administrative work.

Workload

Police stations of general competence (PSGC) cover a large number of police tasks, regular and extraordinary activities. They are responsible for: (1) public order and peace, (2) securing crime place, public protests, facilities, sports competitions and other public events, (3) assisting people in certain situations, (4) detained persons in police stations, (4) foot patrol, (5) crime prevention and (6),

detection and apprehension of the perpetrators etc. In addition, police assist in natural disasters and in executing court orders. Apart from those regular and extraordinary police activities, the police stations also perform administrative work: filling police records, notes, data bases, preparing plans, reports and other written assessments.

Such a workload (operational, preventive, and administrative) affects the quality of primary police work and marginalizes those activities related to detection and determination of legal elements of crime in order to record the reported crime. Although, generally, the respondents agree that due to the excessive workload, the efficiency in detection and deterrence from the crime is reduced, however the workload is directly and/or indirectly related to the quality and objectivity of crime recording. Moreover, the workload affects both the motivation and the proactive action of the police to detect and report crimes. In this regard, some of the respondent state:

You know why your work plan cannot be entirely (fulfilled)... Because the securing football matches is out of the plan, no protests, no summits, no natural disasters... With those (additional activities), the primary police work is accumulating... That's the problem. No one can foresee the police work, it does not exist.

We are too occupied (with protests)... That means we generally have little police work, because we are preoccupied with citizens, complaints (neighbour disputes), too many superficial things we do, from complaints... mourning of citizens, rather than with crime... (we are) overcrowded (with crime), and you have to clear it.

(He) cannot make contact with the citizens... He is constantly engaged in other activities, protests and the like.

Every policeman is cluttered with obligations, he is doing everything. That is. The policeman does everything from the postman to ... one intervention, another, they are assembling,

(Statements by interviewed persons)

According to above statements, a large percentage of the police work is not regular (on a daily basis), and on an annual level, even 50% of the daily police activities refers to extraordinary activities. Apart from them, the work of the police is further burdened with increased crime, especially with heavy thefts and burglaries in apartments in some parts of Skopje city. Their detection and clearing up, in order to be more efficient should be in accordance with adequate personnel and technical capacities of the police, which mean more human resources, more vehicles, more sophisticated equipment, and more funds. Because, in the existing present conditions with limited personal, technical and material capacities, the police efficiency is reduced, and there are possible mistakes in the process of recording, classifying and qualifying the reported crime event.

Insufficient number of police officers

The increased workload in correlation with the insufficient number of human resources in the police service is linked to the “objective image” of the recorded crime. In fact, the number of police officers has always been a problem in the Macedonian police organisation. According to certain statements of the respondents, at the Skopje police level, the uniformed part of the police is filled from 35 to 40% of the expected full capacity, which mean that the entire city area cannot be covered with adequate number of police officers and other police intervention groups (called ALFI). Moreover, those police officers who need to be declaratively present in a certain security area, due to engagement and relocation on other extraordinary activities, are not able to perform the regular foot patrol or crime detection activity. Hence, because the police stations are not completely “covered” with police officers in accordance with planned job systematization, some other police priorities and urgent activities within police stations on a daily basis might decrease the quality of crime recording. For illustration are the following statements from the respondents:

Our people are trying to be present, but we are in lack with policemen. Everywhere is that problem, and now normally, when there is no presence, when there is no preventive action, crime is ruling, our people cannot reach.

We work with minimal forces.

(Statements by interviewed persons)

Motivation and pro-activity of police officers

The motivation and pro-activity of police officers can significantly affect not only the clearing up rate, but also the process of recording, properly classifying and qualifying criminal offenses. According to the majority of the respondents, police officers are not very motivated and proactive in performing their activities, but they are de-motivated and “passive”, as most of the respondents state:

They (policemen) do not work, they are afraid... Reality is a disaster... I am a policeman. I'm afraid... they need to be motivated, and the only motivation is money.

Why to risk, if it is not valued.

Some of them show interest, some of them think they are coming for a salary.

