

# PHENOMENOLOGY OF JUVENILE CRIME IN CROATIA

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## ON THE ETIOLOGY OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Juvenile delinquency is considered to be the most serious form of problematic youth behavior that depends on internal (subjective-psychological) and external (social and cultural) factors (Derk and Stašević, 2017). Thus, some authors consider antisocial behavior to be a constant way of behaving of individuals that begins in early childhood and lasts until early adulthood (Farrington, 2003; Sampson, Laub, 2004). It is important to distinguish between the expected rebellious pattern of behavior inherent in adolescence and the pattern that can escalate with numerous and serious consequences. Adolescence is characterized by personality development, so it is not surprising that young people want to experience and discover what the world has to offer. In most cases, this does not imply engaging in criminal activity, but delinquent behavior is not surprising. It includes most behaviors that deviate from social norms and as such can be condemned by the community. During this period, young people face many obstacles, including the future itself, and as a result there is a “growing up out of delinquency” (Siegel, Senna, 2000; according to Kovčo Vukadin, 2009). Young antisocial people are often impatient and prefer to focus on the current situation and the satisfaction they can get at the moment than on what the future holds for them. The desire for autonomy that occurs during adolescence may explain the desire to socialize with deviant peers. For some, personality devel-

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opment leads to taking responsibility for one's own actions and thus moving away from previous behavior. For those who do not develop self-control, it is possible to engage in criminal activities without worrying about the risks that such behavior carries with it. Along with biological and psychosocial maturation, dismissal of delinquent behavior can be contributed to the fact that juveniles after a certain age are criminally liable and that they are no longer under the protection of their parents or the state as an entity that must sanction their undesirable behavior in an appropriate manner. Kelley, Loeber, Keenan, and DeLamatre (1997) believe that the cause of problematic behavior over a time continuum lies in the developmental pathways of group identification. At the moment when the developmental paths of the two groups begin to differ, they differ in various segments, including behavior. When the values of one group do not coincide with the values of another, there can be a conflict of misunderstanding and rejection, so one group can be accepted by society while the behavior of another can be condemned. Delinquent behavior, due to its development without adequate intervention can escalate and lead to the commission of criminal acts.

Traditional theories that explain juvenile delinquency focus on differences among individuals and on the question of why one group commits crimes and another does not. Some of them deal with the issues of the cause of crime and its prevention. Some upgrade their questions and address the cause of the crime such as general theory of pressure, theory of social disorganization, theory of social control, etc. (Farrington, 2003). Their research and observations are based on adolescence, i.e. the age when minors break the law the most. Apart from peers, there are other risk factors that can lead from delinquency to crime, and will be mentioned later in the paper. New knowledge about the beginnings of a criminal career in adolescence has led to the development of several new theories, including the developmental criminology of lifetime. They explain that age does not have to strictly mark the transition from one stage to the next. It is precisely these transition points that are the subject of the study of developmental criminology that accompanies changes in these periods. Areas of school, family, peers and interpersonal relationships are observed, and on this basis, attempts are made to explain changes in criminal activity (Doležal, 2009). Developmental theories, unlike traditional ones, deal with the longitudinal aspect of committing crimes, so they do not look at one time point of research, but at changes in criminal career over time. They address issues of antisocial behavior and commission of criminal acts, risk factors throughout life, and the impact of life events on behavioral development (Farrington, 2003). One of the new theories of crime derived from the concept of criminal career is the "Age-graded" theory (Sampson, Laub, 2004) which has three important starting points. The first indicates how delinquent behavior in childhood and adolescence is influenced by the structure of informal family and school control. Then it explains that antisocial behavior tends to persist and



stretch through adulthood in various life segments. The last starting point emphasizes the importance of changes in the quality of informal social control by family and school and how it changes over the years. Another theory offers its view on the topic of juvenile delinquency, and that is the theory of continuous and adolescent delinquency (Moffitt, 1993). Juveniles who start their delinquent behavior in childhood and continue it in the form of chronic, multiple and even lifelong delinquency, can be called continuous delinquents while adolescent delinquents are characterized by the beginning of such behavior only in the period of adolescence with occasional involvement in criminal activities during the mentioned period, and adolescence is seen as a normal developmental stage. Integrated cognitive theory of antisocial potential (Farrington, 2003) is another recent development theory. Under the notion of antisocial potential, this theory understands the potential for committing criminal offenses that can be observed in the short and long term. The commission of criminal offenses depends on the current antisocial potential and the relationship between the individual and the environment, i.e. on the opportunity provided to commit the offense. Due to maturation, the antisocial potential is greatest during adolescence, but is consistent throughout life. It increases due to exciting stimuli and the search for adventure, which can increase at certain times.

