



MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR
OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC



PREVENCE
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The Czech Republic

Crime Prevention Strategy

2008 -2011

The Czech Republic

Crime prevention strategy 2008 to 2011

The **crime prevention policy**¹, one of the main elements of the **national security policy**, is the key tool to reduce crime, eliminate criminal and pathological phenomena, work with offenders, and protect and assist victims of crime. Unlike the penal policy, the prevention policy uses non-repressive methods, administered by a range of public institutions and private entities. Given the wide range of causes of crime, preventive measures have impact on many areas of the public life, such as social policies, employment, education, leisure activities, crisis intervention, or urban planning. The role of preventive measures is often recognised within penal policy as well, where the alternative punishment is more and more frequently used².

Crime prevention is defined as an offensive strategy to combat crime. If we wish to render prevention measures successful and guarantee sustainability of their positive results, all our activities must be well planned, prepared, implemented, and analyzed. That is why the Czech Republic has been, since 1996, periodically drafting mid-term crime prevention strategies to guarantee continuous planning and implementation of the national prevention policy together with its on-going improvement and streamlining in line with the new development in crime and the needs of policing. The strategic approach allows for improved planning of long-term government financing from the government budget as well as streamlined logistics and improved human resources management to support crime prevention systems in the Czech Republic.

¹ Prevention of crime is an element of criminology - a scientific discipline analyzing the offender and victim personality as well as potential ways of limiting or controlling crime. It is an empirical, more practical than theoretical, multidisciplinary discipline.

² A prison sentence is a temporary relief as it places the offender behind bars, but it has a deep negative impact on the offender, and his closest social environment, and his social and economic status. (Conclusions of the 11th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Penal Justice, Bangkok 2005).

Preventive measures are implemented on national, regional, and local level and in primary, secondary and tertiary areas³. **Crime prevention includes:**

- Social measures – the focus is on social and economical issues, individuals in high risk and their families, groups of citizens in risk and high-risk areas, all the above with the objective to change the adverse social and economic environment;
- Situational measures - the focus is on technical measures, including urban planning, to ensure the public safety and to limit opportunities to commit crime, increase the offender risk of apprehension, and reduce profits from crime;
- Information for citizens and their engagement and awareness – the focus is on the supply of information on the security situation and available forms of protection against crime; the main objective is to engage citizens in pro-active steps to improve their own safety and security of their environment;
- Building of implementation capacity – strengthening the crime prevention system, improving conditions for the implementation of national, regional and local prevention, and facilitating financial support.

The main target groups on which preventive measures are focused can be characterised as groups of individuals displaying socially pathological behaviour, and/or groups with a criminal history. This especially includes the youth, perpetrators of crime, or potential offenders and victims of crime.⁴

The prevention policy primarily promotes non-repressive measures to prevent crime and minimise crime related risks and consequences. Its objective is to reduce the incidence of crime and its seriousness while increasing the public perception of safety.

³ **Primary prevention** focuses on the roots of delinquency and underlying causes of criminal behaviour. It concerns the entire population, adults and children alike. **Secondary prevention** focuses on high-risk individuals and groups, defined by age, type of threat, territory, etc. Its goal is to prevent criminal behaviour and actively encourage socially-acceptable behaviour. **Tertiary prevention** includes re-socialisation and re-integration measures toward those who have already engaged in illegal activities, in areas already affected by crime and toward victims of crime.

⁴ This involves children with behavioural problems; socially deprived persons; women; senior citizens; disabled people; solitary persons; foreigners; members of national and ethnic minorities; long-term unemployed and difficult to employ people; inhabitants of remote areas; citizens living in unsuitable conditions; citizens unable to comply with their obligations related to tenancy; persons released from prison and persons addicted to alcohol and other narcotic or psychotropic substances.

The interagency **Government Committee for Crime Prevention** (hereinafter the Government Committee) is responsible for crime prevention planning and its subsequent implementation⁵. Its main role is to initiate, coordinate, and inform.

The Government Committee is in charge of drafting concepts of the government crime prevention policy on the ministerial level. Simultaneously, it plays the main role in transforming these concepts into practical measures. It is also responsible for the preparation of support documents for the government negotiations on crime prevention and decisions on the allocation of the government budget to programmes and projects under the umbrella of the government approved Crime Prevention Strategy.

