

Crime In Poland – Spatial Distribution And Typology

Marek Fałdowski ¹

¹The Higher Police Training School in Szczytno
ul. Marszałka Józefa Piłsudskiego 111, 12-100 Szczytno - Poland

Abstract— A sense of security and public order in Poland is in the hands of the Department of Interior and Administration, where analyses of possibilities of occurrence of crime are carried out based mainly on the Police data. The findings are used to prevent and combat crime in a more effective way. Preventive actions are crucial in this respect e.g. development of relevant programmes and strategies, as well as tasks for units subordinated and supervised by the competent Minister of the Interior. The above mentioned effectiveness is also influenced by cooperation with institutions and organisations dealing with various aspects of crime prevention at the national and international level. While assessing crime, efficiency of the police activities as far as crime prevention and combat, statistical data including particular crime offences that determine time and place are useful. The statistics is the key element in determination of perpetrators' actions. It is also an indicator of activities performed by individual Police units, inter alia by adequate (at place and time) services deployment (preventive and criminal). Based on crime statistical data, one may possess knowledge of the desired Police operations, and social demands. On one hand, the analysis of statistical data related to crime and examination of the sense of security felt by Polish citizens, is one of the evaluation methods of the activities of the Polish Police forces; on the other, it offers a number of paths in the search for solutions concerning prevention and fight against crime. The indicated analyses including data interpretation are supposed to raise awareness concerning the phenomenon of crime in Poland, and demonstrate changes over years with respect to security and public order, as well as social assessment of the Police activity.

Index Terms— crime, statistics, detection, sense of security, social research, Police, security and public order.

I. INTRODUCTION

Statistical data relating to crime in Poland (Order No 5 of the Chief Commander of the Police from 31 January 2013, repealed Order No 350 of the Chief Commander of the Police from 1 July 2003 on the collection, processing and compilation of crime statistical data and suicide bombings and cases of

drowning (the Official Journal of the Polish Police Headquarters from 2003, No14, item 74 as amended.). Due to the annulment of the order, including use of the TEMIDA Police Crime Statistics system, since 2013 all task in this field have been implemented using the Analytical System based on information processed by The National System of Police Information) is presented annually by the Ministry of the Interior and Administration as reports on security in Poland. These reports are supposed to present the security situation in Poland in a given year, in comparison with previous years, using various ways of data collection by individual bodies and institutions. The data includes the most significant issues connected with security, also results of social surveys concerning the current sense of security in Poland, as well as data relating to: crime, drugs, corruption, terrorism, public safety, road safety and safety during mass events; also matters referring to financial aspects of crime and fraud committed against the European Union, and data concerning fine proceedings (Raport o stanie przestępczości w Polsce w 2016 roku, 2016).

Statistical data on crime in Poland collected by the Police, which is later included in the above mentioned reports, may be categorised as: initiated proceedings, ascertained and detected crime. The initiated proceedings are understood as pre-trial proceedings performed by a police organisational unit, referring to a case suspected to be a crime, or instigated by the Public Prosecutor's Office and handed to the police for further investigation. The statistical category also includes initiated enquires, and then ended with a decision on discontinuance and entry of the case in the crime register. Excluded proceedings as regards an act or an accomplice are not included. Moreover, the category excludes data on proceedings instituted and conducted by the Public Prosecutor's Office or transferred for continuation to services other than the Police. Statistical data gathered by the Police relates to units entitled to conduct pre-trial proceedings i.e. the Police organisational units. The next category includes 'ascertained crime', that is a crime, with respect to which during



pre-trial proceedings it was proved that a criminal offence had taken place. The 'crimes ascertained' include crimes and misdemeanours prosecuted by public prosecution, including fiscal offences. 'Detected crime' is the last category mentioned above, it includes crimes established, where at least one suspect was determined in a finished pre-trial proceedings.

One of the indicators of the Police efficiency in combating crime is the detection rate, expressed as a percentage which is the quotient of the number of detected crimes divided by the general number of crimes established, after adoption of proceedings discontinued in the previous years.