Because there is no variable, there is passivism... It does not come in correlation with the discovery power of the police.

There are no rewards for the cleared crimes.

No interest, no one is chasing you, no one punishes you, is the same... You will take (the same) salary.

(Statements by interviewed persons)

Papyrology and huge administrative work

The recording of each undertaken action by the police related to crime in certain forms, records, databases or automatic data processing systems is the basis for further analysis, processing, statistical research and crime documentation. Written documents are necessary for recording the factual situation related to crime, perpetrator and victim. In that sense, an important feature of the police is that it is characterized by formalism: keeping notes or records for each activity. This is part of the basic police work, which includes a significant part of the working day. Since all police activities must be recorded and documented (otherwise, omission to record is punishable), the respondents complain that “*real or right*” police work is going down significantly. This situation has been identified and often criticized by the police officers. For illustration, we quote the following statements:

The writing work is extensive... and that sector needs to be larger (more employees).

It's a lot of administration, in seven books...

This (recording) is not a problem... The problem is that the job is lagging behind ... For the police it's a lot because an event is unnecessarily recorded in seven books that are unnecessary.

Overburdened with records and books, and you cannot accomplish to do the right police work that needs to go out on the field, to talk to people, with citizens, with damaged ones.

Everything is hand-made, it's not normal to have a lot of papyrology; everything is turning around in a circle.

Too many events, too much administration ... I fill six (6) forms for one “called” person, it's too time consuming... We are overly administrative for an event ... We are overburdened with transcripts.

(Statements by interviewed persons)

The extensive and manual administrative work has been identified in *the Police Development Strategy (2016 – 2020)*. It states that the documentation and exchange of documents within Public Security Bureau are carried out in a paper-form which has a significant negative impact on police efficiency. There is no electronic centralized archive for storing all documents. In that context, the huge administrative police work reduces its operational and preventive function. Also, police officers in the Operational Communication Centres and police stations, due to insufficient upgrading of the electronic system, are forced to enter the same data (for example related to one crime) manually into several police records, which substantially consume human resources in administrative matters and reduce the efficiency. Therefore, introduction of an Electronic Document Management System (DMS) is considered as a top priority in the strategic documents for police reforms that will speed up the flow of daily information and will shorten the process of internal communication. At the same time, it will facilitate

the transmission, storage, search and inspection of official documents that will reduce errors, save administrative costs and unify the police practice, particularly in crime recording.

CONCLUSION

Based on project findings and conclusions, the police face certain challenges that should be considered. Main conclusions are: (1) there are different police practices in legal definition of reported crimes. They can be calculated by the police officers in order to show smaller number of crimes that are prosecuted *ex officio*, to decrease their obligation for detection and clearing up, to show bigger clear up rate etc; (2) Police don't have proper methodology and other unified standards for counting and measuring crime figures; (3) Crime recording in many cases depends on the victim's will, which distort the objective image of reported crimes in certain circumstances; (4) Crimes prosecuted by private lawsuits are not part of the official crime statistics; (5) Police officers are burdened with many police tasks and administrative work during their daily activity that is related to proper registration and detection of reported crimes; (6) Police officers lack specific in depth knowledge in criminal law, criminology that is necessary for proper recognition and classification of reported crimes.

In order to get comprehensive perception of police recording practices; a critical examination should be done at national level, which means in all local police stations across the country. This will help to consider all challenges that police officers meet within their recording practices. Another task is to develop and adopt unified methodology for counting and measuring crime and to establish certain standards and principles, such as: *prima facie* model, rule of major offence, victim-oriented approach in crime recording, counting units, classification schemes etc. This is important in order to set legal rules and procedures which protect against legal uncertainty and possible abuse of discretion in decision-making by the police. They also ensure consistency and harmonization of the various police practices in recording crime, which, on the other hand, increases the confidence in the objectivity of police statistical records. In addition, training of police officers is imperative that seek more training hours for recognition, classification and registration of reported crimes.

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