The Government Committee is chaired by the Minister of Interior and vice-chaired by the 1st deputy Minister of Interior.

The Government Committee secretariat is the Crime Prevention Department of the Ministry of Interior. This department is also in charge of concepts, guidelines, and management of the crime prevention subsidy system. Mgr. Jitka Gjuričová has been the head of the Crime Prevention Department ever since its first day of existence (January 1, 1996).

The Government Committee membership includes, next to the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, Ministry of Justice, Probation and Mediation Service, Ministry of Defence, Ministry for Local Development, Ministry of Finance, Supreme Office of Prosecution, Police Presidium of the Czech Republic, Institute of Criminology and Social Prevention, Government Council for the Roma Community, and Government Council for Coordination of the Drug Policy.

Since 1996, the Crime Prevention Department of the Ministry of Interior has been, together with other ministries represented in the Government Committee, drafting mid-term strategies to lay down priorities of the national crime prevention strategy. These priorities are subsequently implemented by the Government Committee and the responsible ministries.

⁵ In 1993, the Czech authorities established, at the Ministry of Interior, an interagency coordination body – National Prevention Committee – thus creating the necessary conditions to start developing its own prevention policy

The government uses these mid-term strategies (four-year) as a basis for its budgeting of all tasks stipulated in the Strategy⁶.

In 1996 -2007, the Czech Republic established its crime prevention system, including all its logistical, personnel, information, and financial support. The programme had built on crime prevention programmes of individual ministries represented in the Government Committee as well as on local crime prevention strategies, research and analyses performed by the Ministry of Interior, prevention activities of the Ministry of Interior and the Police of the Czech Republic, and on cooperation with NGOs and other subjects active primarily in the area of primary prevention. The Local Level Crime Prevention Programme (hereinafter only "Programme"), implemented on the local level by municipal self-administration and supported by the government budget, became the main pillar of crime prevention in the Czech Republic.

The government subsidy of the Programme, which reached CZK 900 million, was used to support over 4000 crime prevention projects in 230 municipalities and regions.

The implementation of the Programme revealed that the long-term government support in the form of guidelines, consultancy, and financial subsidies, helped integrate prevention into the municipal policies - social affairs and welfare, education, health and safety – gave rise to new advisory bodies (crime prevention commission) and helped create new jobs in the government administration (prevention manager). Simultaneously, the Programme stabilized and further intensified partnership with the Police of the Czech Republic, especially in the phase of problem identification, crime prevention, and decision-making on all levels.

The evaluation of Partnership programmes in towns and municipalities is largely based on analyses of final project reports, on the evaluation of the Programme as such, and on annual crime analyses. **The crime analyses show that prevention programmes and activities in towns and municipalities help stabilize crime and often result in a subsequent reduction of crime.**

⁶ The first strategy was limited to the year 2000, the 2nd was 2000-2003, the 3rd was 2004-2007, and the current one is 2008-2011.

Crime Prevention Strategy 2008 to 2011

The Crime Prevention Strategy 2008 to 2011 builds on the interim strategies and intends to **further improve the public perception of safety and to help reduce the seriousness of crime**. In the Strategy, the government defines the key priorities, principles, and elements of crime prevention and determines the recommended framework for the crime prevention strategies drafted and implemented by the public administration on the central level as well as on regional and local levels.

The Strategy has been drafted in light of the current development in crime and is based on the most recent national and international research and experience.

1. The Strategy

The Strategy priorities are: to suppress property and violent crime, to eliminate socially pathological behaviour, to limit opportunities to commit crime, to increase the offender risk of interception, and to raise public awareness of the crime prevention.

The Strategy target groups are: the youth prone to the socially pathological behaviour or already having a criminal history, first-time offenders, repeated offenders, and socially excluded communities.

We plan to pay increased attention to the implementation of the Early Intervention System and the work of Juvenile offender teams which we believe serve the best example of tools to help significantly reduce the juvenile crime. Last but not least, we wish to embed the crime prevention in the Czech legislation.

2. Crime Prevention Strategy 2008 to 2011 - Key Objectives

- Efficient and stable crime prevention system – local, regional, and central level.
- Improved competences of regions and municipalities in the process of planning and implementing preventive measures.
- Structured partnership of all stakeholders on all levels of the public administration.