The analysis of statistical data related to crime and to the sense of security felt by the Poles is one of the methods to evaluate the activities of the Police, but also it is an element of the search for solutions concerning prevention and fight against crime. The mentioned analyses including data interpretation are supposed to raise awareness concerning the phenomenon of crime in Poland and demonstrate changes over the years in terms of security and public order.

II. STATISTICS ON CRIME

The material scope of the study is related to the concept of statistics. The term 'statistics' comes from the Latin word 'status' i.e. the state of affairs. The term was introduced into science in the 18th century by a German scientist Gottfried Achenwall in the meaning of a wide range of information about the state. The term 'statistics' may be used in the following meanings:

The studies about the state presenting basic knowledge necessary for state rulers (description of a state's condition based on numerical data, census, lists of royal, church, monastery estates) – historical, ancient and medieval meaning,

- all numerical data (tables, charts) referring to a given group or category, as well as drawing conclusions based on numerical values,
- activities connected to data collection and figures description (e.g. road accident statistics),
- a scientific discipline referring to numeric description of methods and requests of accuracy present in mass trials,
- determination of a given measure criterion (e.g. mean) describing a sample result (Borowska, 2016, p.10).

Descriptive statistics refers to the statistical description method (replacement term - analyses) of research results, based on an exhaustive overall analysis. Such approach is called determinism. Descriptive statistics may be divided into a structure analysis (structure) of phenomena, dynamics analysis (changes in time) and phenomena interdependency analysis.

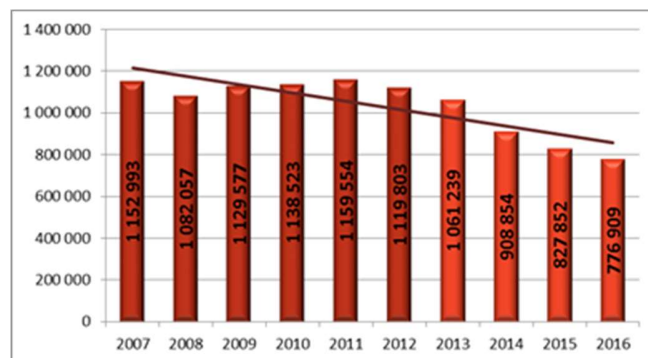
Generally, statistics is a discipline of quantitative studies, including both a numeric description method (deterministic approach) and statistical interference method in conditions of uncertainty (stochastic approach). The mentioned methods are treated integrally. Therefore the aim of using statistics is not only to open possibility of performing reliable and comprehensive analysis: how is it, and why is it?, but also a possibility of a highly probable statistical projection — how, on the basis of random samples, does one reproduce unknown reality by means of numbers? Thus, statistical analysis is both

a diagnosis and projection. Statistics has broad practical applications wherever phenomena and mass operations are present. They are visible in all fields of knowledge and human activity, including economic and social sciences.

III. CRIME IN STATISTICAL TERMS

In 2016 the Police initiated a total of 717,141 preparatory proceedings concerning various crime cases, that is about 70,827 less than in the year 2015 (a decrease by 9%). In recent years in Poland, the downward trend in the number of crime detected by the Police has been clearly visible. In 2016 the Police detected a total of 776,909 crimes, which is the smallest number so far. It indicates a decrease in the number of total offences by 6,2% compared to 2015. In 2001–2005 the number of crimes detected by the Police remained at the level of around 1,4 million a year. Until 2013 the total number of crimes detected was over one million, whereas since 2014 their number has decreased to less than a million. The number of crimes detected in 2016 was lower than the recorded one in 2007 (over 1,15 million crimes were confirmed) by 32,6% (Statistical data for years 2013–2016 used in The report on crime in Poland in 2016, concerning procedures initiated and crime detected, derive from the Police information system KSIP (Krajowy System Informacji Policyjnych/ Polish National Police)).

CHART 1. THE NUMBER OF CRIMES DETECTED IN 2007–2016.