The aims of this paper are to provide an overview of the relevant body of literature into an area of the juvenile crime and to analyze the trends, scope, structure and dynamics of juvenile delinquency in the past decade (2011–2021) in the Republic of Croatia.

## RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Risk factors are events whose existence can announce an outcome, i.e. a certain type of behavior without the existence of a causal relationship (Loeber, 1990). There are numerous divisions of risk factors that influence the development of delinquent behavior in young people, from simpler, which divide them into dynamic and static, to complex, which branch in several directions. Aware of the fact that all factors affect each other, experts agree that the development of one risk factor is not enough to develop delinquent behavior. In his paper, Ricijaš (2009) states a generally accepted division into three basic groups of risk factors: individual, risk factors in the family and school environment, and risk factors in the wider social context. Individual factors include biological/hereditary and cognitive and emotional factors, among which various experts consider the element of aggression, hostility and behavioral disorders to be important, followed by severe temperament and impulsivity, attention deficit and hyperactive disorder, intellectual functioning and



moral reasoning. The relationship between parents and children, parenting style and socio-pathological phenomena in the family fall under the second group of risk factors, as well as the factor of education and peers. Loeber (1990) and Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber (1996) state in their research that it was the impact on risk factors that consequently led to a later change in delinquent behavior in a positive way. Manifestation of delinquent behavior does not necessarily mean that a juvenile who engages in such behavior will develop a potential career and engage in criminal activities. But it should be borne in mind that, as already mentioned, adolescents go through a period in which they make important decisions and in a certain way decide on their future. Risk factors for the observed delinquents are low verbal intelligence (Ollendick, 1979), desire to prove themselves in society, maternal alcoholism, inappropriate parenting style (Ricijaš, 2009), generally unfavorable family climate, migration, and many others. In young people, in addition to risk factors, there are also protection factors that affect the strengthening of the positive aspects of the individual and focus on the positive end. They are aimed at preventing risky behaviors of children and young people in order to prevent behaviors such as abuse of addictive substances, non-fulfillment of school obligations, violence, delinquency and the like. Dimensions of protection of minors include individual, family, school, peer groups and community. It is in these dimensions that young people can be empowered to reduce the impact of risk factors and prevent future undesirable behavior. Research on the subject of protective factors has led to the fact that some children develop resistance to risk factors and despite their influence are not subject to them, but nurture socially acceptable behavior (Gar-mezy, Masten, 1991; according to Martinjak, Odeljan, 2016). Anticipating factors, whether risky or protective, can greatly help experts in the field of prevention and treatment of behavioral problems.

## TRENDS AND PATTERNS OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN CROATIA

### METHOD

There are three methods of measuring juvenile crime: through measurement of officially recorded crime in police, prosecution or court statistics, through self-reported delinquency surveys and victimization surveys. This paper focuses on the empirical analysis based on secondary data of registered crimes of the state attorney's offices and juvenile courts in the period 2013–2020, which is an indirect measure of juvenile delinquency in a particular area. The secondary data on reported, accused and convicted juvenile perpetrators for the period 2013–2020 for this purpose has been requested and obtained from the Croatian Bureau of



Statistics. Juvenile perpetrators are analyzed in relation to gender, age, educational attainment, types of crimes committed, and other relevant variables in order to identify trends and crime patterns spanning decade. The *research methods applied in this study are data analysis method and descriptive-comparative method*.

The results of comparative research and official crime statistics across Europe (Cajner Mraović, Butorac, & Kešetović, 2014; Enzmann & Podana, 2010; Sijerčić-Čolić, 2012; Steketee & Gruszczyńska, 2010) bring good news about declining overall juvenile crime rates in Europe since 2005. Since the mid-1990s, juvenile delinquency has been declining or stagnant in European countries (Ricijaš, 2009: 175). The trends in juvenile delinquency in the Republic of Croatia can be analyzed from several aspects. Table 1 shows the data of the Croatian Bureau of Statistics on the number of reported, accused, and convicted juveniles in the past two decades.