- Establishing new professional crime prevention managers on both regional and municipal level and giving them necessary competences.
- Appointing and training qualified members of the Police of the Czech Republic and the municipal police corps to implements and supervise crime prevention measures.
- Implementing measures stipulated in the Strategy with the support of the government budget, regional and municipal budgets, and the EU financing.
- Increasing the number of stakeholders involved in the preparation and implementation of prevention programmes.

3. Crime Prevention Strategy 2008 to 2011 – Key Principles

The Strategy is the key source document for the subsequent drafting of crime prevention concepts⁷ on both regional and municipal level.

- Prevention programmes and their implementation are based on security situation analyses performed by all levels of the public administration. Such analyses best reflect both the local, regional, or national conditions as well as the needs of the public.
- Most activities are on the local level.
- Administrative guidance from the central level is limited and the national authorities provide for the legislative framework, underlying concepts, expert guidelines, information supply, and some financial support.
- Prevention programmes bring together both lay and professional support.
- A successful prevention programme needs clear division of tasks and competences, cooperation of all stakeholders involved, exchange of information, and public support.
- The Police of the Czech Republic provide assistance primarily by supplying information, performing analyses, and making evaluations. Their support is most visible in the implementation of practical prevention measures on the local level.

⁷ Regions and municipalities may include the public safety and crime prevention in their community planning (mid-term plans of social services development), should the social services provided under the plan serve this particular purpose.

4. Basic strategy points

4.1 Target groups

- **Offenders** (juvenile; young adults; repeated offenders; offenders with basic education and/or vocational education and unqualified offenders);
- **Victims** (children - victims of vice, violent, or property crime, children as victims of bullying; victims of violent crime, including domestic violence; victims of trafficking in human beings; victims of property crime; victims of racially, ethnically, or religiously-motivated crime);
- **Individuals in high risk of becoming offenders or victims** (pre-delinquent children and juveniles; families of children with behavioural pathologies; socially-excluded individuals and groups; women; senior citizens; disabled and/or socially-excluded individuals; solitary persons; foreigners; members of national and ethnic minorities; long-term unemployed and difficult to employ; inhabitants of remote areas; people having problems paying rent and/or other payments; people released from prison)⁸.

4.2 Criminal offence and other pathological behaviour

- **Property crime** (house or apartment burglary, petty theft – items from cars, car theft, theft of car parts, pick pocketing, fraud and credit fraud, unlawful possession of a credit card);
- **Violent crime** (robbery; violent assault, street violence, violence under the influence of alcohol or drugs, bullying);
- **Crime against children, family and human dignity** (abuse of a dependent, trafficking in children, endangering welfare and morals of children, rape, sexual abuse);
- **Other crime:** corruption; trafficking in human beings, domestic violence, spectator violence, vandalism, racially, ethnically, or religiously motivated crime, violations of law and order outside restaurants or bars, violations of law and order in socially excluded areas, misdemeanour (neighbour relations, violations of property rights).

⁸ High-risk individuals also include individuals addicted to alcohol, narcotic, or psychotropic substances. These issues are the responsibility of the Government council for drug policy coordination.

4.3 The crime prevention system

To further develop the crime prevention system in 2008 to 2011, the Czech Republic has defined the following priorities:

- 4.3.1 Change in the crime prevention organizational structure, new competences of regional and municipal authorities in the implementation of crime prevention plans.**
- 4.3.2 Juvenile crime prevention via the Early Intervention System⁹.**
- 4.3.3 Crime prevention legislation.**

Change in the crime prevention organizational structure, new competences of regional and municipal authorities in the implementation of crime prevention plans

The crime prevention system organizational structure will have the following three levels – central, regional, and municipal. All activities will be coordinated by the Government Committee. Regions, however, will have more responsibilities in providing coordination and guidance¹⁰ to their territorially subordinated municipalities. The municipal level will be represented by larger municipalities (over 25 thousand inhabitants), which may, should they meet the relevant criteria, receive financing from the government crime prevention budget for the entire period of the existence of the Strategy. The crime prevention concepts will be drafted based on security analyses which are to be made on both regional and municipal level. When implementing their prevention measures, regions and municipalities will be required to follow the underlying objectives, principles, and procedures stipulated in the Strategy while taking into consideration the local conditions and needs.