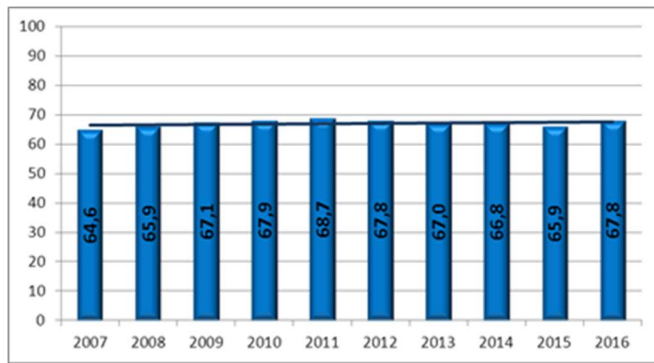


Source: The report on crime in Poland in 2016, the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw 2016

In 2016 the overall crime detection rate was equal to 67,8% and was higher than in 2015 by 1,9 percentage points (65,9%). The overall crime detection rate in 2016 was higher than in 2007 by 3,2 percentage points (Chart 2).

In 2016 the Police identified a total of 312,366 suspects in crime cases. It indicates a decrease in the number of suspects by 2% compared to the year 2015, when the number amounted to 318,713. In 2016 amongst the criminals identified by the Police, there were 13,006 minors (slightly more than in the previous year, when the number was 12,898).

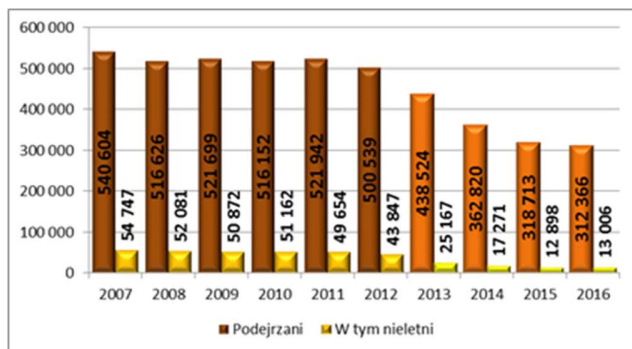
CHART 2. OVERALL CRIME DETECTION IN 2007-2016



Source: The report on crime in Poland in 2016, the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw 2016.

The minors constituted 4,2% of all identified suspects (in the year 2015 the percentage was equal to 4%) (For more information see: The report on crime in Poland, The Ministry of Interior and Administration in 2014 – 2016).

CHART 3. THE NUMBER OF CRIMINALS ESTABLISHED BY THE POLICE IN 2007–2016



Source: The report on crime in Poland in 2016, the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw 2016.

The crime risk indicator (Poland overall, and broken down into voivodeships) per 100,000 inhabitants is shown in Fig.1.

An average, overall criminal threats in Poland per 100,000 inhabitants in 2016 were equal to 2022* which was the lowest valued in recent years. The indicator has been decreasing together with the number of crimes detected in Poland (in 2013 it was equal to 2,754, in 2014 to 2,361, in 2015 to 2,151). Generally, in 2016 the lowest total crime risk indicator per 100,000 inhabitants was observed in the eastern and central part of the country. The highest values of total crime risk indicator per 100,000 inhabitants were observed in the western voivodehips and within the General Police Headquarters' area of operations.

In 2016 the risk indicator of over 2,000 crimes per 100,000 residents was recorded in the following voivodeships: Lower Silesian, Silesian, Lesser Poland, Lubusz, West Pomeranian, Pomeranian and Opole, and also within the General Police Headquarters area of operations. In 2016, as compared to 2015, the overall crime risk indicator per 100,000 residents decreased in all the voivodeships.

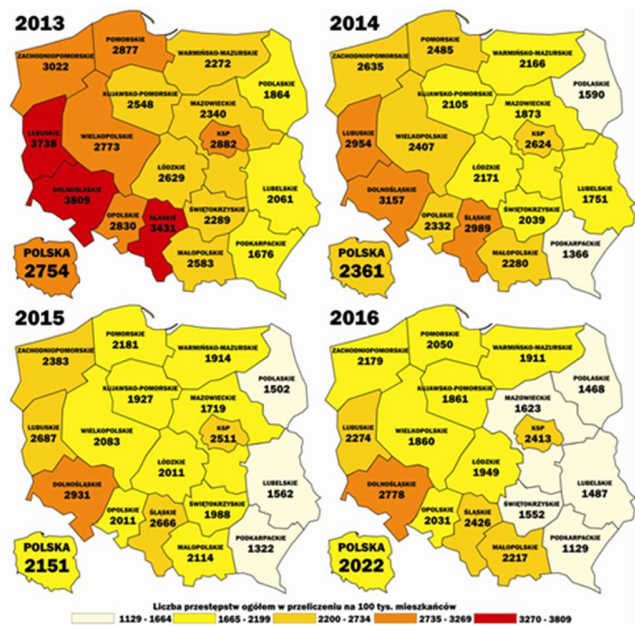


Fig.1 the threat of total crime per 100,000 inhabitants.