Table 1: Reported, accused, and convicted juveniles (2000–2021)

| Year | Reported | Accused | Convicted |
|------|----------|---------|-----------|
| 2000 | 2375     | 1108    | 787       |
| 2001 | 2846     | 1133    | 884       |
| 2002 | 2822     | 1277    | 994       |
| 2003 | 2909     | 1160    | 875       |
| 2004 | 2731     | 1306    | 936       |
| 2005 | 2630     | 1096    | 855       |
| 2006 | 2830     | 1212    | 974       |
| 2007 | 3191     | 1250    | 968       |
| 2008 | 3419     | 1296    | 958       |
| 2009 | 3188     | 1238    | 987       |
| 2010 | 3270     | 1269    | 925       |
| 2011 | 3376     | 1084    | 814       |
| 2012 | 3113     | 778     | 626       |
| 2013 | 2553     | 637     | 545       |
| 2014 | 1952     | 626     | 564       |
| 2015 | 1739     | 492     | 420       |
| 2016 | 1532     | 422     | 365       |

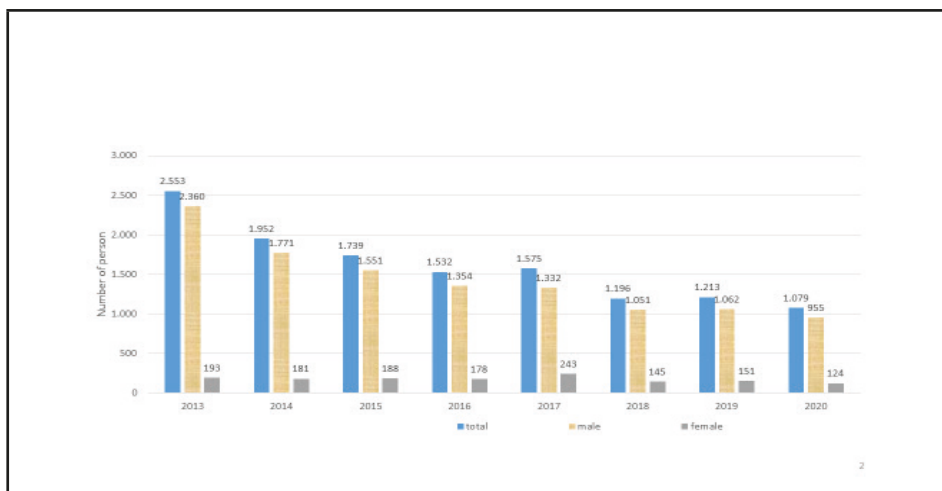


|      |      |     |     |
|------|------|-----|-----|
| 2017 | 1575 | 380 | 333 |
| 2018 | 1196 | 347 | 302 |
| 2019 | 1231 | 331 | 293 |
| 2020 | 1079 | 298 | 268 |
| 2021 | 1000 | 297 | 264 |

Source: Annual statistical reports of the Central Bureau of Statistics (Juvenile offenders, reports, charges and convictions from 2000 to 2020). Retrieved from: <https://www.dzs.hr/> (September 19, 2022) Until 2012, there was a slight increase in the number of juveniles reported for criminal offenses, with occasional slight declines or stagnation. Starting from 2012, the trend of decrease of reported juveniles for criminal offenses begins and continues to this day, and in 2020, compared to 2011, there is a decrease of about 68%. The same is the case with the permanent decrease in the number of accused (about 72.5%) and convicted (about 67%) juveniles compared to 2011. The report of the Chief State Attorney of the Republic of Croatia on the work of state attorney's offices in 2018 (<http://www.dorh.hr/dorh03052019>) states the declining trend in the number of juveniles reported for criminal offenses in the work of almost all state attorney's offices in the Republic of Croatia. Possible explanations for this trend include increased undertaking of primary prevention measures at the general population level, strengthening secondary prevention by imposing a number of institutional educational measures, as well as a general reduction in the number of police reports due to the legislation amendments.