CENTRAL LEVEL

The central level shall provide for a unified and centralized crime prevention system and its analysis, it should solve problems which are not in the competence of the individual ministries and other public bodies, and facilitate a stable, durable, and complex approach to all issues and challenges related to crime.

⁹ For a detailed description of the project and its implementation (Early Intervention System methodology and juvenile crime teams) please refer to the „Evaluation of the system of care for children at risk“, which had been submitted to the government in September 2007.

¹⁰ While not compromising the independence of regions and municipalities and while acting in keeping with the binding legislation.

Priorities:

- A roll-out of the Early Intervention System and Juvenile crime teams.
- An efficient drawing of financing from the European structural funds.
- Crime prevention legislation.

Key objectives in 2008 – 2011:

- Analyses, evaluations, and supervision,
- Guidelines and consultations provided to regions and municipalities (under the local crime prevention level),
- Interagency projects - planning, guidelines, implementation (support and protection of victims of trafficking in human beings, support to victims of crime, support of anti-corruption measures, Early Intervention System, property crime project “Safe Area”, etc.),
- A nation-wide roll-out of the Early Intervention System and Juvenile crime teams (hereinafter only Early Intervention System),
- Training of crime prevention experts, members of the Police and civilians facilitating the Early Intervention System, and training in methods of the Community policing,
- Crime prevention subsidies from the government budget,
- EU financing,
- Support of research in criminology and sociology,
- Improved position of the Czech Republic in the crime prevention international network,
- Crime prevention legislation.

The central level of crime prevention shall coordinate prevention activities of the individual elements of the system (central, regional, and local stakeholders); facilitate training, guidelines, and information exchange; supervise implementation of interagency and nation-wide projects; and secure financing to implement the Strategy 2008 to 2011 objectives.

REGIONAL LEVEL AND PRAGUE

The objective is to reinforce the self-administrative role of regions in the process of implementation of crime prevention programmes co-financed from the government budget.

Priorities

- To draft of regional crime prevention concepts.
- To facilitate the planning, preparation, implementation, and financing of regional programmes.

Key objectives in 2008 – 2011:

- To draft a regional security analysis,
- To draft a regional crime prevention concept,
- To provide for logistical support and guidelines to Regional crime prevention programmes (regional and municipal projects, in Prague projects of Prague municipalities),
- To provide consultations and guidelines to those municipalities, which will implement their prevention programmes,
- To supervise the flow of subsidies to co-finance regional and municipal projects,
- To evaluate and supervise.

<p>The regional level shall establish the prevention policy on its level and provide for its coordination and co-financing, guidelines, and consultations.</p>

MUNICIPAL LEVEL

Municipal programmes shall protect local communities from crime, increase the public perception of safety, help reduce property and violent crime, eliminate pathological behaviour, facilitate cooperation of all local stakeholders, and integrate the Police of the Czech Republic in the municipal prevention activities.

Priorities

- To draft a municipal crime prevention concept.
- To facilitate the planning, preparation, implementation, and financing of municipal programmes.
- To facilitate the implementation of Early Intervention System on the municipal level¹¹.

Key objectives in 2008 – 2011:

- To draft a security analysis,
- To draft a municipal crime prevention concept to define tasks and responsibilities of all stakeholders,
- To facilitate the implementation of Early Intervention System and the work of Juvenile crime teams,
- To support crime prevention programmes for children and the youth and potentially participate at the implementation the Basic prevention programmes for schools,
- To evaluate the effectiveness of all projects supported as well as activities of stakeholders on the municipal crime prevention level,
- To develop cooperation between the self-administration and the Police of the Czech Republic in promoting principles of Community policing.

The municipal level shall adopt a complex and streamlined approach to the crime prevention. The Police of the Czech Republic shall promote methods and principles of the Community policing.

Juvenile crime prevention – implementation of the Early Intervention System¹²

Priorities

- To facilitate the implementation of the Early Intervention System on the municipal level.
- To facilitate a flow of information from the Police of the Czech Republic information systems to the Early Intervention System.
- To secure the EU structural funds financing necessary to implement local projects under the Early Intervention System and to organize training of stakeholders.