Source: Report on crime in Poland in 2016, the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw 2016

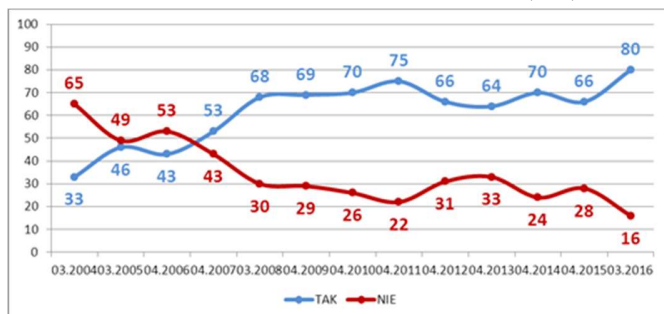
IV. THE SENSE OF SECURITY IN POLAND

The public opinion survey concerning the sense of security amongst Poles mainly relates to the assessment of the Police work with respect to combating crime, and the fear of crime. The results of the survey carried out in 2016 and in preceding years indicate that the citizens of Poland feel safe. The results of social evaluation of the Police which is a law enforcement agency responsible for most operations connected with ensuring security in the country, remains high. The information regarding the current level of the sense of security, declared concerns and expectations of Poles regarding safety derive from public opinion polls conducted by independent research centres (the Centre for Public Opinion Research) irrespectively, or at the request of the National Polish Police Headquarters (the Polish Crime Survey). The Centre for Public Opinion Research since the end of 1980s has been conducting regular surveys concerning the sense of security among the inhabitants of Poland. The survey conducted in the middle of March 2016 demonstrates that Poles declare a very high sense of security. The survey was conducted in March 2016 on a sample of 1,007 Poles (N=1007).

Over the past several years, the outlook on the security in Poland has considerably changed. Since 2007 a high proportion of respondents has been claiming that life in Poland is safe, as compared to the number of respondents who declared the opposite. In March 2016 four-fifths of adult Poles (80%) recognised the country as safe. A similar result was registered in April 2001, when 81% of respondents claimed that Poland is a safe country. Compared to the survey conducted in 2015, the number of positive opinions increased by 14 percentage points. In the research carried out in March 2016, 16% of respondents declared that Poland is not a safe country. Compared to the

previous survey, the number of respondents claiming that Poland was not a safe country to live in, decreased by 12 percentage points. It is the lowest result recorded in history.”

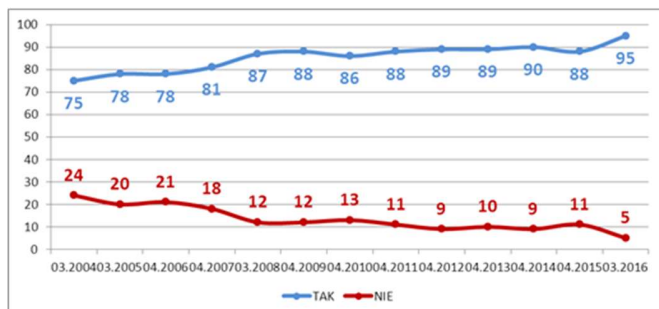
CHART 4. IS POLAND A COUNTRY WHERE YOU LIVE SAFELY? (IN %) N=1007



Source: The report on crime in Poland in 2016, the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw 2016

In the CBOS opinion poll from March 2016 in which the cyclical question on the sense of security near the place of residence (in a district, in the neighbourhood, in the countryside etc.) was asked, 95% of adult Poles claimed that their neighbourhood may be classified as safe and calm. This result is the highest in the history of the research. Since April 2015 the number of such indications have increased by 7 percentage points. At the same time, 5% of the respondents, the least so far, presented an opposite view.