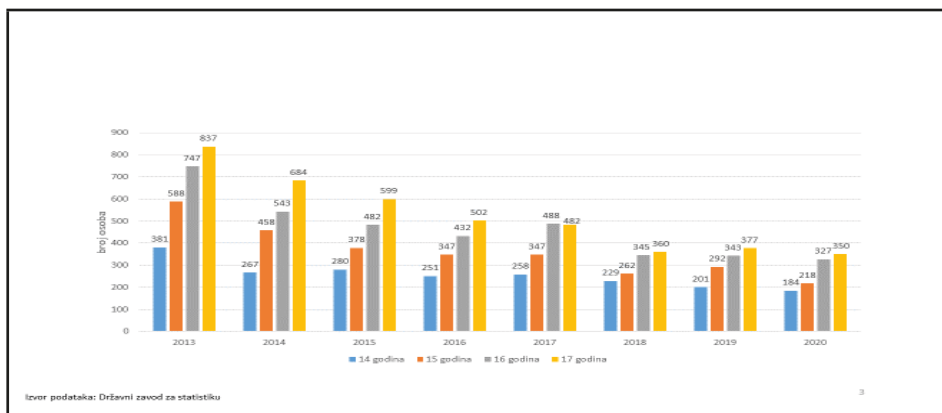
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Delinquent activity is related to the age of minors, therefore, looking at the age range, we notice that with the increase in age, the share of reported as well as convicted minors increases. In the observed period, it is evident that minor girls reported for criminal offenses participate in total youth crime in the range of 8 to 16%, therefore it can be stated that young men still predominate (Graph 1). In Graph 2, it is evident that the fewest convicted juveniles are 14 years old, while the most convicted juveniles are 17 years old. The police usually detect the commission of criminal offenses by minors at their age of 17. Since 2017, the increasing involvement of 16-year-olds in criminal activities has been noticeable, and 10% of 14-year-olds have been continuously reported for criminal offenses.



**Graph 1** – Reported juvenile perpetrators by gender (2013–2020)

**Source:** Annual statistical reports of the Central Bureau of Statistics (Juvenile offenders, reports, charges and convictions from 2013 to 2020). Retrieved from: <https://www.dzs.hr/> (May 10, 2022).

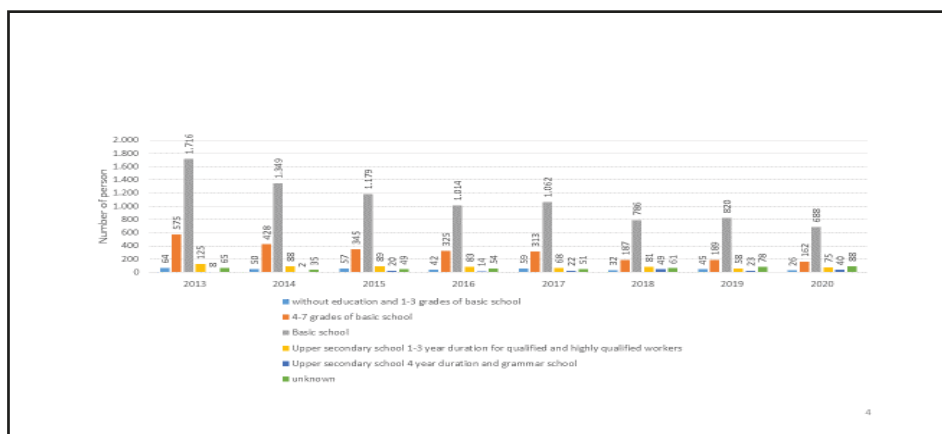


**Graph 2** – Convicted minors by age range (2013–2020)

**Source:** Annual statistical reports of the Central Bureau of Statistics (Juvenile offenders, reports, charges and convictions from 2013 to 2020). Retrieved from: <https://www.dzs.hr/> (May 10, 2021).

Since the minors are adolescents, it is expected that the majority of them have completed primary school (more than 50%), however, it's worrying fact that in all observed years a relatively large share – on average around 30% of minors – have

not completed primary school; 4 to 7 grades of primary school completed (Graph 3). This information undoubtedly indicates neglect of children's needs by parents, guardians, schools or social care. At the same time, it should be emphasized that the quota of minors who attended any secondary school is negligible. It should be pointed out that the relationship between the level of education and the development of juvenile delinquency is inversely proportional, which means that young people with poorer school performance and a lower level of education have a prerequisite for the development of delinquent behavior, since these people have a harder time enduring stressful situations, are subjected to deception and are often accompanied by a low level of upbringing and self-control. Since children, as a rule, spend a large amount of time at school, it represents an extremely important place for the socialization of young people (Ricijaš, 2005), which was missed to a significant extent in the surveyed population.



**Graph 3** – Reported juvenile perpetrators by educational attainment (2013–2020)

**Source:** Annual statistical reports of the Central Bureau of Statistics (*Juvenile offenders, reports, charges and convictions from 2013 to 2020*). Retrieved from: <https://www.dzs.hr/> (May 10, 2021).