¹¹ Including the Municipality of Prague.

Key objectives in 2008 – 2011:

- To facilitate the implementation of the Early Intervention System on the municipal level – in municipalities and territorial units (by ways of signing an implementing agreement, establishing a Juvenile crime team, etc.),
- To launch the process of automated data transfer from the Police of the Czech Republic information systems to the Early Intervention System,
- To roll the project out to cover the entire Czech Republic,
- To create and implement an Early Intervention System complex training program,
- To create a central communication platform and secure a local module connectivity.

The Early Intervention System shall help change the child behaviour by ways of securing rapid, adequate, and efficient reaction of all institutions which cater to children at risk or delinquent individuals. The objective is to prevent children from developing criminal behaviour and help them live a crime-free life.

Crime prevention legislation

The crime prevention legislation will include the following:

- Definition of crime prevention,
- Definition of stakeholders and their interactions,
- Activities, responsibilities, and competences, including financing.

The new legislation shall further stipulate the responsibility of the government and the Ministry of Interior to create conditions necessary (including financing) to implement prevention measures and the joint responsibility of the Ministry of Interior and regions to create crime prevention concepts, implement prevention programmes and measures, coordinate prevention activities in the area under their responsibility, analyze the security situation, etc.¹³

Prevention of crime will be embedded in a draft bill “on measures to maintain public order and internal security (internal security act)“, the Ministry of Interior is currently working on. It may also become a part of the amended Act on regions, municipalities and the

¹³ The authorities are proposing to establish, next to a position of a Roma coordinator (established pursuant to the Act on regions and the municipality of Prague), a new position of a regional crime prevention manager.

municipality of Prague. The authorities, however, feel the need for a comprehensive solution and the latter option does not seem to fully meet this requirement.

Crime prevention may also become a part of the planned new police act, which will accompany the upcoming complex reform of the Police of the Czech Republic.

5. Efficient preventive measures

a) complex social measures

The Early Intervention System and the Juvenile crime teams, special rooms for interviewing children – victims or witnesses of crime, dedicated activities¹⁴ at places with high incidence of crime and socially pathological behaviour, prevention of property and violent crime and related measures complemented by changes in urban planning.

b) secondary and tertiary prevention (re-socialization, re-development)

Probation programmes for children and adults, programmes carried by the centres of institutional care; social and re-socialization programmes for the first-time offenders and repeated offenders (focused on changing their lifestyle), training and education in support of employment, potentially including housing (temporary protected housing, housing assistance, etc.); programmes to assist socially excluded families or families with children in risk of behavioural pathologies (home tutoring), programs to establish contact between families on one side and the public administration and schools on the other, intervention centres and other services catering to individuals at risk of the domestic violence, programs to assist and support victims of unlawful conduct or trafficking in human beings, programs targeted at hooligans and perpetrators of spectator violence.

c) Situational prevention measures

Improved CCTV coverage, information and assistance centres established and operated by the Police of the Czech Republic and the municipal police to raise awareness of home security and to familiarize the public with various types of house alarms and other security equipment, security features to be used to protect housing and other property owned by the self-administration, safe zones and locations (see the Safe Area programme), complex security of parking lots to prevent car theft and theft of items from vehicles.

¹⁴ These activities may include checks at places at high risk (used car dealerships, scrap yards, garages) performed by the police of the Czech Republic, municipal police, staff of the internal revenue (tax) authority, etc.

d) public awareness

Valid, timely, comprehensive, and objective information on socially pathological behaviour and its causes on both national and local levels; information on the most common types of crime, modus operandi of the offenders, and most common places and times of crime; guidance and recommendations to improve property and personal safety, information on what the public at large can do to improve the overall safety and what is done in this field by the public administration (including the Police) and self-administration (including the municipal police); anti-corruption measures and promotion of an anti-corruption hotline.

e) education

Improved awareness of children, the youth, parents and teachers of the binding law, education programmes targeted at alternative social relationships, social skills, job counselling, information on socially pathological or risky behaviour and its causes, and prevention of bullying and school violence; training of the members of the Police of the Czech Republic and municipal police corps targeted at communication skills, handling of street unrest, and protection and assistance to victims of crime.