CHART 5. IS POLAND A SAFE COUNTRY TO LIVE IN ? (IN %) N=1007



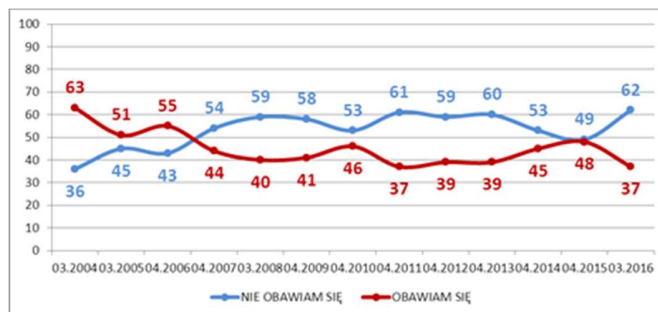
Source: The report on crime in Poland in 2016, the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw 2016

According to CBOS opinion poll from March 2016, 62% of adult Poles were not afraid of becoming a victim of crime. Since the previous edition of the survey (April 2015) a percentage of respondents, who are not afraid of becoming victims of crime, has increased by 13 percentage points (so far it has been the highest score in the study). At the same time, 37% of respondents expressed concern that they could become victims of crime, however only 3% declared a strong sense of such danger ('I am afraid of it').

In March 2016, 53% of adult Poles were not afraid that one of their closest relatives could become a victim of crime. Since the previous publications of the survey from April 2015, the percentage of respondents who are not afraid that their closest relatives could become victims of crimes has increased by 13 percentage points. It has been the highest result in the history of this research. In the same study, 45% of respondents expressed concern that their closest relatives could become victims of crime, however 6% declared a strong feeling of such danger

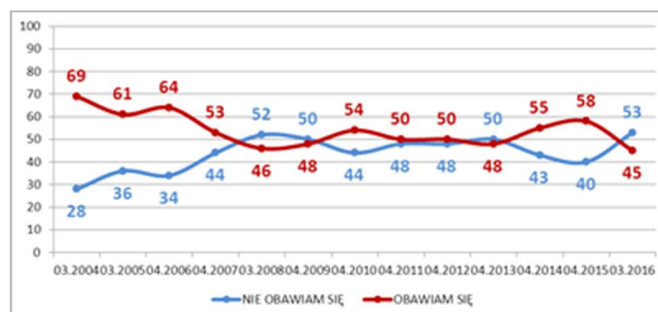
('I am afraid of it'). It has been the lowest result in the history of this study.

CHART 6. ARE YOU AFRAID OF BECOMING A VICTIM OF CRIME? (IN %) N=1007.



Source: The report on crime in Poland in 2016, The Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw 2016

CHART 7. ARE YOU AFRAID THAT SOMEONE FROM YOUR CLOSEST FAMILY COULD BECOME A VICTIM OF CRIME? N=1007

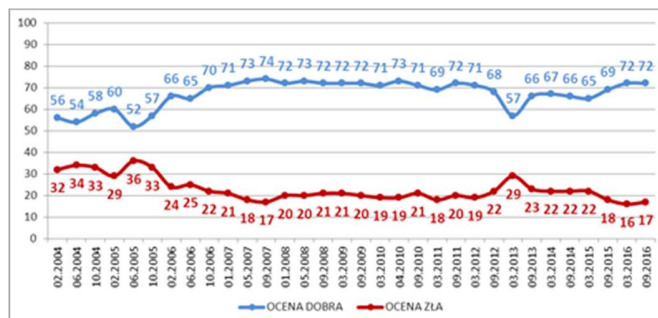


Source: The report on crime in Poland 2016, The Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw 2016

Regular surveys evaluating public institutions and agencies performed by the Centre for Public Opinion Research show high scores for the Police as compared to other surveyed institutions. According to 2016 research*, the percentage of Poles who assesses the Police positively increased compared to previous publications of research, and it was equal to 72%. In September 2016 the opposite view was declared by 17% of respondents (Chart 9).