When it comes to the integrity of the family of minors (Graph 4), it is evident that the majority of juvenile offenders still live with both parents (65%), however, there is a question of harmony, relationships and other factors within the family that influence development of delinquent behavior. Families characterized by a high level of conflict between parents have a greater influence on the development of antisocial behavior in children because they cause an increased level of family instability, difficulties, and the connection between parents and children is greatly reduced. It is indicative that on average over 30% (in the range of 27–44%) of

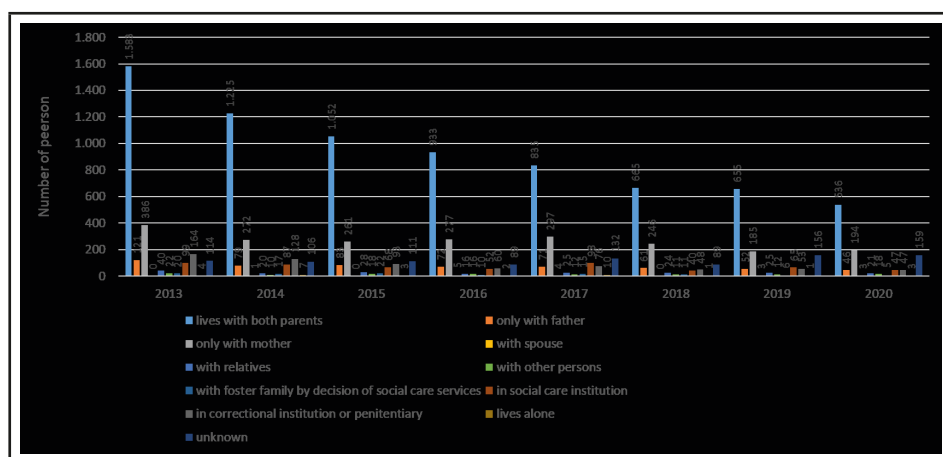




them live with only one parent (predominantly with the mother – 20%), mainly after a divorce, but this pool also includes children born out of wedlock (25–35%).

The fact that more than 10% of minors were in an educational institution or a social welfare institution at the time of reporting the criminal offense is of additional concern, which indirectly indicates the beginnings of their problematic behavior in childhood and the developmental need for learning self-discipline and structuring daily obligations and activities (schooling, caring about themselves and their environment).

Theoretical models and empirical research indicate that there is a connection between the family environment and the early appearance of behavioral problems in childhood and serious delinquent behaviors during adolescence. The results of longitudinal studies show that children and adolescents living in overcrowded homes with a large number of family members, especially with single parents, had an increased risk for the later development of delinquent behavior (Pardini, Waller, & Hawes, 2015).



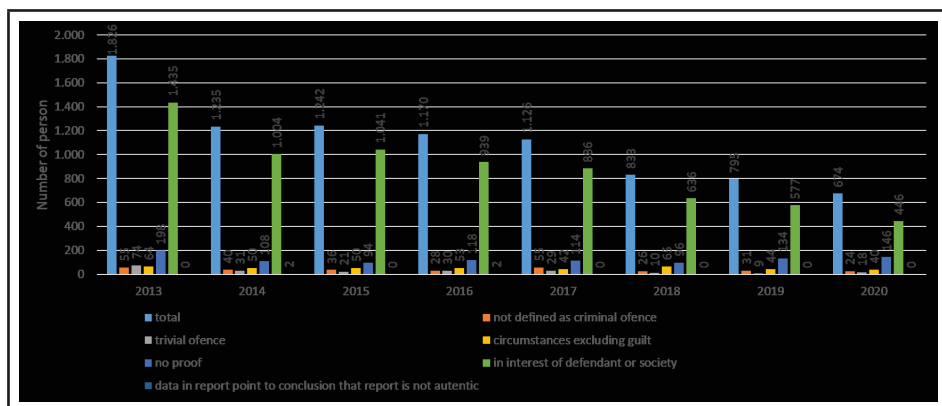
**Graph 4** – Reported juvenile perpetrators (with whom they live with; 2013–2020)

**Source:** Annual statistical reports of the Central Bureau of Statistics (Juvenile offenders, reports, charges and convictions from 2013 to 2020). Retrieved from: <https://www.dzs.hr/> (May 10, 2021).