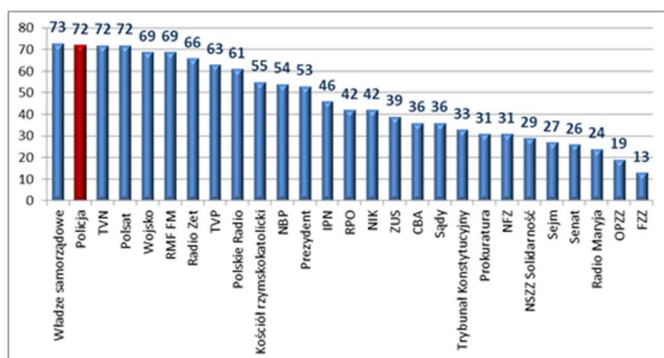
In the CBOS survey from September 2016 only local government units were evaluated higher than the Police. The army and TV stations TVN and Polsat, were ex aequo in second place with the result of 72% of positive opinions (Chart 10).

CHART 8. HOW DO YOU EVALUATE THE POLICE ACTIVITY? N=981



Source: The report on crime in Poland in 2016, the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw 2016

CHART 9. HOW DID YOU EVALUATE ACTIVITY OF ...? N=981



Source: The report on crime in Poland in 2016, the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw 2016

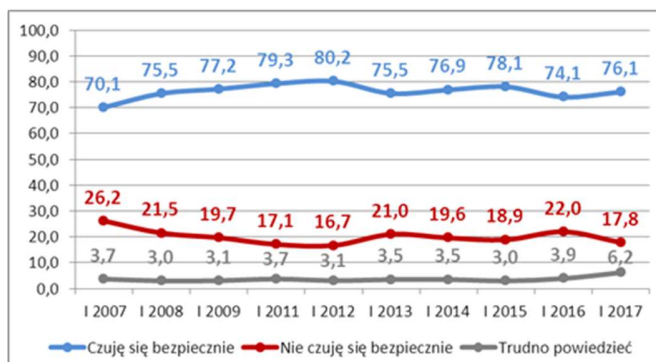
V. THE POLISH CRIME SURVEY

The Polish Crime Survey (PBS) (*PBS is the largest in size (N=17,000) social opinion poll on security in Poland. Random representative samples, conducting of research in the area and statistical data analysis are commissioned to independent research companies by the General Police Headquarters, whereas detailed analysis and survey reports are processed in the General Police Headquarters.*) is a public opinion survey performed so far in ten publications (between 2007–2017). The survey mainly relates to the evaluation of work of police officers, the efficiency of the Police in the fight against crime and the level of fear of crime felt by the Polish citizens. The survey is implemented on a sample of 17,000 Poles over 15 years old, 1,000 respondents (random representative sample) in the area of operation of each Voivodeship Police Headquarters and Warsaw Police Headquarters (N=17000). Due to the way the results are used, the Polish Crime Survey is always performed in January and it constitutes a summary of the previous year. Drawing a test sample, conducting the study, and statistical data analysis are commissioned to independent research companies by the General Police Headquarters.

Adult Poles were asked whether they feel safe during walks after dark in their neighbourhood. Over three-quarters of the questioned Poles (76,1%) declared a sense of security during walks after dark. 17,8% of respondents indicated a lack of sense of security, whereas 6,2% of subjects found it difficult to answer the question. Compared to the previous survey results (January 2016) the number of people who declared they feel secure walking after dark increased by 2 percentage points. At the same time the percentage of answers stating the lack of security decreased by 4,2 of percentage points (Chart 10).

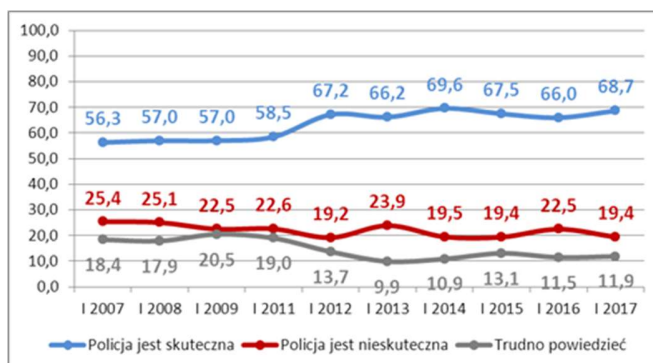
The selected group of Polish citizens was asked about effectiveness of the Police in the fight against crime. The majority of respondents (68,7%) considered the Police to be effective. Less than a quarter of respondents presented different declarations (23,9%). Every tenth person (11,9%) could not provide the answer. Rating in this field has improved compared to the previous year. The increase in a percentage of indication of the answer 'effective' by 2,7%, while the percentage of indication of answer 'ineffective' decreased by 3,1% (Chart 11).

CHART 10. DO YOU FEEL SAFE DURING WALKS AFTER DARK IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD? N=17000



Source: The report on crime in Poland in 2016, the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw 2016

CHART 11. ARE THE POLICE EFFECTIVE IN A FIGHT AGAINST CRIME IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD? N=17000



Source: The report on crime in Poland in 2016, the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw 2016

The participants of the study were also asked to evaluate the work of police officers serving in the area of their residence. The majority of the questioned Poles (69,2%) evaluated it positively. The negative opinion was given by 16,7% of respondents, whereas 14,1% had no opinion on this subject. Compared to the previous year, one might observe a slight increase in the percentage of positive opinions (by 1,8%), while the percentage of negative answers decreased by 2,4%.

The latest publication of the Polish Crime Survey shows that over three-quarters of Poles (76,1%) feels safe while walking after dark in their neighbourhood. A lack of a sense of security was declared by 17,8% of subjects. Compared to the previous publication of the study, one may observe an increase in the sense of security (increase in the percentage of respondents stating that they feel safe by 2%, while decrease in the percentage of subjects showing different declarations by 4,2%).

Respondents were also presented with a list of potential threats and were asked to select the maximum of three which worry them the most in their area of residence. As the study illustrates, the biggest concerns are: bravado of drivers (29,5%) and burglary e.g. into apartments, cellars or cars (28,7%). Over one-fifth of respondents is afraid of assaults, robberies (21,1%), destruction of property by vandals (20,3%) or aggression of intoxicated persons (20,2%). The remaining threats are indicated by less than one-fifth of subjects. Compared to the

previous year results, the respondents are less likely to point to burglaries (decrease by 5,8%), fights (by 3,7%), theft, e.g. pick pocketing (by 3,3%) and assaults, robberies (by 2,6%), however more often they fear vandalism (increase by 4,1%) (Table 1).

The subjects were also asked which issues referring to the Police work were the most important to them. The study's results indicate that police officers are first of all expected to arrive promptly at the crime scene after a call to the emergency number has been made (44,5%). For over one third of Poles, the Police effectiveness is essential (35,3%), and to about one quarter of Poles it is the presence of police patrols in the area of residence (25,5%), possibility of easy calling the emergency

number (24,0%) as well as honesty and police incorruptibility (23,1%). Every fifth respondent expects a quick and efficient proceedings, without further formalities (20,6%). Compared to previous results of the research publication, the percentage of indication referring to possibility of easy calling the emergency number decreased (8,9% decrease), as well as fast arrival at the crime scene (6,4% decrease), and also the Police effectiveness (3,3% decrease). Whereas the subjects more often indicate professionalism and competence of police officers (increase by 4,5%).

TABLE 1.
WHAT THREATS DO YOU FEAR THE MOST NEAR THE PLACE OF YOUR RESIDENCE? N=17000

Threats	2007	2008	2009	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
bravado of drivers	34,9	38,5	35,9	31,0	26,9	27,9	29,7	30,3	29,0	29,5
burglaries	22,1	20,7	19,3	30,1	32,2	35,5	33,2	29,0	34,5	28,7
assaults, robberies	23,4	19,6	19,6	21,6	26,3	24,9	20,5	21,0	23,7	21,1
vandalism	21,0	21,8	21,0	17,8	18,7	19,7	19,0	17,1	16,2	20,3
aggression from drunks or drug addicts	20,2	19,3	20,0	14,5	18,3	19,3	20,4	14,4	18,8	20,2
fights	19,9	17,8	17,6	14,9	18,0	23,2	21,1	14,0	21,7	18
accosting by aggressive groups of youth	23,1	21,0	19,1	15,8	18,3	17,8	16,0	12,8	15,4	17,5
theft (e.g. pick pocketing)	14,4	11,9	12,2	16,2	22,1	22,5	22,8	16,4	18,8	15,5
none/ I am not afraid of anything in the neighbourhood	13,7	15,6	17,6	19,5	15,0	13,1	14,1	22,2	14,7	14,8
extortion and ransom	4,2	3,7	4,1	3,5	6,3	10,3	8,8	4,3	8,3	9,4
drug trafficking	6,0	6,3	5,7	4,2	5,4	9,1	8,3	5,0	8,4	9,1
noisy, unmannerly neighbours	5,7	5,8	6,4	4,6	6,7	6,5	5,9	4,9	5,0	8,4