In most cases, the proposal to impose a penalty or other measure is submitted without conducting a preparatory procedure, and the procedure is not started most often for the already mentioned principle of opportunity (on average, about 80%) (Graph 5). The state attorney is thereby given the possibility to condition the decision not to initiate court proceedings on the minor's willingness to perform

one or more special obligations, the number of which is in Art. 72, para. 1 of the Juvenile Courts Act significantly expanded (Official Gazette RC, 84/11, 143/12, 148/13, 56/15, 126/19). Therefore, in the preliminary procedure, the state attorney has the authority to impose special obligations on a minor as informal sanctions without first determining their guilt. This fulfills the intention of the primacy of informal forms of treatment (in interest of defendant or society), and it can be said that decision-making by applying the principle of opportunity in juvenile criminal law has turned from an exception into an almost rule in practice.

The trend in solving criminal charges using the principle of opportunity compared to the total number of cases in the work is proportional to the trend of applying the dismissal of criminal charges. While in 2012 there was a peak of about 51% of criminal reports that were resolved in this way, in the following years there was a continuous decrease to as much as 34.1% in 2019. Among other things, state attorneys rejected criminal reports in a fifth of cases on average for the entire observed period, because there was no reasonable suspicion of the commission of a criminal offense, the reported offense was not a criminal offense or there were circumstances that exclude guilt or criminal prosecution.



**Graph 5 – Reported juvenile perpetrators by type of decision (proceedings not initiated; 2013–2020)**

**Source:** Annual statistical reports of the Central Bureau of Statistics (Juvenile offenders, reports, charges and convictions from 2013 to 2020). Retrieved from: <https://www.dzs.hr/> (May 10, 2021).

According to Article 5 of the Juvenile Courts Act, educational measures, security measures and juvenile prison sentences are imposed on juveniles as criminal sanctions for a committed crime<sup>2</sup>. However, a juvenile prison sentence cannot be im-

**2 Educational measures** are measures of warning, increased supervision and correctional institution measures. The aim of educational measures is to influence upbringing,

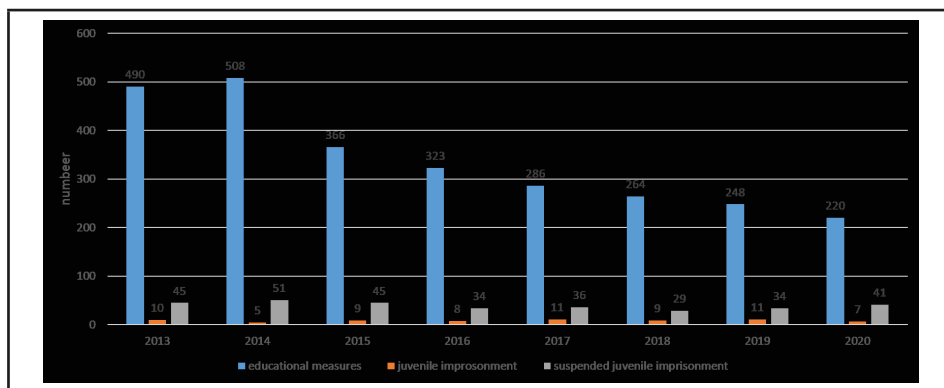


posed on a minor who, at the time of committing the criminal act, turned fourteen, but did not turn sixteen; only educational and security measures can be imposed on them. A juvenile prison sentence can be imposed on a minor who has reached the age of sixteen but has not yet reached the age of eighteen. According to Graph 6, the majority of sentenced juveniles were sentenced to educational measures (about 90%), while 2–3% of juveniles served in juvenile prison. Although the number of measures imposed decreases over the years, the measures of referral to a disciplinary center, enhanced care and supervision with a stay in an educational institution, referral to an educational institution and measures of referral to a special educational institution do not show such a trend, but are equally imposed over the years.