Source: The report on crime in Poland in 2016, the Ministry of Interior and Administration, Warsaw 2016

VI. CONCLUSION

In 2016 the Police detected a total of 776,909 crimes. It constitutes a decrease in total crime by 6,2% when compared to 2015. Between 2009-2011 the number of offences detected by the Police, has slightly risen, following a considerable drop in 2004–2008. Another fall was observed after the year 2011. The number of crimes detected in 2016 was lower than the one recorded in 2007 (when over 1,15 million crimes were found) by 32,6%. In 2016 the overall detection rate of crimes was equal to 67,8% and it was higher than the one recorded in 2015 by 1,9 of percentage points (65,9%). Along with the decrease in the number of crimes found, the number of suspects is also decreasing. In 2016 the Police established a total of 312 366 suspected crimes. It indicates a decrease of suspects by 2% compared to 2015, when the number was equal to 318,713.

Results of an independent opinion poll conducted in 2016 and at the beginning of 2017 indicate that inhabitants of Poland feel safe. Social rating indicators of the Police who is responsible for execution of the largest number of tasks connected with ensuring the state security, has remained at a high level (the Centre for Public Opinion Research - A sense of security every day). The results of a study from March 2016 show that the residents of Poland declare a strong sense of security. The majority (80%) of Poles regarded the country as safe (the opposite view was expressed by only 16% of respondents). In

the same survey, the subjects were asked about a sense of security in their neighbourhood (district, estate, village). The results were even higher than the ones relating to the whole country. The vast majority (95%) of subjects defined their neighbourhood as safe and peaceful (5% of respondents presented the opposite view).

The Poles were also questioned about the sense of security during walks after dark in their neighbourhood. In January 2017, the vast majority of Poles (76,1%) declared that they feel safe in such situation (17,8% of subjects presented the opposite view). Analysing the Police effectiveness in the fight against crime in the place of residence, in January 2017 68,7% of subjects confirmed that the Police is effective. 19,4% of respondents presented an opposite opinion. In the Polish Crime Survey, the Poles positively evaluated work of police officers who serve in the area of their residence. In January 2017 the Poles were also enquired about the frequency of police patrols (mobile and on foot) in the neighbourhood. Most of the respondents (58%) claimed that the police patrols are visible at least once a week. 16,2% of subjects declared that the police patrols are observed at least once a month in the area of their residence. 11,3% of respondents claimed that the Police patrols were present less than once a month, whereas 7,8% of subjects stated that they were not present at all (5,8%).

REFERENCES

- Borowska, M. (2016). Statystyka. Stalowa Wola: [Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II. Wydział Zamiejscowy Nauk o Społeczeństwie].
- Domański, C. and Pruska, K. (2000). Nieklasyczne metody statystyczne. Warszawa: Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne.
- Fisz, M. (1969). Rachunek prawdopodobieństwa i statystyka matematyczna, Warszawa: PWN.
- Hołyst, B. (2016). Kryminologia, Warsaw.
- Józwiak, J., Podgórski, J. (2000). Statystyka od podstaw, Warsaw.
- Kendall, G., Buckland, W.R. (1986). Słownik terminów statystycznych, Warsaw.
- Raport o stanie przestępczości w Polsce w 2016 roku. (2016). Warsaw: Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych i Administracji.
- Rao, C.R., (1984). Statystyka i prawda, Warsaw.
- Zeliaś, A. (2000). Metody statystyczne, Warsaw.