development of personality and to strengthen the feeling of personal responsibility of a juvenile by offering protection, care, assistance and surveillance and by providing general and professional education, in order to influence him/her to refrain from committing new criminal offences in the future. After the new Juvenile Courts Act (Official Gazette, Nos. 84/11, 143/12, 148/13 and 56/15) came into force, a new educational measure, called assignment to a centre for disciplinary development, was introduced. **Measures of warning** are reprimands and special obligations, imposed when juvenile person's personality or behaviour should be influenced upon. **Increased supervision measures** are increased care and supervision, assignment to a centre for disciplinary development and increased care and supervision with daily stay in a correctional institution, imposed when long-term measures are needed for the upbringing and education of a juvenile person with adequate surveillance and assistance, without juvenile's separation from their environment. **Correctional institution measure** refers to the assignment to a correctional institution, the assignment to a rehabilitation centre and assignment to a special correctional institution, prescribed when long-term and intensive educational measures or measures of treatment are needed, with juvenile's separation from their environment. Correctional institution measures are imposed as extreme measures and may last within the limits prescribed by the Juvenile Courts Act, only for the time needed to achieve the aim of educational measures. **Suspended juvenile imprisonment** – juvenile may be found guilty for criminal offence by a court and at the same time a juvenile imprisonment penalty may be suspended if the court thinks that, by the pronouncement of guilt and by threatening with the subsequent pronouncement of a sentence, the perpetrator can be diverted from the commitment of further criminal offences. In this case, the court may pronounce educational measure of increased supervision, assignment to a centre for disciplinary development and one or more special obligations. **Juvenile imprisonment** is the penalty of depriving freedom with particularities related to the pronouncing, duration, aim and content of penalty. Juvenile imprisonment may be imposed only for criminal offences for which the law prescribes three years penalty of imprisonment or a more severe penalty and may not be shorter than six months nor longer than five years, only exceptionally it may be up to ten years for criminal offences for which long-term imprisonment penalty has been prescribed, or in case of a merger of at least two criminal offences with prescribed imprisonment above ten years. **Security measures** applicable to juveniles are: Compulsory psychiatric treatment, Compulsory treatment of addiction, Compulsory psychosocial treatment, Prohibition to drive a motor vehicle, Prohibition to approach, harass or spy someone, Prohibition to access to internet, Protective supervision following the full execution of a prison penalty.



Radić (2017) points out that in the Republic of Croatia, the most frequently imposed educational measure is enhanced care and supervision, which is imposed annually in about 35% of cases on average. Special obligations are also imposed in about 30% of cases per year, the measure of referral to a center for disciplinary development and increased care and supervision in 7% of cases, the measure of referral to a correctional institution in 5% of cases, and the measure of referral to a special correctional institution in less than 1% of cases per year. The suspended juvenile imprisonment (similar in purpose to a suspended sentence) in the observed period was imposed on 10–20% of juveniles. This punishment is more frequent in the last six years of the observed period, which indicates a higher level of social danger, that is, more serious crimes committed by minors (see Graph 7). Namely, since the introduction of the suspended juvenile imprisonment into the legislation of the Republic of Croatia until today, this measure has been on a constant rise. Juvenile courts consider this type of sanction as a type of control mechanism for the behavior of minors in the future. However, it should be emphasized that the center for social welfare is the most important source of data on juvenile perpetrators of criminal offences, which is expected to process the data and submit it with a reasoned proposal for the imposition of a criminal sanction. At the same time, these data form the basic material used by state attorneys and juvenile judges in the proceedings.

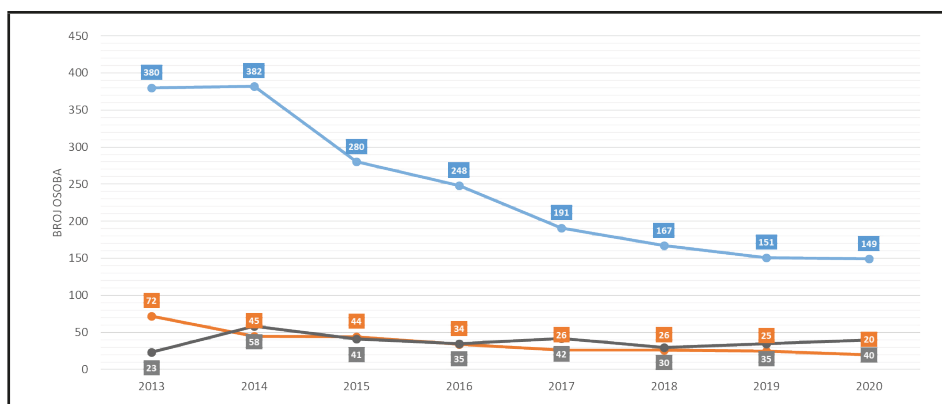


**Graph 7** – Convicted juvenile perpetrators by imposed criminal penalties and other measures (2013–2020)

**Source:** Annual statistical reports of the Central Bureau of Statistics (Juvenile offenders, reports, charges and convictions from 2013 to 2020). Retrieved from: <https://www.dzs.hr/> (May 10, 2021).

In the observed period, there is a continuous and gradual downward trend in the number of criminal reports for all criminal offenses by 38% compared to the initial

year of observation. Regarding the incidence and severity of juvenile delinquency, Graph 8 provides a clearer picture. Although there is an obvious strong downward tendency of committing property crimes, they are the most represented in the total mass throughout the observed period (73–80%), which is a phenomenon in the world as well. On the other hand, in the range of 5–10% of minors persist in committing criminal offenses against life and body in the period in question and somewhat less when it comes to offenses against personal freedom. It should be pointed out that during the last two observed years (2019 and 2020), there is a greater involvement of minors in drug crime (about 20%) (Graph 8). Although the occasional use of drugs used to start in high school, nowadays the age limit has been lowered to the elementary school population in urban as well as rural areas. This problem affects the family and educational institutions, affecting all age groups and social strata. Finally, it should be noted that only a quarter of reported minors are eventually convicted.



**Graph 8** – *Convicted juvenile perpetrators by most common offences (2013–2020)*

**Legend:** **brown line** – *against life and body*, **blue line** – *against property*, **grey line** – *against people's health*

**Source:** *Annual statistical reports of the Central Bureau of Statistics (Juvenile offenders, reports, charges and convictions from 2013 to 2020). Retrieved from: <https://www.dzs.hr/> (May 10, 2021).*

## CONCLUSION REMARKS

The general trend in Croatia during the observed period is a significant decline in overall juvenile crime which might lead to the conclusion that juvenile crime in Croatia does not pose a serious problem. Besides property crimes still prevail-

ing, there is an obvious increase in drug-related crime and steady share in crime against the human body as the most serious crime, even though absolute figures of the latter reported offenders are quite low. It is most likely that this trend indicates the increasing propensity of juveniles to commit more serious offences.

As regards juveniles' family characteristics and their personal features it is found that juvenile offenders come from complete, but unstable, and also from single-parent families that probably had a family history of problem behavior or family conflict (Howell, 1995) which further leads to poor parenting. In addition, this research has identified poor school performance or leaving school at a young age as a risk factor in juvenile offenders observed. Despite the ongoing discussion of the direction of causality, the evidence is clear that poor school performance and leaving school at a young age are connected to juvenile delinquency (Hawkins et al., 1998; Huisinga and Jakob-Chien, 1998; Maguin and Loeber, 1996). Consequently, child and family risk factors, peer group influences, socioeconomic status, low school motivation, and early behavior problems were the most common causes of delinquency and, in combination, increased the risk that leads to anti-social and criminal behaviour.

This research paper builds on the existing knowledge of the topic and addresses possible implications of future developments within the mixed model of the juvenile justice system that is lacking in the existing literature. Notably, in juvenile justice, there are three main and most widely accepted models of responding to the commission of criminal offenses by juveniles: protective, judicial, and mixed model with elements of restorative justice. The protective model deviates from excessive formalism, and social care centers play a significant role with the aim of educating, protecting and helping minors. In contrast, the judicial model gives little importance and attention to the personal and family circumstances of minors, and the sanctions imposed are mostly penal, instead of social welfare. Croatia opted for some form of mixed approach, placing emphasis on the personality and individual needs of minors (Radić, 2017), to which sanctions are then adjusted, which is taken from the protective model while simultaneously guaranteeing the minor's legal security and compliance with all standards of international protection from the judicial model.

All indicators in the observed period point to the conclusion that punishment is only a measure of last resort, which is confirmed by the fact that the share of juvenile prison sentences is only about 2% and that in most cases the principle of opportunity is used, thus favoring the application of educational measures as informal forms of treatment for avoiding negative stigmatization and labeling of minors. Despite the constant slight increase in the suspension of juvenile imprisonment (similar in purpose to a suspended sentence), we believe that with the predominant imposition of educational measures, a relatively mild special-pre-



ventive criminal law policy towards minors is implemented in practice with a deviation towards the protective model. However, we are of the opinion that proper intervention at an early stage is the best approach to preventing juvenile delinquency. It requires individual, group and organizational efforts aimed at minors, however, it is important to accept the fact that no state institution and imposed educational measure is as influential on the development of minors as the institution of the family.

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